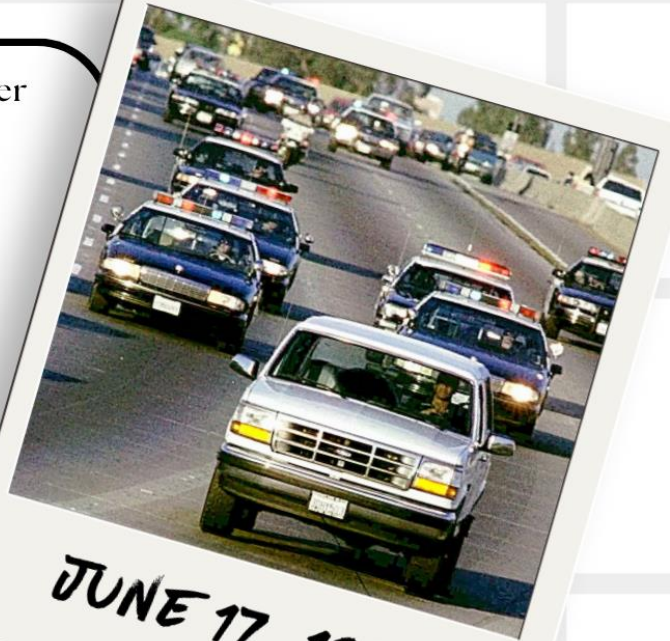




What do you remember about this photo?



JUNE 17, 1994

Certain events capture the entire nation's attention. And when one event mashes together pro-football, pop culture, and murder, it's going to steal headlines.

### DISCUSS

- CAN YOU REMEMBER A TIME WHEN SOMETHING FELT DEEPLY UNFAIR?
- WHY DOES INJUSTICE AFFECT US SO PROFOUNDLY?

For more than two hours, the LAPD pursued a white Ford Bronco across Los Angeles. Inside was O.J. Simpson, the NFL great who had just been charged with killing his ex-wife, Nicole, and her friend, Ron Goldman.

The police chase was a media spectacle. People stopped what they were doing. Restaurants wheeled televisions into the dining room. Families gathered to watch.

What started as celebrity fascination became a national conversation about guilt, innocence, fame, race, truth, evidence, and the criminal justice system.

Our longing for justice isn't merely a cultural curiosity. According to Scripture, each human heart is created to long for justice to be served.

● **WHAT EMOTIONS DO YOU HEAR IN THIS PSALM?**

O Lord, God of vengeance, O God of vengeance, shine forth! Rise up, O judge of the earth; repay to the proud what they deserve! O Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked exult? They pour out their arrogant words; all the evildoers boast. They crush Your people, O Lord, and afflict Your heritage. They kill the widow and the sojourner, and murder the fatherless; and they say, "The Lord does not see; the God of Jacob does not perceive."

Understand, O dullest of the people! Fools, when will you be wise? He who planted the ear, does He not hear? He who formed the eye, does He not see? He who disciplines the nations, does He not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge—the Lord—knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath.

Blessed is the man whom You discipline, O Lord, and whom You teach out of Your law, to give him rest from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked. For the Lord will not forsake His people; He will not abandon His heritage; for justice will return to the righteous, and all the upright in heart will follow it.

Who rises up for me against the wicked? Who stands up for me against evildoers? If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. When I thought, "My foot slips," Your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up. When the cares of my heart are many, Your consolations cheer my soul. Can wicked rulers be allied with You, those who frame injustice by statute? They band together against the life of the righteous and condemn the innocent to death. But the Lord has become my stronghold, and my God the rock of my refuge. He will bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness; the Lord our God will wipe them out.

- Psalm 94 ESV

Psalm 94 is the only psalm in the 90s that is not used regularly in worship.  
It is a psalm of lament, an honest reckoning with evil.

Why do believers sometimes  
hesitate to pray this boldly?

The psalmist doesn't hide their anger or pretend to be comfortable with injustice, but unashamedly takes their complaint to the Lord: who can do something about it and who ultimately cares about justice more than anyone.

The biblical lament is not an indictment of the Lord or evidence of unbelief. Lament is faith's voice when it refuses to give up on the Lord's justice. The psalmist complains to God because they believe God still hears and cares.

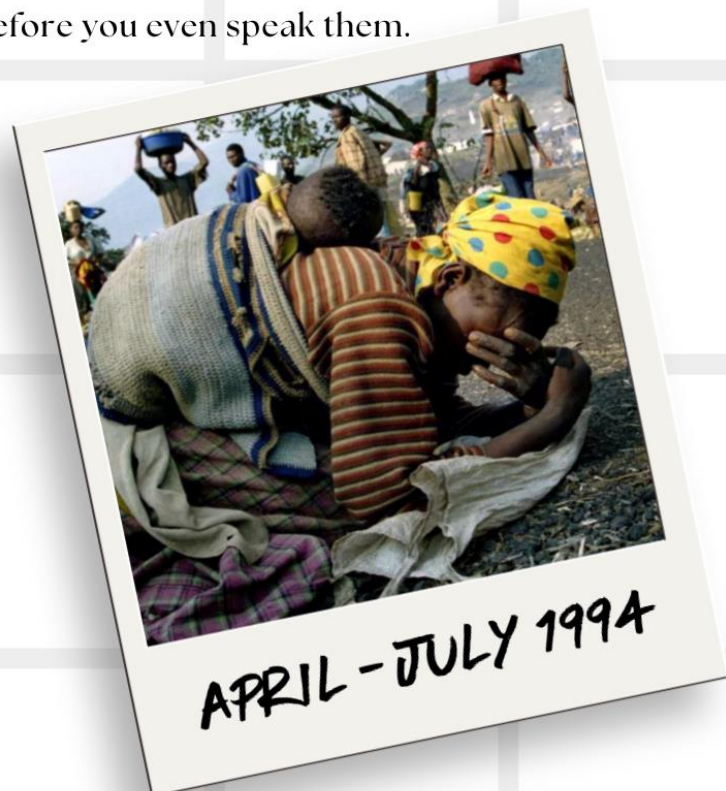
### DISCUSS

- WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMPLAINING TO GOD AND COMPLAINING ABOUT GOD?

Prayer is never an exercise in pretending. There is no reason to be dishonest with the God who knows your prayers before you even speak them.

The wicked believe God doesn't see, He doesn't hear, and He doesn't care. Pride, prosperity and self-deception can allow them to imagine power lasts forever, truth doesn't matter, and ultimately no one will hold them accountable. Sin almost always begins by imagining no one is watching.

Very few in the world took notice of atrocities in Rwanda in 1994, as up to 700,000 Tutsi people were systematically slaughtered in just 100 days. Tragedies like this force even the faithful to ask, "Where are you, Lord, when evil is winning?"



Years later, those who orchestrated the Tutsi genocide were prosecuted by an international tribunal. Justice was delayed but not denied. While God's timing is often mysterious, His judgment is never mistaken.

Christians approach questions about evil and injustice from a peculiar perspective. For us, justice looks like a cross. It looks like the victim forgiving those hurting Him. It looks like the innocent dying for His attackers' crimes. It looks like Jesus Christ suffering under the full weight of His Father's wrath in your place.

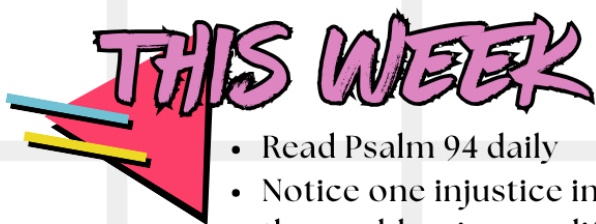
The Lord will not ignore evil, but neither will He abandon sinners. Instead, He judges sin in His own Son. The judge bears the judgment, and the one who cried "My God, My God..." (Ps. 22:1) fulfills every lament psalm. The cross assures us that God takes evil more seriously than we ever could—and loves sinners more deeply than we ever imagined.

Your life's undesirable circumstances are not God's punishment. Because of Jesus, there is no punishment left for you. There's a difference between punishment and discipline. Punishment satisfies justice; discipline forms children. Christ's sacrifice means believers experience God's fatherly discipline, not His condemning wrath.

## **DISCUSS**

- **WHAT SITUATION TEMPTS YOU TO TAKE JUSTICE INTO YOUR OWN HANDS?**
- **WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO TRUST GOD WITHOUT PRETENDING IT DOESN'T MATTER?**
- **WHAT CONSOLATION HAS THE LORD GIVEN YOU DURING DIFFICULT SEASONS?**

Psalm 94 concludes confidently, not because circumstances have changed, but simply because God has not changed. The Christian does not need to deny injustice, nor become consumed by it. You can lament honestly, seek justice where God has called you to act, and entrust ultimate judgment to the Lord, who sees every wrong, hears every cry, and has already demonstrated His justice and mercy at the cross.



- Read Psalm 94 daily
- Notice one injustice in the world or in your life
- Pray for God's justice rather than personal revenge, and thank Him that the final judgment belongs to Christ Jesus