

THE STORY OF JUSTICE

Shalom: From Creation to Cain | Discussion Notes

This series is primarily teaching ideas and themes of justice through the Bible. So, we're looking for our Hub discussions to take the ideas and make them practical. To help with these, we'll upload a summary of each talk on YouTube for you to show to the Hub, allowing you to get straight to the application.

- Sam started by saying that the Bible, rather than being seen as a force for justice, is often seen today as a barrier to progress. Do you agree, if so why?

The story of Creation tells us that there was justice in the garden of Eden because of right relationships between humanity and God, each other and nature.

- Have you thought about 'justice' as being about right relationships before? How does that change how you view justice?
- Which of these three - God, each other and nature - do you need to work most on to get that relationship right?
- Shalom is the Jewish word that sums up the justice, wellbeing and peace we find when these three relationships are right. Have you seen or experienced 'shalom'?

Sam explained how individualism tells us that justice is found when we are true to ourselves. This is very different from the Biblical idea that justice is found when our relationships are right.

- Do you agree that individualism stops us from seeing justice today?
- How does individualism risk damaging our relationships with God, one another and the planet?

Finish with this practical exercise. Sam explained that the Bible describes creation like God weaving together threads into a fabric. In other words, God wants to bring us together into relationships again but this requires us sacrificing our preferences, desires and even our future plans.

Get two sheets of paper. On one sheet write down some things that God might be asking you to sacrifice eg. your time, dietary preferences or even career goals. On the other sheet right down some things you want to aim for that can bring you into a closer relationship with either God, each other or nature, eg. sitting with someone who is sleeping rough, spending more time in nature, committing to certain lifestyle changes. These could be things you want to change in the immediate future or things that you want to see in the long-term.

You may want to do this activity on two big sheets of paper or give each person individual sheets. Either way, spend some time reflecting and committing these thoughts to prayer.