



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Do Something / Week 4

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

BOTTOM LINE

When it comes to injustice, never stop doing something.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students discover practical ways to be part of a life-long commitment to speaking and acting on behalf of others.

SCRIPTURE

Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? (James 2:15-16 NIV)

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead (James 2:17 NIV).

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people (Galatians 6:9-10a NIV).

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- What is your MOST used emoji? Your all-time favorite?
- *Note: The Interactive happens here. See your Teaching Script for details.*
- For me, it's this one. *[Show a picture of the shrug emoji.]*
- For the past few weeks, we've been talking about injustice, and how we all just wish somebody, somewhere, would DO something.
- When I think of all the injustice in the world, or even just all the injustice we've been talking about here at church, I feel like this emoji.
- *Communicator Note: Be mindful as you use the emoji and language of the shrug to demonstrate the shrug as, "I don't know what to do" and not, "I don't care".*

TENSION

- When you hear people talk about justice, it simply means something that is right, fair, or equal. Well, injustice is the opposite of that. So when we talk about injustice, we're talking about the things in our world that are unfair, unequal, or not right.
- When you think about it this way, chances are you can see plenty of areas of injustice in our world.
- There's a need for more somebodies to do something. And you are somebody who could do something.

- Maybe you hear that phrase and feel excited, challenged, or even inspired. You're ready to jump in and do the work. What I want you to see is that the work isn't easy. It's not a one-and-done battle.
- Maybe you're still feeling like this [*Show shrug emoji*]. Because you realize that it's emotionally, mentally, and even spiritually exhausting to deal with and fight against the long list of injustices happening in our world.
- As much as we're talking and praying about injustice, the reality is that to you, it truly feels like one of those problems we just can't solve.
- It feels like something **SOMEBODY** needs to do something about it, right? Well, remember what we said: **YOU** are somebody.

TRUTH

- We're going to look at some words from a guy named James. What's interesting about James is that he was actually the brother of Jesus.
- James went on to write a letter to a group of Christians who were facing severe injustice, and he challenged them (*James 2:15-16 NIV*).
- When faced with the **HUGE**-ness of a problem that we don't know how to solve, we often just settle for saying (or posting) something and doing nothing.
- Of course, thinking about it is good. Praying is powerful. Posting is important. But if our "doing something" stops there, we have missed some of what it means to follow Jesus.
- Following somebody means you do the kind of thing they would do. And Jesus? Jesus was always doing something about injustice.
- Did Jesus offer His words? Absolutely! But He also offered His actions (*James 2:17 NIV*).
- James was saying that our faith and our actions are connected.
- When it came to injustice, Jesus was always doing something. **ALWAYS**.
- God wants to see the wrongs in the world made right. He wants us to never stop doing something about injustice.
- It may feel overwhelming, but small changes are still that: changes!
- Now, some of you get this because you have been **DOING** something about injustice for a long time. And you know...
 - It's exhausting.
 - It may feel like it's not working.
- I want you to hear from somebody else who met Jesus, who hung out with His followers (including James), and who spoke to people facing huge injustice (*Galatians 6:9-10a NIV*).
- Fighting injustice is like planting a seed. You plant it. You water it. You give it sunlight and time to grow. And then, you keep doing that until something blooms.
- There are people who have been fighting to right the wrongs in this world for decades and decades now. And little by little, they've seen change. They've made progress.
- The same can be true for us. So when it comes to injustice, never stop doing something.

APPLICATION

- Here are ways to keep doing something about injustice:
 - Use your voice.
 - Use your influence.
 - Use your talent.
 - Use your life.

LANDING

- Maybe before this, you've never thought about God as caring about injustice. For some of us, this idea has even changed the way we think about God altogether.
- Today, as we're wrapping up this series, I want you to imagine: what if the Church actually did this?
- Here's what crazy -- that **CAN** happen...but only if we **DO SOMETHING**.

INTERACTIVE

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

- A small bag of seeds.
- A handful of dirt.
- A potted plant.
- A small pail of water.



TEACHING SCRIPT

Do Something / Week 4

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BOTTOM LINE

When it comes to injustice, never stop doing something.

INTRODUCTION

3 MINUTES

Weird question. What is your MOST used emoji? Your all-time favorite? I know, I know. Most of us probably don't use the emojis as much as our grandparents or parents, but we still use them all the time. How do I know? Take a quick peek at your phone's emoji keyboard. Chances are, the most used ones appear first. So, which is your go-to?

For some of you it's the sideways laughing emoji...

Or maybe it's the green face, sick emoji...

Or for all the pros in the room, you can probably make a whole conversation just with emojis...

But for me, it's this one. *[Show a picture of the shrug emoji.]* This is my go-to emoji for just about anything!

What do you want for dinner? Shrug emoji.

What was our math homework? Shrug emoji.

How do you get TikTok famous without spending thousands on lighting and cameras? Shrug emoji.

Basically, when I don't know what to say, how to help, or what to do next, the shrug emoji is my answer. And honestly, when I was thinking about what we're going to talk about tonight, I thought of this emoji, too.

For the past few weeks, we've been talking about injustice, and how we all just wish somebody, somewhere would DO something. And when I think of all the injustice in the world, or even just all the injustice we've been talking about here at church, I feel like this emoji. What do I do? What can I do? And what's the *something* that will actually make a difference when it comes to injustice?

(Communicator Note: Tone is so important in conversations like these. Be mindful as you use the emoji and language of the shrug to demonstrate the shrug as, "I don't know what to do" and not, "I don't care".)

TENSION

5.5 MINUTES

Just to make sure we're all on the same page, let's define that word "injustice."

When you hear people talk about justice, it simply means something that is right, fair, or equal. Well, injustice is the opposite of that. So when we talk about injustice, we're talking about the things in our world that are unfair, unequal, or not right.

People getting bullied at school? That's injustice. Victims of human trafficking? That's injustice. Families in poverty? That's injustice. Schools go online to deal with a pandemic, but students don't have the tools or resources or internet access they need to keep up with classes? That's injustice. Women aren't paid the same as men for the same job? Injustice. People being treated differently because of their race or ethnicity? That's injustice. And of course, the list could go on and on.

When you think about it this way, chances are you can see plenty of areas of injustice in our world. And if you're honest, that probably makes you think something like, *Wow, that's a lot of terrible things happening in the world. Somebody should really do something about all that!*

And so far, we all agree. We all get that. There's a need for more somebodies to do something. Check! But I want you to pay attention to what I say next because it's literally the point of this series. And it could be a phrase that passes right through your mind having no effect, or it could change the course of your life. Here we go:

YOU are somebody who could do something.

Now, maybe you hear that phrase and feel excited, challenged, or even inspired. You're ready to jump in and do the work. Put me in, Coach! Let's get this thing started! If that's you, that's great! But keep listening, because what I want you to see is that the work isn't easy. It's not a one-and-done battle. So many people, including some of you and some of our leaders, have spent years fighting against things like racism, poverty, and gender inequality. You know this work isn't easy or fast. So all of us who are ready to do something have to be ready for the long-haul.

Or maybe you're still feeling like this [*show shrug emoji*]. Because you realize that it's emotionally, mentally, and even spiritually exhausting to deal with, and fight against, the long list of injustices happening in our world. As much as we're talking and praying about injustice, the reality is that to you, it truly feels like one of those problems we just can't solve.

- Maybe you're thinking, injustice has always happened, and it's still happening, so is there really hope of changing it? [*Show shrug emoji.*]
- Maybe you're wondering how you, just one person, can make a difference in some huge problems like racism, human trafficking, sexism, poverty, and more. Is it even possible for *one person* in high school to make a difference in any meaningful way? [*Show shrug emoji.*]
- Maybe you're SO tired of talking about it and trying to explain to people who don't seem to care that you wonder if it's even worth trying anymore. Will people ever care as much as you do? [*Show shrug emoji.*]
- Or maybe you've experienced injustice for so long that you wonder if saying anything or doing anything is really going to make a difference. It hasn't so far... so why would it now? [*Show shrug emoji.*]

All of that? I totally get it! Because you're right: standing up and doing something about injustice isn't easy. It is overwhelming. It is something that feels like somebody bigger, or stronger, or older, or more powerful should be doing. It feels like something *somebody* needs to do something about, right?

Well, remember what we said: **You are somebody.**

TRUTH

9.5 MINUTES

To get started, we're going to look at some words from a guy named James. What's interesting about James is that he was actually the brother of Jesus.

Can you imagine growing up in the same family as Jesus? Of course, it must not have helped that Jesus is literally God in human form. For those of you who have siblings, you can probably feel for James!

What's interesting is that after Jesus died and was raised back to life, James got more involved in the ministry his brother was all about. He went from being mostly absent from Jesus' ministry to being the guy traveling the world and telling others about his brother. What changed? Well, my guess is when your brother dies and comes back to life, it makes sense to believe that He is who He says He is. He believed that his brother, Jesus was actually the Son of God. This is one of the reasons we know the resurrection actually happened: Jesus' own brother believed He died and came back to life.

James went on to write a letter to a group of Christians who were facing severe injustice, and he challenged them by saying this:

Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? (James 2:15-16 NIV)

When you put it that way, it sounds pretty heartless. But you know what? If we're honest, I think that's what we're all tempted to do sometimes. When faced with the HUGE-ness of a problem that we don't know how to solve, **we often just settle for saying (or posting) something and doing nothing.**

- When we see something unjust happening in our town, we think about how bad it is. We may even say so, but sometimes, that's where our involvement ends.
- When we see someone we know struggling to have their needs met, we might say we'll pray for them, and we probably do. But of course, we don't want to "get in their business," so it stops there. We don't do much else.
- When we see racial injustice happening in our country, we might post about it on our social media feeds, but then we move on. So many of us don't do the harder work of learning about it, speaking up about it, or standing up to it when we see it happening.

This, by the way, isn't a teenager thing. This is a human thing. Every adult in this room feels the temptation to hold back when it comes to injustice. And don't get me wrong here: thinking about it is good. Praying is powerful. Posting is important. All of that is good, but if our "doing something" stops there, we have missed some of what it means to follow Jesus.

You see, following somebody means you do the kind of thing they would do. And Jesus? **Jesus was always doing something about injustice.**

Maybe you've heard about how He spoke up for the poor, cared for the sick, hung out with people who were outcasts, and confronted leaders who were treating people unfairly. Did Jesus offer His words? Absolutely! But He also offered his actions. He lived in a way that showed the world what it looks like to value people and, as His followers, we can do the same.

Look at what James went on to say here:

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead (James 2:17 NIV).

James was saying that our faith and our actions are connected. If we say we have faith, but it doesn't motivate us to do something, then something about our faith is broken. And here's why that's a big deal: living a life of faith is about becoming more like Jesus. And even if you've missed every part of this series so far, here's the part I want you to always remember. When it came to injustice, Jesus was always doing something. *Always*. And when we make that shift to allow our prayers and words to turn into action, we are becoming more like the person we're praying to. We're becoming more like Jesus.

The things that make you feel sad or angry that you know aren't right; the injustices that motivate you to act; those things that hurt you and the people you love; those things are wrongs in the world that God wants to see made right.

When it comes to injustice, never stop doing something.

It may feel overwhelming; like our little actions won't have any effect on such giant problems. But small changes are still that: changes! And they're changes in the right direction.

Now, some of you get this because you have been DOING something about injustice for a long time. You've been speaking up for people, showing up to help, posting, working. And because of that, here's what you know for sure:

1. It is exhausting. Doing something means you have the same conversations over and over. It means you don't show up one time, check the box, and move on. You show up over and over and over.
2. It may feel like it's not working. You may feel like you're fighting a losing battle; that every little thing you're doing just isn't working. You probably feel discouraged at times, wondering if this battle is even one that can be won.

Well, if that's you, I want you to hear from somebody else who met Jesus, who hung out with His followers (including James), and who spoke to people facing huge injustice. It's the apostle Paul, and here's what he said:

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people (Galatians 6:9-10a NIV).

"Don't get weary when you're doing good," Paul said. In other words, don't give up! Don't give in when the good work gets hard. Instead, keep going, keep working, keep fighting.



For this Interactive, you'll use plants and gardening tools to illustrate how fighting against injustice is like planting a seed, taking care of it, and allowing it to grow over time.

Say something like this: "Fighting injustice is like planting a seed (show the bag of seeds). You plant it (show the handful of dirt). You water it (show the gardening pail). You give it sunlight and time to grow. You have to take care of it (gardening shears). And then, you keep doing that until something blooms."

"You won't see much at the beginning. And you may even think that a plant won't ever sprout. But underground, a lot is happening. Eventually, the plant will pop up, and before long it will be harvest time."

See the work you're doing; the injustices in the world that break your heart? They aren't new. And that means the battle against them isn't either. There are people who have been fighting to right the wrongs in this world for decades and decades now. And little by little, they've seen change. They've made progress. And I'm so grateful they didn't give up. They didn't stop.

The same can be true for us. So when it comes to injustice, never stop doing something. It may feel impossible, but little by little you can change the world. How? Like James said, DO something, and like Paul said, "KEEP doing something."

APPLICATION

3 MINUTES

So, here are ways to keep doing something about injustice:

- **Use your voice.** Speak up. Say something in the moment. Say something on social media. Say something to a teacher or adult who can help. Use the voice you have to speak up and speak out for those who need it. And if that doesn't work? KEEP saying something until it does.
- **Use your influence.** Maybe people listen to you because they're in your friend group. Use that influence you have to talk about injustice with them. Maybe your family has resources that could help other people. Ask how you can use those. Maybe your family has connections or a lot of opportunities. Ask how you can use YOUR opportunities to help someone else get more opportunities.
- **Use your talent.** You don't have to give up on basketball or theatre or Spanish class or whatever your hobby is. Use the talent God has given you to do something for others. Maybe you use your art to do something about injustice you see in your school. Maybe you use your influence on your team to speak up for or serve others. Maybe you can use the ability you have at school to tutor kids who need help. If you aren't sure how to start or what you have to offer, ask God. Ask Him to show you. Then, ask your Small Group Leader. They can tell you not only what talents they see in you, but help you brainstorm ways you can put them to work for the sake of others.
- **Use your life.** We're not talking about just one service project or signing up to volunteer a few times. Injustice is everywhere, and part of following Jesus is making a commitment to DO something and KEEP DOING SOMETHING. It's making the lifelong commitment to be in the work. Of course, that means you may have to take care of yourself in the process. You may need to find some people who can encourage you, who can remind you that doing something is worth it even when it doesn't feel like it.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

Maybe before this, you've never thought about God as caring about injustice. For some of us, this idea has even changed the way we think about God altogether. If that's you, we're about to head

to small groups, and we'd love for you to talk to your group or your leader about that. In fact, one of the reasons we have small groups is so we can get together and talk through how our faith is growing and changing with people who get it.

But before those conversations, pause with me for a minute. Today, as we're wrapping up this series, I want you to imagine: what if the Church actually did this? Not just our church, but THE Church, the entire community of people who follow Jesus. How might the people in your school or your neighborhood see God differently if Christians were known for choosing to SEE people the way God sees them, and TREAT them as He would? It's fascinating to think about, right?

Here's what's crazy -- that CAN happen...but only if we DO SOMETHING.



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
