

Speaking to the soul



Justice

“Look at my servant, whom I strengthen. He is my chosen one, who pleases me. I have put my Spirit upon him. He will bring justice to the nations.” Isaiah 42:1

I became absolutely fascinated by the law when I was in my teens. I often visited our local magistrates' and crown courts

in Southend and was completely gripped by the whole process. On a few occasions I went up to the Old Bailey in London where they tried the most amazing cases. My mind was well and truly opened up to the darker side of our society and I was given a good crash course in justice. It became clear to me that the difficult work that these courts were doing was vital to the stability of society. But when we read about justice in Isaiah the subject is much wider than merely what happens in courts of law, vital as that obviously is. It refers to God's desire that everything should be done fairly throughout society. Relationships need to be healthy and strong and the way people treat one another needs to be considerate and loving.

Our verse today is the beginning of the first of the Servant Songs in Isaiah. God looked to Israel to be the servant who would fulfil his mission to the world. But we also see him pointing further forward to the coming of the messiah, Jesus. He would be filled with God's Spirit and would open up a path of salvation and justice to all who would follow him. As servants of God, we are commanded to live our lives in step with the Spirit. This involves living justly and lovingly but also fighting for justice for those around us. Our greatest responsibility is for the most vulnerable – the young, old, immigrants, disabled, homeless and all others who are most frequently overlooked by our society. When we reach out to them we can be sure that we are doing exactly what God wants us to do in bringing his justice to our world.

QUESTION

Where do you see a particular need for justice among the people you meet each day?

PRAYER

Lord God I recognise that you are a God of justice. Help me to strive for justice and fairness in every part of my life.

Amen

Photograph - St Columba's Parish Church, Knock, Belfast