

**Sunday, October 6**  
**Discussion Questions**  
**We Are Mercy + Justice**

This week we focus on our seventh DNA statement: *We are Mercy + justice ... we partner with others in protecting the powerless and caring for the hurting.* When Jesus began his ministry, his first 'sermon' focused on his commitment to bring mercy + freedom to the poor, captives, disabled and oppressed. Jesus came for those in need. So do we.

**REFLECT (10 Minutes)**

How has the Holy Spirit been speaking to you through the sermon Sunday?

OR

Was there anything new or interesting that grabbed you from the teaching Sunday?

How do you make sense of the relationship between doing mercy and Justice and being a Christian? Take a moment to consider what you think, even unconsciously about this relationship. Have a conversation about the reality of this interconnection in your life or in the life of the church.

**DIG DEEPER (20-30 Minutes)**

Start by reading Matthew 25:31-46.

- a. What themes jumped out to you as you heard these texts?
- b. What are some things that the biblical authors describe God's people doing?
- c. How do you think verses like these should inform our understanding of "Church"?

Have you ever been a stranger? Describe some of the feelings you had. Did anyone welcome you? Describe that experience.

Identify the six groups of needy people mentioned in Matthew 25, and discuss who else fits into the "least of these" category?

AS A GROUP - WATCH THIS VIDEO (JUSTICE): <https://vimeo.com/240052534>

What idea or image jumped out to you in a new way through this video? (Spend some good quality time here discussing varying aspect of the video.)

Have you ever been unjustly treated? Have you seen another person being oppressed? How did you respond?

**RESPOND (10-15 minutes)**

We all participate in injustice. We do either actively or passively and even unintentionally. This is the surprising message of the biblical story. Take a moment and ask yourself, "Am I doing something that oppresses someone else?" (Perhaps it is a result of consumption, or perhaps justice you have left undone.)

What are some factors that keep us from getting involved in social justice activities?

One of the most remarkable aspects of practicing the social justice tradition is its double effect: in the process of helping others, we too are helped. Have you ever experienced this effect? Describe that experience.

**PRAY (10 Minutes)**

Take some time to identify and pray for members of your group in specific areas of your lives that you want to join God in mercy and Justice.

Take some time to pray through the Lord's Prayer together:

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

**LEADER NOTES**

These questions are a guide; feel free to use/exclude ones as people may have already answered the question or talked about the theme OR if your group takes a long time to tackle one particular theme it's ok to skip over questions in the interest of time/focus.