**The Source of Justice (Matthew 4:12-22)**

 The beginning of true justice is repentance. Greetings to you dear brothers and sisters as we talk today about justice. Given that this week is the commemoration of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr’s life and legacy, it is worth it to focus on that theme, knowing that the majority, if not all his speeches and messages were based on Biblical truth. So, let’s talk about justice.

 First and foremost, the definitions of the term are more than one: to be considered just by God was a declared status for a believer who followed (Christ), while an act that agreed with God’s declaration of a righteousness or justice could also be considered just. Both an act and a person could be considered just or righteous according to God. My hope is that today’s topic will link the two together. Again, I stress that the beginning of true justice is repentance. Let’s get to our explanation…

 In its essence, justice can only be received from God and done through Him, and that only through Jesus. After settling down in Capernaum, Jesus’ first message was “Repent!” His first act in changing the world, in other words in bringing God’s justice, was the call to repentance. Why? It was because humanity had not had an intimate relationship with God for millennia. They were suffering, justly, for their sinfulness. Jesus did not only turn to a new page for all of humanity with his arrival, but He also brought the revelation of justice to earth. To obey Jesus’ message and then to follow Him, as his disciples did and became apostles, was the beginning of God’s mission. Up until then, God’s justice was not accepted among human beings. They were disobedient to our Just God – which is why Jesus showed us the other side of Justice through His Person and Mission on earth. That Justice was the transformation of the human being through Christ – by the just punishment of sin being transferred to Jesus as the sinless Lamb of God. But the beginning of that is repentance unto following Christ.

 About the subject of justice, G.K. Chesterton once wrote, “*Children are innocent and love justice, while most adults are wicked and prefer mercy.*” The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke these words about justice: “*I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.*” He saw justice in the Final Coming of the Lord.

 So, what about us? How is it that repentance unto following Christ is the formula for justice? Let me explain: when we repent from our sins, we cause God’s just condemnation of sin to be transferred to Jesus Christ, by His own will, and we take up His sweet burden, to perform God’s righteousness in life. In other words, when our condemnation unto spiritual death is cancel because of our faith, we enter a new life. Within that life, it is now just or righteous to consider unjust all the works of the devil, be they sin, catastrophes and sicknesses, and righteous or just to work against them, pray against them, and blot them out from our circles of influence. The justice that Christ bore from God’s hand gives us freedom to bring and establish the genuine justice of God upon this broken world.

 It is justice when we live with love, truth, and virtue. It is justice when we bring sinners to repentance with our life examples. It is true justice when we work, speak, and pray against sickness, poverty, and the oppress of the devil in all its forms. In its essence, justice can only be received from God and done through Him, and that only through Jesus.

 Therefore, if you truly want to live a just or righteous life, let your initial repentance unto Christ continually shine like a light to others – and let your faith-journey with the Lord cause His true Justice to be revealed to them – the justice that is the forgiveness of your sins through Jesus, and the condemnation of the devil for all his works.

 The beginning of true justice is repentance. May the Lord bless you all. Amen.