

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS - SESSION 4

JUSTICE

Short of time?

These are the core activities – topic introduction, Bible basics, real life application, time to reflect – taking action, and the prayer. If you have more time, then pick and mix additional activities from those below to add to these core ones.

What are we trying to achieve?

By the end of this session, your young people should have an understanding of what justice means and how we are called to bring justice and kindness to our world.

Topic introduction

Note to leaders: Share this introduction with the group to set the scene for the activities and discussion to follow.

Length of activity: 5-10 minutes.

Justice can be one of those words that we hear all the time, but is actually quite difficult to define in a sentence when asked. Ask the group what they think the word 'Justice' means. Split into pairs and give each pair 60 seconds to come up with a definition. Let each pair share their definition with the group. Were there any common words that kept coming up from the different definitions given? Share the dictionary definition of justice as below. Whose definition was closest?

Justice is a concept that means people behave in a way that is fair, equal and balanced for everyone.

In the Christian faith, as well as most other religions, justice and fairness are an important part of the faith's teaching. There are numerous mentions of the word 'justice' in the Bible. Christians don't need to look far to find an example of someone who cared and fought for justice. Jesus cared for the outcasts and the downtrodden. He reached out to others with love and compassion and he spoke up for those who were overlooked or discriminated against. Jesus made pursuing justice an important part of his life on earth.

Thousands of years later, people all around the world are still fighting for justice. Many charities and organisations exist purely to fight for justice and help disadvantaged people in all walks of life.

The Queen and members of the Royal family, spend much of their time supporting and championing the work of some of these charities and organisations, helping to shine spotlights on important issues and raise awareness of the work these charities do. In fact members of the Royal family are Patron or President to over 3,000 charities and organisations worldwide, including the British Red Cross, Action for Children, WaterAid and Action Aid.

Quirky question

Length of activity: 5 minutes.

Ask your young people the following question and have a short discussion using their answers.

If you were Prime Minister for the day, what policy change or new law would you make that would help bring justice to people in the UK?

Let the group share their answers and explain how their policy change / law would make a difference.

Activity – Paper Balls

Note to leaders: This activity requires a long thin space. Ideally this should be at least 5-6 metres long.

What you'll need: Paper & a bin / bucket.

Length of activity: 5- 10 minutes.

Stand the group in a spaced-out line, that spreads across most of the room (there should be at least 5 or 6 metres between the first and last person – ideally more). Give each person a piece of paper and ask them to scrunch it up.

Once everyone has done this, place a bin or a large bucket at one end of the line. It should be very close to the first person in the line. Explain that every person that can get their ball in the bin/bucket from where they are standing will get a prize (eg a chocolate bar). No-one is allowed to move. Only award a prize to anyone who got their ball in the bin/bucket.

Afterwards have the following discussion.

-  Who was happy with the outcome? Who wasn't?
-  Were the rules fair? If not, why not?
-  Who thinks the rules should change if played again and who thinks they should stay the same?
-  During the activity, who complained about the rules and who celebrated them?

It was probably likely that those at the front of the line were far less likely to complain or speak out, than those who were at the back of the line with the least chance of succeeding. This illustrates injustices around the world. Those with the best life opportunities or greatest resources, and therefore those who are least impacted by any 'unfairness', are often those who are best placed to speak out. However, instead, some people can be too focused on what's in front of them to turn around and consider what's happening to others behind them.

Activity – Unfair Bake Off

Note to leaders: This activity requires some ingredients being brought beforehand and may also require some preparation too.

What you'll need: Baking ingredients or ready made cake/cupcakes. Icing, sweets, sprinkles etc.

Length of activity: 15 - 30 minutes.

Split the group into a minimum of two teams. Larger groups could be split into more than two teams. Explain that you are going to have a Bake Off competition. Each team will be given some resources and they will have a set period of time to make the most impressive bake that they can. Note – it will be quicker to give the group ready-made cake / cupcakes for them to decorate, rather than baking something from scratch.

Give one group some very basic ingredients / decorating resources. This might be a small amount of white icing and some basic sweets / sprinkles etc. Give the other group a wide range of ingredients / decorating resources including various colours of icing, good quality toppings, sweets, sprinkles etc. Make sure its clear that one group has an advantage over the other.

Let the groups know how long they have got to complete the task and at the end of the time limit, judge the bakes and declare a winner of the competition based on the best looking cake.

Afterwards, discuss the following

- 👑 Was the activity fair? If not, why not?
- 👑 Did the team with the better resources win? If so, was that a surprise?
- 👑 Did the team with all the good resources share what they had? Did the team with the least resources ask to have any of the resources? (There was no rule saying the resources couldn't be shared around!)
- 👑 Can anyone think of any real life examples of where some people have lots and others have little? Does this privilege (or lack of it) impact the way people live?

Afterwards highlight that most of us in the UK are privileged. We are lucky to be born into families that can provide us with shelter, food, love and care, whilst living in a society that provides us with education, health care and opportunities. However this isn't the case for everyone around the world. Are we using our privileged positions to help others? Or are we just keeping our heads down and worrying about ourselves? What would Jesus have done in our situation?

Bible basics – Do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.

What you'll need: A Bible.

Length of activity: 5 minutes.

Read Micah 6:8 to your group or get one of them to read it.

The Lord has shown you what is good.

He has told you what he requires of you.

You must act with justice.

You must love to show mercy.

And you must be humble as you live in the sight of your God.

Before looking at this verse in more detail, ask the group what their initial thoughts are? What do they think this verse is saying? What do they think this verse is encouraging people to do?

Our earlier activity/activities have highlighted examples where things haven't been fair or 'just'. How could we change those activities to live out the Bible verse we have just shared?

Real life application – Malala Yousafzai

Note to leaders: More information about Malala Yousafzai can be found online.

What you'll need: YouTube Video & Projector / TV (Optional)

Length of activity: 10 minutes.

Malala Yousafzai is a brilliant example of someone who saw and experienced injustice and used her voice and actions to make a difference and bring about change. Ask the group if any of them know Malala's story. Once the group have shared what they know, share the information below.

Malala's Story

- 👑 Born on 12th July 1997 in Pakistan. In Pakistan baby girls weren't always a cause for celebration, but her father was determined to give her every opportunity that a boy would have.
- 👑 In 2008 the Taliban took control of the town where Malala lived. They banned many things such as owning a TV and playing music and also declared that girls could no longer go to school. Aged just 11, Malala had to say goodbye to her education – something she loved and was passionate about.
- 👑 Malala continued to receive an education secretly and at great risk. She wrote articles for the BBC under a secret name, detailing the Taliban's growing influence in her home town and the impact it was having on her.
- 👑 Malala started speaking out publicly on behalf of girls and their right to an education. This made her a target.
- 👑 In October 2012, on the way home from school, a masked gunman boarded her school bus and asked 'Who is Malala?'. He shot her in the head.

- 👑 Malala was rushed to hospital and eventually moved to the UK for treatment. She woke up 10 days later.
- 👑 Since the attack, Malala has lived in the UK and has committed her life to speaking up about girls education and demanding equal access. She established a charity, dedicated to giving every girl an opportunity to achieve a future that they deserve.
- 👑 In December 2014, Malala became the youngest ever winner of a Nobel peace prize.

Her story in video form can be [found here](#) - or as a [news clip here](#).

After experiencing the horror of a gun attack and defeating the odds by pulling through, it could have been so easy for Malala to hide away and live a quiet life. Instead she chose to continue the fight and put other people before herself. She is free from the Taliban and their rules and is now living in the UK with access to education; instead of being silenced, her voice is now louder than ever.

Time to reflect – Thinking it through

What you'll need: Bibles

Length of activity: 15 minutes.

Right at the very beginning of the Bible it says that we are made in the image of God (that makes us all pretty important!). Humans were made equal and therefore God intended for us to be treated as such. But history has shown we find it difficult to treat each other equally, so we now have an unequal and unjust world. What are Christians called to do about that?

What does the Bible say? As a group take a look at Proverbs 31: 8-9, Jeremiah 22:3 and Deuteronomy 24:17-22. Discuss each passage and the message behind each one. What are these verses telling us and encouraging us to do? What is the Christian response to injustice?

Christians are called to act. Reading the Bible, thinking good thoughts and praying often isn't enough. We are all called to follow the example shown to us by Jesus: to look around us, to notice those who are disadvantaged or downtrodden, those who need a hand or some love, and do something to help them.

In the Bible there are loads of examples of Jesus doing just that. Split into small groups and each find a story in the Bible where Jesus helped someone else. After a short while, groups should feedback which story they found, what Jesus did and the impact of his actions. What examples will the groups find?

Christian social activist, Shane Claiborne, shares his views on this subject and social justice in the world today in [this video](#).

Time to reflect – Taking action

Note to leaders: Encourage the group to stop and think. This activity would benefit from taking place in a quiet space.

What you'll need: God of Justice worship song by Tim Hughes

Length of activity: 10 minutes.

Spend some time thinking about people, groups, countries and so on, who are experiencing injustice. Give each young person some Post-it notes and a pen. Ask them to write down the names of people / groups / countries etc. This may include homeless people, people living in poverty, women who are domestically abused, people living with famine and disease and so on.

Place all the Post-it notes on a wall to help the whole group appreciate the wide range of people the group have thought of.

Spend some time in reflection and prayer. During this time play the worship song 'God of Justice' by Tim Hughes. Encourage the group to listen to the words and think about them. To help with this, you could [show a lyric video](#).

Challenge – Time to Act

Note to leaders: This activity is something that can be started during your session on justice, but will then need time over the course of following weeks and/or months to work on and develop.

What you'll need: Pens and paper.

Length of activity: 20 minutes.

There are many ways for groups and individuals to get involved with some charity work or a campaign that will help others.

As a group, sit down and discuss where you would like to make a difference and how much time and resources you have to give. You may choose to do something that benefits people in your local community or you might like to help people thousands of miles away. Come up with a plan for what you'd like to do and then put those plans into practice.

Ideas could include collecting for a food bank; purchasing tents/sleeping bags/clothes etc for homeless people; putting on a fundraiser for a charity or creating a petition for an important cause.

Let us pray – God of Justice

Note to leaders: Share this prayer with your group.

Length of activity: 1 minute.

Dear Lord,

God of Justice, we know the world is full of injustice; people are suffering as a result. Lord we ask that you help us to open our eyes and see those around us who are in need of our love and support. Give us the strength and courage to use our voices, talents, resources and more to do your work and fight their corners.

Whilst we might not be able to change the world, help us to remember that we can change the world for one person; that a small act of kindness can make a big difference.

Amen.

70 Acts of Service

The Queen has served the UK and the Commonwealth for 70 years. To honour her, let's join together in [70 Acts of Service](#) during 2022.