

Bringing the spirit of Sabbath to our work From Stress to Shalom

Good Morning ...
Let the stress
begin ...



A common assumption

If you want peace in life you need:

1. a just environment
2. personal responsibility

How am I to find peace in the face of injustice?

**I know that life in
a fallen world is
often unfair?**

**Is life within the
kingdom of God
also unfair?**



Matthew 20:1-16

The parable of the unjust wages

"¹ For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² And when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place; ⁴ and to those he said, 'You too go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And so they went. ⁵ Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did the same thing. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing; and he said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day long?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into the vineyard.'"

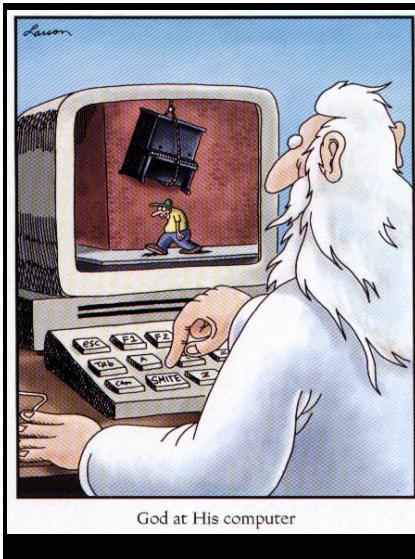
"⁸ And when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last group to the first.' ⁹ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. ¹⁰ And when those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; and they also received each one a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.' ¹³ But he answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what is yours and go your way, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. ¹⁵ Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ Thus the last shall be first, and the first last."

Observations

- ✓ This passage reveals the apparent insensitivity (injustice) of the landowner (God).
- ✓ It challenges us to reassess the "rules of engagement" in God's kingdom.

1. God does not respect our place in line.
2. The real issue is God's generosity not our merit.
3. This "insensitivity" adds to the stress we feel in life.
4. The Kingdom of God mocks the way of this world.

**If God wants me to have peace,
why does He add to the problem
with the stress of injustice in life?**



ANXIETY AND PERCEPTION

Luke 15:11-32 - The Prodigal and his brother.
- My view of myself

Matthew 25:14-30 - Faithful and fearful slaves.
- My view of my master

Luke 10:38-42 - Mary and Martha.
- My view of my work



A SENSE OF INJUSTICE

Matthew 20:1-16 - The insensitive wages

Matthew 18:21-35 - The ungracious lender

John 8:1-11 - The woman taken in adultery

Luke 15:11-32 - The Prodigal and his brother.

Luke 15

“²⁸ But he became angry, and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began entreating him. ²⁹ But he answered and said to his father, ‘Look! **For so many years I have been serving you, and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a kid, that I might be merry with my friends;** ³⁰ but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.’”

Note that the older brother was concerned:

1. Not when the Prodigal rebelled.
2. Not when the Prodigal repented.
3. **But only when the Father was gracious.**

The stumbling block to the Kingdom is no longer the holy standard which was satisfied at the Cross.



The chief obstacle to the Kingdom is now the grace of God at that Cross.

John H. Gerstner



“The main thing between you and God is not so much your sins; it’s your damnable good works.”

Luke 10:38-42 - Mary and Martha.

Luke 10


“⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, ‘Lord, **do You not care** that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.’”

Note that Martha was concerned:

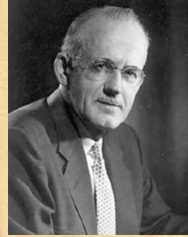
1. Not with Mary’s interest in Jesus.
2. Not with Mary’s laziness.
3. **But with Jesus’ “insensitivity” in not sharing Martha’s priorities.**

Accurate Perception that does not lead to clear priorities will never lead to lasting peace.

Loving, sacrificial, service in the name of Jesus will never justify poor boundaries?



A.W. Tozer



"We take a new convert and immediately make a worker out of him. That is not God's way. God meant that a convert should first learn to be a worshipper, and then his work will have God in it."

Matthew 25:14-30 - Faithful and fearful slaves.

Matthew 25

"²⁵ And **I was afraid**, and went away and hid your talent in the ground; see, you have what is yours."

Note that the servant:

1. Respected the Master's authority.
2. Made decisions based on that respect.
3. **But could not feel safe with the Master.**
(He did not see the Master's graciousness?)

The key to a good golf shot:

1.
The way you set up
will influence the
way you swing.

Grip
Posture
Visualize
Back swing

2.
The way you swing
will influence the
quality of your shot.

Tempo
Balance
Eye on the ball
Follow through



The key to peace in the face of injustice:

1.
The way you prepare
will influence your
inner response to
life's circumstances.

Perception
Values
Priorities
Plans

2.
Your inner
response will
influence your
outward behavior.

Bear the Cross
Graciousness
Forbearance
Love



Despised & forsaken by man,
acquainted with grief,
a man of sorrows,
smitten by God,



**prince
of peace**

John 17:26

"that the love with which You
loved Me might be in them
and I in them"

Christians are called to fight for social justice but also to forebear with personal injustice.



The Apostle Peter demonstrates what it means to preach & bear the Cross of Christ.

How to deal with personal injustice.

- ✓ Remember, a relaxed inner attitude is a testimony to your faith, hope, & love. Anger & fear testify to something else.
 1. Don't be surprised by injustice and misunderstanding.
 2. Prepare to respond with spiritual power.
 3. Pray for wisdom in responding.
 4. Ask Christian friends for advice (they can be more objective).
- ✓ Remind yourself this is all about your response as you bear witness to your true treasure and your call to be a blessing when it is not deserved.
- ✓ Before defending yourself with the truth, seek to find out if God is using this in your life for some bigger purpose.
- ✓ Protecting and defending others against injustice should be done in the context of leading them to true power & peace.

Presssure Stress is the trigger that calls for a Godly response.
Perception Seeing things realistically and Biblically is step #1.
Priorities Setting boundaries and keeping them is step #2.
Plans Planning how you should respond before you have to is step #3.
Practice Disciplining yourself to work your plan is step #4.
Peace Radiating the peace of God in your blessing, worship, and ministry.



There are two ways to please God in a crisis:

1. You can pray
2. You can be an answer to a prayer



Bitterness is like drinking poison and hoping the other person dies.

If you want peace, seek justice! GOD'S WAY!

