



MOVING TOWARD SOLIDARITY

MODULE EIGHT

SESSION 1

In this session we will explore what it means to listen carefully to our neighbors, so that we can understand what it takes to faithfully stand in solidarity with them.

KEY POINT: When we see injustice, we might believe we know exactly how to fix it and bring about needed change without taking the time to listen and to learn from those who are actually experiencing injustice. As we partner with God to correct injustice and stand in solidarity with our neighbors, we must develop ears to hear by listening to those who suffer.

CENTRAL VERSES: MATTHEW 13: 15-16
*For people's hearts have become hard;
 They hardly hear with their ears
 And they have closed their eyes.
 Otherwise, they may see with their eyes,
 Hear with their ears,
 Understand with their hearts
 And turn, and I would heal them.
 Blessed are your eyes because they see and
 your ears because they hear.*

PREPARATION

30 MINUTES

LESSON

1 HOUR

Hyperlinks are set on URLs throughout the Justice Journey PDF.
 A single list of all links is also available at:
covchurch.org/justicejourney/links

Session #

Eyes to See

KEY WORDS

DISCRIMINATION: Unfair treatment of others because they are different than we are. The difference could be gender, religion, race or language.

OPPRESSION: When people are harmed by injustice and hurt by unfair systems and laws.

PRIVILEGE: An advantage only available to a person or group of people.

SOLIDARITY: Supporting one another. Standing up and speaking up for those facing injustice.

SUPPLIES

For this lesson you will need

- Blue painter's tape
- Paper
- Crayons/markers
- Prizes or snacks
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Bibles
- Tape
- Inflated ball and deflated ball

PREPARATION

- Tape a starting line on one side of the room. Measure 20 sheets of paper in length across the room. Tape another line, the finish line, at this distance. Pick up the papers.
- Two copies each of skits 2-5.

KEY VERSES JAMES 2:1-4

Welcome

As children enter, invite them to look around the room and take turns sharing what they see. Then ask them why they think those things are in the room.

PRAYER

Gather children in a circle for opening prayer. Explain we are entering a special time with God. Encourage children to hold their palms up as a sign we are ready to receive what God shares with us today. You may want to light a candle as a sign that God will show us how to light our way in love when we find ourselves in a dark or difficult place.

PRAY: God you love each of us and you purposely made all of us different. Because of your love for us, you offer each of us eternal life through your son Jesus and fill us with your Spirit so we may be guided by you. We look forward to what we will learn from you today and how it will help us to love others in the same way you love us.

Opening Activity

SUPPLIES: Blue painter's tape, paper, prizes or snacks

This game is designed to help children see everyone is capable of winning the game, but because those with an abundance are often self-focused and fail to notice those who are struggling, everyone does not actually win. The game also reveals the frustrations that arise when those with fewer resources struggle and no one notices or shares their excess resources. Everyone could "win" if we noticed and shared our resources like Scripture calls us to do when we see our neighbors in need.

Build a Bridge

Depending on the size of your class, divide into 3 or more equal-sized groups. If you only have a few children, they can each work individually. Point out the lines of painter's tape previously placed on the floor.

EXPLAIN: We're going to play a game together. Between these two lines of tape is a sea of water. Your challenge is

to get to the other side without stepping in the water (on the floor). I'm going to give you sheets of paper as stepping stones. You must lay them down on the floor one at a time to make a bridge to the other side.

You will step on the sheets of paper to get to the other side. If you step on the floor, you must start over. You can only lay down a stone once. It cannot be picked up. Once you (or your team) get to the other side, you will receive a prize.

Hand out different amounts of paper to the groups or individuals. Some will receive 12 sheets, some receive 8 sheets, and some receive 4 sheets. (Arrange varying numbers in piles before handing them out, rather than counting them out to each group.) If some children notice and complain that they received fewer sheets of paper, explain that they will need to be creative in how to use the stepping stones to get to the other side. Repeat the instructions with the added encouragement to give it their best effort.

For the Teacher: Remember, this game is about those with abundance noticing the unfair advantage they have and working together to share resources so everyone can make it to the other side.

You cannot tell them this while playing, but there is no rule that says a team cannot give some of their paper to another team or person. However, they cannot give their paper stones after they have laid them down on the floor.

If there are some who are unable to finish, because they were not offered additional paper by other teams, offer them some extra pieces of paper at the end of the game so that they can make it to the finish line and receive a prize.

ASK:

- What did you like or not like about this game?
- What did you notice or not notice?
- Why do you think we failed to notice some of the class was struggling?
- What do you think was most important, getting your team to the other side for the prize or stopping to help another team so everyone could get a prize?
- What could have been done to make sure everyone got across the finish line?

EXPLAIN: Solidarity is sacrificially loving your neighbors who are being mistreated or overlooked and living together as mutual friends. Standing in solidarity means we must develop eyes to see those around us who are hurting, ears

to hear how and why they are suffering, and hearts that respond to their needs. Jesus did this, and it serves as our model, helping us see why we cannot become so focused on ourselves that we miss opportunities to share God's love with others and help our neighbor in times of need.

Bible Time

SUPPLIES: Construction paper, scissors, crayons/markers, Bibles

READ MATTHEW 13:15-16.

Invite children to draw or cut out a heart while you read through the passage several times.

DISCUSS: Hold up your hearts. Where is the heart in your body? Let's think about what a soft heart is and what a hard heart is.

Guide children toward the understanding that a soft heart is open to the direction from Jesus to love, and a hard heart means we are focused on ourselves rather than others.

Sometimes, we are so focused on ourselves that we fail to see how others are struggling. How did that happen today during our game?

READ JAMES 2:1-4.

While you read the passage several times, encourage children to draw or write what they are hearing. Explain that the word discrimination means unfair treatment. Discrimination is the opposite of privilege.

REFLECT:

- What is happening in this story?
- Who is being treated unfairly?
- Why is this happening?
- How would you feel if you were the poor man?
- Do you think this is what Jesus would want?

EXPLAIN

- Why do you think we treat poor people differently?
- How can we love poor people in ways that show they are as important as rich people?

Application Activity

SUPPLIES: Inflated ball and deflated ball, copies of skits

EXPLAIN: Sometimes, even those of us who have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior fail to see the unfair treatment of others.

ASK: What was unfair about the game we played today?

EXPLAIN: We're going to play another game called Eyes to See. There will be five skits.

The object of the game is to notice unfair treatment in each skit and decide how you could respond. We will need two volunteers to act out each skit.

SKIT 1

The teacher says, "It's recess time." The teacher hands the first student an inflated ball and tells them to have a good time. The student walks away and starts to bounce the ball. The teacher then throws a deflated ball to the other student and walks away.

DEBRIEF: What did you see? What do you feel? How could you respond?

SKIT 2

KID 1: I'm going to be on the soccer team this year. I just bought my uniform!

KID 2: I love soccer! Where can I sign up?

KID 1: Well, you can only be on the team if you buy a uniform and pay the registration fee.

KID 2: I didn't know it would cost money.

KID 1: Just ask your parents.

KID 2: Maybe next year...

DEBRIEF: What did you see? What do you feel? How could you respond?

SKIT 3

KID 1: I got straight A's!

KID 2: That's awesome! So, did I!

KID 1: Who asked you?

KID 2: What?

KID 1: No one who dresses like you could get straight A's! Get out of here!

DEBRIEF: What did you see? What do you feel? How could you respond?

SKIT 4

KID 1: I had a great time playing in the park yesterday with my friends.

KID 2: We don't have a park in my neighborhood, but I did help my neighbor, Mrs. Samuelson, bring in the groceries because she is old and needs help.

KID 1: Lame! I guess that's what you get for living in a poor neighborhood. Bye Dumpy!

DEBRIEF: What did you see? What do you feel? How could you respond?

SKIT 5

KID 1: Hey speak English! This is America!

KID 2: Many languages are spoken in the United States.

KID 1: Anyone who doesn't speak English is not a true American, loser!

DEBRIEF: What did you see? What do you feel? How could you respond?

EXPLAIN: Jesus noticed when people were overlooked or treated unfairly and lovingly responded. Jesus wants us to not only notice when people are mistreated and oppressed, but to respond in love as well.

Closing Activity

SUPPLIES: Construction paper, tape

Have students make a telescope by rolling a piece of construction paper and taping it. Ask them to look through their telescopes and share what they see with their neighbor.

ASK: How is looking through a telescope different compared to seeing with our eyes?

EXPLAIN: Sometimes our vision is limited. We fail to see unfair treatment or speak up or take action to change it. Jesus wants us to see injustice and unfair treatment, and to speak up and take action to change it. Let's sharpen our vision so that we can see and respond like Jesus.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank you for teaching and helping us to see injustice, to notice unfair treatment, and to stand in solidarity with our neighbors who suffer. Help us to stand together and speak out when we see injustice and take action to help each other.



MOVING TOWARD SOLIDARITY

MODULE EIGHT

SESSION 2

In this session we will explore what it means to listen carefully to our neighbors, so that we can understand what it takes to faithfully stand in solidarity with them.

KEY POINT: When we see injustice, we might believe we know exactly how to fix it and bring about needed change without taking the time to listen and to learn from those who are actually experiencing injustice. An old proverb explains, “Those closest to the problem are also closest to the solution.” As we partner with God to correct injustice and stand in solidarity with our neighbors, we must develop ears to hear by listening to those who suffer.

CENTRAL VERSES: MATTHEW 13: 15-16
*For people’s hearts have become hard;
 They hardly hear with their ears
 And they have closed their eyes.
 Otherwise, they may see with their eyes,
 Hear with their ears,
 Understand with their hearts
 And turn, and I would heal them.
 Blessed are your eyes because they see and
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PREPARATION

30 MINUTES

LESSON

1 HOUR

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Session #

Ears to Hear



KEY WORDS

EQUALITY: Being equal in status and opportunities.

EQUITY: The quality of being fair and just.

EXPLOITATION: The action of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work. Such as working long hours for little or no pay.

INJUSTICE: When something is unfair, resulting from privilege or the sin of selfishness or oppression.

SOLIDARITY: Supporting one another. Standing up and speaking up for those facing injustice.

SUPPLIES

For this lesson you will need

- Blue painter’s tape
- Paper
- Crayons/markers
- Construction paper
- Tape
- Bibles
- Two copies of the labyrinth grid

PREPARATION

- Using blue painter’s tape, create a 10-foot by 10-foot grid on the floor (see diagram at the end of the session).
- Thoroughly read the directions for the labyrinth game for each team before beginning the game.
- Make plans to create an obstacle course.

KEY VERSES JAMES 2:5-9

Welcome

SUPPLIES: Paper, crayons/markers

As children enter, ask them to draw something that they did this last week. As each child shares their drawing, remind them how important it is to listen quietly to what their friends are sharing. Then explain we are going to enter into a time of prayer.

PRAYER

First, we will quietly listen to what God might be saying to us. Give children an opportunity to share anything they might have heard from God. Next, ask if anyone has prayer requests. Pray together, lifting these requests to God, thanking God for hearing our prayers, and asking God to help us listen for ways we can help others this week.

Opening Activity

SUPPLIES: Labyrinth grid created with blue painter's tape, paper, two copies of the labyrinth grid map

Object of the game: Find the path through a labyrinth to rescue your teammates.

This game is designed to help children understand the importance of seeing and hearing. When one group with an abundance of resources tries to help another group that lacks resources, the group with a surplus may try to act to solve the problem of inequity without taking the time to listen to the group that is hindered by the inequalities. This instinct to act without listening can cause problems and often worsens the situation.

For the teacher: Thoroughly read and share the directions below for each team before beginning the game. There are 14 sheets of paper needed to create a specific path through the labyrinth. Give Team One 12 sheets of paper and 10-14 minutes to find their way through the maze.

Give Team Two 2 sheets of paper and a map through the maze. Keep one map for the teacher.

Team Two's map must stay hidden. Team Two cannot help Team One find the way unless Team One asks for help. If

Team One has not asked for help at the half-way point, 5-7 minutes, Team Two can ask them this one question: "Can we help?"

Playing the game: Divide everyone into two teams. Take Team Two outside the room and give them their directions. Have Team One stay in the room for directions and line them up on one side of the grid.

Team One Directions: Your group has become divided in a dense jungle and there is only one safe way through the jungle to find them. Use these papers to create a path through the jungle labyrinth to join Team Two who will be returning soon and taking a position on the other side of this jungle grid. You must determine the exact path through the labyrinth by laying down sheets of paper as stepping stones, creating a path to the other side.

Here is the challenge. There is only one right way through the jungle labyrinth. Each player on your team will take turns stepping on a block in the grid to find the path to Team Two. The teacher will announce if that block is the correct step to take on the path through the jungle. If the guess is incorrect, the next student will make a guess by stepping on another block. Once you have guessed a correct block in the labyrinth, lay down a sheet of paper to mark that block. The next team member will now step on that block and seek to find the next block through the labyrinth. It could be forward, to the side or at an angle. Each time you find another block through the labyrinth, lay down a sheet of paper to mark the path and work your way back out of the grid the same way you went in. Then the next person will walk in on the blocks you have found and make the next guess. Only one person can be in the labyrinth at a time until the path is completed. The path must be connected from end to end. You are only given a short time to fulfill your task. The teacher will give you warnings as the time is ticking down.

Team Two Directions: Team One has been told your group has become divided in a dense jungle and there is only one safe way through the jungle to find you. Team One is trying to determine the exact path through the labyrinth by laying down sheets of paper as stepping stones, creating a path to the other side, but they do not have enough papers. Here are two sheets of paper that you must keep hidden until Team One asks for your help.

Each player on Team One will take turns stepping on a block in the grid to find the path to you. When the teacher tells them the correct block is found, they lay a piece of

paper on that block. They take turns to find the next block through the labyrinth. Here is the key: I am giving you the map that shows the way through the labyrinth. But it must stay hidden, and you cannot help Team One find the way unless they ask for your help. Only a short time will be given to fulfill the task. I will announce when half the time has expired. If Team One has not asked for your help at the half-way point, you can ask them this one question: “Can we help?”

For any question Team One asks, Team Two can respond with this statement, “We believe we know the way and can help you.”

If Team One invites you to help by saying something like, “Please help us.” You may help them get to the other side by giving them directions from the map and adding the two pieces of paper you have, at the end, to complete the path. I will give you warnings as the time is ticking down.

Once the path is completed, everyone from Team One should travel across the path to join Team Two to complete the game.

DISCUSS:

- **TEAM TWO**, how were you feeling watching Team One play the game?
- **TEAM ONE**, why do you think it took a while to ask Team Two for help?
- **TEAM ONE**, why did you assume Team Two didn’t have anything to offer?
- If Team Two had all the resources Team One had, would they have needed rescuing?
- Who was actually rescued in this game?
- How did you end up standing in solidarity (together as one group)?

In our last session together, we talked about “seeing” or noticing unfair treatment. When something isn’t fair, resulting from privilege or the sin of selfishness or oppression, this is called injustice. This week we are going to talk about the importance of listening. Sometimes we may notice unfair treatment and just want to fix it without first listening to those who are being treated unfairly.

Bible Time

SUPPLIES: Construction paper, tape, Bibles

READ MATTHEW 13:15-16.

Invite children to roll up their construction paper into a tube and tape it.

Read the verses again while children are working on the tubes. Ask them to hold their tubes up to their ear and listen carefully as you read Matthew 13:15 again.

EXPLAIN: These paper tubes help us to focus our hearing. There can be a lot of noise and a lot of voices, but we can also focus on what God says to us. Today it’s about listening to God and others, especially listening to those who are treated unfairly or unjustly. Read the verse a couple of times.

ASK: What causes us to see but not understand?

READ JAMES 2:5-9 (NLT or NIV recommended for comprehension).

EXPLAIN: There are some people who have plenty and are unkind to those who are poor. They do not think people who are poor have anything of value to offer. Let’s read James 2:5 again.

ASK:

- What does the very first word in this verse tell us to do? Listen.
- What does this verse say the poor are rich in? Faith in Jesus.
- Are the poor just as important to God as someone who has money? Yes.
- Who do the poor love in this verse? Jesus.

READ JAMES 2:6.

ASK:

- How do the rich often treat those who are poor? Put them down and fail to share.
- In this passage, the rich even take the money of the poor. How do you think Jesus feels about this? This is called exploitation. It is the action of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work, such as working long hours for little or no pay. Jesus doesn’t believe this is right.

READ JAMES 2:8.

Our “neighbor” is everyone. But sometimes money makes us forget this. We can start to think that only people who have the same things as we have, and live in homes like ours, are our neighbors. When we live this way, we keep everything God has blessed us with for ourselves and look down on our neighbors who are poor. This is not equitable. We forget that what we have is a blessing from God, and God has blessed us so we can be a blessing to our neighbors who are in need.

What do you think it means to love our neighbor? We listen to them and learn from them so we can share and make life equitable. Unfortunately, those who have more than they need usually don’t listen well to those who have less and are in need.

Application Activity

SUPPLIES: Paper, crayons/markers

Encourage each child to think of a sound they could make. Have each child share their sound and have the rest of the class try to guess what the sound is.

ASK: What did you have to do to figure out what the sound was? Listen, concentrate, think.

Listening shows we care about someone. Jesus listened to people that others didn’t listen to. Jesus listened to and spoke with:

- Children
- Those who were hurt
- Women as well as men
- The poor
- The sick
- Servants
- The homeless.
- Those who sinned and hurt others, to help them change their ways

When we listen to someone, it shows we value them. We stand together with them.

Often listening is more important than having an answer for someone.

LISTENING EXERCISE

- Instruct everyone to draw something that made them sad or mad.
- After the drawings are completed, have the students pair up.
- First, have one explain what they drew and then have their listening partner pray for them.
- Next, have partners switch places and do the same.

EXPLAIN: Most of us would prefer to talk rather than listen. During this time, I saw how well you listened to one another; by listening, you knew how to pray for one another. The same holds true for our relationship with God. When we pray, we can listen for what God might say to us. Prayer helps us to notice, listen, and care well for each other.

Closing Activity

SUPPLIES: Paper, obstacle course

Either mark out some squares with paper on the grid you used earlier or create an obstacle course using paper on the floor. Have students pair up and take turns closing eyes and having each partner guiding one another through the course by voice. The object is to move through the course without stepping on the paper.

ASK:

- How easy or hard was it to listen?
- Why did you need to trust the voice of your partner?
- How is moving through this obstacle course together an example of standing in solidarity?
- Why is listening important when we see injustice?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Dear Jesus, when we see injustice, help us to listen to those hurt by these sins, learn from them how we can help end them, and speak up to show the world your love. Everyone is valued in your eyes. Help us to pay attention and have the courage to stand with those who are made fun of or are hurting or left out. We are all your children and you love us all. Help us to love the way you love us.

Grid for the Labyrinth Game

END

TEAM 2's POSITION

						O			
						O			
						X			
					X				
			X	X	X				
		X							
		X		X					
			X		X				
						X			
					X				

BEGIN

TEAM 1's POSITION

The X's are symbols for the number of sheets of paper the beginning team has.
The O's represent the number of sheets of paper the end team has.

JUSTICE JOURNEY FOR KIDS

Lined writing area on the left side of the page, consisting of multiple horizontal lines for text entry.

Lined writing area on the right side of the page, consisting of multiple horizontal lines for text entry.



MOVING TOWARD SOLIDARITY

MODULE EIGHT

SESSION 3

In this session we will explore what it means to have a heart that responds to injustice.

KEY POINT: We may have eyes and ears that notice injustice, but we also need a heart that responds to injustice in order to stand in solidarity.

CENTRAL VERSES: MATTHEW 13: 15-16
*For people's hearts have become hard;
 They hardly hear with their ears
 And they have closed their eyes.
 Otherwise, they may see with their eyes,
 Hear with their ears,
 Understand with their hearts
 And turn, and I would heal them.
 Blessed are your eyes because they see and
 your ears because they hear.*

PREPARATION

30 MINUTES

LESSON

1 HOUR

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Session #

Hearts that Respond

KEY WORDS

FAITH: Complete trust in something we can't see but believe is there.

INJUSTICE: When something isn't unfair, resulting from privilege or the sin of selfishness or oppression.

OPPRESSION: Unjust treatment or control of others through unfair systems of laws.

PRIVILEGE: An unfair advantage only available to a person or group of people. But not to other people.

SELFISHNESS: To be concerned for one's self or one's own advantage, regardless of others.

SIN: Anything that is against God's will.

SOLIDARITY: Supporting one another. Standing up and speaking up for those facing injustice.

SUPPLIES

For this lesson you will need

- Crayons/markers
- Playdough
- Drawing paper
- Construction paper
- Pens and pencils
- Broken crayons and unsharpened pencils
- Tape
- Chalkboard, whiteboard, or 2 poster boards

PREPARATION

- On the board/poster write: Jesus said, "A new command I give you, love one another. As I have loved you, you must love one another." John 13:34.
- On another board/poster write: sin, privilege, selfishness, and oppression.

KEY VERSES JAMES 2:14-17

ADDITIONAL VERSES:

John 13:34, James 1:19, Philippians 2:1-11, Matthew 25:35-40, Mark 12:41-44, Romans 12:4-6.

Welcome

SUPPLIES: Markers/crayons, drawing paper, playdough, paper, board/poster with John 13:34 written on it

As children arrive, point to the passage, have them read it, or read it for them. Offer them markers/crayons and drawing paper, or playdough. Ask them to draw or mold a picture of a way we show love to someone. This could also be a time to ask them when they felt closest to God this week or something that was special to them this week.

PRAYER

Gather children in a circle for opening prayer. Explain we are entering a special time with God. Encourage children to hold their palms up as a sign we are ready to receive what God shares with us today. You may want to light a candle as a sign that God will show us how to light our way in love when we find ourselves in a dark or difficult place.

PRAY: God you love each of us and you purposely made all of us different. Because of your love for us, you offer each of us eternal life through your son Jesus and fill us with your Spirit so we may be guided by you. We look forward to what we will learn from you today and how it will help us to love others in the same way you love us.

Opening Activity

SUPPLIES: Drawing paper, construction paper, markers, pens, crayons, pencils, broken crayons, and unsharpened pencils, both boards with Bible verse and words

Have the children share their drawings or clay moldings of ways we can show love to someone.

EXPLAIN: Today, we are going to talk about why we, as Christians, need to respond to injustice lovingly. Injustice is when things are not fair.

Show the board with sin, privilege, selfishness, and oppression written on it. Ask the children what they think each word means.

EXPLAIN: Sin is anything that is against God's will. Privilege is an unfair advantage gained because of oppression, or the exclusion of others. This advantage allows some people to be treated better and respected more than others. Selfishness occurs when we do not take on the mindset of Christ (Philippians 2:1-11). Oppression is when people are harmed by injustice and hurt by unfair systems and laws. Injustice occurs because of sin and results in privilege, selfishness, and oppression. Injustice hurts people and leads to groups being mistreated.

Application Activity

EXPLAIN: We are going to divide into two groups, and together we are going to create an art gallery. I will be giving you supplies to draw something you love to do, and then we will put them up to form our art gallery and share what we created.

Give one group an excess of drawing paper, construction paper, markers, pens, crayons, and pencils. Give the second group a few broken crayons, an unsharpened pencil, and one piece of paper.

DISCUSS: In a moment, we are going to create our art gallery. But before we begin, do you notice anything that's not fair? Why is it not fair?

When one group has much better resources than another, this is called privilege. It's wonderful that we have access to these supplies, but is it fair that some have so much, and others were given so little? We see we have more than we need, and others do not have enough, shouldn't we share?

Part of having privilege is also having power because the group that has more resources gets to choose if they will share those resources. Why do you think it's sometimes hard to share even when we have more than enough?

The group that doesn't have enough resources, or even the nice resources, may also choose to share their broken crayons with you, but if you already have nicer crayons and markers will you accept them?

How would you feel if you offered what little you had, and it was rejected?

Those that have more than they need have the power and the privilege to turn something down. This group also has the privilege of deciding what is considered good or bad.

ASK:

- What do you think Jesus thinks about this?
- To whom can we turn to know what is good and what is bad?
- What do you think Jesus would do?
- What does it look like to love one another when things are unjust?
- How can we change something that is unjust, and make it "just" right now?

EXPLAIN: Let's work together to create our gallery and then share what we have each created with one another.

Bible Time

Remember, today, we are exploring what it means to have a heart that responds to injustice.

READ JAMES 1:19.

ASK:

- What should we be quick to do and slow to do? Quick: listen. Slow: speak, become angry
- Should we tell our neighbor what we are going to do for them, or listen to what they say will help?
- If their solution is different than ours, should we become angry? Why, why not?

READ JAMES 2:14.

ASK: What is faith? Complete trust in something we can't see, but we believe it is there.

We can't see the wind or gravity. Yet we have faith, it's there. In the same way, we may feel the love and presence

of Jesus and have faith Jesus is with us. Jesus asks us to live out our faith by sharing God's love with others.

We're now going to read what faith looks like.

READ JAMES 2:15-17.

ASK:

- What are the needs that someone has in this passage? Clothes and food.
- Does Jesus want us to say, "Well, I hope you keep warm and find food." Or do you think Jesus wants us to listen to what this person has to say and then help?
- What are some of the loving deeds or actions you think Jesus wants us to live out?

Let's read how Jesus calls us to love those who are in need.

READ MATTHEW 25:35-40.

Jesus knows what it is like to be in need:

When Jesus was born, there was no room in the inn (inside) for him and his family. (Luke 2:6-7)

Jesus was an immigrant and was a stranger in a new land, that needed to be invited and welcomed in. (Matthew 2:13-14)

Jesus was unjustly put in prison. (Matthew 27:15-17)

Jesus was hungry and asked for something to eat. (Luke 24:41-42)

Jesus was thirsty while on the cross and asked for something to drink. (John 19:28-30)

EXPLAIN: If we're going to stand in solidarity with those who face injustice, we need eyes to recognize it, ears to hear from those who are hurt by it, and a heart like Jesus that responds to injustice.

Application Activity

SUPPLIES: Paper, crayons, markers, pencils

Today we are going to talk about having a heart like Jesus and exercising a different kind of power. We will be talking about ways to use our power like Jesus did.

THE POWER OF LISTENING OVER TELLING.

Invite the children to pair up.

EXPLAIN: You will listen to a story from the Bible,

and then you will share with your partner the part of the story you were most surprised about, or you have a question about. Then you will switch places, listen to the story again, and your partner will share the part they were surprised about or had a question about. After that, you will each share with the class what your partner said surprised them, or a question they had.

Read Mark 12:41-44.

Allow time for the partners to discuss the story and then have each child share what their partner shared with them. Praise students letting them know you believe they are capable of excellent listening, and listening well enough to share.

THE POWER OF SHARING OVER TAKING.

As you give each student supplies, ask them to draw ways they can share. Give each student either two pieces of paper, two crayons, two pencils, or two markers. No student will have enough supplies to complete the assignment because no one will have both paper and something to write with.

ASK: What’s the difference between sharing and taking?

EXPLAIN: You obviously don’t have enough supplies to finish. You will have to decide with whom to share to create your drawing.

DISCUSS: It’s not always easy to share. We may not end up with all the items we want.

In this case, you were not sharing out of abundance, but shared what you had, like the widow who put in the two coins. Encourage children to share their drawings.

THE POWER OF CARING OVER IGNORING.

EXPLAIN: I will read some real-life situations. You will decide what you would do.

What would happen if you ignore...

Someone being made fun of because of their race?

What could happen if you cared? *(Note the response could be positive or negative. Doing the right thing is not always easy.)*

What would happen if you ignore...

Someone being made fun of because they speak another language or struggle to speak English? What could happen if you cared?

What would happen if you ignore...

Someone being left out of a game because they are in a wheelchair? What could happen if you cared?

What would happen if you ignore...

Someone who doesn’t have money to buy lunch? What could happen if you cared?

What would happen if you ignore...

Someone being made fun of because of their clothes? What could happen if you cared?

What would happen if you ignore...

Someone being made fun of for sharing? What could happen if you cared?

What would happen if you ignore...

Someone being made fun of because they can’t answer a question? What could happen if you cared?

EXPLAIN: Jesus tells us listening, caring, and sharing are examples of the true power of love. Jesus shared his life with us and gave his life for us. Jesus loves us that much. Jesus has shown us how to give something up to stand in solidarity together.

Closing Activity

SUPPLIES: Paper, tape, markers

READ ROMANS 12:4-6.

DIRECTIONS: On the paper, write one gift/talent/ experience you could share with a friend. Once you are done, tape it to your shirt.

Form the class into a circle. Have each student read out loud, the gift or talent of the student across from them. (If the circle is large, have each neighbor read the gift.)

EXPLAIN: None of us looks exactly alike or has the same gifts or talents. God has made each of us unique, and you are all special and loved by God. Each of you has special gifts to share. And it is God’s hope and desire that we would stand together as one body, listening to each other, sharing with one another, caring for each other—standing in solidarity.

Standing in solidarity and taking action against the sins of racism, oppression, injustice, and exploitation is not easy. We can’t do this work on our own. We need Jesus to help us make things right. This is what Jesus lovingly calls us to.

An Invitation

Jesus loves us so much that he wants us to be one with him. Jesus promises to give us strength through the difficult times. When others may not love us, Jesus will still love us and never leave us. Jesus will take away our sin and help us to love those around us. Jesus will fill us with his Spirit to guide us and help us to overcome injustice and once again be the one loving body that all are invited to.

If you want Jesus to wipe away your sin and be the loving leader and guide of your life, you can simply pray, talking to Jesus and Jesus will hear you and accept you as his disciple.

If this is something you would like to do, then we will invite you to pray with one of your teachers at church, your pastor, your mom or dad, or other family member. And we will celebrate your new life in Jesus who loves you and will guide you and be with you forever.

If there are children that want to do this, then include their parents in this profound moment of their children's spiritual journey.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Help us, Jesus, to love one another as you first loved us. Show us how to honor others above ourselves. Help us, Lord, to keep our eyes on you so we might be joyful in hope, patient when things don't go as we wish, and remain faithful in prayer. Help us to stand together in solidarity, as one body, listening to each other, sharing with one another, caring for each other. Give us hearts that respond with sacrificial love when we see injustice.

JUSTICE JOURNEY

for kids

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MAKE & DEEPEN DISCIPLES