

THE RULER THIS WORLD REALLY NEEDS

(Psalm 72)

Over and over this past decade we have watched city after city collapse under the weight of its own sin and rebellion. What often began as demonstrations against police brutality and murder eventually morphed into a violent mêlée against policeman and firefighters and the criminal destruction of homes, businesses, and personal property. Evil people took advantage of criminal acts by police and used it as an excuse to commit **other** criminal acts that will set those cities back for years (and even decades) to come. Hundreds of small business owners have seen their life's work destroyed overnight, including many minority small business owners.

But whether we're thinking of murderous police officers or destructive rioters, the words of the prophet Isaiah still hold true:

Isaiah 57:20-----...the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

The Temptations had it right when they looked around and called planet earth a "Ball of Confusion."

In just nine days we will vote. **This is the most important** vote in our country's history because it will decide whether the people of America want a country founded on godlessness or Judeo-Christian values. A country based on secular humanism and socialist/totalitarian values or one based on freedom, limited government, and a free market. Every one of us need to vote, and we need to vote wisely. If we choose the one on the left, America will become like Venezuela, Cuba, and so many other third-world countries that are awful places to live.

Earlier, I had you turn to Psalm 72. Psalm 72 is a very encouraging passage of Scripture because it tells us that the world that we as God's people dream of will one day become a reality. And that future world and its Ruler is what I would like to talk to you about for a few minutes this morning.

Title: **The Ruler This World Really Needs.**

(Prayer)

In spite of all the people who have **never gotten justice from** an American court or the right treatment from police (and there have been many since the founding of our country), the injustices that have occurred in the courts of America are few in number compared to those that poor people around the world have endured their entire lives in the third world. People in those countries would literally give their right arm to have what we have here in America.

For example, **Washington, D.C.** spends about \$850 per person per year on police. In **Bangladesh**, the government spends less than \$1.50 per person per year on police. **In the U.S.**, there is one prosecutor for every 12,000 citizens. **In Malawi**, there is one prosecutor for every 1.5 million citizens.

In a 2014 book entitled *The Locust Effect*, authors Gary Haugen and Victor Boutros share the following illustration that will help you understand the injustices millions of people live under.

To visualize the way public justice systems in the developing world "work" for hundreds of millions of the world's poorest people, I find myself thinking about **the old broken-down truck that always sat rusting** and decomposing amidst the weeds in the back corner of my grandfather's raspberry farm when I was a kid. If you asked him if he had a truck, he'd say, "Sure." And he could point to things on the truck called an "engine" and "tires" and "steering wheel"—but if you asked him if it worked, he'd smile slightly over the absurdity and say, "Oh, no. No one had driven it in decades. No raspberries have been hauled, no supplies have been moved. In fact, I best not go near it," he would advise, "It's just a hide-out for snakes and spiders now."

Likewise **for the great mass of poor people in the developing world**, if asked about the public justice system, they could probably point to things in their country called "police" or "courts" or "laws" or "lawyers." But these things are useful to them in the same way the "truck" was to grandpa—and that is, not at all. Just as my family had no experience of anyone ever making use of grandpa's truck for trucking, the poor in the developing world have no life experience of the justice system being a useful source of justice for them. In fact, police, courts, laws and lawyers have become, like the rusty truck in the weeds, mysterious at best and dangerous at worst.

It's important that we understand that the majority of people who have lived and died on earth since Adam and Eve did not live in a society where they could obtain justice if wronged nor did they ever feel protected from the violent people around them.

This kind of a societal context is important when you come to Psalm 72. When you read this Psalm from the viewpoint of those who have been wronged or mistreated by the criminal justice system in their respective countries, it will help you to understand it a lot better.

Jesus will be the Ruler this world really needs because...

1. **All mankind will finally experience justice, peace, and prosperity (72:1-7)**

When you read Psalm 72, it doesn't take long before you realize that this is not speaking of the reign of an earthly king but of the reign of King of kings—the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a prayer concerning the future ruler of the entire world. Notice the words I have highlighted:

¹ **Give the king Your** judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. ² He will judge Your people with **righteousness**, And Your poor with **justice**. ³ The mountains will bring **peace** to the people, And the little hills, by

righteousness. ⁴ He will bring **justice** to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor. ⁵ **They shall fear You** As long as the sun and moon endure, Throughout all generations. ⁶ He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, Like showers *that* water the earth. ⁷ In His days the righteous shall **flourish**, And abundance of **peace**, Until the moon is no more.

Author and theologian N.T. Wright said:

The biblical doctrine of God's wrath is rooted in the doctrine of God as the good, wise and loving creator, who hates—yes, hates, and hates implacably—anything that spoils, defaces, distorts, or damages...his image-bearing creatures. If God does not hate racial prejudice, he is neither good nor loving. If God is not wrathful at child abuse, he is neither good nor loving. If God is not utterly determined to root out from his creation, in an act of proper wrath and judgment, the arrogance that allows people to exploit, bomb, bully and enslave one another, he is neither loving, nor good, nor wise.

2. **All nations will finally have the correct focus—honoring and serving their Creator** (72:8-11, 15)

⁸ **He shall have** dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. ⁹ Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, And His enemies will lick the dust. ¹⁰ The kings of Tarshish and of the isles Will bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba Will offer gifts. ¹¹ **Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.**

¹⁵ And He shall live; And the gold of Sheba will be given to Him; Prayer also will be made for Him continually, **And daily He shall be praised.**

What nation on earth currently has the honor and service of the true God as their focus? None. But in that future day, Psalm 86:9 says:

Psalm 86:9-----⁹ **All nations** whom You have made Shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And shall glorify Your name.

Thirdly, Jesus will be the Ruler this world really needs because...

3. **All who were formerly mistreated and oppressed will finally be safe and thrive because of the compassion of their King** (72:12-14)

¹² **For He will deliver** the **needy** when he cries, The **poor** also, and **him who has no helper.** ¹³ He will spare the **poor** and **needy**, And will save the souls of the **needy.** ¹⁴ **He will redeem their life from oppression and violence;** And precious shall be their blood [life] in His sight.

At the 50th National Day of Prayer breakfast, just 5 months after the terrorist attacks on 9-11, President Bush got it right when he said:

It is always and everywhere wrong to target and kill the innocent. It is always and everywhere wrong to be cruel and hateful, to enslave and oppress. It is always and everywhere right to be kind and just, to protect the lives of others, and to lay down your life for a friend.

And in that future day, Jesus will rule the world with a rod of iron (yes, His laws will be followed) but He will also rule the world compassionately and see to it that everyone is treated the way that a person created in the image of God deserves to be treated.

Finally, Jesus will be the Ruler this world really needs because...

4. **All the earth will finally enjoy the blessings that God had intended for it all along because of the King's righteous reign (72:16-20)**

¹⁶ There will be an abundance of grain in the earth, On the top of the mountains; Its fruit shall wave like Lebanon; And those of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. ¹⁷ His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. **And men shall be blessed in Him; All nations shall call Him blessed.** ¹⁸ Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who only does wondrous things! ¹⁹ And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen. ²⁰ The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

It was Martin Luther King Jr. who said:

"True peace is not merely the absence of some negative force, tension or war, it is the presence of some positive force, justice, good will, brotherhood."

And my friends, in that future day when Jesus takes His throne and rules over the entire earth, there will be the "presence" of a positive force that planet earth has not experienced for over 2000 years. Jesus will return to this earth and His foot will touch the Mount of Olives in Israel. He will completely obliterate all human rule and will reign over the entire earth in righteousness and holiness—with justice and compassion.

There will be no more injustice.

There will be no more poverty.

There will be no more inequality.

There will be no more prejudice.

There will be no more unfairness.

There will be no more violence.

The Prince of Peace will be the Ruler this world really needs!

In the meantime, as we seek to be the best people and citizens that we can possibly be, let's also pray for God's kingdom to come:

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."