**Sermon Research: Week 3**

**The Judge** – Scales

The God I want is… a God who will punish those who do wrong/evil (to me and to my world)

But… the Messiah wants his people to forgive and be salt and light

The option for Marc is to make this message personal (wrongs done to me and I forgive them) OR cultural (evil in the world that God calls us to change based on his command for us to be salt and light)

**Main Points:**

* The Judge VS Forgiveness OR Salt and Light
  + Point #1 - The Messiah is a merciful judge (God is a merciful judge)
  + Point #2 - The Messiah has forgiven our personal sins- (God has granted us mercy)
  + Point #3 - The Messiah calls us to forgive those who hurt us (God calls us to grant mercy to others)

**CORE SCRIPTURE:**

**Salt of the Earth**

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. (NIV Matthew 5:13)

**QUESTIONS TO FIND QUOTES ON:**

* Why does God allow evil to still exist in this world?
* What does it mean for Christians to be salt and light in the world?
* How are Christians called to change culture to make it more just, fair, and equitable? Like bringing heaven to earth

**Scriptures that people use that can be interpreted around “The God I Want”**

“6 Arise, LORD, in your anger;

rise up against the rage of my enemies.

Awake, my God; decree justice.

7 Let the assembled peoples gather around you,

while you sit enthroned over them on high.

8 Let the LORD judge the peoples.

Vindicate me, LORD, according to my righteousness,

according to my integrity, O Most High.

9 Bring to an end the violence of the wicked

and make the righteous secure—

you, the righteous God

who probes minds and hearts.” (NIV Psalm 7:6–9)

Romans 8:22

**22**We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Exodus 34:6-7

**6**And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, **7**maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

Matthew 13:40-42

**40**“As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. **41**The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. **42**They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Romans 1:18-19

**18**The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, **19**since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

Revelation 20:12-14

**12**And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. **13**The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. **14**Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

**Other Scriptures around The Messiah’s Kingdom that reinforce the Core Scripture**

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” (NIV Mtt 5:7)

**The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant**

“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” 22 Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. 23 Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. 26 At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. 28 But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. 29 His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ 30 But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. 32 Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. 35 This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.” (NIV Mtt 18:21–35)

**QUOTE:** “To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God forgave the inexcusable in you.” - CS Lewis

**What Commentaries Say About the Parable Logistics**

This parable mirrors the most common form of rabbinic parable—a story involving a king with servants or sons. The king almost   p 283  always stands for God; the servants, for God’s people. Often obedient and disobedient servants provide a contrast between righteous and wicked behavior. Settling accounts is a natural metaphor for judgment. Ten thousand talents would have been an enormous debt, on the borderline of what the ancient mind-set could have conceived (cf. NIV marg.). Estimates in modern currency range from several million to one trillion dollars. The “talent” was the highest known denomination of currency in the ancient Roman Empire, and ten thousand was the highest number for which the Greek language had a particular word (myrias; cf. our myriad). One might conceive of this first servant as an extremely wealthy governor or satrap, a very powerful official in his own right. Since he is unable to repay his debts, he and his family must be sold, along with all their assets, in order to raise at least some funds for the king. He will obviously recoup nothing anywhere close to the amount owed, but something is better than nothing. Selling people into slavery to pay their debts was extremely common in the ancient world. The man begs for mercy and makes a promise he almost certainly will not be able to keep. To the astonishment of Jesus’ original audience, the king pities the man and cancels his debt. Not only will he not sell him into slavery, but he will not require repayment of any kind. Sheer grace is at work here. “Took pity” is the same word for the compassion that characterizes Jesus’ emotions and behavior in 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; and 20:34. *(Craig Blomberg, Matthew, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 282–283.*