

# The Plaintiff's Practice:

## A RIGHTEOUS CAUSE

by Ben Hogan



**T**he merry-go-round continues. Another Republican President and his chamber of commerce party try to restrict the rights of widows and orphans in court. Arbitration clauses prevent asking for jury justice for fraud or breach of contract. New assaults on the contingency fee system would take away the average person's key to the courthouse. Preemption rules are roadblocks from getting a jury trial for most fraud cases, and take the power away from states that might want to legislate increased safety for their citi-

zens. When our clients are in court, more rules restrict the testimony of experts needed to prove a case.

It's enough to drive one to drink.  
Or to your faith.

It is the humble purpose of this article to suggest that our work finds support in the Bible. Consider the following examples.

### THE BIBLE TALKS ABOUT JUSTICE

#### Isaiah 10:1-3

*"Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless."*

#### Isaiah 61:8

*"For I, the Lord, love justice."*

#### Psalms 11:7

*"For the Lord is righteous, He loves justice."*

#### Psalms 106:3

*"Blessed are they who maintain justice, who constantly do what is right."*

#### Amos 5:15

*"Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts."*

#### Amos 5:24

*"But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream."*

#### Proverbs 28:5

*"Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it fully."*

#### James 1:27

*"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and keep oneself from being polluted by the world."*

Once we are in court with our clients, watching the professional



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witness for your adversary "doctor" the facts in order to deprive the Plaintiff widow and orphan of justice, you might remind him of some of the following.

**Proverbs 18:5**

*"It is not good...to deprive the innocent of justice."*

**Isaiah 29:20-21**

*... "or by falsehood deny justice to the righteous – all these shall be exterminated."*

**Proverbs 14:5**

*"A truthful witness does not deceive, but a false witness pours out lies."*

**Proverbs 14:25**

*"A truthful witness saves lives, but a false witness is deceitful."*

Alabama trial lawyers have a long history of religious leadership. Those who attended Association of Trial Lawyers of America conventions in the 70s and 80s remember the Christian breakfasts sponsored by Brother Hare and other leaders. Currently the Beasley firm is the gracious sponsor of a prayer breakfast at every Alabama Trial Lawyers convention. On the local level, many Alabama trial lawyers are church leaders. This is certainly fitting for a profession dedicated to seeking justice for the oppressed. We can find spiritual comfort in knowing that God's Word supports our work.

There are also some spiritual warnings for us attorneys. James, the brother of Jesus, said in James 3:16, *"For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice."* And: *"Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."* [James 4:4].

In our continued work representing orphans, widows and average people in their distress, may we pray God's help in both battling the enemies of justice and "from being polluted by the world." ■