

Veil of Tears: Love God – Do Justice

Good morning!

Everyone loves a good movie, especially the old classics.

In the 1948 movie that won three Oscars, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*, Humphrey Bogart plays Fred C. Dobbs, a good-natured American down on his luck, who is reduced to begging to survive in Mexico. That is, until he discovers a gold mine with two new friends and they all become rich...and Dobbs becomes something else entirely.

Dobbs loves the gold so much that he's transformed by it into a greedy paranoid murderer. In *Christianese* terms, we call this transformation worship...worth-shape. The value we put on something shapes us, we are transformed by the worth we put on it. That's what worship is...our love for something or someone changes us, reforms us.

Today we're going to discuss another film, a new film, a powerful film that will transform you, or at least I think it will.

You'll also see what happens when something created in God's image, namely woman, is not valued, and the grotesque result of those who don't honor His creation with the dignity it warrants.

I'm speaking about the brand new film *Veil of Tears*.

Adjectives like "shocking" and "powerful" do not do justice to this film, but justice is exactly what we need to discuss this morning, namely justice for the women of India.

Let's take a look at the *Veil of Tears* trailer:

[Veil of Tears Trailer](#)

In order to understand this movie, and this Hindu country of ancient traditions, we need to step back in time to understand their society today, which in many ways is still stuck "back in time" itself.

A Glimpse of India

"India is the saddest place I have ever visited." –Pastor Francis Chan, *Crazy Love*

Most Americans know very little about India, but it is best summed up in two words: vast and varied. You could also throw in "lost" because the majority of these people do not know the gospel, although it first came to them centuries ago.

Christian tradition says that the Apostle Thomas planted the first church in India in 52 A.D. and today there are over 1 billion lost people there, mostly rural and dirt poor, with over 400 languages and 2,000 dialects that are as diverse as the geography of this massive country.

For centuries, India has been a constant punching bag, a battleground for invaders, conquered and re-conquered by every major power, resulting in not only language rifts, but major religious divisions between Hindus (80%) and Muslims (13%), as well as the lesser religions of Sikhs (2%), Buddhists (2%), Jainists (1%) and Christians (3%).

Eventually, Gandhi was able to lead a peaceful revolt against British rule that led to democratic independence in 1948, and the creation of Pakistan (primarily for Muslims), but it cost him his life. Despite his assassination, and all he did, India remains divided in so many ways today.

And through all of this turmoil, churning a people group through wars and invasions, even the success of their recent democracy, one constant continued to plague them—the women of India are still today, as Doctor Daniel Johnson says in the movie, “...*no better than a domestic animal.*”

As we see in the beginning of the film, perhaps the greatest symbol of India is the Taj Mahal. This palace is actually a magnificent tomb that represents a fairy tale story of love from the 1600's that unfortunately has no factual basis in this present day fatalistic society—one that is steeped in traditions that demean women and segregate them from the men.

In general, Indian men rule this caste society, and for centuries have felt that the role of a woman is to serve them from birth to death. As you'll see in *Veil of Tears*, in a hopeless society like this, trapped in their caste system and without any worth or rights, women are resigned to utter despair turning to prostitution, begging, and suicide as their only avenues of escape.

Indian Women

Indian women are trapped in a caste system that is watertight...whatever state you are born in is the one you will die in. The poor stay poor. The rich stay rich. If your parents have a profession, it will be yours too, even if it's degrading.

Ninety percent of sex workers' daughters follow their mothers into prostitution, estimated now to be close to 3 million, and many as young as just 13 years old! As a result, AIDS is rampant in the Mumbai slums where 12 million people eke out a *literal* day-to-day existence rooting through garbage.

The other numbers in the film are equally staggering for some areas:

- 95% illiteracy rate among women
- 70% of births are at home
- 250,000 babies die in the first weeks
- 46% of marriages are girls under 18
- 8,391 brides burned alive in 2013 for dowry issues
- 11 million abortions per year...PER YEAR!
- 21 times the average suicide rate worldwide
- 80% of loans are for dowries that perpetuate poverty
- 46 million widows end up on the streets

Now consider these two verses:

Proverbs 31:8-9, *“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.”*

Proverbs 24:11-12, *“Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say, “But we knew nothing about this,” does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done?”*

In America, we are quick to say, *“What would Jesus do?”* I think we all know what He would do as an advocate for the oppressed and outcast, but I want you to ask yourself if you can do something about it...now that you know of their plight.

What can you practically do for them?

Is there something you can personally do to help these women who are beyond destitute, beyond unfortunate, beyond staggering, and beyond hope? They are considered less than dogs in this spiritually dead country. So what can one Christian do, 7,000 miles away?

You can do justice!

Do Justice

“Injustice makes people ask where is God. Justice answers the question with action.”

We know that God cares for these poor women. He is the ultimate Rescuer. We need look no further than the cross to see His heart for the lost and rejected outcasts of India.

So often we ask to know God’s will for our lives. What does the Lord want me to do? Let’s look at two verses that sum up the entire Bible and reveal what’s on His heart.

When we read these two passages I think we can know his “macro-will” all the time, every day, 24-7. (Sometimes His “micro-will” for our specific life situations may take more prayer and counsel, but His overall will is crystal clear.) Consider what God said in the Old Testament about what He wants from us in Micah 6:8:

*“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act **justly** and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”*

Pretty straightforward what He “requires” of us, isn’t it? I urge you not to complicate this simple verse with any excuses. Don’t over think what He wants you to do. We are to act with justice, love mercy, and be humble in our walk with Him.

Now let’s look at what Jesus said in the New Testament:

“But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’

And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets (Matthew 22:34-40).”

Pretty much the same message, eh? Love God and love your neighbor...how? By treating them with justice. Come to their aid, their defense. Love God and do justice. Ultimately, the most loving thing you can do is share the gospel with them, but sometimes the physical need precedes the spiritual need.

As General William Booth, the founder of *The Salvation Army*, said, “It’s hard to hear the gospel when your stomach is growling.” Amen!

Now let’s look at a portion of *Veil of Tears* that deals with just one segment of women in India...the widows...and you’ll also see how both of these passages are obeyed. These women are abandoned and neglected, as if under a curse, even by their own families!

I’d like you to meet “your neighbor,” Netramani, who had lost all hope, had absolutely nothing, and needed someone to “act justly” on her behalf.

Film clip 43:17 to 48:31 (Netramani)

Why do you think God sums up His entire message to us in these two passages? I submit to you because He wants us to be like Him...a God of Justice Who cares for the very least. The lepers, widows, adulterers, tax gatherers...the sick who needed a Physician. That is who He came to save...the lost.

And remember what Jesus said in Matthew 25?

“For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.”

Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’

*The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even **the least** of them, you did it to Me.’”*

Is this just a nice story that Jesus told to move us to compassion and justice? I don't think so. Why do you suppose Jesus identifies with “the least” so much? The answer is because He was rejected too. He knows what it's like to be dismissed by society. He is Netramani.

Just look at the description of Jesus in Isaiah 53 and think of Netramani:

“He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.”

God values women, created in His own image, to the point of shedding His own precious blood to save them. They are why He came to rescue us because our Jesus knows *exactly* what it feels like to be cast aside. That is why He is a God of justice.

God of Justice

We know that a holy God is perfect in all His ways, and that means that He is fair...and just. And He is also loving and gracious. Many people stumble over a God that is both just (the great Punisher of sin in the Old Testament) and loving (forgiving and merciful, like Santa Claus, in the New Testament).

Are they incompatible traits? Is our God schizophrenic?

Consider Isaiah 30:18, where we see that He is both loving and just:

*“Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the Lord is a **God of justice**. Blessed are all who wait for him!”*

One analogy may help you to see God's heart of love and justice more fully. Imagine you are arrested for drunk driving after losing control of your car and you've killed two

pedestrians. Later, when your case came up in court, you discovered that the judge was your very own father!

Even though your father loves you, as a judge he must punish you to fulfill his duty and obey the law. If he let you off the hook, he would not be just. The families of the people that you had killed would demand justice for your actions.

The parallel is clear. Although God loves us, He must punish sin or else He would no longer be righteous. The point is that we are not good enough for a holy God to accept us into Heaven. Our sin cannot be swept under the carpet; it must be dealt with righteously.

His love and justice merged at the cross when He allowed His only Son to be punished in our place, for our sin, "...*the just for the unjust* (1 Peter 3:18 NASB)." That is love. That is justice. He stepped in and took our place, thus satisfying His love and justice.

If our God is just, should not we His people be like Him? Is not the Body of Christ, the Church, working beyond what Jesus was limited to do in a physical body, and called to make the same sort of sacrifice in being loving and just, responsible to do what He would do?

Jesus left us an example to follow...to **do justice** for the oppressed in love. Justice does not only mean dealing with a wrong as in punishment, it also means dealing with a wrong to right it (Luke 18:3). But the point is God demonstrated it.

Romans 5:8 says, "*But God **demonstrates** his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*"

He didn't just say it, although He did say it countless times, He actually demonstrated it, and at a phenomenal cost we barely comprehend. Now I ask you, what should we do with this model of demonstrated love and sacrifice?

Take Action

John 4:35 "*Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.*"

So often here in America we wonder where are these fields that Jesus says are ripe for harvest. We complain, "*I've tried to witness to my neighbor, my co-worker, my bowling buddy...and nothing. They're not open. They've heard it all and are happy with all their distractions and works-oriented religion.*"

Then look 7,000 miles to the east where there is no Boaz for the women of India and see what a little love and justice can do for those who have nothing, who have no hope.

Remember. *“Injustice makes people ask where is God. Justice answers that question with **action**.”* How will you personally answer it? What will you do about it? Are you the answer?

At the end of ***The Treasure of the Sierra Madre***, Dobbs thinks he is a murderer and says, *“Conscience. What a thing! If you believe you got a conscience, it'll pester you to death. But if you don't believe you got one, what could it do to ya?”*

Fortunately for all of us who know Christ our consciences have been quickened, and I pray sensitive to the need laid before all of us with the women in India through this film. The fields are more than white...they are bursting with opportunities to imitate Jesus!

I hope you will generously consider how you can *“rescue those being led away to death”* and *“hold back those staggering away to slaughter.”*

Please go to their website and prayerfully reflect how you can help these wretched women have some hope through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Go to **“Veil Of Tears Movie Dot Com”** to demonstrate your love, just as Jesus demonstrated His love for you.

<http://veiloftearsmovie.com>

I love this quote by C. S. Lewis:

*“It is not your business to succeed, but to **do right**. When you have done so the rest lies with God.”*

My prayer is that your worship of our risen Lord, will transform you, re-shape your value of Him, and what He values, so much that it will overflow in gratitude in helping these poor women of India, and through your simple acts of justice...their veil of tears will be removed.

Their slogan is “Hope is on the way.” Won't you be that hope? Won't you do justice, as our Lord would do if He were here?

Remember what James said in chapter one, *“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do** what it says.”*

Let's close with one more film clip, the closing scene from ***Schindler's List***:

[Schindler's List](#)

Let's pray

**All Bible verses NIV translation unless otherwise noted*