
SCAM PROOF YOUR LIFE IN THE END TIMES

Justice & Restoration for Christians

STEVE CIOCCOLANTI

MEET STEVE CIOCCOLANTI

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM THAT YOU SEE IS THE PROBLEM THAT YOU'RE CALLED TO SOLVE.

A lot of people don't realize that. They see a problem, and rather than solving it, what do they do? They complain about it.

In reality, you may notice a problem that others don't because it's your **distinctive gift to solve it**. For instance, you hear an instrument out of tune. Well, not everybody hears that. An amateur may not hear it, or he may hear it but not be bothered by it. But an expert musician cannot tolerate it. The more musically gifted you are, the more demanding you will be that an instrument be perfectly tuned.

So if you're sitting in a church and hear somebody singing out of tune, rather than saying, "Well, he's a bad

musician,” it’s possible your calling is to join the worship team. You see, rather than complaining about your church, join the worship team and make it better. You could offer voice coaching, singing lessons, piano tutoring, or some other musical contribution. The problem you see is a clue to the problem you’ve been put on earth to solve. In my case, I’ve always noticed one thing. Ever since I was little, I can’t escape it.

I always notice INJUSTICE.

It bugs me. I realize that not everyone is bugged, but it peeves me, it angers me, and it motivates me. I don’t like injustice for anybody. In fact, I’m not as bothered when it’s done to me because my faith is in God to restore me. I’m more bothered by injustice to others because they may not know what to do. I don’t like to see people get deceived or abused.

I think about it.

I think about injustice during the day. Sometimes it just pops into my head. Sometimes an injustice is far removed from me, but it will pop into my head or into my heart, and I’ll start thinking about it.

I think about it at night. I think about it during the day. And I think about how to solve it.

When I became a Christian at the age of 20, I didn’t see the Bible as the solution to injustice at first, mainly because I was a baby Christian. I saw God as the solution for my personal sins. God had to work on me first before I could help others. God had to clean me up from my addictions and personal flaws. However, when I learned and understood the love of God, the goodness of God, and

the right-standing (righteousness) of the believer through Jesus Christ, I could go on to study other topics that were important to God and not just to me.

The Lord soon led me into Bible prophecy, and my ministry exploded on social media. Viewership magnified when I taught publicly on the end time. The end time is often misrepresented as a message of doom and gloom, because “end time” sounds like “end of the world.” No, contrary to what you might have been told or believe, the world is not going to end. The Earth was created to last forever. *“Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever,”* (Ecclesiastes 1:4 NIV). God compares His eternal sanctuary in Heaven to the Earth. Heaven is *“Like the earth which He has established forever”* (Psalm 78:69). Rather than being destroyed, the Earth will actually be cleansed and renewed at Jesus’ Coming.

Yes, there will be momentary tribulation for Jews and persecution of Christians, but the main message of the end times is not about us. It’s about Jesus coming back to right the wrongs, to restore what was lost, to reward the believers, and to punish the evildoers. This is all Good News if you have become Christian and are not among those being judged by Christ!

My study of the end times naturally opened my eyes to God’s end-time goal—in a word, it’s *justice*.

One of the key Scriptures the Lord led me to was this.

DEUTERONOMY 32:4

...For all His ways are justice,

I was very happy to see that in Deuteronomy 32:4, the Bible says that, **“ALL God’s ways are justice”** [emphasis added].

Say that to yourself, say it to God, say it to the devil, **“ALL His ways are justice.”**

THE SECRET TO INTERPRETING THE BIBLE AND UNDERSTANDING END-TIME PROPHECY

I learned the secret to interpreting the Bible and understanding end-time theology (or eschatology): **“ALL His ways are justice.”** All His ways are NOT mercy and grace; all His ways are NOT fulfilling your needs and your desires; ALL His ways are JUSTICE.

If you don’t understand this about God, that His nature is just and everything that’s going on in the world is to prove His justice, you won’t understand the Bible and you won’t understand Him.

A lot of people think, “Why doesn’t God just prove Himself to me? Just show up! Just prove that He exists!” Isn’t the answer obvious?

He doesn’t want to. It’s not His priority. He could care less about proving His existence to you. What He cares about is justice—**“For all His ways are justice.”** Psalm 37:28 adds, “For the Lord LOVES justice...” [emphasis mine]. Everything that’s being allowed on Earth is to prove His commitment to justice.

Now, you might question, “Well, then, why is the world all messed up?”

It is because one of the things that God wants to prove

to all Creation for all eternity is that He is NOT an unjust dictator. If He intervened whenever He disagreed with us, if He did what He would like to do, which is to stop every sinner, then 100% of the planet would be dead. That's the truth—100%. There's no way to stop sinners from sinning except by ending every opportunity for them to sin, and that is only possible by ending their lives.

God could stop sin right now. Would He prove that He's powerful? Yes. Would He prove that He exists? Yes. And then what? He wouldn't have proven His justice. In fact, without His incredible restraint, all the people who die and go to hell would merely shake their fists at Him for all eternity and say, "You are an unjust God, You didn't even give me a chance." So God says, "Alright, I'll give you a chance." So every sinner who's allowed to live increases the suffering on the earth.

Sinners are not reasonable or easy to please. They claim they wish God would show up and intervene in this suffering world. But if He started with you and intervened by saying, "Hey! You're supposed to go to church," we already know the average sinner's response, "I don't want to." What if God (or His agent, a human messenger) were to insist, "You're supposed to go to church." That insistence would not meet with better results. The sinner would merely yell, "Get out of my face!"

If God were to show up through the wall or through the ceiling and remind you of all the things you are supposed to do, guess what? You'd hate Him. Maybe not you, my reader, since you have distinguished yourself to be the more open-minded of the species, but the general

“you” out there in the world. Many people out there would shake their fists at God and say, “What an unjust God—Leave me alone!”

“Leave me alone” is what many teenagers say to their parents. And what do you, as parents, eventually realize? You have to leave them alone because they’re going to have to learn the hard way.

My children usually believe me, but even if they don’t, I know that they will eventually learn that in the big things of life, I was right because I’m older, I’m wiser, and I’ve already made all the same mistakes they’re about to make.

However, many times your children are not going to believe your wisdom till they fall flat on their faces. The danger is that some people cannot recover from some mistakes. Some mistakes are fatal. Overdosing on drugs. Illicit sex with someone infected with HIV AIDS. Not managing your temper. Committing a crime. These are real dangers parents have to be concerned about.

So God is not so different from good earthly parents. He waits patiently for some of His Creation to come to the mature realization that He is wise even when they fail to fully understand His ways. All His ways are justice.

The above is merely one illustration—one facet of His justice. I’m merely introducing a new perspective to you, without going further into details. I’m suggesting that you will understand everything in the Bible, everything going on on Earth, and everything in the universe when you realize that ALL His ways are JUSTICE. But that’s a broader subject for another book.

Suffice it to say, for the purpose of our conversation,

when we become a truly transformed (or born again) Christian, we join a divine family that is centered on justice. It's very strange to me to be a Christian and not be concerned about justice because it's God's number one thing.

It is a just thing that all humanity bows to Jesus because He is the only perfect human being who ever lived, and He came from Heaven to pay for our sins. After Jesus died and rose from the dead, He went to Heaven to allow everyone on earth a grace period to hear His Good News without force, coercion or heavy-handed tactics. He sent His witnesses to preach and commissioned them to write everything essential to our salvation in one book—the Bible. He continues to send preachers and pastors like myself out into the world to make known the choice sinners have: to turn from their sins, trust in Jesus' sacrifice and be saved.

However, Jesus will not wait forever for people to believe in Him because while He waits, more sin accumulates on the earth. With each passing day, sinners keep on sinning and people keep on suffering. So Jesus promised to come back and end the offer of salvation. The angels told the original disciples who watched Him ascend into Heaven, *“This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven”* (Acts 1:11b).

When Jesus returns, what will He do? *He's going to judge the living and the dead.* That's His first priority.

I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will someday judge the living and the dead when he comes to set up his Kingdom:

There's no pit stop in between. There's no Santa Claus coming down the chimney to hand out a few gifts on the way. God the Father will send God the Son to earth a second time to prove HIS justice.

It's all about God proving that He was *just* to allow the Lord Jesus Christ to be sacrificed and crucified on the Cross to pay for our sins. The price of sin is death and there was no other way to rescue us but for the only perfect Man who ever lived to suffer on our behalf.

We should say, "Thank You Lord Jesus that You did all that for me!" It is a just and rightful thing that all men, women and children everywhere bow their knees to Jesus and confess He is their Lord. But many people are unjust—they won't do the right thing.

For those of us who've chosen to repent of our sins and accept Jesus' gift of salvation, not only have we been invited into this family, but we've also been given the authority to do something on earth about injustice. And I don't think we use our authority enough.

So today I want to talk to you about one small area where we can learn how to use our authority. I want to talk to you about something that many of you, my dear readers, have experienced.

If you're an honest person, you will be surprised by *scams*.

If you are not in the habit of lying, if you're not a scammer, you will be very surprised by how many scammers are out there in the world. Some are big scammers. Some are small scammers. Some of you have been scammed as a child. Some of you have been scammed as an adult.

I WAS SCAMMED

I remember when I lived in southern France, around the age of 15 to 16, one of the Muslim boys that was in my Year 10 (French *troisieme*) said to me, "I'll pick you up for a concert" by this particular band that we all liked.

My host family told me, "The band isn't playing in France this week."

But I went out to the road and waited to be picked up until the sunset, and nobody came. I just walked back into the house. No one had showed up. The next day when I confronted the liar—the scammer—he laughed. His friends laughed along with him.

TYPES OF SCAM

Now, these scams can become very big and elaborate. You can get *hedge-fund-sized scams* like *Bernie Madoff's Ponzi scheme*. Mr. Madoff got as many as 37,000¹ people to trust him with their money. Investors thought, "Well, this is a guy on Wall Street and he's very reputable, so why not? Why can't I trust millions of dollars with Bernie Madoff?"

It's still unknown how many billions he scammed his

clients out of; however, the judge ordered a \$171 billion forfeiture and sentenced Madoff to 150 years in prison—the maximum.²

In our new digital age, there are new scams that have to do with cryptocurrency. People have been scammed by *mining scams*—that’s where you pay for crypto miners and they’re not there or they were there but they closed shop and ran away with your digital coins.

There are *staking scams*—this is where you’re supposed to deposit your coins in a wallet and earn interest, but if it’s too good to be true, it usually is a scam. They don’t give you the high interest and they steal your cryptos.

There are *exchanges* that are scams—you can deposit, you can trade, but you can never withdraw. Their terms and conditions say that they can withhold your funds if for any reason their “Compliance Department” is not satisfied with your account. People whose funds are stolen feel very anguished to be cheated out of their savings.

The scams that are being perpetuated on an unsuspecting world every day are mind-numbing. Oftentimes, scammers have done damage before the ruse is discovered and laws are put in place to protect the public. To expect the government to fix your scam is probably going to take some time. Meanwhile, you’ve been hit, and there may not be anything you can do about it in the natural. Why? Because the scammers know the industry is unregulated. Their registered address is in a tax haven like Seychelles or offshore in Hong Kong. If they’re in a jurisdiction where you could file a lawsuit against them, the scammers rely on the fact that most victims they

steal from don't have the money to hire expensive lawyers. Ironically, scammers prefer to target the poor and vulnerable, not the rich and powerful.

This happens a lot with Nigerian scammers. Kind-hearted people get caught in elaborate, transnational deals. They trust someone who claims to run an orphanage in Africa, and they naively give their banking details to them. Then they are swindled out of their hard-earned savings, or worse, the scammer makes an illegal deposit into your bank account to blame you for a part of their massive, hidden crime.

When your bank account is used for illegal activity, that's the evidence the police have to pursue, so they will go after the wrong person. You, the victim, become mistaken by the authorities for the perpetrator.

You would think the authorities should know better, but they don't. When they accuse the wrong person, they will say they're just "doing their job."

It is so tragic to watch innocent people get scammed.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU'RE A VICTIM?

There's not much you can do in the natural. I've talked with lawyers and private investigators. Lawyers are expensive. Government agencies are inefficient. Most people find the hurdle too high to pursue a crook across international boundaries. Most people resign themselves to having lost money or property to a scammer.

There is one exception.

In the age of social media, if you're an influencer, you

can put a lot of pressure on public scammers. You can expose a known scam if you have a large social following. Make sure you say only what you can prove and not beyond that. There is a risk the scammer could sue you for defamation, but 1) truth is an absolute defense to defamation, and 2) it is unlikely that a scammer would wish to reveal their true identity in court because a career scammer prefers to stay anonymous.

Besides posting a “caveat emptor” (buyer beware) warning on your social media network, you can leave bad reviews on websites like Trustpilot.com. You can petition Apple to remove an app from their App Store if you can demonstrate that the company is acting unethically. You can also petition Google to flag a website with an “unsafe site” label, but Google will not always listen to “little people.”

One of my church members was scammed of her life-savings, worth over \$300,000. The company was offshore and she found that many people on the Internet complained about the same problem she was facing. In hindsight, she could have avoided her problem by doing the following:

- 1) check online reviews before buying or investing anything of worth,
- 2) check for the names of company officers—if they are kept secret, it’s a red flag,
- 3) keep her business and investments in her own country or in related jurisdictions like the United States of America and the Commonwealth countries (nations that

respect the rule of law including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom).

Hindsight is 20/20. She did not do any of these, and the online entity she entrusted with her savings was registered offshore with no names of any public officers, so it made it impossible to track down who they were and who was responsible.

Within two weeks of doing what I'm about to tell you, *she recovered all her money*. It may not happen for you as quickly or in the same way, but the point is that you don't have to be powerless. You may not have the influence, the money, or the technological know-how to recover your own losses from a scam artist, but I'm here to tell you, you don't have to feel hopeless or anguished. There is something that you can do if you're a born-again child of God. You just may not know it yet.

In the following chapters, you will learn what to do both spiritually and naturally. You will discover how to find peace and justice once you have been scammed, then you will learn how to avoid scams in the first place. It pains me to see any Christian get scammed. I believe with all my heart, based on the Word of God, that our Heavenly Father has given us the power to do something about it. So let's turn first to the spiritual solution.

You may wish to combine what you learn with a natural solution. For instance, you may seek the help of consumer protection watchdogs, a current affair-type TV show that exposes crooks, private investigators, lawyers, Apple, Google, etc. That's up to you.

But first, as a Christian, you should do *three things* in

pursuit of justice and restoration. Follow these three steps as part of your spiritual solution.

1. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/12/10/the-stories-of-madoffs-victims-vary-widely-a-look-10-years-out.html>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2009/jun/29/bernard-madoff-sentence>

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