



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Do Something / Week 3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

BOTTOM LINE

God is doing something about injustice.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students brainstorm ways they can join God in His activity on behalf of others.

SCRIPTURE

Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And He healed every kind of disease and illness (Matthew 9:35 NLT).

*When He saw the crowds, He **had compassion** on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36 NLT, emphasis added).*

“For I, the Lord, love justice” (Isaiah 61:8a NLT).

He said to his disciples, “The harvest is great, but the workers are few” (Matthew 9:37 NLT).

All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it (1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT).

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- Have you ever noticed how almost everything we buy has a warning label?
- *Note: The Interactive happens here. See your Teaching Script for details.*
- In this series called “Do Something”, we’re talking about injustice.
- So, if justice is something right, fair, or equal, then 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.
- And I think that seeing injustice should come with its own warning label, one that says: “Will make you ask difficult questions!”

TENSION

- Seeing injustice can leave us asking a lot of questions, both about the injustice itself, and the God who is supposedly in control of the world where it happens.
- Maybe you’ve landed on the really hard question when it comes to injustice. A question that feels so difficult to answer: “*Why isn’t God doing something about this?*”
- Maybe you feel nervous I even said that out loud because we’re not supposed to question God, right?

- Maybe you're like, "YEAH! That's exactly what I keep asking!" You probably feel relieved that someone finally said it out loud.
- Maybe this is the very reason you're still not sure about all this Jesus stuff. You can't imagine yourself being a Jesus-follower if He's not going to do something about the brokenness you see around you.
- No matter where we are or what our world looks like right now, God is big enough to handle our questions—even the difficult ones.

TRUTH

- Today, we're going to take a look at the eyewitness account of Matthew, a book written by one of Jesus' closest followers and friends.
- Matthew hung out with Jesus and knew what He was about. Maybe that's why he took the time to write down this thing that he saw (*Matthew 9:35 NLT*).
- Everywhere He went, Jesus had something to say (and do) about people being treated unfairly or in a way that wasn't right (*Matthew 9:36 NLT*).
- Jesus modeled for us what God is really like when it comes to injustice.
 - First, Jesus **saw**. He saw the injustice, the hurt, and the brokenness.
 - And when He saw, Jesus **cared**. That's what compassion is.
- If you've ever wondered, God is FOR justice (*Isaiah 61:8a NLT*).
- So maybe you don't talk about harvesting a lot, but here, Jesus is talking about work.
- That kind of work required a lot of effort. So when He saw what was going on, Jesus had compassion, and He also responded by telling them it's time to get to **WORK**.
- Now let me make this really personal for you and I: *What if God has a plan to do something about injustice* and, what if **WE** are the plan?
- The Apostle Paul, whose life was changed by Jesus, wrote letters to the early church and taught them what it looks like to be a Christian (*1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT*).
- Paul uses the illustration of one body made up of all its individual parts. In the same way, God designed the body of Christ, or the Church, to work together to help each other out.
- When we're talking about injustice, it's not that God isn't there or doesn't care. Instead, God is calling the Church, His people, to be His hands and feet here on earth.
- God is doing something about injustice.

APPLICATION

- The question is: Will you participate in what He is already doing?
- The first step is to rethink what we think about injustice.
 - Rethink what it means to be a follower of Jesus.
 - Rethink how God sees people.
 - Rethink your responsibility.
- The second step is to change the questions you might be asking. Instead of asking, "Where is God?" ask, "Where am I?"
- Once you've taken these steps, it might be time to: find a way to fight injustice.

LANDING

- Over and over we can see that the Bible teaches us that God cares deeply about injustice and wants to use us to do something about it.
- This means that His people should be known for being people who do something about injustice.
- Imagine the opportunities we would have to show people that God is FOR them and FOR helping those who are experiencing injustice.
- Imagine if the people you know would be more willing to believe God is doing something when it comes to injustice because they saw YOU doing something.

INTERACTIVE

This Interactive happens in the Intro section; please see that section for more details. For this Interactive you'll need...

- A series of pictures of funny/odd warning labels.



TEACHING SCRIPT

Do Something / Week 3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

BOTTOM LINE

God is doing something about injustice.

INTRODUCTION

1.5 MINUTES



INTERACTIVE

Communicator Note: For this Interactive, you'll use a series of funny warning labels (i.e. remove child before washing clothes, do not iron shirt while wearing, etc.) to illustrate how everything has a warning label and say something like this: "Have you ever noticed how almost everything we buy has a warning label? Now, if you live life on the wild side like me, you might not pay that close of attention, BUT those labels are there for a reason. Sometimes they're actually helpful, but other times, they make you wonder just who is buying this product. I mean, if they had to put a warning on it, I'm guessing that means someone did that thing they're warning against... right? Here is what I mean..."

(Show slides of funny/odd warning labels)

"As funny as these are, I think the funnier idea to think of is WHERE these warning labels come from. I don't know about you, but that's not something I usually think about, which makes me think that I'm missing something...there's something I'm not seeing."

In this series called "Do Something", we're talking about injustice. So, if justice is something right, fair, or equal, then 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.

Last week, we said that our first step is SEEING injustice. It's choosing to get close enough to listen to and learn about it from other people; to open our eyes and begin to notice injustice around us. But I think that seeing injustice should come with its own warning label, one that says: "Will make you ask difficult questions!"

TENSION

2.5 MINUTES

Here's what I mean. **Seeing injustice can leave us asking a lot of questions**, both about the injustice itself, and the God who is supposedly in control of the world where it happens. Maybe you see an injustice in the world, and you wonder things like...

- **Why would that person say that?**
- **How could someone do that to someone else?**
- **What makes stuff like this happen?**
- **Why isn't anyone doing something about it?**

Or maybe, you've landed on the really hard question when it comes to injustice. A question that feels so difficult to answer:

"Why isn't God doing something about this?"

Maybe you feel nervous I even said that out loud because we're not supposed to question God, right? After all, He's God, and He can do whatever He wants.

Or maybe you're like, **"YEAH! That's exactly what I keep asking!"** You probably feel relieved that someone finally said it out loud.

Or maybe this is the very reason you're still not sure about all this Jesus stuff. You can't imagine yourself being a Jesus-follower if He's not going to do something about the brokenness you see around you.

No matter where we are or what our world looks like right now, **God is big enough to handle our questions—even the difficult ones**. All sorts of people who have gone through all sorts of things, have been trying to answer these questions since the beginning of time. So why do we keep asking?

Because it bothers us. After all, how can a good God allow things like human trafficking, prejudice, poverty, and racism to happen and do...nothing?

TRUTH

7.5 MINUTES

Thankfully, we don't have to guess or assume where God is in the midst of all of this. We don't have to guess what God is really like or if He really cares. We can look at his Son, Jesus, who is the best way to see what God is really like.

Several people who knew Jesus personally, and hung out with Him, took the time to write down what they saw and heard so that people like you and me, the ones who *didn't* get to see it with their own eyes, would know what happened.

Today, we're going to take a look at the eyewitness account of Matthew, a book written by one of Jesus' closest followers and friends. Sometimes in church, we call this the "book" of Matthew or the "Gospel" of Matthew. No matter what you call it, Matthew hung out with Jesus and knew what He was about. Maybe that's why he took the time to write down this thing that he saw. Here's what he said:

Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness (Matthew 9:35 NLT).

Jesus was teaching, healing, and helping people as He shared the message of what God's Kingdom is really like. He talked about things like...

- the outcast being loved.
- the slaves being freed.
- the oppressed being rescued.
- the hungry being fed.

In other words, He's talking about justice. Everywhere He went, Jesus had something to say (and do) about people being treated unfairly or in a way that wasn't right. Matthew continues:

*When He saw the crowds, He **had compassion** on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36 NLT, emphasis added).*

Jesus modeled for us what God is really like when it comes to injustice.

- First, **Jesus saw**. He saw the injustice, the hurt, and the brokenness.
- And when He saw, **Jesus cared**. That's what compassion is.

So, if you've ever wondered, God is FOR justice. In fact, thousands of years earlier, He said so through the prophet Isaiah:

"For I, the Lord, love justice" (Isaiah 61:8a NLT).

So, we know that God loves justice. Got it! But that still doesn't answer the question, *Why doesn't He DO something about the injustices around us today? Why doesn't He wave a magic wand or do that whole miracle thing He was so good at?*

Interestingly enough, Matthew gives us a clue in the next verse. Look at what Jesus said next:

He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few." (Matthew 9:37 NLT).

Okay, so maybe you don't talk about harvesting a lot, but here, Jesus is talking about work. He lived in a farming community, so when He started talking about planting and harvesting, it wasn't weird. That kind of work required a lot of effort. So when He saw what was going on, Jesus had compassion, and He also responded by telling them it's time to get to **WORK**. He is basically saying, "There's plenty to be done, but also plenty of room for more people to get involved in the work."

Now, let me make this really personal for you and I: *What if God has a plan to do something about injustice* and, what if *WE are the plan*? What if the miracle Jesus has in mind isn't making injustice magically go away, but instead, it's you and me doing the work to end injustice on His behalf? What if it's us responding to all the things He already cares about? What if the plan is us becoming more like *Him*?

I think it's possible. Here's why:

The Apostle Paul, whose life was changed by Jesus, wrote letters to the early church and taught them what it looks like to be a Christian. He used this word picture to describe the Church:

All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it (1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT).

Paul uses the illustration of one body made up of all its individual parts. Even though it may seem like the ear is independent from the toe, the whole body relies on each part in order to function as God designed it to. In the same way, God designed the body of Christ, or the Church, to work together to help each other out. So, when we're talking about injustice, it's not that God isn't there

or doesn't care. Instead, God is calling the Church, His people, to be His hands and feet here on earth. In other words:

God is doing something about injustice.

Think about that.

God *is* doing something about racial injustice *through us*.

God *is* doing something about violence toward women, and the plan is *us*.

God *is* doing something about sex trafficking, hunger, poverty, modern-day slavery, and all of the injustices we see on a local level and a global level, and we get to be a part of that.

APPLICATION

3.5 MINUTES

The question is: Will you participate in what He is already doing?

If so, where do we start? Here are a couple of steps you can take to begin.

The first step is to rethink what we think about injustice. In other words, to change our minds about the way we see God, the world, and even ourselves when it comes to injustice.

- Maybe it's time to **rethink what it means be a follower of Jesus**. Maybe you thought faith was about singing songs and showing up at church and praying. Those are good things, but to follow Jesus, is so much bigger than that. Following means you start to see the world like He sees it. You care about what He cares about. You treat people the way He would treat them. Then, you can begin to do something about the brokenness in this world because you know that's what Jesus is calling you to do.
- **Rethink how God sees people**. Maybe you thought God didn't care about some people. Okay, maybe you would never say that out loud, but sometimes it's tempting to assume that God likes certain people more than others; that somehow good things happen to people because God likes them more, and bad or unjust things happen because He likes them less. Ask Him to help you rethink that, too. Jesus makes it so clear that God loves ALL people, and He cares about the hurt and injustice they face.
- **Rethink your responsibility**. Maybe you thought responding to injustice wasn't exactly a teenager thing. Or maybe you thought it was important to only care about certain ones. Maybe today is the day to start changing your idea about how injustice impacts us all. To start rethinking how you think about what you can do personally in response to it.

The second step is to change the questions you might be asking. Instead of asking, "Where is God?" ask, "**Where am I?**"

Maybe the next step for you is to choose to be part of what God is already doing in the world; to ask God to begin to show you where your place might be in working toward justice in your community, your school, or in the world as a whole.

Once you've taken these steps, it might be time to: **Find a way to fight injustice**.

- What do you see that is breaking your heart?

- Step up, serve, give your time, give your energy, and give your money. Take the skills, personality, and resources God has given you and find ways to use them to help bring justice to the injustices God has shown you.
 - Who is working to fight injustice in that area, and how can you partner with them?
-

LANDING

1 MINUTE

Over and over we can see that the Bible teaches us that God cares deeply about injustice and wants to use us to do something about it. This means that His people should be known for being people who do something about injustice. So just imagine if we became known as a group of people who are...

- The most compassionate.
- The most kind.
- The most just.
- The most resilient.
- The first to speak up.
- The first to stand up for others experiencing injustice.

Imagine the positive impact we could have on our community, our schools, and our world. Imagine the opportunities we would have to show people that God is FOR them and FOR helping those who are experiencing injustice.

As you head to Small Group, I want you to think about this: what if that were true of your small group? What if that were true of your friend group? What if the Christians at your school or in your neighborhood were the MOST compassionate, and kind, and brave, and vocal about injustice?

How might that change the way people see God?

Imagine if the people you know would be more willing to believe God is doing something when it comes to injustice because they saw YOU doing something.



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
