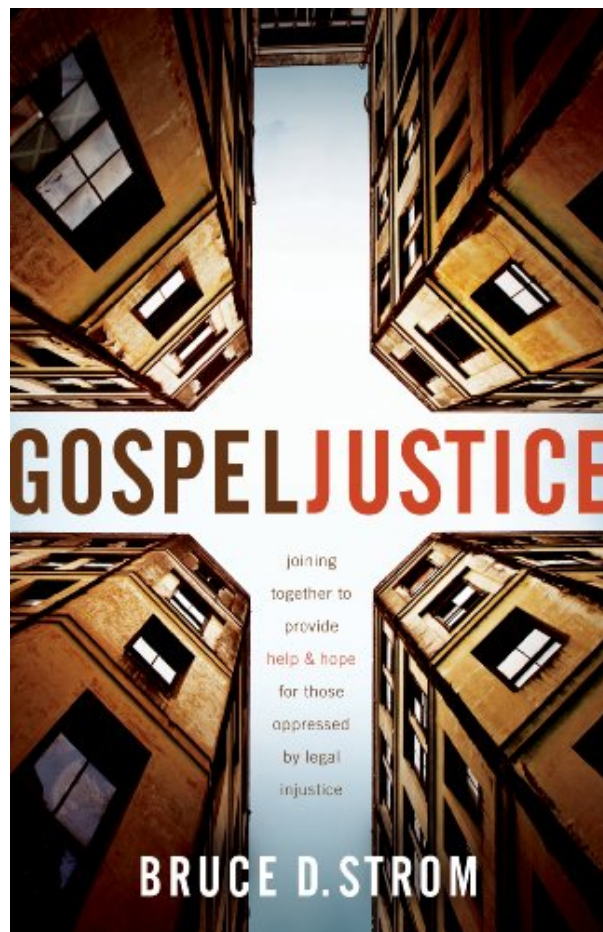
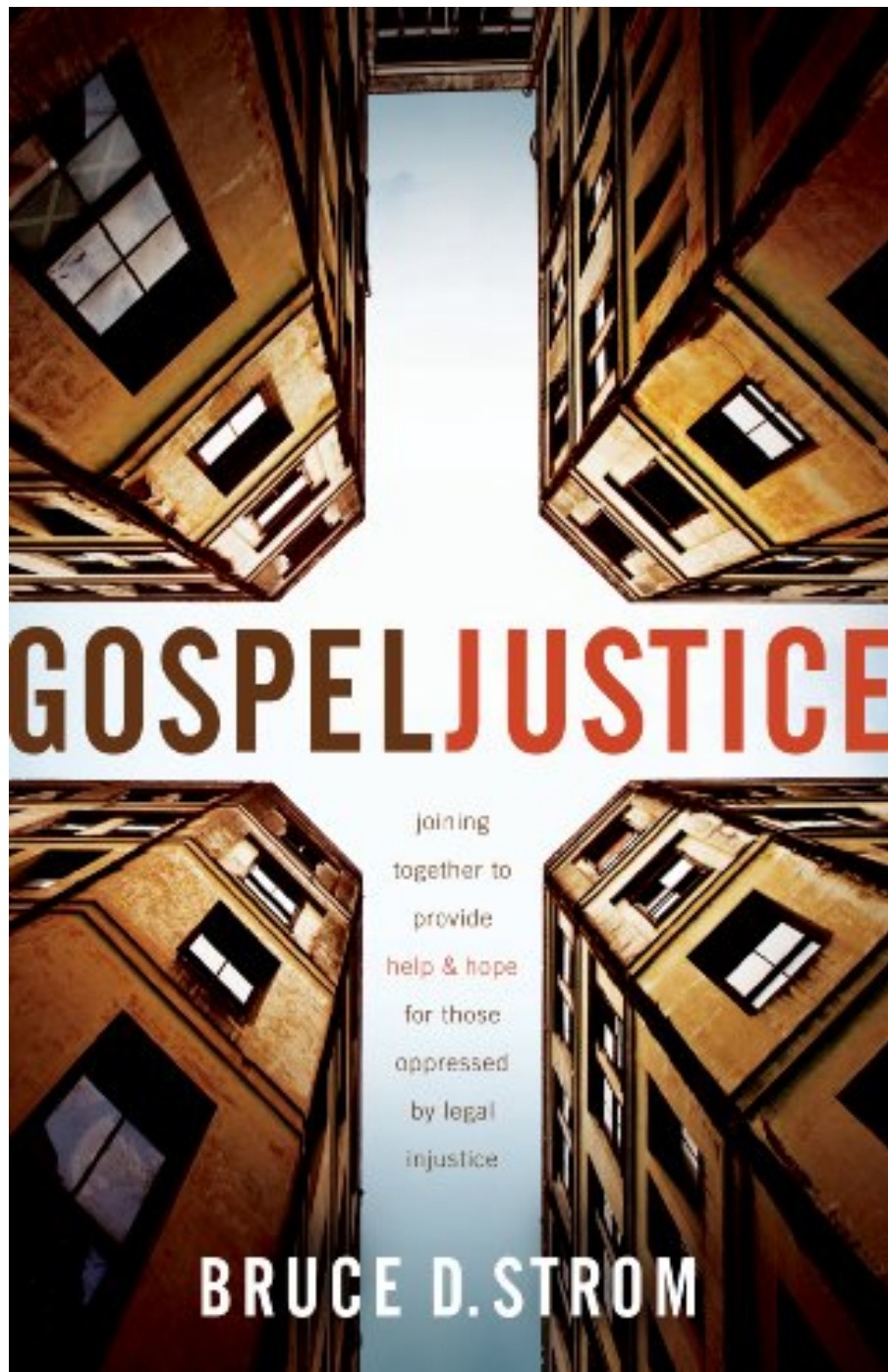


# GOSPEL JUSTICE: JOINING TOGETHER TO PROVIDE HELP AND HOPE FOR THOSE OPPRESSED



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## Review

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“Justice is much more than a trend: it is a timeless value that is central to the biblical story and close to the heart of God. Bruce Strom has been a pioneer in challenging the church in the United States to seek justice for the vulnerable in our society, and Gospel Justice includes both a much-needed theological framework for thinking about justice as well as practical examples of how that plays out in real people’s lives.”

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## Most helpful customer reviews

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

I should have gone to law school

By Paul Mastin

I have read a lot about justice, social justice, justice for the poor, all in the context of Christian ministry to the poor and marginalized. I suspect I am not alone in missing what Bruce Strom makes obvious in his new book *Gospel Justice: Joining Together to Provide Help and Hope for Those Oppressed by Legal Injustice*. Justice, a "vital part of any holistic ministry . . . cannot be separated from law and lawyers."

Many commentators have observed that the church in the U.S., especially among younger Christians, seems to be waking up to social issues such as poverty, human trafficking, unfair labor practices, housing issues, and other areas. But rarely do I here people noting, as Strom does, that the roots of these problems often have to do with a lack of legal representation, and that the solutions will frequently come from legal action.

Strom had achieved a high level of success in the legal profession when God opened his eyes to "how self-focused I was, and He helped me see the needs of others in pain around me." He began to see that many of the problems of the poor cry out for legal solutions, so he began what would become Administer Justice, a group of volunteer lawyers who assist people in need with legal matters of all kinds.

*Gospel Justice* is full of stories of people whose lives were changed with the help of the compassionate, knowledgeable assistance of the Administer Justice staff. It's shocking to realize how many people suffer in ways that could be prevented or remedied if they had legal representation. This is not a theological treatise or law review article, but Strom brings in enough theology and legal knowledge to give the reader ample inspiration to use one's legal skills to help the poor, to apply to law school, or at least to seek out a legal group to volunteer with or donate to.

We have seen medical missionaries for generations. Bible translators, church planters, and evangelists all fit nicely into our picture of what a missionary looks like. We are familiar with service to the poor: soup kitchens and food banks, homeless shelters, and clothing ministries are commonplace. Strom has presented a new picture, at least new to me, of one way to be a missionary, one way to serve the poor. Providing legal services for the poor and marginalized goes beyond what traditional ministry among the poor has done by creating opportunities to address structural issues and root causes. Justice indeed. I should have gone to law school.

Thanks to NetGalley and the publisher for the complimentary electronic review copy.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Why being a Christian lawyer isn't an oxymoron

By Man in the Middle

One of the key points made by author Strom in this excellent book is that in America, justice may not be possible without legal representation, which in turn is often completely unavailable to those who need it most. As Strom notes, an accused criminal has a right to free legal representation in America, but victims do not. That leaves a huge hole of injustice in our system toward precisely those Jesus most especially wants aided and defended: widows, orphans and aliens, or as we might say it today, single moms, their kids, and people from other cultures.

Strom fleshes this out very thoroughly, both with a fine study of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, and with actual stories of people who have been aided in recent years by the Administer Justice legal aid charity he heads in the Chicago suburb of Elgin.

Strom's book was very helpful in clarifying why legal help has to be part of our response to injustice to the poor, so we do not merely bandage the wounded, and do not merely restore them to their previous precarious situation, but actually help them permanently arrive in a better place, both in this life and beyond.

Strom's vision is for this to become a nationwide movement of churches and legal volunteers, and I'm pleased to note that our own church opens a new legal assistance office in its main building this coming Monday. It had previously been off-site, but Strom makes a good point that we need to welcome the poor more directly to our churches. Since the center at our church uses only lawyers as volunteers, and I am not a lawyer (IANAL) it was recently suggested I volunteer at Administer Justice. I'm finding it a good fit for me, and hope it will indeed blossom and grow nation-wide.

As for the book, I've read other good ones about the Good Samaritan, such as *Tea with Hezbollah: Sitting at the Enemies Table Our Journey Through the Middle East*, but found enough new and different insights here to also make this book highly recommended!

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Living out the Good Samaritan parable

By Ken L.

In this day and age when the American public has negative perceptions of both Christians and lawyers, Bruce Strom demonstrates what a vital and positive role Christian lawyers can and must have in our society. Gospel Justice beautifully lays out a vision for living out Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan. God calls us to work for a society based on love and justice. Strom shows us how it can be done - one legal aid client at a time.

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