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THE STORY BENEATH THE STORY

"Other people are real as you are."

*Cry aloud; do not hold back;
lift up your voice like a trumpet;
declare to my people their transgression,
to the house of Jacob their sins.*

v. 1

Why have we fasted, and you see it not?
Why have we humbled ourselves, and you
take no knowledge of it?

v. 3

Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers.

Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist.

Fasting like yours this day
will not make your voice to be heard on high.

v. 3



Leslie Newbigin

I wonder what later generations will identify as our biggest idol to which we are oblivious? No doubt it will be our economic idolatry and our blindness to consumerism. It will be our lives immersed in mindless consumption in a world where there is so much poverty and hunger



Zadie Smith

I think the hardest thing for anyone is accepting that other people are real as you are. That's it. Not using them as tools not using them as examples or things to make yourself feel better or things to get over or under. Just accepting that they are absolutely as real as you are and have all the same expectations and demands. . . .

*Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?*

v. 6

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your
house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own
flesh?

v. 7

Then shall your light break forth like the
dawn,

and your healing shall spring up speedily;
your righteousness shall go before you;
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear
guard.

v. 8

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'

v. 9

Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Jeremiah 29:5-7



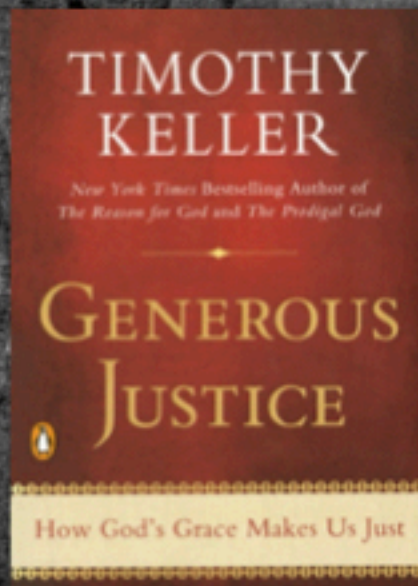
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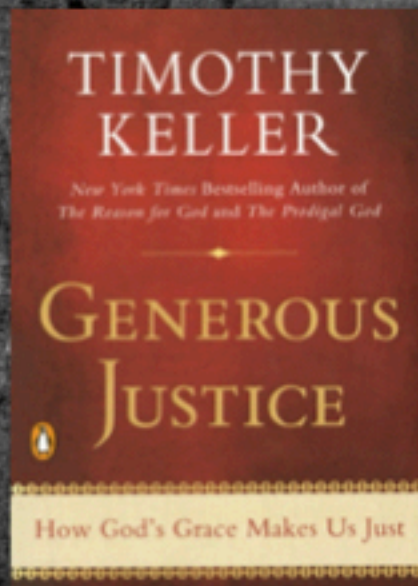


Zadie Smith

And it's so difficult that basically the only person that ever did it was Christ. The rest of us are very, very far behind.



There is a direct relationship between a person's grasp and experience of God's grace, and his or her heart for justice and the poor. . .



Before you can give this neighbor-love, you need to receive it. Only if you see that you have been saved graciously by someone who owes you the opposite will you go out into the world looking to help absolutely anyone in need. Once we receive this ultimate, radical neighbor-love through Jesus, we can start to be the neighbors that the Bible calls us to be.



David Fitch

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One early Sunday morning several years ago, I called my 5 yr old son off the hockey rink in the middle of practice to go to church gathering. He complained. I said "Get in the car son. Hockey means nothing without the Eucharist."

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