



FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Find time to explore these questions as a family after each session.

Session 1

- What are some things in the world that are not right?
- Why should you help people who are abused, oppressed, or exploited?
- How do your actions affect people involved in these sorts of injustices? When might you be complacent or complicit in people's suffering?
- What does it mean to do justice or be righteous? Can a Christian be just but unrighteous? Why or why not? How can a church balance personal morality and social justice?

Session 2

- Should you give money to people who are asking for a handout? Why or why not? What else could you give them that might be helpful?
- What can you do to change the way the world works to remove the conditions that lead to homelessness?
- In what ways do we contribute to the conditions that make it difficult for vulnerable people to succeed?
- When have you been compassionate to someone in need? Why did you practice compassion in this situation?
- If you could change one thing about the way the world works, what would it be?

Session 3

- What causes of justice do you stand up for? What injustices do you personally stand up against? How do you do that?
- What are some issues of justice that people in your life particularly ignore? What are some issues of justice you particularly ignore?
- What could you do to help people who live in unjust situations?
- Who can you think of that lives, has lived, or has died for a just cause? Which is more impressive, someone who dies for a cause or someone who lives their whole life for a cause?

Session 4

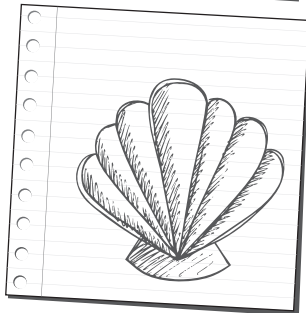
- Do you believe that God ever helps people on God's own? Why or why not?
- When has God used you to help someone else? When has God used someone else to help you?
- Is it always obvious how God wants us to do justice? Explain.



TONGUE TWISTERS



Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled peppers?
If Peter Piper Picked a peck of pickled peppers,
Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?



She sells seashells by the seashore.
The shells she sells are surely seashells.
So if she sells shells on the seashore,
I'm sure she sells seashore shells.



Imagine an imaginary menagerie manager
imagining managing an imaginary menagerie.



A skunk sat on a stump and thunk the stump stunk,
but the stump thunk the skunk stunk.



A tutor who tooted the flute
tried to tutor two tooters to toot.
Said the two to their tutor:
"Is it harder to toot,
Or to tutor two tooters to toot?"



JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

- You get grounded for saying something rude about your teacher on Facebook.

JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

- Someone at school gets extra credit in math class for doing something great in a football game.

JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

- You were late to church, driving safely on an empty road, and a police officer gives you a speeding ticket for driving five miles over the limit.

JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

- A family in your church has a child with a disability that causes her to make unpredictable, loud noises. Some people complain that this ruins their worship experience. The church session discusses whether to ask the family not to bring the girl.

JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

- Your good friend, who happens to be a white male, is a great student with perfect test scores, awesome essays, and impressive letters of recommendation. However, his first choice college accepts instead a less accomplished candidate, who happens to not be a white male.

JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

- A man chooses to try to provide better for his family by coming to the United States. The job he finds is picking tomatoes fourteen hours a day in unsafe conditions for less than minimum wage.

JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

- A popular restaurant in your town raises prices because they decided to pay more for tomatoes from your friend's family's farm, rather than purchasing less expensive tomatoes from another farm that hires people who can't get other jobs and pays them less than minimum wage.

JUST RIGHT/NOT RIGHT

- Your whole town used to eat at that popular local restaurant, but now it seems like everyone hangs out at the new fast-food place, which is cheaper. Because everyone likes to save a dollar, the local restaurant closes and all its employees lose their jobs. Some of your friends do get jobs at the new fast-food place. However, your friend's family has to sell their farm because no one will buy their more expensive tomatoes.



NEIGHBOR TOURNAMENT



Round 1

Round 2

Round 3

Round 3

Round 2

Round 1

Purchase fair-trade coffee and organic veggies.

Rebuke someone for telling a racist joke.

Donate regularly to your neighborhood food bank.

Use less gas and electricity.

Confront people who misuse words like *retarded* or *gay*.

Treat immigrants with dignity and kindness.

Spend the extra effort to properly dispose of electronics.

Say "thank you" to a business that supports justice.

Collect blankets for a homeless shelter.

Pay a little extra for clothing not made in sweatshops.

Make a microloan to help someone for away help themselves.

Write a letter about justice to your government leaders.

Do not buy products that test abusively on animals.

Take part in a protest or rally about justice.

Convince your congregation to do more for single mothers.

Stay more aware of international atrocities and peace issues.





KEEP YOUR COINS





HOMELESSNESS QUIZ

Circle T (True) or F (False) for each statement.

- T** **F** 1. About 2 million people are experiencing homelessness in America.
- T** **F** 2. Most people who are experiencing homelessness are not white.
- T** **F** 3. About a third of the people who are experiencing homelessness are under eighteen.
- T** **F** 4. Homelessness is only a problem in cities.
- T** **F** 5. Most people who are experiencing homelessness sleep in shelters.
- T** **F** 6. Homelessness was dropping, at least before the recession.
- T** **F** 7. About a quarter of people who are experiencing homelessness are military veterans.
- T** **F** 8. The main reason people become homeless is laziness.
- T** **F** 9. Most people who are experiencing homelessness could get a job if they just tried harder.
- T** **F** 10. Being homeless is very dangerous.
- T** **F** 11. If you give money to someone asking for help, they will waste it on alcohol or drugs.
- T** **F** 12. Jesus chose to be homeless.



HOMELESSNESS QUIZ ANSWERS

1. **False.** The best estimate before the recent recession is that about 3.5 million Americans are homeless at any time. Twenty states have populations lower than that!
2. **True.** Recent estimates hold that only 39 percent of the people who are homeless are white. Another 42 percent are African American, 13 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Native American, and 2 percent Asian.
3. **True.** The most recent estimates hold that 39 percent of people who are homeless are children, most of whom are homeless with their family. Forty-two percent of those children (or 16 percent of all people who are homeless) are under five years old. About 5 percent of all people who are homeless (or about 175,000) are unaccompanied minors.
4. **False.** About 9 percent of people who are homeless live in rural areas. They sometimes struggle more because of a lack of access to shelters or structured assistance.
5. **False.** While many people do use shelters on cold nights and some people use them for months at a time, about 59 percent of people who are homeless regularly sleep in their car and 25 percent regularly sleep in tents, boxes, caves, or railcars.
6. **False.** During the economic boom of the 1980s, homelessness *tripled* in American cities. During the 1990s, rates of homelessness doubled again in many cities. Most large cities continued to see increases through the 2000s.
7. **True.** The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that about 23 percent of people who are homeless are veterans. Of the veterans who are homeless, 89 percent received an honorable discharge, and about a third served in combat. Of the combat veterans who are homeless, almost half served in Vietnam.
8. **False.** About 26 percent of people who stay in shelters have severe mental illness. Nearly 25 percent of women who are homeless are trying to escape domestic abuse. One of the fastest growing segments of the homeless population is adults over fifty, often on fixed incomes, who can no longer afford housing and medication. Even for younger adults who become homeless, most are simply victims of economic circumstances, especially the perfect storm of lower wages (or a lost job), higher costs of living, and less public assistance.
9. **False.** About 15 percent of people who are homeless *have* a job! Moreover, it is very difficult for people who have been homeless to get or keep a job—consider the hurdles of hygiene, health, unreliable transportation, and all the competition for work.
10. **True.** People who are homeless are more likely to be victims of hate crimes, sexual assault, HIV/AIDS, deadly weather, extreme hunger, a lack of health care, incarceration, and many, many other dangers.
11. **Not a fair question.** On the one hand, many people have exhausted every other option for making money and will go without food or shelter if no one helps. Accusations like this are insensitive and foolish. On the other hand, it is true that about 38 percent of people who are homeless are alcoholic, and 26 percent are addicted to drugs. (Some of that addiction is a *result* of being homeless, rather than a cause.) Homelessness activists disagree about whether it is more helpful to offer those folks a way to cope with their suffering or more destructive to contribute to their habit. They tend to agree, however, that giving other things—like healthy food, bus tokens, or a smile—is very helpful.
12. **True.** “And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head!’” (Matthew 8:20).

Statistics and estimations come from the National Coalition for the Homeless (nationalhomeless.org/factsheets).





MOST HELPFUL.

Rank the ten scenarios (1 = most, 10 = least), first by the scenarios in which people most need help and then by the likelihood that you could help someone in the situation.

Scenarios	Most Needs Help	Likelihood That You Could Help
A person in a wheelchair is struggling to open a heavy door.		
An elderly man has dropped his grocery bags, and cans are rolling everywhere.		
A young girl at the mall has lost her parents.		
A person experiencing homelessness has not eaten a full, nutritious meal in days.		
A foreign banana farmer raises her family in abject poverty because the American firm that buys her fruit pays very low wages so that it can charge you a few cents less.		
Someone at your school regularly uses racially or sexually insensitive comments.		
Your church sponsors an awesome youth group ski trip but does not have enough money in the budget to help the people who practically live in the park across the street.		
A store you really like has all its clothes made in sweatshops.		
An ex-convict is trying to start a new life, but no one will give him a job.		
Thousands of children in Thailand are terribly sick because they live in landfills in order to scavenge for electronics parts that Americans throw away.		



FARKLE RULES

Extra-Dangerous Farkle Scores

- 1 one = 100
- 1 five = 50
- 3 ones in one roll = 1,000
- 3 twos in one roll = 200
- 3 threes in one roll = 300
- 3 fours in one roll = 400
- 3 fives in one roll = 500
- 3 sixes in one roll = 600
- straight, 1-6 = 1,000
- 3 pair = 1,500
- six of a kind = 2,500

Goal: To earn points by rolling certain dice combinations. The more you roll, the more you can earn, but with every roll you also risk losing your points.

Instructions:

- The first player rolls all six dice and decides which scoring dice to keep.
- If rollers do not have any scoring dice, they take a score of zero, their turn ends, and the next player rolls.
- If they do have scoring dice, they may take that score and end their turn, or they may set aside any or all of the scoring dice (which dice to set aside is a matter of strategy) and roll the remaining dice again.
- Any roll that fails to produce more scoring dice is a “farkle”! When a player farkles, he or she loses 1,000 points from his or her overall score, or another player can sacrifice 200 points from his or her score to allow the farkler to score zero on that turn.
- If a second roll does score more points but still leaves one or more nonscoring dice, a roller may stop and take that total score. Or, the roller can keep going by adding any of the new scoring dice to those already set aside and rolling the remaining non-scoring dice a third, fourth, or fifth time.
- When players score all six dice, they may stop and take that score or roll all six dice again to add even more points to their score. When rolling all six dice again, the same rules for scoring points remain, and a farkle still erases all points from the whole turn.
- Two-of-a-kind dice do not score and cannot be set aside, unless they are ones or fives; nor does a fourth-of-a-kind score any more points than a three-of-a-kind, unless it is a one or five; and rolling a third one or five over two or three rolls does not make it a three-of-a-kind.





MOCK COURT

Characters: Narrator, Steve, Sally, Alexandra, Cy

- Narrator:** Steve was the star on every sports team, played drums in an awesome band, and even teachers seemed to like him. It's like he never made a mistake! Sally, who will definitely be the prom queen, has a crush on him. She is a sweet girl, but her friends are so mean. One day, Steve was eating lunch with some ninth graders from his church when the girls walked by loudly.
- Cy:** Wow, do you see that little kid?!
- Alexandra:** Could she have more zits?!
- Cy:** And that one over there, where does he buy his clothes? The 1995 store?
- Sally:** Oh, leave it alone. Why are you always so judgmental?
- Alexandra:** Wake up, Sally! Steve is never going to be prom king if he hangs out with dorks like that.
- Narrator:** Steve was conflicted. He had daydreamed about dancing with Sally at prom, but her friends might be right.
- Cy:** And seriously, Sally, do you want to come to my after-prom party and skinny-dip with the lacrosse team at the lake house, or hang out with Steve's lame friends watching Disney movies in some church basement?
- Narrator:** Actually, Steve *had* planned on going to the after-prom party at church. If Sally knew that, she really might not go to prom with him.
- Alexandra:** Hey, Steve! Why are you hanging out with these losers? I'm starting to think you're a loser too. Come on, Sally, you aren't going to prom with this loser.
- Sally:** *(After some careful thought)* Ummm . . .
- Steve:** *(After some careful thought)* Listen, Alex, these are my friends. Why do you have to be so stuck-up? What did they ever do to you? What did I ever do to you? I'm going to ask Sally to the prom, and it's none of your business.
- Alexandra:** Actually it is my business, Steve! Sally is my friend, and I don't let friends hang out with tools!
- Cy:** And who are you to get so snotty, Steve? We're trying to save you from social suicide, and you get angry at us!
- Alexandra:** Just for that, I'm telling everyone in school that you like Justin Bieber and still sleep with a teddy bear. You're going down!
- Narrator:** And Alexandra did spread all kinds of rumors, even worse than those. And Sally let it all happen, without a peep. Steve never did get a date to the prom, although he did have plenty of fun at his church party. As for Cy, her after-prom party was busted by the cops. The school board wanted to keep everyone at that party from walking for graduation, but Steve, of all people, convinced them to offer mercy.

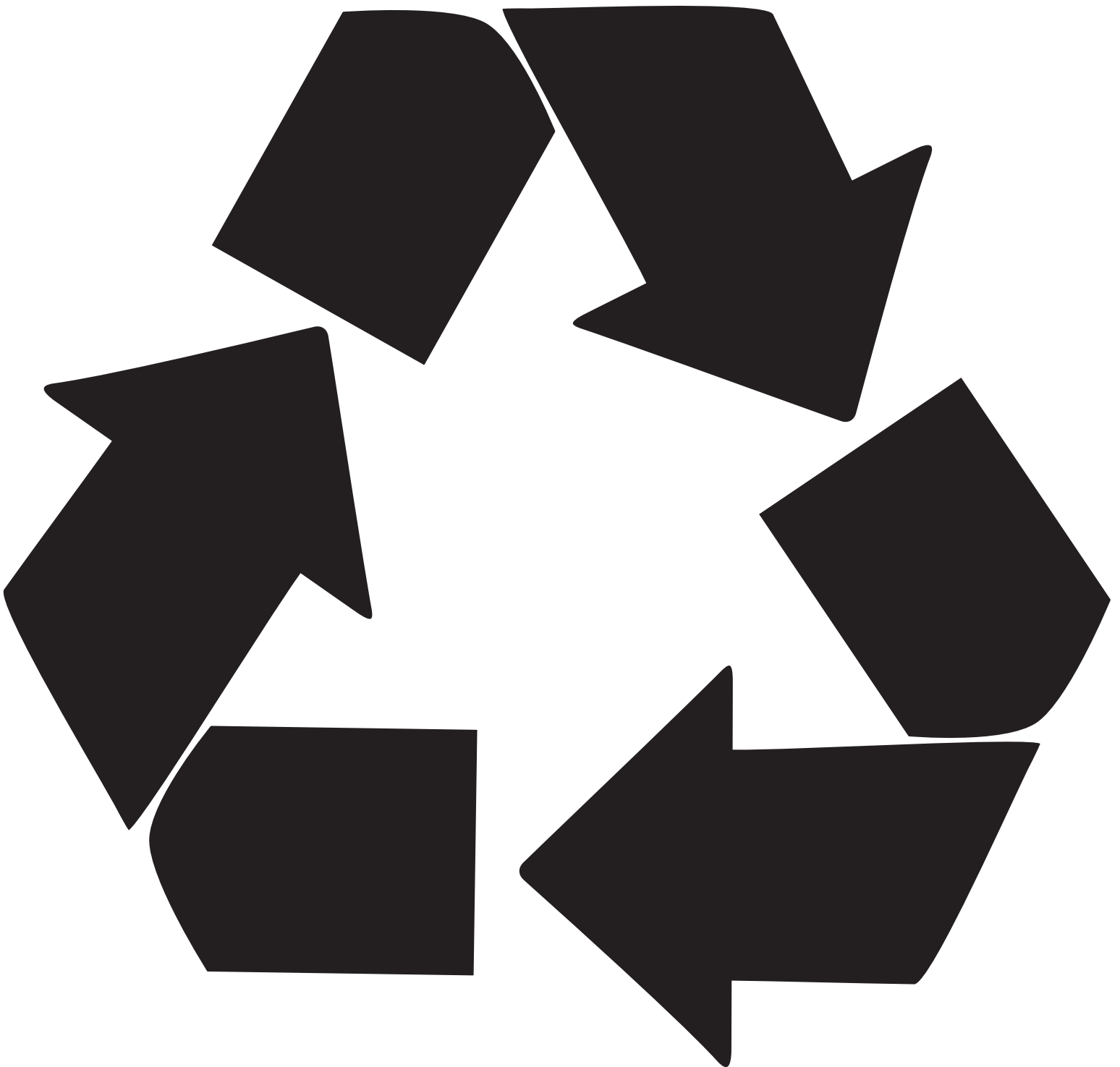


DESIGNING JUSTICE





DESIGNING JUSTICE





DESIGNING JUSTICE

USDA

ORGANIC





DESIGNING JUSTICE





DESIGNING JUSTICE

FAIR TRADE



CERTIFIED[®]





DESIGNING JUSTICE





DESIGNING JUSTICE





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ONE



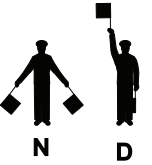


TITLE



1. Peace Symbol

This is a combination of the semaphore (the alphabet in flags) symbols for "N" and "D", which originally stood for "nuclear disarmament." Eventually it came to mean peace more generally.



2. Green Arrows

The three interlocking arrows were first used at early Green Day celebrations to inspire us to "reduce, reuse, recycle."



3. USDA Organic

This symbol accredits that a farm or company uses certain environmentally friendly practices to produce food. When your grandparents were your age, all farms were organic. Now the vast majority of food is grown with chemicals and practices that wreck havoc on the land, animals, and human neighbors.



4. Two-Finger Peace Sign

Winston Churchill popularized one sense of the two fingered V by declaring victory over the Nazis. Eventually it came to mean peace more generally.



5. Fair Trade Certified

This symbol accredits that a farm or company uses certain socially just business practices, especially treating the farmers and source communities fairly. Many businesses keep prices lower by treating their foreign employees and partners with little respect.



6. Dove

Early Christians considered the dove peaceful and compared it to the Holy Spirit, which was "descending like a dove" (Matthew 3:16) to Jesus at his baptism.



7. Handicap Accessible

This symbol declares that a space or area is accessible for everyone, but it can stand for inclusivity more generally.



8. Shaking Hands

This symbol encourages us to overcome racism.

9. Blue Ribbon

There are so many colored ribbons that represent various causes. A blue ribbon is a symbol of support against child abuse, bullying, and human trafficking.



10. ONE

This is a campaign to fight poverty in Africa, led by U2's lead singer, Bono.

TERESA'S PRAYER

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but
yours.

Yours are the eyes with which he
looks compassion on this world.
Yours are the feet with which he
blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the
feet, yours are the eyes, you are
his body.

Christ has no body now but yours.

—Attributed to Teresa of Avila (1515–1582)



SESSION 4 FAITH STATEMENT

God has reached out to those who suffer injustice and defended the excluded, the poor, and the hungry. The Lord is moving toward the time when justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. We are persuaded God is at work here and now when people deal fairly with each other and labor to change customs and structures that enslave and oppress human beings.

We believe God sends us to work with others to correct the growing disparity between rich and poor nations, to achieve fair legislation justly administered and enforced, to make the operation of courts and penal institutions more just and humane. We are charged to root out prejudice and racism from our hearts and institutions. We are commissioned to stand with women and men of all ages, races, and classes as they struggle for dignity and respect and the chance to exercise power for the common good. We must not [tolerate] in the church and its institutions the inequities we seek to correct in the world. We must be willing to make such amends as we can for centuries of injustice which the church condoned.

—A Declaration of Faith, 8.3

FAITH





MY DECLARATION OF FAITH

Write your own declaration of faith by finishing each of the eight sentences below.

God has reached out to . . . _____

The Lord is moving toward the time when . . . _____

We are persuaded God is at work here and now when . . . _____

We believe God sends us to work with others to . . . _____

We are charged to . . . _____

We are commissioned to . . . _____

We must not tolerate . . . _____

We must be willing to . . . _____

