



STANDARDS AND PHILOSOPHY FOR JUSTICE

Paraclete, from paráklētos (Greek): one who consoles or comforts, one who encourages or uplifts; hence refreshes, and/or one who intercedes on our behalf as an advocate.

As ones called to be paracletes, we have a heart for the disadvantaged and an appreciation of the image of God in all of us. We observe that our society and Christ's church are divided and wrestling with deep concerns regarding justice. We also recognize and affirm that there has been a loss of a biblically aligned emphasis on justice and on unity in diversity. The following statements embody our standards for addressing the need for justice in our world. While not fully realized, these standards are intended to envision the journey ahead.

- **We rely on God's word and the Holy Spirit for this journey toward justice.**
Scripture and God's just character form the foundation for how we practice equitable justice, and they form the center of our theology of mission. The work of the Holy Spirit in our own lives and in the ministry of Paraclete Mission Group is essential to our success in living out God's heart for justice.
- **We start with personal and corporate examinations and commitments to justice.**
We recognize that our individual cultural backgrounds and formation may have subtly created an insensitivity to the injustices endured by many who are struggling in our society—those of differing backgrounds and ethnicities, both within and without the community of faith in the Son of God. We enter this work from a place of humility and a posture of learning. We individually and corporately study the scriptures diligently to understand God's intent for equitable justice and his commands on the promotion of justice where injustice exists, and we apply this insight to our activities within Paraclete Mission Group. We envision our own organization as a safe place for its associates to serve, learn, be on a journey, try, make mistakes. We gently hold each other accountable for growth in how we care for and include others.
- **We partner with others to learn and grow in our understanding and practices of justice.**
We invite others to assist us in perceiving the world and recognizing those who are abused and suffering because of injustice. Together we define terms to avoid confusion and disunity. We examine ways in which others are practicing God's justice through ministry.

We honor the diversity of Christian traditions within the teachings of scripture and respect the liberty of conscience of individuals in areas where scripture is silent or unclear, while still applying an organizational vision of biblically based justice. And we employ patience and grace for the tensions and the complexity of this endeavor.

- **We operate Paraclete Mission Group in ways that reflect God's justice.**

We believe doing justice means acting, not just speaking. We put actions to our words by welcoming and providing a voice to those within Paraclete who have struggled with abuse, oppression, and injustice in their own lives. We identify and employ the diverse talents, perspectives and voices that are a part of God's kingdom within our organization. We market ourselves and tell our stories in ways that reveal our heart for justice. Pursuing justice happens internally by examining and adjusting, as needed, our policies, procedures, and financial structures.

- **We engage in ministry that demonstrates God's heart for justice.**

While honoring our important existing justice-based ministries, we seek additional work of this kind, and seek domestic as well as international contexts to come alongside with justice. We find ways to show solidarity with those burdened with injustice. Our mission "to come alongside" includes advocacy in favor of the poor, marginalized, exploited, and defenseless individuals of this world, and promotion of solutions for the injustices they suffer.

Through dependence on God's word and the transformational work of God's Spirit within our individual and corporate lives, we see Paraclete Mission Group displaying God's heart for justice in all we do.