

What beliefs, scriptures, and values guide your approach to the criminal justice system?

Need for mercy, compassion:

Compassion for those in poverty

Need to give people a bootstrap so they don't feel the future is hopeless

Need for support

Love your neighbor

Equity among all people regardless of race, class, status, etc. (could we have a blindfolded Lady Justice? how?)

People aren't born criminals- early interventions can prevent criminality

Relationship and engagement:

Matthew 25: Jesus said whoever visits those in prison has visited Jesus

Rehabilitation of prisoners

Intentionality of proximity

It's complicated:

Protection of society

What are the limits of redemption?

As Christians, how do we approach those who have committed truly heinous crimes?

consideration of the sentencing

What values do you see reflected in our system currently?

Historically

The ideal of penitence- people should accept responsibility and show remorse in order to gain a second chance. This is still seen in our parole system today.

The influence of Christian beliefs in various periods-our values can change the system

In principle/ideal:

Western justice systems are set up on the idea of human rights, and protecting the rights of all members of society (in practice, it's not applied equitably, and definitely seems that for those in prison, rights are revoked)

The rights of the indigent are protected e.g. right to counsel (in practice, those with wealth and means have much better access to legal help)

Individual responsibility

Implicitly:

There are different classes of citizens/humans. Those in prison treated as second-class.

Cruelty

Punishment for poverty, rewards for wealth (white collar criminals have more ways out)

Treating young people who are still developing as irredeemable