

THE KINGDOM MOSAIC:

Life Together Series [101]

Let us start by asking the
age-old Covenant question,
Where is it written? *(click to visit link)*

SESSION 1:

Connecting Righteousness and Justice

AMOS 5:1-17

SESSION 2:

What Does God Require of Us?

MICAH 6

SESSION 3:

The Power of Proximity

MATTHEW 25:31-45

SESSION 4:

The Good Samaritan

LUKE 10:25-37

SESSION 5:

Addressing Inequity

ACTS 6:1-7



This is the first iteration of what will become a series of Bible studies focused on justice, racial righteousness, and the mosaic nature of the kingdom of God. The purpose of this series is to ground our pursuit of life together in the word of God as we grow from a denomination with multiethnic ministries into a multi-ethnic denomination. Scripture is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. As the hands and feet of Christ, we want to be an authentic signpost of God's love, mercy, and justice in a world that desperately needs it! In our own strength, we will fail to navigate the complexities of doing life together, but empowered by the Holy Spirit we will flourish, experience shalom, and beloved community.

Our congregations are hungry for Bible studies that help us understand God's heart for justice and God's plan for diversity. Our churches are seeking biblical resources that empower us to function as everyday peacemakers, ambassadors of reconciliation, and co-laborers with Christ in a divided and hostile world. This study will begin to address these requests.

Renowned biblical scholar N.T. Wright wrote, "Rejecting racism and embracing the diversity of Jesus' family ought to be as obvious as praying the Lord's Prayer, celebrating the Eucharist, or reading the four Gospels. It isn't just an extra 'rule' we're supposed to keep. It is constitutive of who we are" ([Undermining Racism](#)). This series will help unpack that statement by reminding us—as Mission Friends and children of God—who and whose we are. It will also highlight how Scripture explains we are called to live distinctively for Christ.

We explore five key biblical passages: Amos 5; Micah 6; Matthew 25:31-46;

Luke 10:25-37; and Acts 6:17. Each of these passages is critical for understanding biblical justice, racial righteousness, and the mosaic kingdom of God. Thematically, it may be helpful to think about this series as "a journey to repentance" progressing through four stages:

1. **Seeing:** Amos 5
(illumination of the sin)
2. **Sorrow:** Micah 6
(godly sorrow that leads to lament)
3. **Resolve:** Matthew 25:31-46 and Luke 10:25-37 *(girding oneself to avoid repeating the sin)*
4. **Repair:** Acts 6: 1-7 *(action to address not only the result of the sin, but the cause of the sin)*

Biblically, these conversations must begin with the imago Dei (the image of God). In Genesis 1:27 we read, "God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." As we begin to unpack what Scripture says about justice, racial righteousness, and our God-given diversity, the imago Dei roots us in the biblical truth that all human beings are created equally in God's image, and as a result, all have intrinsic value and infinite worth. Sin has distorted what God created and called good; sin has distorted our thoughts, actions, and relationship with God and neighbor. This series helps highlight this distortion and provides space for us to communally discern how we realign ourselves with God and the missio Dei (*the mission of God*) by fulfilling the great commission and the greatest commandment.



SESSION 1: **Connecting Righteousness and Justice**

SCRIPTURE: AMOS 5:1-17

ACTIVITIES

- Who are [prophets](#) and why are they important?
- Watch this [video](#) on how to read and understand the books of the Bible written by prophets.
- Watch this [video](#) outlining the book of Amos.
- Engage this [Bible study](#) for this passage.
- Watch this [sermon](#) from Eugene Cho, Covenant minister and president of Bread for the World.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What are the dangers of a gospel that simply comforts us?
2. Why do we need the gospel to disrupt us?
3. Can you recall a time when the gospel disrupted your life?
4. Has the gospel ever caused you to lament the injustice and oppression your neighbors endure? If so, when, and what did this look like?
5. What is repentance?
6. What have you recently repented of?
7. How do we repent of our sin/disobedience to live righteously and with justice?
8. How would you restate the biblical connection between righteousness and justice in your own words?

IN OUR CONTEXT

- To read an example of how systemic injustice lingers and continues to inform our lives today click [here](#).

“Genuine hope is not blind optimism. It is hope with open eyes, which sees the suffering and yet believes in the future.” — JÜRGEN MOLTMANN



SESSION 2: What Does God Require of Us?

SCRIPTURE: MICAH 6

ACTIVITIES

- Watch this [video](#) framing the book of Micah.
- Read this [article](#) on how we read Micah 6:8 in its proper context.
- Watch this [video](#) on biblical justice.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. How do you think we have watered down God's requirements to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly?
2. What do we normalize that moves us away from God's requirements to love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with our Creator?
3. What does it mean to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly for you personally? In our congregation?
4. How can the Church do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly in society at large?
5. What idols do you cling to?
6. What idols do we worship as a nation?
7. How do you see God calling us to be counter-cultural, to not conform to the pattern of this world?
8. How can we do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly, all together?

IN OUR CONTEXT

- Read this [modern example](#) of injustice rooted in idolatry.
- This story is a [modern example](#) of a church honoring its word and doing justice by walking humbly with God.

“Any religion that professes to be concerned about the souls of men and is not concerned about the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them, and the social conditions that cripple them is a spiritually moribund religion awaiting burial.” — MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



SESSION 3: **The Power of Proximity**

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 25:31-45

ACTIVITIES

- Engage this [Bible study](#).
- Watch this interview with [Bryan Stevenson](#), founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative, on the power of proximity.
- Watch this snippet of an [interview](#) with Jenny Yang, World Relief vice president of policy and advocacy.
- Read this [interview](#) with Bryan Stevenson about the film [Just Mercy](#), which documents his faith-rooted activism.
- Watch this spoken word [here](#) on the power of proximity.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What does the incarnation and Jesus's life on earth reveal about the importance of proximity?
2. Former ECC president Gary Walter commonly said, "You don't have insight until you're onsite." Can you identify a time in your life when you were "onsite"? What insights have you gained from proximity?
3. Where might God be calling you to go to gain more insight?
4. How does your family of origin, life experiences, and/or personality affect how you move toward or away from differences, difficulties, or danger?
5. How do you see rugged individualism and the American dream hindering us from pursuing proximity to people who suffer and are marginalized?
6. What did you feel when the video exclaimed, "You never stop fighting for your own!"
7. Who do you consider as "your own"? Who do you not consider as "your own"?
8. When you see that this video was produced by World Relief, are you more comfortable thinking about addressing issues further away than the ones in your backyard?



IN OUR CONTEXT

- This [story](#) illustrates how proximity changed the education system in Durham, North Carolina.
- This [story](#) illustrates how proximity helped Covenanters rally around one of our congregants in need.

“When we respond to the immediate needs of the poor, we are choosing to be merciful. That is good, but that is not necessarily justice. Justice is not a response to a problem, mercy is. Justice looks beyond the problem to see how people ended up in that broken place and works to overcome barriers so they can be restored.” — MICHELLE FERRIGNO WARREN



SESSION 4: **The Good Samaritan**

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 10:25-37

ACTIVITIES

- Watch this [video](#) on Christ-like love.
- Engage this [Bible study](#) on the Good Samaritan.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Which character in the parable do you most identify with?
2. Who are wounded neighbors that we pass by today?
3. What does my love for “neighbor” reveal about my love for God?
4. How do you think fear keeps us from intervening with God’s love when we see someone in need?
5. What happens when we do not stop and show God’s love to our wounded neighbors?
6. Who were you taught to think was inferior to you?
7. How has that informed your worldview? How has it informed who you identify as your neighbor?
8. How do you think your family, community, and/or education added to this spirit of superiority?
9. How does the theme of the power of proximity continue to challenge us here?

IN OUR CONTEXT

- Read this [story](#) about how a Covenant pastor refused to pass by on the other side of the road, even when many of his peers chose not to bear witness to God’s love amid racial division and violence.

“The neighbor [is] not he whom I find in my path, but rather he in whose path I place myself, he whom I approach and actively seek.” — GUSTAVO GUTIERREZ



SESSION 5: **Addressing Inequity**

SCRIPTURE: **ACTS 6:1-7**

ACTIVITIES

- Listen to this [sermon](#) from Paul Robinson, executive minister of Love Mercy Do Justice.
- Read this [excerpt](#) from Subversive Witness by Dominique DuBois Gilliard.
- Engage [this](#) Bible study on this passage.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Who are “the least of these” in our context?
2. How are we mobilizing to care for them?
3. In what tangible ways can we affirm the dignity of, enter into relationship with, and learn from the wisdom of our neighbors on the margins?
4. What are the advantages of a homogeneous community? Challenges?
5. What are the advantages of being a part of a more diverse community? Challenges?
6. What does it mean to be full of the Spirit and wisdom?
7. How are these titles connected to love of neighbor?

IN OUR CONTEXT

- [Read](#) about this ECC church who mobilized to address inequity.

“Rejecting racism and embracing the diversity of Jesus’s family ought to be as obvious as praying the Lord’s Prayer, celebrating the Eucharist, or reading the four Gospels. It isn’t just an extra ‘rule’ we’re supposed to keep. It is constitutive of who we are.” — N.T. WRIGHT