



# COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Do Something / Week 1

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

## BOTTOM LINE

**Before you do something about injustice, you have to see it.**

## GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students develop the practical skill of noticing injustice around them.

*(Note for the Communicator and/or Ministry Leader: If you have students that are visually impaired, consider changing the bottom line to “notice” instead of “see” – or have a conversation with them ahead of time.)*

## SCRIPTURE

*“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” (Matthew 25:41-46 NIV).*

## TEACHING OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

- *Communicator Note: Tell a story about a time when you didn't see an injustice or didn't recognize it.*
- Have you ever noticed there is one category in life that seems to always cause arguments? Superheroes!
- *Communicator Note: do a quick poll by naming two superheroes from competing universes and have students cheer for their favorite.*
- Maybe we love superhero movies because we all love the idea of superheroes existing in our real world.
- There are times in life where we just wish someone would do something to help us out.
- We're talking about some of the biggest areas in life where we all wish someone would just do something: injustice.

### TENSION

- Let's start with definitions:
  - Justice simply means something is right, fair, or equal.

- Injustice is the opposite of that. So when we talk about injustice, we're talking about the things in our world that are not right, unfair, or unequal.
- For most of us, something came to mind the minute you heard the word. (*Give examples of injustices your students may know about here.*)
- The real question we all face is: "Why doesn't somebody DO SOMETHING?"
- A conversation like this can be tricky because so many of us see and experience injustice in different ways. For some of you, this feels so heavy. You have been thinking about injustice a long time because you've experienced it yourself.
- On the flip side, some of you haven't experienced the hurt of injustice. Instead, maybe you feel surprised by it.
- *Communicator Note: If there are specific injustice issues facing your community, feel free to talk about them here.*
- I think sometimes we don't DO anything about injustice because we don't get close enough to see what's really happening and ask the hard questions.

## TRUTH

- Jesus made a habit of pointing out a lot of things people hadn't seen before.
- Jesus often used stories with real-life examples to reveal a bigger truth. In this case, He used a story of sheep and goats to explain the differences between the righteous and the unrighteous—those on the right side and those on the wrong side.
- In this story, the sheep are on the right, or righteous side, and the goats are not (*Matthew 25:41-46 NIV*).
- Jesus distinguishes between the righteous and the unrighteous—the good guys and the bad guys—by how they responded to the needs of the least of these, whom Jesus defined as the prisoners, the hungry, the sick, and strangers.
- Listen to the level of shock that the "goats" expressed in their response to the King. It's as if they're saying, "Not me. I'd NEVER do that."
- Jesus wanted to make a point—not only did you not do something about the injustice, but you didn't even SEE it.
- When you don't see those who need your help, you're not just missing out on seeing injustice; when you don't see it, you're missing out on part of what it means to follow Jesus Himself!
- His people are people who see and act when it comes to injustice.
- If you get to know Him, you'll see that Jesus always cares about injustice, always speaks up for others, and always fights for what's right.
- If you follow Him, you'll become more like Him in that way. You'll begin to care about the things He cares about. And because of Jesus' example, you may begin to see injustice differently than you ever have before.
- Before you do something about injustice, you have to see it.

## APPLICATION

- We need to be able to look around and see what's happening. We need to be able to notice the injustices in our daily, ordinary world.
  - Get close enough to see.
  - Be curious enough to listen.
  - Be courageous enough to name it.

## LANDING

- You can be the generation to DO SOMETHING in areas where it has seemed impossible. But the first step to doing something is SEEING it, and helping others see it, too.
- That's why we have Small Groups! There we can talk about real, difficult things and help each other see things we haven't seen before.
- As you head out, I want you to think about this quote from Maya Angelou, a famous writer who wrote about injustice often: "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."





# TEACHING SCRIPT

Do Something / Week 1

PRELUDE

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## BOTTOM LINE

**Before you do something about injustice, you have to see it.**

## INTRODUCTION

2 MINUTES

*(Communicator Note: Tell a story about a time when you didn't see an injustice or didn't recognize it.)*

Have you ever noticed there is one category in life that seems to always cause arguments? No, I'm not talking about politics or religion. I'm talking about superheroes! Or more specifically, superhero movies. It feels like you are either a *Marvel* fan or a *DC* fan. And on either side, people *let you know* if they disagree with the one you pick!

*(Communicator Note: do a quick poll by naming two superheroes from competing universes and have students cheer for their favorite.)*

Either way, it seems like most people love superheroes. In fact, superhero movies are some of the largest grossing movies ever. Why? I think people love a good hero because of what they do. They solve a problem, they fight the bad guys, they are brave, and they can do some *crazy cool* stuff. Basically, they see something wrong in the world and they go do something about it in the most epic way possible.

And maybe we love superhero movies because we all love the idea of superheroes existing in our real world. I mean we could all use a little superhero help from time to time. Maybe for you, it's...

Being rescued out of accelerated math.  
Pushing your college application to the top of the pile.  
Making life easier on your single mom.

There are times in life where we just wish someone would do something to help us out; to make things change; to make things better; to solve the problem; to do *something*. Well, that's what we are going to be talking about for the next few weeks (no, not Wolverine!). We're talking about some of the biggest areas in life where we all wish someone would just do something. We're going to talk about some things in the world that aren't quite right. The things that seem unfair. The stuff we may name as "injustice."

## TENSION

## 5 MINUTES

When I say that word, “injustice” what comes to mind?

We should probably start with some definitions.

**Justice simply means something is right, fair, or equal. Injustice is just the opposite of that. So when we talk about injustice, we’re talking about the things in our world that are not right, unfair, or unequal.**

But you didn’t actually need me to define it, did you? No, for most of us, something came to mind the minute you heard the word. Maybe it was something big and global like human trafficking or global poverty or world hunger. Maybe it was something local that feels so unfair, and it’s right around the corner. Maybe you’re experiencing a kind of injustice personally and you know the pain all too deeply. Or maybe you’ve made it to a side of TikTok that, over time, has helped you see an injustice you’ve never experienced. What I’m getting at is *something* comes to mind for all of us. In fact, that’s one of the things I love and really admire about Gen Z. You guys, maybe more than any generation in history, are aware of injustices happening in the world.

The real question we all face is not, “Does injustice exist?” The question is, “**Why doesn’t somebody do something?**” And that’s the question we’re going to be wrestling with for the rest of this series. What does it look like, and whose job is it, to do something about injustice?

Now, as we get started, I have to admit: a conversation like this can be tricky because so many of us see and experience injustice in different ways. For some of you, this feels so heavy. You have been thinking about injustice a long time because you’ve experienced it yourself. You’ve seen how it has affected your family and your friends. This topic *hurts*. If that’s you, let me stop right here and say this: I’m sorry. What you’re walking through isn’t okay. And if you take anything away from this message today, let it be that here in our student ministry, we do not ignore things that hurt our family. We want this to be a safe place where you cannot only talk about your real-life experience, but where you can find real friends who love and support you through it.

On the flip side, some of you haven’t experienced the hurt of injustice. Instead, maybe you feel surprised by it. Maybe when you were younger, you never thought about things like access to education or racism or food insecurity. And maybe, as you’re getting older and starting to see some things on social media, you feel like you keep discovering things you never knew about the world around you. And maybe you’ve even found yourself asking the question, “why doesn’t somebody *do* something about that?” Maybe you have even found yourself asking some questions you’ve never asked before like...

- **Why are there some students that never get in trouble when they should, while other students always get in trouble even if they’re not doing anything wrong?**
- **Why do people still act like it’s okay to make jokes that are racist or sexist or ableist?**
- **Why does that guy continue to be bullied, but no one seems to care enough to do anything about it?**
- **Why does one person in our friend group go home to a house that feels unsafe, while others don’t have to worry about it?**
- **Why are there so many little kids in our community who don’t get to eat if school is out? Why are three meals a day not normal for everyone?**

*(Communicator Note: if there are specific injustice issues facing your community, feel free to add them here.)*

My point is this: when we see injustice (through our own experience or someone else’s), it makes us ask some hard questions. It makes us wonder how others don’t see it or how we *didn’t* see it before. It’s not that we don’t care about injustice. I think sometimes we don’t DO anything about

injustice because we don't get close enough to see what's really happening and ask the hard questions.

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## TRUTH

6.5 MINUTES

We aren't the first to have this problem. In fact, Jesus made a habit of pointing out a lot of things people hadn't seen before. One of the questions people asked Jesus a lot was, "Who is cool with You, and who is not?" Okay, maybe they didn't say it exactly like that, but they asked Jesus this kind of question in a lot of different ways. And like Jesus did in many conversations, He answered with a story.

Jesus often used stories with real-life examples to reveal a bigger truth. In this case, He used a story of sheep and goats to explain the differences between the righteous and the unrighteous—those on the right side and those on the wrong side. Or to think back to our superheroes, the good guys and the bad guys, like Batman and the Joker. Jesus was simply trying to make it clear that there were two categories here, and since flocks and shepherds were part of life in ancient Israel, everyone would have been familiar with this example.

So again, the question presented to Jesus was, "Who is cool with You? Who is in good standing with You? Who is on the right side? And who is on the wrong side?" And in this story, the sheep are on the right, or righteous, side and the goats are not.

Listen to what He says to the goats:

***"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." (Matthew 25:41-46 NIV).***

In this story, Jesus distinguishes between the righteous and the unrighteous—the good guys and the bad guys—by how they responded to the needs of the least of these, whom Jesus defined as the prisoners, the hungry, the sick, and strangers. In other words, people who need the most help, feel the most pain, or get the worst treatment. Now that may seem a little bit extreme. Is Jesus really this mad because they didn't give someone some water?

I mean, listen to the level of shock that the "goats" expressed in their response to the King. WHEN did we not see you? WHEN did we not clothe you or feed you or give you water? It's as if they're saying, **"Not me. I'd NEVER do that."**

He hadn't physically been hungry or thirsty or in prison. But He wanted to make a point—not only did you not do something about the injustice, but you didn't even SEE it. When you don't see those who need your help, you're not just missing out on seeing injustice; when we don't see it, Jesus takes PERSONAL offense as if we don't see Him! You're missing out on part of what it means to follow Jesus Himself!

Remember, this is a story about who is cool with Jesus and who isn't. And He is VERY clear about the answer: **His people are people who see and act when it comes to injustice.**

Now, I'm not saying that's what it takes to start a relationship with Jesus, but I am saying if you get to know Him, you'll see that Jesus always cares about injustice, always speaks up for others, and always fights for what's right. And if you follow Him, you'll become more like Him in that way. You'll begin to care about the things He cares about. And because of Jesus' example, you may begin to see injustice differently than you ever have before. You may be compelled to DO something more than ever before. Don't worry, we'll talk more about WHAT exactly to do over the next few weeks, but for now, let's start with the one thing we all have to do first.

**Before you do something about injustice, you have to see it.**

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## APPLICATION

4 MINUTES

That's where we need to start. We need to be able to look around and see what's happening. We need to be able to notice the injustices in our daily, ordinary world. We all have room to grow in this, so here are three simple things we can do together:

**1. Get close enough to see.** How do we do this? Well, there are a few things we can do. For starters, we can pray that God would help us see the way He sees. Then, spend some time with people who are different than you. This doesn't come natural to any of us. We naturally gravitate toward people who are like us. In order to see what's going on in the WORLD, you have to get to know people IN the world, not just in your circle. So get close enough to see. Strike up a conversation with someone in your class. Sit next to someone different than you in the cafeteria. Get a job that will help you meet people outside your school. Volunteer somewhere. Put yourself on the path to interact with different people. These are all ways to get close enough to other people in order to see the world from someone else's eyes.

And you can make an effort to learn about other's experiences on your own. Watch a movie about injustice. Do a little research on organizations who are working to help. Start discovering what's happening in the world and in your community.

**2. Be curious enough to listen.** The quickest way to SEE injustice is to LISTEN to the people experiencing it. When someone tells you about experiencing injustice, LISTEN. And don't just listen, but try to learn. Try to imagine yourself in their shoes. Think about what they're saying. And here's a heads up: it will make you uncomfortable, especially if it's a kind of injustice you've never experienced or worse, the kind you didn't realize you have participated in. This is when the conversation gets REAL, and it may be tempting to bounce. We are wired as a survival instinct to avoid being uncomfortable. I mean, some of you act like you're going to die if you have to talk to someone on an actual phone instead of texting. Why? Because it's uncomfortable, and we HATE being uncomfortable. But in this case, discomfort isn't necessarily BAD. It's actually a GOOD sign when BAD things make you uncomfortable. It means you're beginning to SEE things the way God sees them. So keep listening, try to learn, and when you hear about injustice, be curious, even if it's a little bit uncomfortable.

Be curious about your own experience, too. Maybe you'll notice you've experienced an injustice, but you've brushed it off because everybody around you keeps saying it's no big deal. Or maybe you'll notice you've participated in injustice without realizing it. You can't know what you'll discover until you get curious. Be open to what God may be doing in you.

**3. Be courageous enough to name it.** That means if it's wrong, say it's wrong. If it's unfair, call it that. When you SEE injustice around you or even IN you, be courageous enough to call it what it is. Identifying injustice takes away some of its power because we can't change what isn't seen, acknowledged, or talked about. This may be the hardest part for you. It's risky, it's awkward, and it's uncomfortable, but it's important, because once we name injustice, we also feel ownership and the responsibility to do something about it.

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## LANDING

1 MINUTE

Listen, so much of following Jesus is learning to see, think, and live in a way that is not natural to us. One of the things that I love about this generation is that so many of you actually see and care about injustice more than previous generations. Here's what I'm getting at: you can be the generation to DO SOMETHING in areas where it has seemed impossible. But the first step to doing something is SEEING it and helping others see it, too. That's why we have Small Groups. There we can talk about real, difficult things and help each other see things we haven't seen before. In fact, your Small Group Leader is a great person to talk to as you're processing and discovering new ways to see the world around you.

As you head out, I want you to think about this quote from Maya Angelou, a famous writer who wrote about injustice often: "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

That's what this series is about. Seeing better, so we can know better, and ultimately do better.



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS

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