

Session 4

Pursuing Justice

Compact 35 mins

In-depth 60 mins

Custom

Session overview

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<div> Film p3 5-10 mins</div> <div>Young people’s perspectives on pursuing justice</div>			
<div> Bible story p4 10-20 mins</div> <div>Jesus and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)</div>			
<div> Bible verse p5 5-10 mins</div> <div>Micah 6:8</div>			
<div> You be the judge p6 10 mins</div> <div>Explore what justice looks like through some light-hearted examples</div>			
<div> What would you do? p7 10-20 mins</div> <div>Discover different examples of injustice and how we respond</div>			
<div> Newspapers p11 10-20 mins</div> <div>Identify where there is injustice in our world today</div>			
<div> Vision board p14 5-10 mins</div> <div>Reflect on this session</div>			
<div> Prayer and reflection p13 5 mins</div> <div>Reflect on the learning and habits</div>			

Session summary:

Key learning

The Bible shows us that justice is an important part of peacemaking

Application

Recognise the existence of injustice in the world and join with others in pursuing a just and flourishing world

Habits focus

Reimagine the possibilities when we join with others to pursue a just and flourishing world

Before the session

You will need:

- Newspapers (go through them beforehand to check that there's nothing that would be inappropriate for your group)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Paper and pens
[Optional – if you do **You be the judge** activity]
- Colourful paper for the vision board activity in **Sanctuary**
- Your group's vision board

Set up your room:

- During the **Newspapers** activity, your group will gather round the vision board

i Important: Remember that 'justice' and 'injustice' will mean different things to different members of your group. There may be people in your group who experience systemic injustice every day or whose stories are heard less often than others'. There may be others in your group who are less aware of injustices in the world around them, particularly if their lives haven't been directly affected by them.

Intro

 00:00

 5 mins

Aim of the session

This session is called **Pursuing Justice**.

In this session we are going to:

- Recognise the existence of injustice.
- Explore how we respond to situations of injustice.
- Practise reimagining by discovering the power of coming together to pursue a just and flourishing world.



Recap

Recap the previous session and remind the group of the three habits of being curious, being present, and reimagining.

Ask your group what they remember from the previous session and if they have any examples of actions or stories from the past week.

Story

 00:00


Film

 5-10 mins

Discuss: What do we learn about justice in this film?

You might like to draw out examples of the following: the power of coming together; seeking hope; telling a new story.

Choose either Option 1 or Option 2

Option 1



Bible story

🕒 10-20 mins

Jesus and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

Read the retelling of the passage to your group on p132. (You may like to invite young people to take on the roles in the story.)



Questions for discussion (choose as many as your group have time for):

- In what ways had Zacchaeus contributed to injustice?
- Zacchaeus gives half his money to the poor and repays those he's cheated four times as much. Is this a fair response? Why is making amends an important part of justice?
- How do you think Jesus' actions help Zacchaeus to change his behaviour?
- Who had power or influence in this story?
- What does this story have to say to situations in your own life?



Key learning

Please highlight the points below:

- Zacchaeus had treated people badly and misused his powerful position within the Roman tax system. By changing his behaviour, Zacchaeus was challenging the unjust system he was part of.
- The experience of being seen by Jesus, even though he had done things wrong, helped Zacchaeus find the courage to put things right.
- When Zacchaeus made amends for the injustice he contributed to, he was able to be part of his community again.
- Also draw on the **Key learning** from the Bible verse on p89.

Option 2

Slide 8



Bible verse Micah 6:8

🕒 5-10 mins

Share the verse:

“[W]hat does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (NRSVA)



Questions for discussion:

- What do you think it means to ‘do justice’? (The Message describes this as ‘do what is fair and just to your neighbour’)
- Why is it important for us to ‘do justice’?
- What have kindness and humility got to do with justice?

Slide 9



Key learning

Please highlight the points below:

- Doing justice is about treating others well and pursuing a world where everyone can flourish.
- The way we pursue justice matters – we should seek to challenge injustice but not to harm other people.
- Humility encourages us to listen deeply to those who have experienced injustice and to recognise when we get things wrong.
- We can sometimes feel awkward about naming injustice for fear of offending another person – this verse shows that doing justice and being kind can go together.



Activity

You be the judge

🕒 10 mins

Explore what justice looks like through some light-hearted examples

Start here



1

Give out pieces of paper and pens. Ask the young people to:

- write a silly 'crime' on one piece of paper (e.g. eating the last biscuit but leaving the packet in the tin or taking someone else's phone charger without asking)
- write a 'punishment' for that crime on another piece of paper (e.g. having to buy biscuits for everyone or having no mobile phone charge for a week)

2

Fold up each crime and put the papers into one bowl; do the same with the punishments and put them in the other bowl.

3

Ask a volunteer to pull out one crime and one punishment.

4

The volunteer reads them out and all the participants, as a group, chat about if the punishment fits the crime or not. Hold a vote to decide if the punishment is appropriate.



Key learning

Please highlight the points below:

- You may encounter different or conflicting perspectives on justice and injustice. This may be shaped by our experiences.
- In the Bible, justice is about much more than crime and punishment – it involves right relationships between people and calling injustice out when people who are vulnerable or less powerful are treated badly.
- In this activity, you may have noticed decisions that felt unjust or unfair. We might also experience this in our everyday lives. There are ways to speak up about this and advocate for justice. This may include speaking to people in power and campaigning for just and fair systems.



Activity

🕒 10-20 mins

What would you do?

Discover different examples of justice and injustice, and how we respond to them

Start here



1

Use the slides to show these scenarios to your group. Ask them for their responses and how they arrived at them.

Scenario one

You visit your gran's house and scoff down a massive doughnut you find in the fridge. You then discover from your mum that your gran has been saving it for her tea.

Do you:

- a) Own up immediately?
- b) Say nothing and hope she doesn't notice?
- c) Leave the wrapper and a smear of cream in the dog's bowl and try to blame Rover?
- d) Buy your gran another doughnut and try to put it in her fridge without her seeing?

Scenario two

Your mate brings a new player to football club. You think he says that her name is Dani, but when you call her that, she looks at you weirdly. Then you realise that your mate might have said 'Sammy' or even 'Jenny'.

Do you:

- a) Never speak to her, pass the ball to her or even acknowledge her existence?
- b) Ask her what her name is and then apologise if you got it wrong?
- c) Think of a nickname for her and attempt to get everyone to call her it?
- d) Sneak up to your mate and ask her what her name is and then write it on your hand so you don't forget?

Scenario three

You go shopping and get a load of new clothes for not very much money. Then you see a video on TikTok about the collapse of a factory in Cambodia, a factory which made garments from the shop where you bought your new clothes.

Do you:

- a) Take the clothes back and ask to speak to the manager?
- b) Do nothing – Cambodia is thousands of miles away and you don't know anyone who lives there?
- c) Do nothing, but feel guilty about it?
- d) Find out about the supply chain of the shop and what their policy is about workers' rights and modern-day slavery?

Scenario four

Your mate gets stopped leaving a shop by a security guard, who asks to see their receipt for what they've got in their bag. They look humiliated and outside the shop they tell you that this is the third time this has happened to them this month, even though they've never stolen anything in their life.

Do you:

- a) Work together to start a campaign about the discrimination your friend has experienced?
- b) Tell them they're making it up – it's never happened to you?
- c) Tell them to forget about it. If they've never stolen anything, they've got nothing to worry about?
- d) Go back to the shop and demand an explanation from the security guard?

2

Use these questions to unpack your group's responses:

- If you could see there was an option that seemed the right thing to do, was it easy to choose that option?
- Did you think of other ways to act in each situation? What would you have done differently?
- What stops us from challenging injustice in the world, especially if we are part of the problem?



Key learning

Please highlight the points below:

- Justice is an important part of building a world where everyone can flourish.
- Some of these examples may feel very familiar – others may be quite different from anything you've experienced.
- While we might not cause an injustice, we have the power to respond in ways that reinforce or challenge injustices.



Activity Newspapers

🕒 10-20 mins

Identify where there is injustice in our world today

Start here



1

Share out the newspapers, magazines, paper, scissors, pens and glue.

2

Invite participants to look at the newspapers and magazines and find headlines or pictures that show issues of justice or injustice in the world.
Ask your group to cut these out and stick them on to the vision board.

3

Gather participants around the large piece of paper and invite them to reflect on what they see, using some of these questions:

- What injustices do you notice?
- What are the causes of these injustices?
- Who has the power to help stop these injustices?
- What does this tell you about power and injustice?
- How do you feel when you see these?

4

Share this quote from Nelson Mandela: **"We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in our hands to make a difference."**

Explain that, although there are many injustices in the world, when we come together we are able to bring hope and change. There is injustice but there is also hope.

5

One way of pursuing justice is to speak to those in powerful positions about what is happening to those who are impacted by the injustice. You can do this through campaigning, writing letters to your MP or speaking to/emailing your favourite brands and manufacturers about whether they have fair policies. When many people take simple actions together, big change can happen.

6

Ask the young people to share anyone they know who has inspired them by joining with others to bring positive change in the world.



Key learning

Please highlight the points below:

- The stories in these newspapers reflect the fact the world isn't as it should be – injustice and inequality are real.
- We cannot fix everything but we can do a little bit of good where we find ourselves.
- By coming together, we can make a positive difference. This is reimagining – pursuing hope of a better future by joining with one another.
- Sometimes it can take a long time for injustices to be righted.
- God is at work to renew the whole world. We look forward to a day when there is justice – 'the last will be first and the first will be last' (Matthew 20:16).



Vision board

🕒 5-10 mins

Guide your group through this activity using the instructions below:

1. Give out a piece of paper to each person in your group.
2. Place your hand on the paper and draw round it. (If your group is small enough, the young people could draw round their hand directly on the vision board.)
3. Inside the hand, complete the sentence: 'I long for a world where...' (e.g. '...where young people's voices are heard', '...where climate change is stopped').
4. Cut out the hand and stick it on the vision board.
5. One person writes the title 'We long for a world where...'



Key learning

Please highlight the points below:

- There is power in coming together in our shared hope to see justice and peace in the world.
- Pursuing that better future together is an act of reimagining.



Top takeaway

Ask your group (to write down or say aloud):

What is something you want to remember from this session?

(Give them a minute to reflect before answering.)



Prayer and reflection

Please read this aloud:

Loving God, fill us with your Spirit now.

We think about the stories we have heard about the transformation of injustice.

Help us to **be curious** about others' stories – listening as often as we speak.

We think about what we have learnt about recognising the injustice experienced by many.

Give us the courage to **be present** – showing up and sticking around.

We think about the things we have learned about pursuing justice in this session.

Inspire us to **reimagine** what's possible – finding hope, knowing that you can transform all things.

In Jesus' name. Amen

Notes

End of session 4