

ABSTRACT

Title: In what way does restorative justice seek to offer an alternative to that which is common within the Criminal Justice System at present? How does restorative justice relate to the mission of the Church?

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This dissertation seeks to examine the theories of justice, the biblical and theological foundations for justice as we discover it within the Hebrew Bible, the new paradigm of restorative justice and an exegetical study on specific Gospel accounts which highlight Jesus as a practitioner of restorative justice.

My research methodology will include a focus on the Restorative Justice Paradigm as is currently in practice in various parts of the world and, specifically, how it relates to biblical justice. Statistical evidence along with case studies will help to determine the validity and effectiveness of restorative practice.

My research will seek to find a clear landscape that reflects a biblical approach to justice, based on Judeo Christian ethics rather than secular based guidelines. This will enable a clearer understanding of the Churches call to mission and evangelism generally, and especially with a view to those in prisons, specifically in relation to restorative justice programmes and initiatives.

The themes as detailed above will, therefore, allow for a comprehensive integration of biblical, theological and practical elements with a view to attempting to determine the value of Christian based restorative justice programmes and initiatives, for future implementation within local prisons, and as a vital vehicle for mission and evangelism.