



Introduction

We are starting a new five-week series called Shadows and Light. We are going to be talking about social injustices that are taking place in our world. So what does injustice mean? Injustice always involves the abuse of power and with the abuse of power, people or victims suffer. As we talk about the title of this series Shadows and Light, the “shadows” represent the evil of injustice which hides in the dark, and the “light” represents the light and hope of God.

1 John 1:5 says:

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

Today as I talk with you, millions of lives around the world are in the grip of injustice.

(When sharing these statistics expand on the difficulties of each one)

- ◆ **1.1 billion people do not have access to clean drinking water**
- ◆ **2.6 billion people do not have access to basic sanitation**
- ◆ **Approximately 23 million people are infected with AIDS/HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa**
- ◆ **Worldwide, there are nearly two million children in the commercial sex trade**

When 14-year-old Manna ran away from her abusive home in South Asia, she met a woman who offered her job selling fabric. She accepted the position, and the woman provided her a place to sleep for the night. When Manna awoke in the morning, the woman was gone, and Manna discovered that she was in a brothel. Manna attempted to refuse the first three men who had paid to rape her. She was physically assaulted by the brothel keepers until she lacked the strength to resist. For the next two years, she was held in the brothel and raped by customers for the profit of the brothel owners. She was freed when IJM investigators discovered her captivity and alerted local authorities, working with them to release her and three other young girls from the brothel. The brothel owners each received five-year sentences. IJM, which stands for International Justice Mission, is a Christian human rights organization that rescues victims of violence, sexual exploitation, slavery and oppression.

<http://www.ijm.org/statistics&factsheets/viewcategory> Sex trafficking factsheet)

These are the types of social injustices happening around our world today. So often we don't even realize the evil that is taking place. The Bible declares that the world is fallen and sinful.

1 Peter 1:13 says: "Therefore, prepare your minds for action."

So often my mind is not prepared for action and in fact when I hear about these terrible injustices happening in the world I have a hard time comprehending it all because I have spent my whole existence carving out what I think is normal living. What happens

in my bubble of life I suspect is normal for everyone else...so I naively think. I need to wake up and realize my life is not normal to the millions living on a dollar a day or the kids I saw in the villages in Africa without shoes and whose parents are dead because of AIDS. That is the reality of our world. The reality is that my life is anything but normal and maybe yours is too.

Maybe for us to grasp this whole thing we need to go back to the beginning. God's original design for creation was that man would be its caretaker and God and man would be in constant community together. Our amazing creator God is the architect of our world and in Genesis 1 He describes creation and it says it was good. He created the heavens and the earth. He created the sky and the land. He created the sun, the stars, and the moon. He says, "It was good." He created the wild animals and all the livestock. He says, "It was good." But his most prized creation of all was man, whom he created in God's own image. This is the climax of the creation story. Then God looked over everything he created and said, "It is very good."

- ◆ I want you to watch this video as it gives us the story of creation.

<http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/index.cfm?hndl=details&tab=MM&id=9116>

There is something very profound here in this creation story that we need to look at before we discuss the fall of man.

Read Genesis 1:27-30

God created this beautiful planet and then handed over the care of it to us. We are the care takers of this planet; this is something that we will come back to later in this series.

So later in chapter 3, Genesis talks about the fall of man in which Adam and Eve eat the fruit from the tree of good and evil and sin enters the world.

Read Genesis 3:6-8

I want to talk with you about the implications of sin entering our world. God created this Garden of Eden and it was a perfect place full of everything Adam and Eve needed. All of their needs were met, but most importantly, God's presence was in the middle of this garden, and Adam and Eve lived in constant community with God the creator. However, because disobedience to God and buying into Satan's lie, a shadow fell on human existence and sin entered the world. The world as God created it to be would no longer exist. The fall of man, which is sin entering the world, is also the beginning of sorrow for mankind. It represents the entrance of chaos into the world and our lives. What did Adam and Eve do after they realized they did wrong? They hid from God and became conscious that they were naked. Fear and shame are the consequences that are passed down to us. The problems and troubles in this life rise from the foundation of man's broken relationship with God.

So what are the implications of sin in our lives and how does sin affect our relationship with God?

For God to be holy and just and righteous, He cannot tolerate sin. Sin is an attack on his character and his goodness; therefore, it must be punished. Sin represents darkness. **1**

John 1:5 says: This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. For God to be just, he must punish sin, and the punishment of sin is death.

Psalm 37:23 says, “The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power; in his justice and great righteousness, he does not oppress.” God does not author sin; no imperfections come from him. However, God does allow sin to be in the world in order that he might be maximally glorified through the life and death of Jesus Christ. Because of sin, which is against the total nature of who God is, it must and has to be punished. The worst effect of sin is that it is an assault on the holiness of God. For God to be just He must maintain His righteousness and His goodness. Because of this, God must punish sin. If He allows sin to exist without punishing it then God is no longer just. Therefore, guess what? We are all in the path of the wrath of God.

In the 14th century, Robert Bruce, next in line to the Scottish crown, led the fight to gain independence from England. At one point in the conflict, the English were about to capture him. He escaped into the forest, so they put bloodhounds on his trail. When Bruce heard the dogs barking loudly as they closed in on him, he headed for a stream that flowed through the forest, plunged in, and waded upstream a distance. Coming out on the other bank, he was now in the depths of the forest. Within minutes, the hounds, tracing Bruce's steps, came to the bank, but they went no farther. The English soldiers urged them on, but the trail was broken. The stream had carried the scent away. A short time later, the crown of Scotland rested on the head of Robert Bruce. The anger of God pursues us like those dogs. But a stream flows red with the blood of God's own Son. This stream breaks the trail of God's anger.

The bottom line is that we need a substitute, and only God can repair the infinite assault to His character. The cross is the answer. We will talk about that later as well. The implications of sin are this: as Adam and Eve realized their sin and because of their

disobedience to God they hid in shame. What did they do after hiding in shame? They covered their nakedness. Why? Adam and Eve attempt to take care of the sin issues in their lives by covering themselves. They attempt to resolve the chaos on their own. We do that a lot don't we? We attempt to try to solve the chaos and the barrage of issues in our own life by trying to solve it on our own. However, God has a plan. He has a plan for your life. He had a plan for Adam and Eve as well.

Read Genesis 3:21

God makes garments for them out of animal skin. Something had to die for that garment to be made, which is already foreshadowing God's plan for his son Jesus to die for our sins completely. How often have we tried to fix the issues or problems in our life brought on by sin? God has a plan in the midst of chaos. Out of the shadows of sin entering our world comes the light of the Gospel. Adam and Eve need a savior. We need a savior.

So sin entered the world and chaos happened. Sin is rampant and evil exists all around. Do you see it? Have you experienced it? Have you been a part of it? Have you ever thought about the implications of your sin? Have you realized that your sin hurts the heart of God and is totally against the very nature of who God is? Have you questioned or asked how this whole world got so screwed up? Have you lived your life in what you thought was normal to realize that compared to how the world lives and what is happening it's not normal at all? Do you know what's happening in our world? Do you understand that there are social injustices happening all around? Do you realize that there are people and children, God's children that are crying out in bondage and pain, looking for hope? They are looking for answers to their chaos.

- Check out this video (*Details to create this video are included in the items needed folder*)

Closing Prayer