

Justice

Opening Question: **Share one thing that you are particularly interested in, good at, or know a lot about. Have you ever encountered a time or a moment of inequality or unfairness in that thing? (ie. an unfair call by a referee, someone stealing an idea of yours, being graded unfairly in a subject you're really good at, etc.)**

Did you know that there are over 600 laws in the Bible – specifically the Old Testament? So when Jesus was once asked “What is the greatest commandment [law] in the Hebrew scriptures?” he had a LOT of options to choose from. He could have chosen a law about sacrifices or rules about how to take care of your farm animals or even a law about not wearing clothing that has multiple kinds of fabric/fibers (yes there is definitely an OT law about that ☺). Jesus answered that question by saying the greatest commandment is to love God by loving your neighbor as yourself. “All the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments” he said.

It all comes down to love. But love is much more encompassing than the romantic love you see in the movies. With all of the movies and songs or books we read, we might get the impression that love is strictly a feeling. But what if it's more than that? What if love is NOT primarily a feeling? **Read the quote below and write your thoughts about what you think it might mean:**

“Justice is what love looks like in public.” – Dr. Cornel West

So then what do we mean by justice? Before you read some passages from the Bible that involve justice, let's first get a little background of the idea of justice in the Bible. If you've watched crime TV shows or even comic book inspired movies (ie. The Justice League), justice may seem to strictly mean punishing those who break the law or commit an injustice. But just like love, there may be more the idea of justice than simply punishment that fits the crime. Take a look at this video on [justice in the Bible](#) and then explore the following questions:

- **In the beginning of the Bible, how are humans described compared to the rest of Creation?**



- Is justice more about fixing things that are broken or working to prevent injustice from happening? Or is it both?
- Everyone is in some way connected to an injustice in the world. Do you think it's possible to see the end of injustice or is that just how the world will always be? Why?

Now that you have some more background on the idea of justice in the Bible, read Amos 5:14-15, Micah 6:8, and James 2:1-9 and respond to the following questions:

- How do these passages seem to describe the idea of justice?
- What role do you think justice plays in your relationship and walk with God? Is it possible for someone to claim to follow Jesus without caring about pursuing justice in some way? Why or why not? (perhaps check out Matthew 25:31-45)
- According to the video and these passages, what role does justice play in your relationship to your neighbor (the person next door or any human being)?

So, perhaps Justice is about more than just a person receiving the punishment or consequences they deserve for a harmful action. It's about making things right in the world and correcting imbalances in society. Justice is also related to fairness, which is about everyone having what they need in life to thrive in their communities.

- Have you ever had an experience of being treated unfairly? How did it feel to you and did you find justice?
- Do you think all people everywhere long for the same things? Why or why not?

Often justice means looking deeper at what is making unfairness possible. God desires for all people to have a place to live, food to eat, a community, to feel welcomed, to be healthy, to have access to equal opportunities (education, work, etc). But sometimes the ways in which our communities or laws are setup makes it more difficult for God's desires to be realized. Watch this video about [immigration lawyer Judy Wood](#) and then reflect on the questions below:

- How would you describe the work that Judy does? How does it reflect God' justice in the world?
- What wisdom did Judy have to give about working for justice? How does her story inspire you to treat others the way you would want to be treated?

Before your next small group, find a just cause that Westminster promotes and participates in. Find out how you can get involved. When you get together with your small group, we'll also see what questions we can come up with as to why those just causes are even needed 😊

Closing Breath Prayer

INHALE: May my gifts be used

EXHALE: to love people well