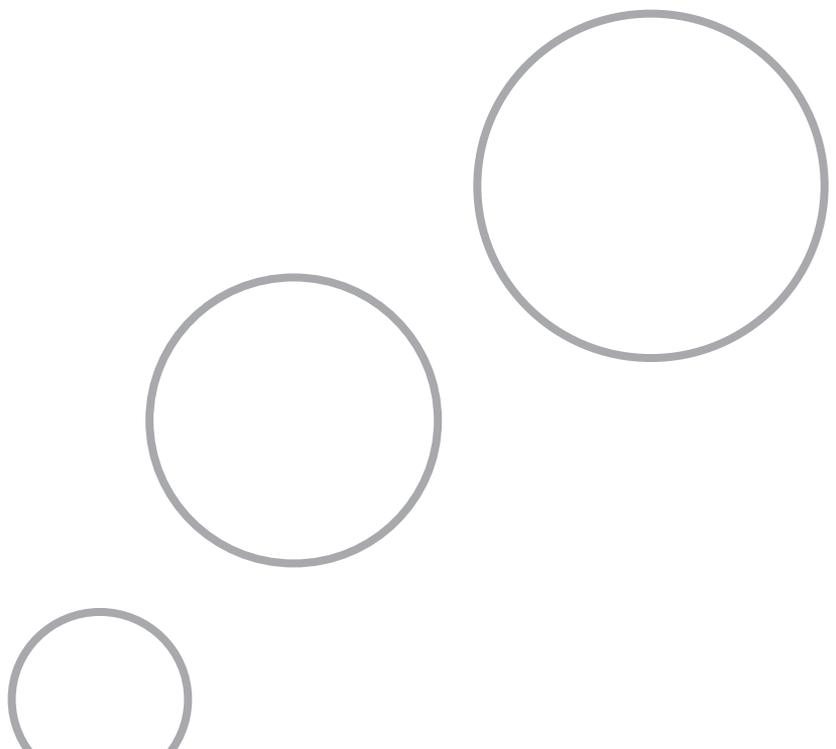




**just:imagine**

campbell roberts and danielle strickland







just:imagine<sup>o</sup>

## Endorsements

Christians who struggle with the question of how they and the church should respond to issues of social justice need struggle no more. I have always admired Campbell Roberts' stance on social justice—he and Danielle Strickland have introduced a whole new way of thinking about Christian ministry with this book. It is a treasure the Salvation Army must share with the world.

Kim Workman, National Director, Prison Fellowship New Zealand

*As you read this material you will sense Major Campbell Roberts' passion for social justice. This subject continues to gain more attention world-wide and expand both knowledge and awareness. This should motivate us to act.*

Major Bill Bamford

**Major Campbell Roberts' far-reaching influence, both inside and outside The Salvation Army world, arises from a lifetime commitment to the themes of justice, mercy and grace. His words and actions have been meaningful to a wide range of people, from everyday Salvationists to prime ministers. Readers will be especially helped and challenged, as I have been over the years, by his reflections on Micah.6:8.**

Colonel Alistair Herring

'Life-changing' is a phrase that comes to mind regarding the contents of this book. No longer can I look narrowly at 'Salvation' as a private affair between God and me; it's about transformed lives but equally transformed communities. It's a public affair. Not only is it about faith and mercy but justice that needs to run like an ever-flowing stream. As a Salvation Army this has much to remind us about our prophetic calling to change the world for good, and do it where we are. Read this book with caution—it could change your life.

**Major Drew McCombe**

'If to be feeling alive to all sufferings of my fellow creatures and to be warmed with the desire of relieving their distress, is to be a fanatic, I am one of the most incurable fanatics ever committed to be at large.' This quote from William Wilberforce is indicative of the many powerful and telling quotes used in this book.

Major Campbell Roberts and Captain Danielle Strickland, both practitioners in the area of justice, have brought together a powerful, dynamic book which will have a great impact. Both authors are involved first-hand with social justice and link this compellingly to the Christian gospel. 'It is the transforming presence of the kingdom of God in the world that ensures the true presence of justice.' It's not a comfortable book to read but one that catches the wave of increased awareness of the need for justice, action and concern that cannot be ignored by Christians.

This book gives practical tools for putting justice into action after establishing a sound theological base. I'm pleased to endorse this work and commend it to a wide as possible readership.

**Commissioner Garth McKenzie**



**Campbell and Strickland team up for a revolution. This book will educate, inspire and equip you to create a better world. Salvationists are gathering for a holy movement of social justice and this book will help fuel that energy towards action. May the Holy Spirit quicken the words from the page to your heart for a life-changing read.**

Commissioner James Knaggs



Roberts and Strickland join together to outline a sound, practical look at social justice. The authors boldly offer us a guide that will help the fight against injustice with solid foundations of Scripture and Salvationist traditions, with tools to look at injustice head on, and with the brave vision of conquering evil with good. It's more than enough to sustain some momentum for social change. Read with the intention of joining in! What lies ahead for the present generation is the possibility of making this a better world and I recommend this book to get you started!

General Eva Burrows (Rtd)



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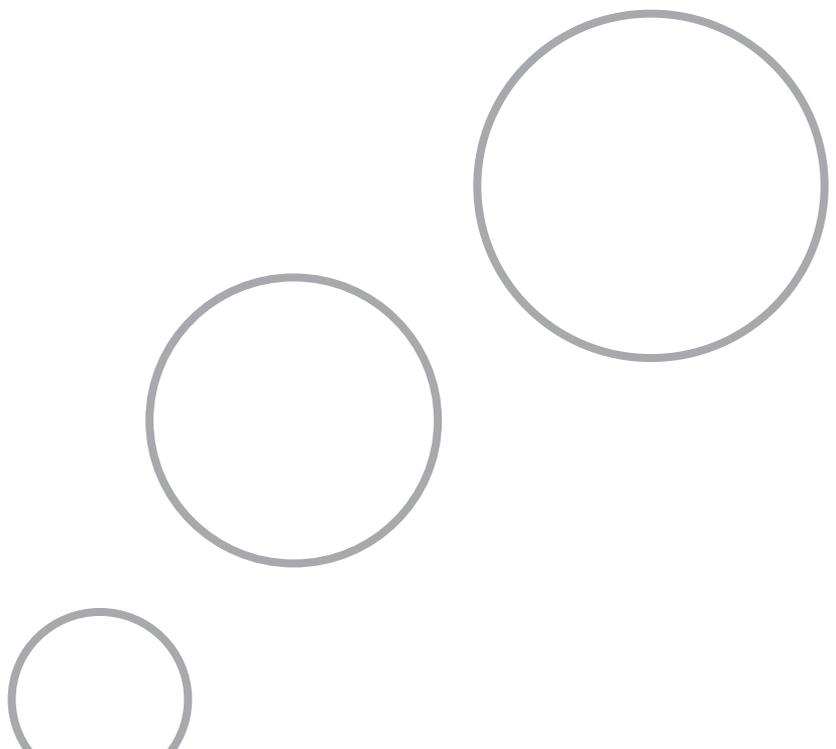
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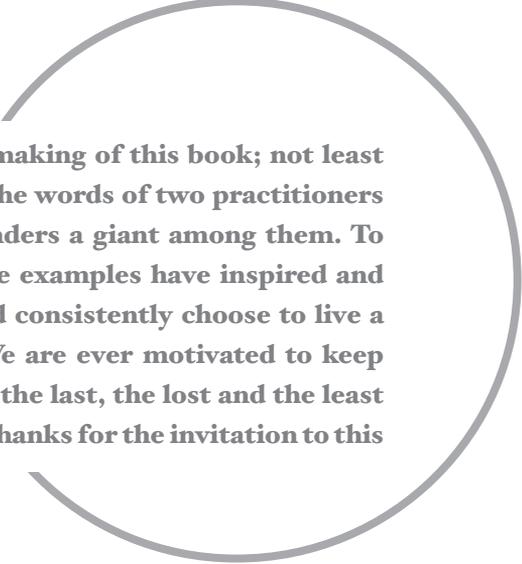
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**We are indebted to many people for the making of this book; not least of which are the team who helped shape the words of two practitioners with limited writing skills, Heather Saunders a giant among them. To many great-hearts of social reform whose examples have inspired and informed us and to those who quietly and consistently choose to live a different way, we are full of gratitude. We are ever motivated to keep living the dream by the endless resolve of the last, the lost and the least to believe. We join our faith to yours with thanks for the invitation to this journey. His Kingdom come!**



# Foreword: Shefali Baroi

Born into an impoverished Bangleshi village home, with a severe disability in both of my arms, my life seemed destined for begging. But God decided to bless my life and, through a variety of contacts, I was sent to live and be educated in a Salvation Army girls' home in the city of Dhaka.

At the home, I was not only taught to read and write, but trained to cope with life. I lacked self-esteem but flourished in stitching and embroidery skills despite my arm and hand disability.

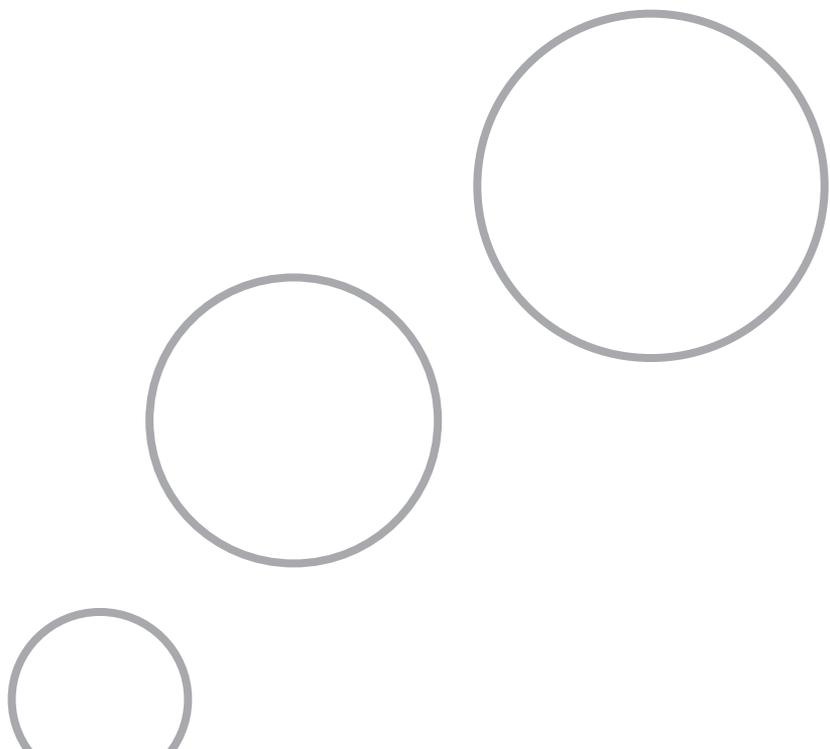
Eventually, I was offered employment with Sally Ann Ltd., a fair trade company owned by The Salvation Army.

As I worked, making many products, I found more and more self-worth. I was eventually made assistant store manager and I have found self-confidence in dealing with the many customers who come into the store. Employment with Sally Ann changed my life. Instead of begging on the streets, I am married with a son, who I named Joy.

I was given these opportunities because someone decided that a life of begging was an injustice and chose to develop and support a program that God used to change my life.

When you choose to support Salvation Army social programs like Sally Ann, you give people like me a chance at life. When you choose to buy fair trade products, you will likely change the course of the lives of many others.

A special thanks to Dawne Warkentin for this foreword from the ground in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The work of Sally Ann is an impressive international social justice project. For more information check out: [http://www.salvationist.org/poverty.nsf/vw\\_features/43BA11AAAE7E76CE80256B04004FA663?opendocument](http://www.salvationist.org/poverty.nsf/vw_features/43BA11AAAE7E76CE80256B04004FA663?opendocument)





## Introduction: The Journey Begins



# Introduction: The Journey Begins

This book has been written by two Salvation Army officers who imagine a better world.

Both authors, heavily influenced by Western world experience—rooted in New Zealand, Australian and Canadian life—recognise their position in this social justice perspective.

We hope that the tools we've accumulated in and through the journey will be transferable and helpful to anyone, from anywhere, who is committed to joining the dreamers of a new world, and that these tools will aid you in a commitment to the long haul of fighting injustice.

This book is in three sections, each of which contains chapters, followed by excerpts of speeches and articles. It may help to read the sections in a group for discussion. The material is a mixture of introduction and exploration and we encourage you to take your time and try to incorporate the ideas into your experience.

Our hope is that social justice won't be something that simply informs your mind but radically alters your life.

The start of our journeys towards justice went like this:

## **Danielle Strickland**

My first 'mission trip' was to Malawi, Africa in the summer of 1989. Along with a bunch of middle-class Western teenagers I went to discover and change the world. And I did. Africa didn't change much (apart from some clothes left behind, newly-built brick classrooms attached to a church, and one dead, fat, hairy spider)<sup>a</sup> but I did change the world. After that trip, 'my world' began to take on new meaning, greater depth and a lot of angst. Gone were the feel-good days of comfortable, personal salvation; now I entered a dangerous world of poverty, inequality and social responsibility. When I overate, I didn't just feel overfed, I felt like

<sup>a</sup>: The spider is really a whole other story...needless to say it was as big as my hand and was very crunchy under my boot!

something was wrong with how the world operated, and implicitly understood that I was implicated in it.

I remember baby Joshua, who was born one week and died of malnutrition the next. Somehow, even though thousands of miles separated his family from mine and our situations were vastly different, I felt connected. That connection is key to world-changing behaviour. It is a life no longer content with the 'inevitable' systems of oppression. Cycles of poverty and systemic global injustice must stop. We are living in an unprecedented age in which they can. We hold the power of wealth, intellect, resources and will to change the world, not just talk about it. Sure, it will start with our individual world (and needs to) but it won't end there. This spirit, a global transforming resolve, will adjust the way we see the world and how we contribute to it.

My first look at injustice on a global scale was a quick, albeit rough, glimpse into the bigger picture. But it left me hungry to understand and uncomfortable with the status quo. As I entered a new world of discovery and challenge I slowly began to emerge out of the land of pessimistic prophetic judgement<sup>b</sup> and mature into a world of new possibilities. My heart echoed the cry of a whole generation choosing to believe the idea that we could make poverty history!

Years later I found myself in Canada's poorest postal code (the downtown eastside of Vancouver) and praying Psalm 97 over the neighbourhood. As I prayed, the Lord began to challenge me on verse eight, 'the righteous are glad at the judgements of the Lord'. I was convicted as I tried to recall a time in my life where I had rejoiced at the Lord's judgement. In fact it was the opposite. When I think of the judgement of God I think 'hide' and resonate with that bumper sticker that says, 'Jesus is coming, quick, look busy!' I realised that the majority of people who rejoice at justice are those who have been oppressed. When a righteous judge comes to rule it's good news for people who have been exploited and abused by

<sup>b</sup> Prophetic judgement is a big danger in the justice world. We can become great at seeing problems without offering any way out... this book is intended to help end that kind of justice rhetoric.

unjust systems. That's when I understood that I needed not only to 'help' the poor but actually position myself 'with' the poor. I want to be on the side of justice. I want to be in on the party at the end of all time when justice will flourish and the majority of the world will be celebrating liberation, equality and bounty. I decided to realign my life to get in line with the Word of God.

Now, after years of working with people, systems and communities, the proverbial penny has dropped—social justice is a complex issue. Most of what we see wrong with the world is much easier to fix in our own minds or in a conversation over tea. In reality, when we begin to work with individuals caught in the clutches of injustice we quickly grasp that the vice called injustice has a fierce grip. Multiply that by millions (even billions) and you've got yourself a mighty big fight.

Visiting my friend Annie (a drug addict who struggled with a severe mental illness) in a psychiatric hospital one day, I had a further revelation. She looked at me with a big smile as I approached her, and said, 'It sure must feel good to fulfil Jesus' words in Matthew; you must feel blessed.' Annie understood that the blessing of the visit was for me, not for her. She knew she was blessed and had the keys to the Kingdom. There is a strong scent of social justice in this. Isaiah 58 suggests that our healing will come as we get on with the work of justice. Fighting injustice (as we will discover) is not so much about bringing 'liberation' to those who are poor and broken, it's often allowing the Kingdom to bring liberation to both the oppressor and the oppressed. It's the radical transformation of the Kingdom of God that Martin Luther King Jr. spoke out loud in his 'dream speech' at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC that infamous day.<sup>c</sup> His dream wasn't of the oppressed rising in power, but of the oppressor laying down his rule and the oppressed laying down his hurt and both of them holding hands, joining together. This is a Kingdom idea of social justice. Nelson Mandela invited his jailer to attend his inauguration celebration as the new president of South Africa at his table of honour, no

<sup>c</sup> Check it out on YouTube or for a full transcript go to:  
[www.usconstitution.net/dream](http://www.usconstitution.net/dream)

longer an enemy but a friend. This kind of Kingdom is not simply an overthrow of a system or a return of judgement but the solution to the problem of injustice itself.

What stirs me most these days is a community of people called The Salvation Army who were born for this fight. William Booth said it like this, ‘Without excuse and self-consideration of health or limb or life, true soldiers fight, live to fight, love the thickest of the fight, and die in the midst of it.’<sup>1</sup> I can only imagine what God’s plans are for a movement like ours. Committed to social justice, we will emerge a force for righteousness in the world. Like passionate dreamers—no longer content with rhetoric and night-time visitations—let’s imagine and surrender ourselves to dream these ‘justice’ dreams in the day so as to walk them out.

### **Campbell Roberts**

In New Zealand it is honourable to say you took part in the protest against the 1981 Rugby Tour of South Africa. But I can tell you, as I sat blocking the motorway surrounded by helmeted police with riot shields and long batons, knowing I’d be arrested if they saw the large bolt cutters up the tunic of my Salvation Army uniform, it didn’t feel honourable. It felt terrifying. Sitting there on the motorway, I asked myself again and again ‘Why was I this stupid?’

In retrospect, social justice actions can seem like stirring stuff. But they rarely feel like it at the time. When an angry chief secretary rings for an explanation of why you have been on the national television news (again!), supporting protesters and radicals well-known for demonstrating, and being arrested at a poverty conference, the convincing explanation doesn’t flow easily down the phone line.

It does hurt when colleagues call you a communist because of the causes you support, and a saintly soldier won’t speak to you

because you have been helping support the families of rubbish collectors on strike. It is not easy when a divisional commander you deeply respect says in a hurt tone, 'but I trusted you and you've let me down' because I had overlooked mentioning to him that for six weeks I lent the local corps bus and mobile social service centre (with staff members) to a group of radical extremists walking the length of New Zealand to protest unemployment. It's scary when your arguments on television for people trigger phone calls threatening your life and family. Scary, too, when they phone the Public Relations Department at Territorial Headquarters to say, 'This is the last time I donate to the Army'. Suddenly you don't have so many friends. So why did I do it? And why are the past 35 years of my officership littered with actions, controversial statements and upsets in an effort to support those at the margins of New Zealand society?

I would like to be able to say that on every occasion my efforts to bring social justice were because of my deep love and passion for God, but I doubt that would be true. Sometimes I fear less worthy motives of egoism and self-interest drove me—it's nice to see your name in the newspaper. I was also something of a rebel and often looking for a cause as an outlet for my rebellion. Sometimes I simply liked the people I was mixing with, and they seemed a little more interesting and human than the people down at The Salvation Army, so I didn't want to offend them by pulling out of their sometimes stupid, hairbrained schemes. So, I confess, there were mixed motives behind some of my social engagement. But I'd still like to think that at the centre of what I have been doing in the last 35 years is a strong belief that in accepting the call of God to be a Salvation Army officer I had to live and act with a passionate and real commitment to social justice.

Where was that passion for social justice born? Some of it certainly came from my dad, who listened daily to the BBC news and made sure that I understood who was suffering injustice and where there was need in the world. I can remember debating the struggle for self-

determination in Cyprus by Archbishop Makarios and the efforts of the rebel leader of EKOA George Grivas against the occupation of Cyprus by British troops. But this learning was not just theory; I saw in my dad a man of justice. A carpenter by trade, he was often away from the house and usually it was doing a building project or renovation for some person down on their luck. Dad seemed to have a natural instinct for knowing when people were suffering injustice or need, and he was there to stand alongside them. From him I also learned the value of ecumenicalism at a time when it wasn't popular for a Salvationist to mix with people from other denominations. Dad was passionately committed to community action and supporting the efforts of other Christians.

So, some of my social justice passion came from my family of origins, but it was reinforced in a big way when I entered The Salvation Army Officer Training College. One Saturday morning while cutting the training principal's lawns as part of a work section, I became involved in an event that changed the direction of my ministry. Up until this event my focus had been on evangelism and the thrill of preaching and teaching.

But, as I cut the lawns that day, an ambulance driver asked me to help him remove a patient from a house behind the Training College. The set of three houses was well-known because the residents (up to 15 men stayed in each of the houses) were all alcoholics, who were kept in misery by a despicable landlord who had control of their welfare benefit. From this he took an exorbitant rent while giving his tenants just enough money each day to help them continue their alcohol-fuelled existence. As we entered the house we passed a number of men in various states of intoxication until, on a sodden, stinking mattress, we found the patient, a formerly well-proportioned male who was now a yellowing, decaying bundle of skin and bone. As we took this very ill man out of the house he died.

I was deeply affected by this man's death, as he seemed to be the victim of a massive injustice. His landlord's callous preoccupation with making money that left no room for concern about people's health and wellbeing had helped kill this tenant. In the days that followed, I became clearer about what needed to be the emphasis of my life's work. I needed to confront evil and injustice, and ensure the lives of people were not miserable and hopeless. As I prayed it seemed that God was saying to me of the dead man 'I loved him; he was my son and they killed him'. My officership needed to be about breaking chains of injustice that bound other human beings.

As I left the Training College and my ministry commenced, my prayer and ongoing study of scripture strengthened the conviction that I must try to do all I could to combat the injustice that left people in poverty without hope or as victims of oppression and marginalisation. In the journey of seeking justice for others I've seen families unfairly evicted from houses or forced to live in cars or a garage because there is no housing for them. I've seen the death of hope in a father when his son's application for a good school was rejected because he lived in the poor part of town. I've felt the terror of children escaping to a refuge from a violent father. I've felt angry when I have seen how some people have been treated unjustly by government agencies, large corporations or unscrupulous individuals.

And as I've prayed about these situations, my prayers have led me to places and action that I never thought a study of holiness and the Bible would involve: on to the protest line, debating with government ministers on national television, living with a family in a derelict car in a city's main street. My prayers and biblical reflection have led to trouble in getting a visa to visit another country because their database labelled me as a social activist and troublemaker, and have encouraged me to move an evicted family's furniture in the back door of the house while the landlord moved it out the front.

But often, at the end of such actions, I've seen the reality of the joy and hope spoken of in the gospels. The hope of black South Africans as they started the journey to regain their humanity, joy in the laughter of children having their first holiday by the sea, and tears of joy in a mum walking through the front door of the first decent housing her family had ever lived in.

During the years of this journey in social justice I've met and had the privilege of friendship with passionate, committed, justice-seeking individuals, some of whom have shared my faith, but many who didn't. God used them and I was thankful for them. Some were victims themselves—poor, homeless, unemployed and abused; others were politicians, government officials, clergy and fellow Christians, trade unionists and company directors. There were anarchists and royalists, conservatives and liberals, bound by a passion to bring justice in situations of injustice.

More recently, I have had the privilege of working with Salvationists and colleague officers in conferences, seminars and at the International College for Officers in the wider issues of injustice and the biblical call to justice. It has been a privilege to see people come alive to God and find a new dimension in their ministry as they have allowed themselves to imagine and work for a new world that is just and hopeful. It is my prayer that this may continue to happen through the challenge of this book.

I can't say I have always been just in my own life. I still struggle to live and act justly and I often fall very short. But this has been an incredibly exciting and rewarding journey that God has taken me on; to imagine the world as he would have it be, and to be part of transforming the dream into reality.

### **Journeying Prayer**

Jesus, take me once again on a journey.  
Take me to the city,  
Take me to the valley and to the mountain,  
Take me to the desert.  
Take me to the place of wandering,  
The place of hunger,  
The place of solitude and of pain.  
Take me to the place where you seem far away  
Yet only you are there.  
Remove my crutches of possessions,  
Remove the pillars of my faithless life,  
Remove all the thumbs that I suck.  
And there in that place where nothing is left,  
There refine my soul.  
Amen.

(‘Punk Monk’ prayer)



# Chapter One: More Than a Dream

What is social justice? Getting beyond the trendy term, an explanation of social justice takes time. Looking into social justice is complex and includes unpacking the layers of issues surrounding it. Rather like uncovering an onion, a glimpse at social justice is complete only with tears and perseverance. But it is a painfully good and necessary journey.

Social justice is an idea that the world and everyone in it can live equal, safe and dignified lives. Backing up a social justice ideology is the belief that God created people to live that way but his perfect world was broken by sin. In the same way the world was broken (by choosing sin) we believe it can be made whole again (by choosing justice). Social justice is about putting our whole lives behind the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and partnering with him in redeeming the whole world.<sup>a</sup>

Although complex, social justice is also basic to our lives. It comes into play even on the playground when we are young. Little kids have an innate sense of justice. Just try distributing candy unevenly and hear the instant and loud cries of injustice, ‘That’s not fair!’ There is a deep sense within us of what’s right. And when that ‘right’ is twisted or wronged our values cry out against ‘injustice’. But a deeper look at the complexity of social justice would suggest that this struggle is fought not only against external systems but also internal ones. It’s fought against our own greed—a selfishness that allows us to accept a situation of injustice as long as we’re the ones with more. In the playground, we never cared much if we had more candy than our siblings; just that they didn’t have more than us!

Social justice is connected with our own humanity, damaged inside and out by sin. An understanding of this justice is the key to correcting both our internal struggle (sin) and our external issues (injustice).

To understand what social justice is, we must start by understanding injustice. For justice implies an action against something unjust.

<sup>a</sup>: William Booth: ‘the whole world redeeming so rich and so free’—  
‘O Boundless Salvation’ (Song #298,  
The Songbook of The Salvation Army)

**To be neutral in a situation of injustice is to have chosen sides already. It is to support the status quo.**

Desmond Tutu

Injustice is anything out of line with the perfect will of God. Injustice is sin, systems, powers and authorities that damage the world. Injustice is greed, desire and harmful practices and beliefs that diminish people and society.

There are situations that are universally understood as unjust. When Jesus told the ancient but constantly relevant Good Samaritan story<sup>2</sup>, the victim had, through no fault of his own, become weak and vulnerable. He had suffered an injustice. But what if the victim on the road to Samaria wasn't a 'good guy' who was in the wrong place at the wrong time, as we tend to assume? Would it change the story? Would it change how we interpret the story? Should it?

There are clear and plain injustices all around us and there are complicated and hazy areas of injustice as well. There are many disagreements over whether something is just or not.

In Western countries, the public debates on economic and public policy often raise complex issues of justice:

- Should there be a limit on the amount of asylum protection given to victims of oppression in order to protect the national social and economic status quo?
- Is it just to encourage rich people to immigrate to our country while at the same time severely limiting immigration from poor countries?
- Both the proponents of the war in Iraq and on terrorism, and those opposed to them, use 'justice' to support their respective views.
- Some believe justice is achieved when criminals are given long, harsh prison sentences, while others see it served when criminals are helped to reform and given mental health and addiction services to aid this process.
- Questions also arise in balancing the rights of victims and offenders.
- It is argued by some that justice is accomplished when the rich pay higher levels of tax, while others believe a flat tax system is more equitable.

- Would justice be served by a carbon market that forced highly-developed, carbon-polluting countries to buy carbon credits from poorer countries that create less carbon pollution?

These are all debatable issues, none of them easily solved, and all requiring careful consideration of Christian thought and theology before action.

### **Debates of justice also occur around social policy.**

Welfare reform in many developed countries has suffered huge setbacks because of an emerging concept in public opinion of the 'undeserving poor'. This is an attitude that suggests people struggle with poverty because of their own irresponsibility and that their fate is not an act of injustice but something deserved by their reckless action or inaction.

Generations of people have been raised on 'welfare' or government dependency. This has created a ghetto-like existence for children raised in a system and becoming all too familiar with its ways. Almost inevitably, the cycle of poverty is repeated and repeated again.

A visitor to a poor neighbourhood in the developed world is often impacted by the sight of cable televisions in family homes where there is no food in the fridge (and often no fridge or cooking facilities). These families often lack the basic life skills of cooking, budgeting and education and so their choices take on a different complexion.

It is dangerous to make quick assumptions, for a more thorough investigation often reveals a raft of painful social conditions that help explain seemingly indefensible behaviour. If you are surrounded by abuse, addiction and insecurity, the television offers a welcome escape. The answers are not easy. Understanding and achieving justice is challenging and complex.

From far away, injustice often looks like an easy fix, or a generalised issue. But, if we take the time to look—to really look—we often find that injustice is a complex layering of wrongs, culminating in an individual making poor choices. To look at injustice as an ‘issue’ would be to miss the bigger picture.

Injustice is something done (or conditions laid) that causes people (real people, with God-given capacity, gifts and talents) to suffer. To know and become friends with people, to choose to see, up close and personal, is the first step towards understanding ‘injustice’ and understanding the verse ‘He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.’ (Micah 6:8, NIV)

When we think about justice our minds often link it with criminal justice and the need for people to be punished when they offend against the laws of the community. But social justice is more than legal and retributive justice. It’s not just about changing the law or paying people back what they deserve—an ‘eye for an eye’. It is about actively eliminating the inequalities that exist in society, and thus becoming a preventative and restorative justice—creating fairness and equality in society. It is helping create the world God wants. ‘An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.’<sup>3</sup>

*‘Social justice is what faces you in the morning. It is awakening in a house with adequate water supply, cooking facilities and sanitation. It is the ability to nourish your children and send them to school where their education not only equips them for employment but also reinforces their knowledge and understanding of their cultural inheritance. It is the prospect of genuine employment and good health: a life of choices and opportunity, free from discrimination.’<sup>4</sup> Mick Dodson*

In order to get to this fair society we must be committed to really understanding injustice and set our lives toward creating a better world. In the gospel of Luke there is a pivotal moment where Jesus makes clear his whole purpose.

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord’s favour has come.’ (Luke 4:18-19, NLT)

The cost of this statement was immediate rejection and eventual death. Everything Jesus does and says and everywhere he goes after this declaration is a journey toward the cross. He offers the sacrifice necessary to change the power of sin in our world—thus undoing the origin of injustice itself. Social justice is a complete commitment to change the world. You can ask every world-changer about the danger of looking deep into the onion of social justice. It is not just tears and smell; it’s the reality of what you must do in response to what you see. Jesus came as God in the flesh. He experienced a sin-filled world and fully understands its effect in a life and in a community.<sup>5</sup>

As Martin Luther King Jr. advocated non-violence in the black civil rights struggle across America, he experienced rejection and confusing angst from the young ‘free Negroes’ in the north who told him that, being from south, he couldn’t understand their situation. At around the same time of King’s crusades for non-violent resistance, Malcolm X was inciting a movement based on violent revolution. Coming from the south, where oppression was explicit, King didn’t understand what it was to live a technically ‘free’ life with little freedom. So, he moved his family into a Chicago slum, an urban ghetto, in true gospel style.<sup>b</sup> He chose to take a good, long and close-up look at injustice.

*‘The civil rights movement had too often been middle-class oriented and had not moved to the grassroots lives of our communities. So I thought the great challenge facing the civil rights movement was to move into these areas to organize and gain identity with ghetto dwellers and young people in the ghetto. This was one of the main reasons why I felt that in moving to Chicago I would live in the very heart of the ghetto.*

<sup>b</sup> Read more on incarnation as a strategy in Ash Barker’s *Surrender All*, or Viv Grigg’s classic, *Cry of the Urban Poor* or, *In Darkest England and the Way Back in*, by Gary Bishop.

*I would not only experience what my brothers and sisters experience in living conditions, but I would be able to live with them...*

*“Too soon you began to see the effects of this emotional and environmental deprivation. The children’s clothes were too skimpy to protect them from the Chicago wind, and a closer look revealed the mucus in the corners of their bright eyes, and you were reminded that vitamin pills and flu shots were luxuries which they could ill afford. The “runny noses” of ghetto children became a graphic symbol of medical neglect in a society, which had mastered most of the diseases from which they will too soon die. There was something wrong in a society which allowed this to happen.”<sup>6</sup>*

A similar experience is obvious in the lives of Muhammad Yunus and Amartya Sen, two highly respected economists, both Nobel Peace Prize winners and strong advocates for the poor. They were deeply impacted by the famines that occurred in Bengal in 1943 and Bangladesh in 1974. Both came to the conclusion that the immense loss of life was unnecessary and a symptom of unequal and flawed economic and social systems.

Sen recalls as a child, “The memory of the Bengal famine of 1943, in which between two and three million people had died, and which I had watched from Santiniketan, was still quite fresh in my mind. I had been struck by its thoroughly class-dependent character. (I knew of no one in my school or among my friends and relations whose family had experienced the slightest problem during the entire famine; it was not a famine that afflicted even the lower middle classes—only people much further down the economic ladder, such as landless rural labourers.) Calcutta itself, despite its immensely rich intellectual and cultural life, provided many constant reminders of the proximity of unbearable economic misery, and not even an elite college could ignore its continuous and close presence.”<sup>7</sup>

All three men's experiences of seeing injustice, and questioning it, have motivated and informed the direction of their life's work. Justice for all people is the call of God. It is the hope for the world. Justice is worth living for, even dying for.

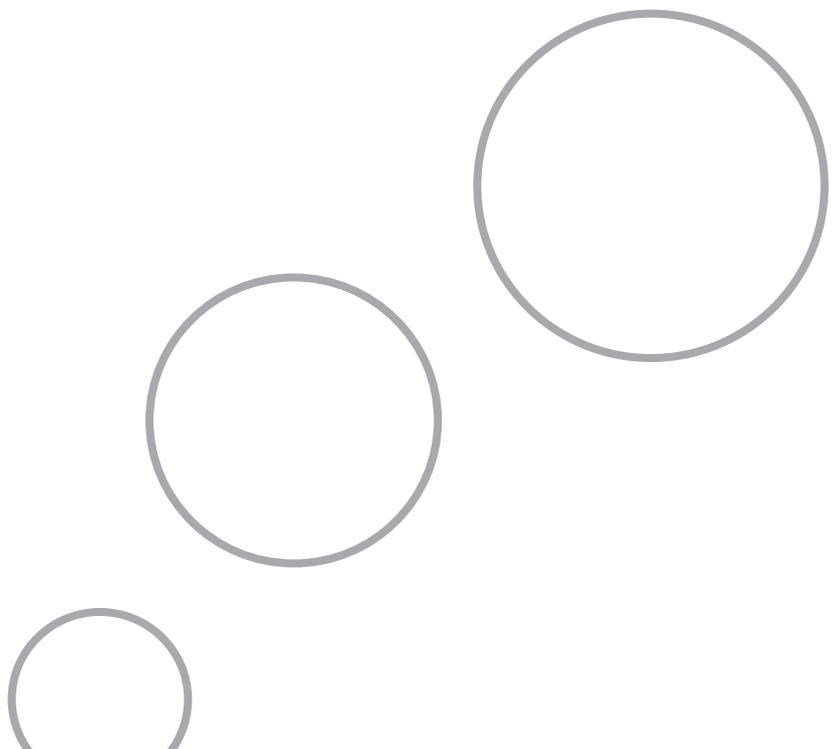
**Prayer**

God, we pray

Give bread to those who do not have bread

And to us who have bread give the hunger for justice.

Amen.





One:  
Foundations of Justice



## Chapter Two: Biblical Justice

*Neither revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society, rather you must tell it a new powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story, one so inclusive that it gathers all the bits of our past and our present into a coherent whole, one that even shines some light into the future so that we can take the next step forward.’ Ivan Illich*

In his book titled *Say To This Mountain: Mark’s story of discipleship*, Ched Myers notes that the Word of God has transforming power only as it intersects with our personal and the broader collective stories and history of our communities and nation.<sup>8</sup>

As we ask questions of justice, it is important we take the time to move between biblical, individual and communal stories so that each informs the others; that our understanding and belief in the biblical story intersects and informs how we view justice.

### **A story of justice**

In his book *Make Poverty Personal*, Ash Barker takes a theological look at God’s call to stand with the poor and urges us to engage in the biblical story. As Christians we need to re-read our Bibles and study such words as “oppression”. There are 14 Hebrew words for oppression. What such a study reveals is that poverty by nature mars the image of God in people, and makes it impossible to love as God intends.<sup>9a</sup>

As we go deeper into our Bibles we discover that it is the story of God’s relationship with and faithfulness to fallen, broken and unjust humanity. It is therefore no surprise that a dominating concern of the biblical writers is to proclaim the justice of God and to call for just conduct from people in response.

God wants a relationship with the world.

<sup>9a</sup> Ash Barker, *Make Poverty Personal*: Page 11. We recommend this book to learn more about the Bible’s call to end oppression.

Scripture, particularly the Old Testament, has as its main emphasis God's relationship with community rather than God's relationship with individuals. Exodus is the story of a nation rescued from oppression and injustice so that relationship to God can be restored.

Justice is essential to that relationship.

As God delivers the Israelite community:

- Exodus and Deuteronomy outline the rights, responsibilities and ecclesiastical structures
- Leviticus addresses the social and environmental aspects
- Judges establishes a legal framework
- Samuel and Kings outline the characteristics and qualities required from the monarchy and national leadership
- The prophets constantly remind the people that injustice offends God, offering graphic pictures of the injustice and desolation within the nation. The prophets record the consequences of ignoring their relationship with God and the injustice that arises within community as a result. They outline the actions of justice required to restore the nation.

Through prophets such as Amos, God warns Israel that they will be judged and punished for their sins. In particular, God condemns them for their treatment of the oppressed and disadvantaged and calls for justice:

'Listen to this message that the Lord has spoken against you, Oh people of Israel and Judah—against the entire family I rescued from Egypt: "From among all the families on the earth, I have been intimate with you alone. That is why I must punish you for all your sins"' (Amos 3:1,2, NLT)

'They have perverted justice by selling honest people for silver and poor people for a pair of sandals. They trample helpless people in the dust and deny justice to those who are oppressed.' (Amos 2:6, NLT)

‘You wicked people! You twist justice, making it a bitter pill for the poor and oppressed. Righteousness and fair play are meaningless fictions to you.’ (Amos 5:7, NLT)

Our God is relational, so it should be no surprise that biblical justice is about relationships. At the root of biblical justice is the creation and sustaining of right relationships with God and between people. God is just because he remains faithful to his covenant with Israel. He can be relied upon to honour his commitment to Israel and calls her to faithfulness as well. This includes obeying God’s stipulations to protect the poor and weak and to dispense justice equitably.

Justice in biblical terms, then, is doing all that is necessary to maintain healthy, equitable and life-giving relationships between people. Biblical justice seeks to put wrong relationships right, and to reconstruct or redeem situations to create restored relationships.

### **A God of justice**

A constant theme among prophets such as Jeremiah is linking knowing God with doing justice. The prophetic understanding is that you cannot claim to know God if you are not committed to doing justice.

‘Thus says the Lord: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight,” declares the Lord.’ (Jeremiah 9:23, ESV)

If we want to know and understand God, we must understand his passion for justice. This is radically different from the modern thought of knowing God that is typically expressed in contemporary worship.

**The very universe of God is on the side of justice.**

Martin Luther King Jr.

Following God's condemnation of Israel's sin, Amos delivers a scathing message:

'I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.'  
(Amos 5:21-24, ESV)

Biblical justice is not some abstract concept. It is an active power, for it is acting out the nature of God. This is different to simply upholding the law or defending the status quo; it is about living out the justice we see in the nature of God. Such justice requires constant actions to deliver the oppressed, restrain the oppressors, heal the broken-hearted and feed the hungry.

Enormous concern for justice in the Bible derives from the fact that it is considered to be an attribute of God. Justice belongs to the very character of God.

'For all his ways are just. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.' (Deuteronomy 32:3,4, ESV)

The centrality of justice to the nature of God explains how the biblical writers can therefore condemn injustice not only in Israel but also in surrounding nations. The God who creates all people holds nations accountable to establish in their laws and practice justice for all. There is a striking picture of this in Psalm 82 where Yahweh attends an international congress of gods and accuses other gods of injustice in other nations.

'God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgement: "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?" Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.

Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.' (Psalm 82:1-4, ESV)

So deeply understood was God's nature of justice that biblical writers often express annoyance and puzzlement at the way God puts up with the injustice and lack of righteousness of his people. Habakkuk records:

'You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?' (Habakkuk 1:13, ESV)

Israel knew that God was a God of justice. They had seen that justice in action. As a nation, they had been the recipients of it. God had intervened when they were subject to injustice from the Egyptians and he had also acted to save Israel from their unjust neighbours. Justice was embedded in their law, which required people to act towards each other in ways that characterised the nature of God:

'You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.' (Leviticus 19:36, ESV)

For the biblical writers justice was rooted in the very character of God.

### **The good news**

Jesus is the proclaimer of God's justice. In keeping with the messianic expectation, Jesus represents the triumph of God's justice on earth. His message spoke to the prevailing concern of the time, which was the injustice that surrounded God's people in everyday life. Jesus was the incarnation of their hope for justice. Matthew describes Jesus as that which was foretold and hoped for by Isaiah (in Isaiah 42):

‘Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; a bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; and in his name the Gentiles will hope.’ (Matthew 12:18-23, ESV)

Jesus described his own ministry as bringing justice to the poor, and he cast himself in that hope:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.’ (Luke 4:18, ESV)

Jesus calls us into this ministry with him and warns us through parable that on judgement day, as sheep and goats, we will be separated according to how we treated ‘the least of these’. Further, only the righteous will have eternal life (Matthew 25:31-46). To be righteous means to act justly towards our neighbour.

If there are any remaining doubts about the call to God’s people to minister justice in our present world, we only need study the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus.

### **Biblical justice has a partiality to it.**

The statue of Lady Justice in Washington, DC stands with scales signifying rights and duties, a sword representing power to punish wrongdoings and a blindfold indicating impartiality, resulting in everyone being treated the same, not showing any favouritism on the basis of gender, race, wealth, education or class.

Impartiality rightly lies at the heart of our criminal and civil justice system today. The same is true of the criminal and civil justice systems in the Old Testament. Judges are to show no partiality to parties on the basis of social status.

‘And I charged your judges at that time, “Hear the cases between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien who is with him. You shall not be partial in judgement. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgement is God’s. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it”.’ (Deuteronomy 1:16-17, ESV)

‘You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of the righteous.’ (Deuteronomy 16:19, ESV)

At the heart of criminal and civil justice is impartiality but when it comes to social justice a far different emphasis emerges. With respect to social justice (commonly defined as how wealth and power is distributed in the society), scripture requires definite partiality or bias towards one section of the population.

The justice of God requires that there is special concern shown to the poor, the widows, the orphans, and for the immigrants referred to in scripture as the aliens. In fact, the litmus test of scripture on whether justice is being done is the plight of the poor and the needy in society. The true measure of justice is how the most vulnerable members of the community make out.

‘Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt. Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry. My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless.’ (Exodus 22:21-24, NIV)<sup>b</sup>

Most people are worried by a concept of bias and consider that partiality seems contrary to the term justice. But what scripture recognises is that treating people the same will not achieve justice when a large power imbalance exists.

<sup>b</sup> The larger portion of scripture is helpful to read for full context (Exodus 22:16-31)

The Psalms again express bias:

‘Who made heaven and earth,  
The sea and all that is in them;  
Who keeps faith forever;  
Who executes justice for the oppressed;  
and gives food to the hungry.  
The Lord sets the prisoners free;  
The Lord opens the eyes of the blind.  
The Lord raises up those who are bowed down;  
The Lord loves the righteous;  
The Lord protects the strangers;  
He supports the fatherless and the widow,  
But He thwarts the way of the wicked.’  
(Psalm 146:6-9, NASB)

God’s justice is rightly biased in favour of the poor and oppressed for two main reasons.

Firstly, the poor are more frequently the victims of injustice than others. Their God-given rights are more easily trampled on than those of the rich and powerful.

Secondly, God is rightly biased towards the poor because the way they are forced to live violates his purpose for the world.

God is not therefore so much biased *towards* the poor as he is biased *against* poverty and oppression.

Grinding poverty, homelessness and hunger are evil and contrary to God’s will and purpose. God’s world does not have some lacking basic needs while others live in opulence and wealth. That is why, in scripture, meeting the needs of the poor is not seen as an act of charity but a work of justice-making. This work moves the world in the direction of God’s intention for it. Charity can enslave a population (consider welfare dependency, for example). Justice does not enslave, but liberates as it seeks to empower the weak so they can participate fully in society.

### **The biblical triangle: faith, mercy and justice**

Chris Marshall in his book *The Little Book of Biblical Justice* describes the relationship of faith, mercy and justice before stating the nature of that justice.

When we consider the following passages alongside each other, several things emerge about the essence of God's will, the heart of God's law, and the meaning of God's Kingdom:

'And what does the Lord require of you? But to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.'  
(Micah 6:8, NKJV)

'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe the mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.'  
(Matthew 23:23, ESV)

'For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.'  
(Romans 14:17, ESV)

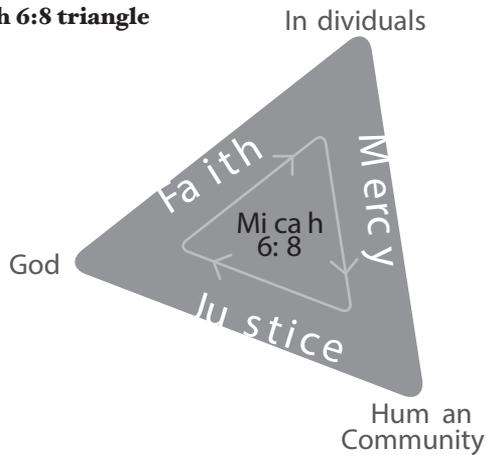
In Matthew 23, Jesus teaches that it is fundamental to read scripture and construct theology in light of God's primary values, the things God regards as the most important: justice, mercy and faithfulness. Our relationship with God could be described as a triangle of faith, mercy (or peace) and justice. Scripture does not present them as competing aspects, or suggest that one flows out of the other; rather, they are a triangle that forms the basis of our relationship with God.

Each text places justice or righteousness first on the list. Justice is not an optional extra. *It is our first activity*. Doing justice is the first and primary demand that God places on his people. As a God of justice (or righteousness), he expects that we, his community, are

his agents for bringing justice to bear in the world; to usher in a just society without discrimination and with fair treatment and equality for all.

In modern usage righteousness often carries the understanding of personal morality or religious piety but justice relates to public, judicial fairness and equal rights. In biblical text, however, righteousness often includes what we mean by justice and is used as a word with identical meaning. Righteousness in the Bible conveys the idea of doing justice and it may lead us to some new understandings if we use versions of scripture that recognise this more frequently.

### Micah 6:8 triangle



An interesting exercise is to take some well-known biblical references and substitute the word righteousness for justice. Consider these verses from the Sermon on the Mount:

‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be filled.’ (Matthew 5:6, NIV)

‘Blessed are those who are persecuted because of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ (Matthew 5:10, NIV)

‘For I tell you that unless your justice surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.’ (Matthew 5:20, NIV)

‘But seek first his kingdom and his justice, and all these things will be given to you as well.’ (Matthew 6:33, NIV)

‘The biblical language of righteousness refers broadly to doing, being, declaring or bringing about what is right. When it is used in contexts that deal with conflict, coercion or social distribution it often has the force of justice or justice making.’<sup>9</sup>

Next on the list comes mercy. Scripture uses mercy almost exclusively in connection with God. Most references to mercy in the Bible are descriptions of God who is rich in mercy. God’s dealing with our broken humanity is characterised by a loving mercy. Above all else, Christians should be known for their belief in the power of mercy. Not, as we sometimes have the reputation for, being judgemental voices in the community. But what does this mercy look like? What it meant for Jesus was acting mercifully toward those who cry out for help in our communities such as the orphan and widow, and including those whom the Pharisees excluded.

In his book *Can You Hear Me?*, Brad Jersak helps us compare mercy and justice without playing them against each other as opposites:

*Mercy helps those who have not received what they deserve (by the way of basic human rights) and relents from inflicting punishment on those who deserve it. Justice makes sure everyone gets what he or she deserves (by way of human rights and freedoms but also penalties for wrongs done). Grace adds to justice the additional blessings and gifts that we definitely do not deserve.*

*Mercy is like the ambulance at the bottom of a cliff, ready to help those who fall. Justice builds a fence at the top of the cliff to protect them from falling in the first place (Deuteronomy 22:8).*

*Mercy wipes the tears from the eyes. Justice asks, "Why are you crying?"*

*Mercy welcomes the hungry to gather around God's banqueting table. Justice addresses why some are under the table aching of hunger while others are sitting on top of the table aching from gluttony. Mercy seeks and saves those lost in the darkness. Justice asks, "Why is it dark? Who is keeping it dark? Who is benefiting from the darkness? Is it I, Lord?"<sup>10</sup>*

Finally, all three texts mention our personal faith and experience of God last, not first. This is perhaps in direct contrast to what has become the hallmark of modern evangelicalism with its emphasis often on the individual and privatised 'God experience' rather than on mercy and justice.

### **Five propositions about injustice**

To understand the mission field to which we are called, we must understand injustice and what God thinks about it.

**Firstly**, God calls injustice sin.

We often relegate injustice, poverty, trafficking, homelessness and hunger to poor social, economic or political policy. It is vital for us to understand that injustice grieves God and is contrary to his will and purpose.

Injustice has a devastating impact on individuals, families, communities and nations. Seeing injustice as sin moves us to view the world through biblical theology and engages our discipleship in a new way. This is not simply social service or social action; it is the wider work of redemption. When we start seeing the world as God sees it this decreases the chance of simply changing the world to suit ourselves. Biblical justice is about seeing the world through the eyes of God.

Often the Christian community is divided into two camps: those who emphasise personal salvation from sin over social reform and

those who emphasise social reform over personal sin. We suggest they are intimately connected. Ultimately, when you boil social justice down to its most basic form, it is about right relationships. Sin results in broken relationships, between one another and between humanity and God. The only true social transformation happens from the inside out. It is the transforming presence of the Kingdom of God in the world that ensures the true presence of justice. This happens at both a personal and community level. Social justice is not in one camp; it is the essence of both.

**Secondly**, injustice breaks the heart of God.

The suffering and the oppressed are God's children. God is impacted by sin and injustice. God expects that we, his disciples, will be impacted to do something about it. We are God's children also, so when injustice occurs, it is in the family. Christianity connects its followers to the suffering of our sisters and brothers in this uniquely powerful way. For it says what we do to the powerless of the world we do to God. We are then asked to challenge injustice.

How does God feel when children are trafficked as sex objects?

**Thirdly**, injustice is contagious.

It spreads like a cancer throughout the world. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.' When we allow injustice to go unchecked it's like cancer; it gets worse naturally. Just because we don't experience injustice personally does not mean we are not connected or impacted by that evil. What starts small grows and becomes like a cycle spiralling out of control.

A child caught in sexual exploitation without intervention often becomes an exploiter. The ever-increasing cycle of injustice goes on and on. Generations of families who have suffered injustice continue to breed the results of that injustice. Many children of war veterans who experienced psychological trauma and suffered

**The only thing necessary for  
evil to triumph is for  
good people to do nothing.**

Edmund Burke

emotional outbursts and dissociation from their parents struggle as adults to parent with proper emotional connection. Where does the cycle end?

**Fourthly**, challenging injustice can bring persecution.

At times there is a cost associated with challenging injustice. Sometimes we will be applauded for our action and at other times criticised and suffer for it.

Archbishop Oscar Romero understood this principle well as he engaged in a social justice campaign in Columbia. While performing a funeral mass in the Chapel of Divine Providence Hospital, he was shot dead by an assassin.

Only moments before his death, Romero had reminded the mourners of the parable of the wheat. His prophetic words:

*‘Those who surrender to the service of the poor through love of Christ will live like the grain of wheat that dies... The harvest comes because of the grain that dies... We know that every effort to improve society, above all when society is so full of injustice and sin, is an effort that God blesses, that God wants, that God demands of us.’<sup>11</sup>*

Jesus put it like this: ‘God blesses you when you are mocked and persecuted and lied about because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted, too.’ (Matthew 5:11, NLT)

**Finally**, facing injustice brings challenging questions.

We like resolution, particularly happy endings. The challenge is living with the tension. In *God’s Politics*, author Jim Wallace says that one of the principles of his life is ‘to never stop asking hard questions’. Questioning is how we uncover injustice.

Some of those challenging questions are:

- What is the extent and nature of injustice and suffering in our world?
- What are the real causes of injustice and suffering?
- What social or political factors might keep these problems in place?
- What needs to happen to remove these global scourges of injustice and suffering?

### **How are we personally linked to injustice?**

If God calls injustice sin, we are implicated. Sins of commission are often thought of as ‘action sins’, or things we have done against someone or God. Sins of omission are things we haven’t done. Both are our responsibility.

Injustice today is often a combination of commission (done in secret, such as corporate executives exploiting developing world labourers) and omission (fuelled by our own personal greed, when we buy the cheapest clothes on the market and don’t ask who made them and under what conditions). These are the personal implications of injustice as sin. We are implicit in the relationship.

## Questions to ask the Lord:

*Would you please take me deep enough into your heart to sense your concern for justice, mercy and faith?*

*As I tune in to those themes, is there some grief in your heart about an area or people group or issue that you would like to share with me? Let me see it how you see it. Let me feel how you feel.*

*What is the darkness that is prevailing there? Why is it there? What needs to happen there? What promise do you have for them?*

*What do you want me to pray?  
What do you want me to say?  
What do you want me to do? If you need a spokesperson, I am available. To whom should I go?  
How shall I deliver this message?  
What is the word of hope? What will redemption look like?*

← *If this were your first time doing such an exercise, I would suggest writing out your message and then praying (and perhaps fasting) over it until peace comes. Then ask the Lord what action you can take with a pure heart.* Brad Jersak (*Can You Hear Me?* Page 229)

### Prayer:

May God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships so that we may live deeply in your heart.  
May God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war so that we may reach out our hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.

And may God bless us with enough foolishness to believe we can make a difference in the world.

Amen.

(Franciscan Benediction)

# Chapter Three:

## Salvationist Foundations

The Salvation Army was born in East London in the 1860s. The industrial revolution had transformed the cities of Britain in a dramatic way. Half the population of England inhabited the crowded, infested, chaotic cities.

For all the advantages brought about by the Industrial Revolution, it produced a kind of rampant individualism. Many people were inspired by thoughts of getting rich, and often this manifested itself in an attitude of self-help and a drive to make money. The strong embraced such individualism. The weak were often devastated and abused by it. There was a lack of social planning, and various groups emerged as social and economic forces that determined the overall direction. Those who were given charity were characterised as being 'deserving', and were usually defined as those who didn't threaten the established order.

The urban masses lived in extreme poverty and worked long hours in unsafe conditions. Vices both great and small became the everyday life of these people. At the time, a debate raged about why this state of chaos existed.

Some argued:

- Drink and riotous living cause it
- The people have lazy and indolent attitudes
- They're not willing to work or take the opportunities available.

Those benefiting most from the industrial reform process were often the perpetrators of such arguments.

Another view came from the churches, humanitarian organisations and social reformers who identified among many things:

- Poor social planning
- Individualism (which failed to show appropriate care)
- Loss of jobs and a lack of upskilling

- Unemployment
- Inadequate housing
- Poor wages (which meant someone could work long hours and still not be able to adequately provide the basics of life)
- Unsafe working conditions
- Lack of health services
- Discrimination against and lack of emancipation for women.

William Booth grappled with these two points of view. His new Christian movement needed a firm theological underpinning for its work. Was it the personal sin of these people that led to laziness, lack of individual effort and failure to take responsibility for themselves? If so, the ministry emphasis needed to be on the individual sin of the person. Or, on the other hand, was it that these people were victims of a selfishly individualistic society that had failed to properly organise itself so that opportunities existed for all? The reform process had moved so quickly that adequate structures of social safety were not in place. If this were true, these people were sinned against and the ministry focus should be on the addressing of corporate evils and sin—an approach which inevitably involved politics.

Booth resolved to hold firmly to the concept of individual responsibility and personal sin but identified what he termed a submerged tenth who were the sinned against. He commenced the famous In Darkest England reform scheme, a program of social/political reform and action.

This scheme was built around what Booth called the Cab Horse Charter. Booth found it a stigma and an enigma that in 19th century civilised society ‘our horses are better treated than our fellow human beings’. He said, ‘When a horse is down he is helped up, and while he lives he has food, shelter and work. That, although a humble standard, is at present unattainable by some of our fellow men and women in this country.’<sup>12</sup>

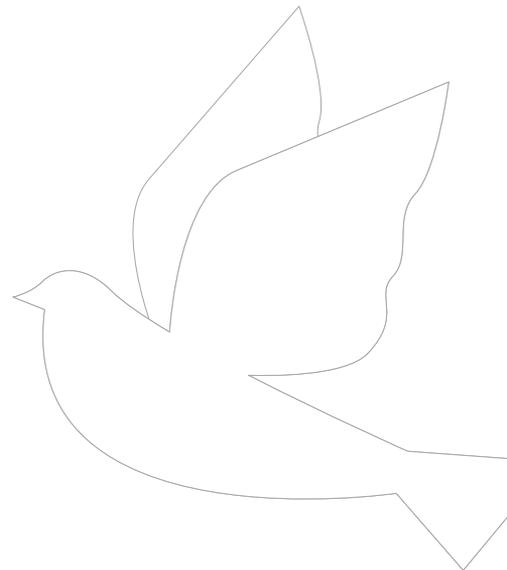
Booth seems to have identified that his young Salvation Army needed to be about justice if it was to do the work of God properly.

In the more recent history of The Salvation Army, there has been less emphasis on justice in our theology and missiology. We have been captured by a theology of the ‘God experience’. A question present-day Salvationists need to grapple with is whether this emphasis on the God experience has meant that in essential areas of ecclesiology, theology and missiology we have failed to give significant recognition to the essential nature of a ministry of justice, especially as this is something the Bible requires for an interactive relationship with God.

We rejoice in The Salvation Army’s strong emphasis on faith that has brought thousands into an experience of God. We are also glad that internationally we have responded with mercy to people suffering desperate homelessness, hunger and want. In times of global catastrophe—tsunami, conflict, earthquake or storm—we have shown that we understand mercy.

But have we understood and been a people of justice? General John Larsson (Rtd) was one among many who often made reference to a phrase that has become an iconic descriptor of Salvation Army mission—that of the ‘Salvation Army bird with two wings’. In this understanding, however, the emphasis has been only on two aspects of our God relationship. We encourage faith (through our figurative, evangelical ‘wing’) and mercy (through our social ‘wing’) but often fail to address the dimension of justice. Understanding our relationship with God as having only two primary implications is, we contend, the essence of our problem because we fail to integrate an understanding of justice into what it means to be in relationship with God.

The balancing of faith, mercy and justice is not a new tension; it was also obvious in the ministry of William Booth. Booth’s early work as a pawnbroker’s assistant brought him into contact with



the harshness and deprivation of poverty. He saw for himself its impact and destructiveness on human life. As recent biographers suggest, the impact of poverty continued to influence Booth during his entire ministry.<sup>13</sup> But despite this, Booth struggled with the theology of it all. Although encouraging his soldiers to relieve social need and engage in social justice actions (such as the Purity Crusade of 1885), he seems to have had reservations.

In a letter to Catherine on 10 November, 1885<sup>14</sup>, he wrote:

*'I am sure our work has materially suffered by our attention being taken from it to give to the Purity Crusade; we may have been paid back to a certain extent, and in the long run much good may be done, but I thoroughly believe in "Salvation" being the panacea for the world's sin and sorrow, and that while there are other medicines that look in the same direction the largest amount of good can be accomplished, with the least expenditure of time and money, by simply getting the people's souls saved and keeping them saved.'*

In his recent biography of Booth, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth: Founder of The Salvation Army*, Roger Green recognises that Booth's theology developed past this rather narrow concept of redemption. 'By 1890 Booth was convinced that it was theologically correct to address social redemption systematically.'<sup>15</sup> He then quotes Booth: 'Why all this apparatus of temples and meeting houses to save men from perdition in a world which is to come, while never...stretching out to save them from the inferno of their present life.'<sup>16</sup>

Booth's writing and speaking in the Darkest England and the Way Out campaign, which for a period completely absorbed his international campaigns, is testimony to this developed theology.

*'The scheme of social salvation is not worth discussing which is not as wide as the scheme of eternal salvation set forth in the gospel. The glad tidings must be to every creature not merely to an elect few who are*

*to be saved...It is now time to fling down the false idol, and proclaim a temporal salvation as full, free and universal, and with no other limitations than the whosoever of the gospel.<sup>17</sup>*

However, despite these moments of light when biblical justice was embraced and proclaimed, the tension still remained—as evidenced in a letter to his son, Bramwell Booth:

*I cannot go in for any more “campaigns” against evils. My hands and heart are full enough. And moreover these reformers of society have no sympathy with The Salvation Army nor with Salvation from worldliness and sin. Our campaign is against sin!<sup>18</sup>*

Maybe heaven will give the opportunity to debate with William at this point and ask, ‘what is sin?’ Is it only something personal? Isn’t sin also the excesses of humanity, personal and social?

Booth seems to have had difficulty in consistently integrating the three aspects of the biblical triangle of faith, mercy and justice. Viewing the totality of his ministry, they were all present, but at particular times he found difficulty in giving *balance* to these three aspects of biblical truth. As well, Booth tended to see mercy and justice flowing from personal faith and this led him to be suspicious of social reformers like W.T. Stead, and Frank Smith<sup>19</sup>, who wanted to redeem the present world.

This theological ambivalence to the biblical call to justice has continued to plague our movement to the present day. Our theological pragmatism and involvement with people has ensured a consistent and outstanding ministry of spontaneous and organised mercy to the needy of the world, but in areas of justice The Salvation Army has been less surefooted. And where we have become involved, it has tended to be around areas of personal morality rather than structural evil. The reasons we have been weak in giving expression to the biblical theme of justice are diverse and at times difficult to discern.

Inadequate theological and biblical reflection has led to an ambivalent tension in those who influence the movement, between personal salvation and the need to redeem present social evil. Where we give expression to redeeming social evil, it is usually with emphasis on ministries of charity rather than justice.

In our consideration of spirituality and holiness teaching, we have been stronger in a holiness approach with its heavy emphasis on personal experience and application of holy living rather than the wider and, we think, more rich approach with community emphasis. Interestingly, the first mention of holiness in the scriptures (in Exodus) is connected to the call/invitation of God to be a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation—at the heart of holiness is the communal practice of ‘everything that is God’.

In their book *Insane: The stories of crazy Salvos who changed the world*,<sup>20</sup> Neelson Munn and David Collinson tell the story of the ‘Lights in Darkest England’ enterprise where ‘The Salvation Army launched a war on sweated labour and phossy jaw’.

*‘A War Cry advertisement of July 1891 announced:*

*‘Lights in Darkest England—The Salvation Army Social Matches!! Are now ready and orders can be executed forthwith. Everybody should use the “Darkest England Safeties”, which are manufactured under healthy conditions and are entirely free from the phosphorous which causes “Matchmaker’s Leprosy”.’<sup>21</sup>*

The lifespan of the commercial venture was limited but the success of the ‘war’ was seen in 1892 when the government changed legislation around ventilation ordinances to decrease the rate of phossy jaw. That was just the beginning of a series of changes in legislation that eventually outlawed the production of phosphorus matches in 1910.

Another legendary story is that of ‘The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon’. Having been exposed to the injustice of the underground world of prostitution, Bramwell Booth and William Thomas Stead hatched a plan ‘to expose the full horror of child prostitution by buying a girl and shipping her to the Continent, proving beyond doubt how easy it was to accomplish such a thing, and, by implication, how regularly it was in fact done. The story would then be publicised in Stead’s magazine, the *Pall Mall Gazette*’.<sup>22</sup> So successful was the campaign and the furore created by the articles,<sup>a</sup> it saw the House of Commons raise the age of consent to 16.

Today, there is a growing hunger within the universal church, including The Salvation Army, for social justice. This hunger represents an opportunity to explore the relationship of faith, mercy and justice in our movement. It’s a hunger for justice, and according to Jesus, blessed are ‘those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (justice), for they will be filled’. (Matthew 5:6, NIV)

**Prayer: Praise for the past and trust for the future**

Living God,  
 We come to worship you,  
 Praising you for the past  
 And trusting you for the future!  
 We come to join our will to your will,  
 To make your purpose our purpose,  
 And your love our love.  
 We come in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
 Amen.

<sup>a:</sup> We recommend you get a copy of *Insane* to read the full account! [www.insanesalvos.com](http://www.insanesalvos.com)



# Just:Speaking

Excerpts from the field

## The Cab Horse Charter William Booth

<sup>a1</sup> The Cab Horse Charter shamed the public and galvanised support for his immense project. Booth followed this up with a well-publicised success to demonstrate the viability of the plan. He tackled and transformed the match industry in England.

What then is the standard towards which we may venture to aim with some prospect of realisation in our time? It is a very humble one, but if realised it would solve the worst problems of modern Society. It is the standard of the London Cab Horse. When in the streets of London a Cab Horse, weary or careless or stupid, trips and falls and lies stretched out in the midst of the traffic there is no question of debating how he came to stumble before we try to get him on his legs again. The Cab Horse is a very real illustration of poor broken-down humanity; he usually falls down because of overwork and underfeeding.

If you put him on his feet without altering his conditions, it would only be to give him another dose of agony; but first of all you'll have to pick him up again. It may have been through overwork or underfeeding, or it may have been all his own fault that he has broken his knees and smashed the shafts, but that does not matter. If not for his own sake, then merely in order to prevent an obstruction of the traffic, all attention is concentrated upon the question of how we are to get him on his legs again. Tin load is taken off, the harness is unbuckled, or, if need be, cut, and everything is done to help him up. Then he is put in the shafts again and once more restored to his regular round of work. That is the first point. The second is that every Cab Horse in London has three things: a shelter for the night, food for its stomach, and work allotted to it by which it can earn its corn.

These are the two points of the Cab Horse's Charter. When he is down he is helped up, and while he lives he has food, shelter and work. That, although a humble standard, is at present absolutely unattainable by millions—literally by millions—of our fellow-men and women in this country. Can the Cab Horse Charter be gained for human beings? I answer, yes. The Cab Horse standard can be attained on the Cab Horse terms.<sup>a 23</sup>

Every now and then I guess we all think realistically about that day when we will be victimized with what is life's final common denominator—something we call death. We all think about it. And every now and then I think about my own death, and I think about my own funeral. And I don't think of it in a morbid sense.

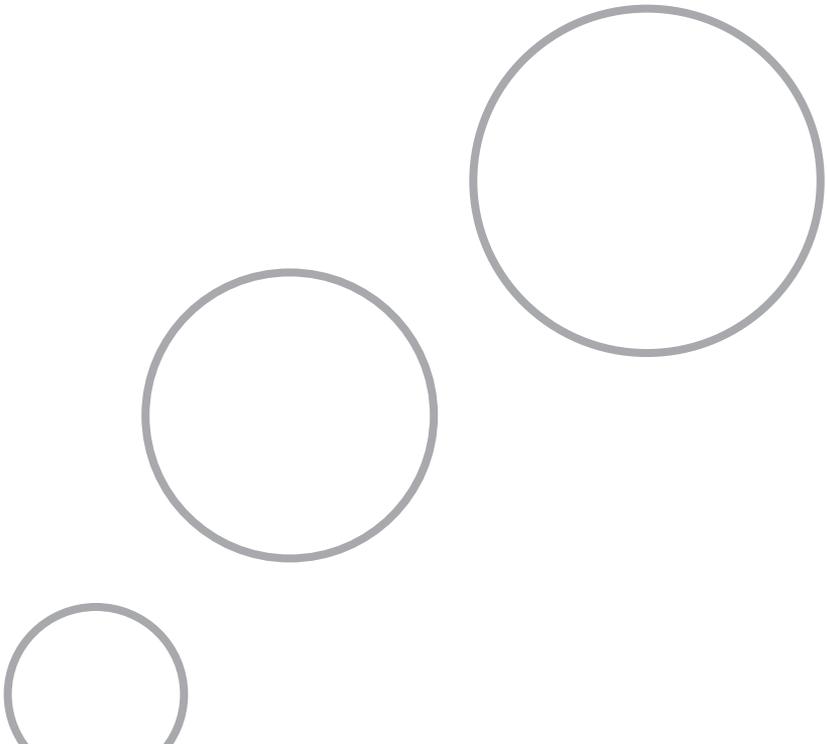
Every now and then I ask myself, 'What is it that I would want said?' And I leave the work to you this morning. I'd like somebody to mention that day, that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to give his life serving others. I'd like for somebody to say that day, that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day, that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try, in my life, to visit those who were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity.

Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things that will not matter. I won't have any money to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind. And that's all I wanted to say.

If I can help somebody as I pass along, if I can cheer somebody with a word or song, if I can show somebody he's travelling wrong, then my living will not be in vain. If I can do my duty as a Christian ought, if I can bring salvation to a world once wrought, if I can spread the message as the master taught, then my living will not be in vain.<sup>a</sup>

## A Drum Major for Righteousness Martin Luther King Jr.

<sup>a</sup>: *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr.* is an impressive read. This excerpt taken from pages 365-366.





Two:  
Acting Justly



# Chapter Four: Global Community

## The emerging global network: Who is my neighbour?

It's no longer difficult to think of the world in terms of a global village. It's familiar. We hear about the world all the time—world news, world banks, world systems, world leaders, and of course the world wide web. We are more connected than we have ever been before to the global scene. But we are not only linked through the Internet, trade and our economies, we are connected through our relationships with other parts of the world. It is how we act in these relationships that determines whether we truly see people as our global village neighbours.

Sometimes our first introduction to social justice comes through mission experiences. They can help us make an essential connection with the world. We come to understand that the world doesn't just consist of our suburb, *our* country, language and people who look and act the same. It expands our sphere to include others. The more we see of the world, the more we realise that it's bigger than us. In recent times, mission trips have received a reputation of not being useful. But although we recognise the impact is limited in long-term program benefits, the effect on participants through relationships is powerful, and can translate into lives of social justice.

There is a great YouTube<sup>24</sup> video and website called *The Global Village* which represents the world as a village of 100 people. With all existing human ratios remaining the same, the demographics would look something like this:<sup>a</sup> ———>

Jesus broke down the essentials of social justice with the story about the Good Samaritan. In the historical context of Jesus telling the story, the Jews despised Samaritans, yet it was a Samaritan man who showed compassion to the person in need. Jesus teaches us about compassion toward neighbours different to ourselves. In *Who Is My Neighbour? Australia's role as a global citizen*, Pope Benedict XVI reminded the Catholic Church that sharing the Eucharist 'gives

### <sup>a</sup>: The Global Village

- 61 Asians, 12 Europeans, 8 North Americans, 5 South Americans, 13 Africans, 1 from Oceania
- 50 women, 50 men
- 47 live in an urban area
- 9 disabled
- 33 Christian, 18 Muslims, 14 Hindus, 16 non-religious, 6 Buddhists, 13 practice other religions
- 43 live without basic sanitation
- 18 live without an improved water source
- 6 people own 59% of the entire wealth of the community
- 13 hungry or malnourished
- 14 can't read
- Only 7 are educated at secondary level
- Only 12 have a computer
- Only 3 have an Internet connection
- 1 adult aged 15–49 has HIV/AIDS
- The village spends more than US\$1.12 trillion on military expenses
- And only US\$100 billion on development and aid
- If you keep your food in a refrigerator, your clothes in your closet, have a bed to sleep in and a roof over your head, you are richer than 75% of the world's population
- If you have a bank account, you are one of the 30 wealthiest people in the world
- 18 struggle to live on US\$1 per day or less
- 53 struggle to live on US\$2 per day or less

rise to a service of charity towards neighbours, which “consists in the very fact that, in God and with God, I love even the person whom I do not like or even know”. We are called to be open to all, for we are brothers and sisters, citizens of the world. We are called to see the possibility that any person anywhere can be our neighbour; we need only act as neighbour to them.<sup>25</sup>

Social justice demands both global and local reaction. On one hand, we need the political will and government policies to shift the massive imbalance of power in the global community, and, on the other, we hear Mother Teresa insisting that the world can be completely changed by one act of love, consistently given. When a BBC reporter was interviewing Mother Teresa, he revealed his cynicism at her small acts of mercy. He said, ‘You don’t believe that you can solve world hunger?’ and Mother Teresa characteristically replied, ‘Yes, I do’. The reporter was intrigued, ‘How can you do that?’ Mother Teresa often responded to such a challenge with, ‘One person at a time’.

**But in this new century,  
millions of people in the  
world’s poorest countries  
remain imprisoned,  
enslaved, and in chains.  
They are trapped in the  
prison of poverty. It is time  
to set them free. Like slavery  
and apartheid, poverty is  
not natural. It is man-made  
and it can be overcome and  
eradicated by the actions of  
human beings.**

Nelson Mandela

*‘I never look at the masses as my responsibility. I look at the individual. I can love only one person at a time. I can feed only one person at a time. Just one, one, one. You get closer to Christ by coming closer to each other. As Jesus said, “Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do to me.” So you begin...I begin. I picked up one person—maybe if I didn’t pick up that one person I wouldn’t have picked up 42,000. The whole work is only a drop in the ocean. But if I didn’t put the drop in, the ocean would be one drop less. Same thing for you, same thing for your family, same thing in the church where you go, just begin...one, one, one.’<sup>26</sup>*

Nelson Mandela (former president of the new South Africa), emerging from a miraculous circumstance where small acts of defiance added up to a bloodless revolution, saw that globalisation and the growing hunger for social justice on a world scale was creating an anthem for a generation. Addressing the crowd at London’s Trafalgar Square for the Make Poverty History event in 2005, he said, ‘Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation. Let your greatness blossom.’<sup>27</sup>

The Make Poverty History Campaign was founded on the belief that the world system, particularly trade rules, debt and international aid must change in order to make poverty history. Mandela was calling the generation to start caring enough, and speaking loud enough, so that political leaders will have to hear and act. Mandela was calling this generation to take up the challenge of massive social change in the global village through the power of our collective voice.

Bono (lead singer of rock band U2), also a key advocate for the Make Poverty History and ONE campaigns asks, ‘Why should I care about someone dying in Africa?’ The answer is we care because that someone in Africa is our brother, our children, our mother, our father... we are connected. This, in essence, is the gospel. God decided to change the entire world and did it by announcing the birth of a baby. These campaigns are all expecting incredibly big changes. These changes will come through small acts of humanity leading to massive social change.

There is a growing hunger to make a difference in the world. The rise of campaigns such as Make Poverty History, the Micah Challenge, Stop The Traffik and the ONE campaign are evidence of it. Tiring of pleasure, a new generation can see consumerism still ringing with empty promises and a lack of fulfilment. We believe this generation is more willing to disregard the false security of prosperity for a better future together. Emerging from the basement of Postmodernity’s cynical anarchy is a new hope, a hope that the very hands that made poverty are the same hands that can end it. Mother Teresa spoke to this often, the refusal to blame poverty on God but rather of our own ability to share. For ‘God made the world rich enough to feed and clothe all human beings.’<sup>29</sup>

**So, we’re launching the ONE campaign to unite in the fight against AIDS and extreme poverty. We know that if we work together, we can win the fight and together we must because African people—guess what?—are equals in the eyes of God. They are our brothers and sisters; our lives are interconnected and interdependent. And this is not just some warm, fuzzy feeling kind of way—they actually are equal in the eyes of God and let’s start treating people, therefore, equally.<sup>28</sup>**

Bono

**One of the ironies of the recent success of India and China is the fear that...success in these two countries comes at the expense of the United States. These fears are fundamentally wrong and, even worse, dangerous. They are wrong because the world is not a zero-sum struggle... but rather is a positive-sum opportunity in which improving technologies and skills can raise living standards around the world.**

Jeffrey D. Sachs

## **Globalisation**

The results of globalisation have been amazing. World travel, economies connecting, mobility and technology are uniting the most unlikely of people. Two childhood friends who hadn't seen each other in over a dozen years were recently reconnected through Facebook. It turned out they lived only a few blocks away from each other but were connected via a friend living on the other side of the world. That's the shrinking world we live in.

Martin Luther King Jr. once said 'Before you've finished your breakfast this morning, you'll have relied on half the world.'<sup>30</sup> And it is no less true today. Tomorrow morning, we challenge you to look at the labels on your toiletries as you have a shower, the labels of your clothes and finally the labels on the food you eat. How many countries and their workers have you already relied upon? The sugar could have come from one country, the wheat from another. Where was it packaged? Processed? Transported from....?

Supporters of globalisation and free trade, such as Jeffrey Sachs, are quick to highlight the positive effects that it has had on developing countries. From 1981 to 2001, according to World Bank figures, the number of people living on a dollar a day or less declined from 1.5 billion to 1.1 billion in absolute terms. In percentage terms, the number of people in developing nations living on less than a dollar a day declined from 40% to 20% of the population, with the greatest improvements occurring in economies rapidly reducing barriers to trade and investment.<sup>31</sup>

In his book *The End of Poverty*, Sachs advocates for the end of extreme poverty and spends time explaining why countries in Asia (as an example) have been able to take a strong foothold in the globalisation process and achieve huge improvements in rates of absolute poverty whereas Africa has remained stagnant. In East Asia between 1981 and 2002, the percentage of people living on

less than two dollars a day decreased by 52% compared to a 2.2% increase in Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>b</sup>

The stark contrast in poverty estimates above shows us that globalisation isn't a guaranteed outcome. It is a process that is evolving, and we need to question why it is not benefiting everyone. In his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, Muhammad Yunus highlighted the dangers of globalisation:

*I support globalisation and believe it can bring more benefits to the poor than its alternative. But it must be the right kind of globalisation. To me, globalisation is like a hundred-lane highway criss-crossing the world. If it is a free-for-all highway, its lanes will be taken over by the giant trucks from powerful economies. Bangladeshi rickshaw will be thrown off the highway. In order to have a win-win globalisation we must have traffic rules, traffic police and traffic authority for this global highway. Rule of "strongest takes it all" must be replaced by rules that ensure the poorest have a place and piece of the action, without being elbowed out by the strong. Globalisation must not become financial imperialism.<sup>33</sup>*

Watching grandparents walk with their grandkids is a great lesson in social justice. Inevitably, the grandparents voluntarily slow down so that they can walk side by side with their grandkids. No one has to tell them to do it; it's a natural expression of love in a relationship.

Will we, the older members in the developing relationship, support creating 'traffic rules' if it means we are slowed down occasionally? Currently, those of us in the position of privilege and power in the global village can continue increasing our standard of living (or a rich owner's profits) with ease at the expense of the poor with little, if any, retribution. Corporations seeking competitive advantage will not compromise their profit margins while others are benefiting from these unjust practices. In other words, those who are younger in the developing system can't keep up the pace.

Area	1981	1984	1987	1990	1993	1996	1999	2002	% Change 1981-2002
East Asia & Pacific	84.8%	76.6%	67.7%	69.9%	64.8%	53.3%	50.3%	40.7%	-52.00%
Latin America	29.6%	30.4%	27.8%	28.4%	29.5%	24.1%	25.1%	23.4%	-29.94%
Sub-Saharan Africa	73.3%	76.1%	76.1%	75.0%	74.6%	75.1%	76.1%	74.9%	+2.18%

<sup>b</sup>: Source: World Bank, 2006 World Development Indicators—Regional Poverty Estimates

<sup>c</sup> Read more about fair trade at [www.fair-trade.com.au](http://www.fair-trade.com.au)

<sup>d</sup> The film *Blood Diamonds* explores the injustice behind the diamond industry. Increasing in popularity, a conflict-free diamond is one whose profits aren't used to fund wars and which is produced and mined under ethical conditions. Only diamonds that are certified and can be traced from the mine to the consumer are conflict-free diamonds. Conflict diamonds are still being sold today into the international diamond market as clean diamonds.

The Fair Trade movement<sup>c</sup> is standing up to such exploitation and showing the market that consumers care about the rules of the game. Supporting the Fair Trade movement increases the volume on the prophetic call that farmers deserve just payment for the coffee beans they grow, and that workers be paid enough to be able to feed their families. It also matters that there are human rights abuses behind the diamonds we purchase to say 'I love you.'<sup>d</sup>

At the top of the globalisation celebration is an aerial view of economic and personal suffering. In *Who Is My Neighbour: Australia's role as a global citizen*, it is suggested 'we are called to think and act globally in cooperation with those who benefit from globalisation and in *solidarity* with those who are marginalised by it'.<sup>34</sup> This link is important to recognise. The Salvation Army has been called to stand with the marginalised. It also has a responsibility to show those in positions of power the effect that the system has on the poor.

'The response of our industrial machine is to expand its markets by creating new wants and new appetites amongst the people who can afford them. We are capable of meeting the basic needs of all the world's people but are in fact fostering further growth in the demand by the wealthy minority for goods and services far beyond what we need or is good for us.'<sup>35</sup>

It is important for those driving development to recognise that excessive capitalism is a problem in itself. The benefits we are experiencing from globalisation have increased our standards of living and, at the same time, are threatening it. We in the West are living a lifestyle that the world cannot sustain. And it is the poorest nations which will suffer the most from the impact of climate change.

## **The Salvation Army positional statement on environment<sup>36</sup>**

*The Salvation Army believes that, as people made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), we have a responsibility to use the resources of the earth in a way that ensures that people in this and future generations do not suffer from poverty and injustice. This is part of our stewardship of the earth and our love of others. In the modern world, Christian stewardship implies large-scale and permanent changes in attitudes and behaviour towards God's creation, so that we begin to 'replenish the earth' (Genesis 1:28).*

*Responsibility was given to humanity to 'cultivate and keep' the earth (Genesis 2:15), but humanity has destroyed or is destroying much of God's creation (Isaiah 24:4,5).*

*God's instruction to 'subdue' the earth and 'rule' over every living thing (Genesis 1:28) cannot be interpreted to justify exploitation. God gave his people rights and privileges, but these included duties and responsibilities.*

*Given the finite resources of the world and its expanding population, together with the impact of industrial and rural activities, development must take account of the need to preserve the earth—an exercise in responsible stewardship.*

*Therefore Salvationists believe the following principles:<sup>c</sup>*

- *A concern and regard for all life forms, not only human life*
- *A striving for a more responsible lifestyle in order to do less damage to the environment*
- *Investment in regeneration, taking a long-term view rather than short-term expediency in thought and action*
- *Care for those who become the victims of the need for environmental stewardship, or who are the victims of environmental vandalism.*

**<sup>c</sup>Salvationists are encouraged to consider seriously their personal responsibility for the environment by taking practical steps to regenerate and conserve God's creation.**

General Eva Burrows (Rtd), for the  
Worldwide Salvation Army,  
December 2006

<sup>f</sup> Oxfam Australia currently have a campaign 'Fight Climate Poverty'. See their website for more details: [www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/climate-change](http://www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/climate-change)

In 2006, the World Bank predicted that the annual cost of developing countries to adapt to climate change could be anywhere between \$US10 billion and \$US40 billion.<sup>37</sup> And while climate change is going to affect all of us, the reality is that developing countries which are more heavily dependent on agriculture and natural resources are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of rising sea levels, drought and flooding and increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters.

Climate change has become an issue of social justice.<sup>f</sup> The food security of families and communities in developing countries living off the land—subsistence farmers—is extremely vulnerable to changes in weather patterns. It is vital that the international community helps protect the economic development of poorer nations most vulnerable to climate change.

Whether we see it as an act of mercy, or an act of justice on a 'polluter pays' basis, in our global village developed countries will need to provide economic assistance and share technology with developing countries because the capacities of these countries to adapt are hampered by their limited human capital, technology and access to credit markets.<sup>38</sup>

The continual need to adapt to the intensifying impacts of climate change will pose many economic development challenges to the global community into the future.

### **Our responsibility**

In effect, globalisation has opened our eyes to the reality of the rest of the world. The TV that drones the false promises of the god of consumerism to wide-eyed Russian teenagers is the same television that projects the images of starving children and enslaved boys to our teens in Western culture.

Desmond Tutu in *No Future Without Forgiveness* tells the story of how apartheid in South Africa was able to flourish;

*How was it possible for normal, decent, and God-fearing people as white South Africans considered themselves to be, to have turned a blind eye to a system which impoverished, oppressed and violated so many of those others with whom they shared the beautiful land that was their common motherland? Apartheid could not have survived for a single day had it not been supported by this enfranchised, privileged minority...It needs to be noted that many white people grew up knowing no other system and they acquiesced in it because it was a status quo that brought them much comfort. The system was not naïve. In fact it was exceedingly sophisticated. The black townships were usually out of sight of whites and it was an easy step from being out of sight to being out of mind. You had to put yourself to considerable inconvenience to visit a black township if you were white...'<sup>39</sup>*

The ignorance in today's world is most often wilful. Is there a place left that does not know something of what is going on in the rest of the world? The luxury of choosing 'not to see' is now at a premium.

We are a generation saturated with more information than ever before. As a result we have subconsciously come up with a filtering mechanism to cope. We determine what we choose to absorb. If we are interested in a particular topic we learn to tune in when appropriate and then tune out. Traditional forms of media that invoke our emotional conscience or response on an issue will not always work. This is one of the effects of globalisation on social justice.

We're a generation that has been desensitised to mass suffering, because it is painful to engage in these topics and they often lead to feeling guilt for the privileges we have. Think of the famines in Ethiopia in the 1980s. Like nerve endings, with the first few taps we react to the pain, but keep tapping and we become numb. We are a broken and fallen world. And with all the advancements in media and communications, the coverage of suffering is unprecedented.

To choose to see and feel the pain of injustice is hard—but necessary. Unless we allow our hearts to be broken with the things that break the heart of God, our best attempts at social justice will be paternalistic and self-motivated. We will respond for ourselves, not for others. The Paul Colman Trio have a great song titled ‘Africa’. It starts, ‘I came to change you but instead you changed me... We smiled at you from behind the glass ... And I see your hands reach out to God. So much higher than ours. And your silent eyes they scream. Of hunger and meaning and eternal dreaming.’<sup>40</sup> The time is coming for *real* strategies to emerge from people who will not let the poverty of others pass them by untouched. William Wilberforce declared, ‘If to be feeling alive to all sufferings of my fellow creatures and to be warmed with the desire of relieving their distress, is to be a fanatic, I am one of the most incurable fanatics ever permitted to be at large.’<sup>41</sup> Bring on the fanatics.

We want to believe this generation is the one that will change the world. The reality, of course, is that people remain wilfully ignorant. There is an incredible story in Ezekiel (Chapters 8 and 9) of a painful vision. God takes Ezekiel by the hair and shows him the ‘terrible sin in the house of Israel’. One act at a time God reveals sin to Ezekiel, and just when Ezekiel thinks things are as bad as they can get he gets another glimpse at even more injustice, pain and defiance against God within Israel. God sends an angel with an inkpad throughout Israel to place a mark ‘on the foreheads of all those who weep and sigh because of the sins they see around them’ (Ezekiel 9:4, NIV). The angels armed with swords instead of inkpots later strike down any Israelite who doesn’t have a mark. God is looking for people who will respond to injustice by choosing to see and then choosing to feel. We can join Bob Pierce, founder of World Vision, and pray, ‘Break my heart with the things that break the heart of God.’

## Glocal

On a world scale we can look at major themes of injustice such as poverty and wealth distribution, trade and globalisation, HIV and AIDS, human trafficking, war, refugees and asylum seekers, reconciliation, global debt and climate change/environment.

In *Be a Hero*, Court and Campbell take an intense look at ‘seven deadly sins’ of injustice facing children in the world today.<sup>8</sup> These seven deadly sins ‘are not things of which people are guilty, but things of which they are victims’:

1. Dirt poor
2. Children in chains (child labour)
3. Orphans of the street
4. Sex and the city (sex industry, child prostitution, human trafficking)
5. AIDS and plagues
6. War-affected children and
7. Religious persecution.

The authors then link the injustices with individual action, calling on their readers to:

1. Pray the Bible (understand God’s heart for justice)
2. Sponsor a child (become responsible for ‘one’/invest in the life of a child)
3. Start/support a project working with children
4. Advocate for the ‘invisible people’
5. Go on a ‘hero holiday’ (a mission immersion experience —see for yourself).

The writers are creating a link between injustice (particularly global injustice) and the way we live. The connection is a necessary one. That relation can be more than simply responding with resources to help the poor. Injustice is not something we fight alone within

<sup>8</sup> Check out [beahero.org](http://beahero.org) and [armybarmy.com/be-a-hero.html](http://armybarmy.com/be-a-hero.html)

the global context. Relationship is at the heart of justice. Creating meaningful relationships with marginalised and vulnerable people, no matter where they live, will change the way we live. Global justice shifts to local responsibility.

The new word for social justice themes that are also rooted in local expressions is 'glocal'. This is the recognition that we are connected. No matter how far away extreme hunger is from our own experience, we know that people are going without the essentials every day. Children are dying in the deserts of Africa and young children are going without breakfast or lunch at the local inner-city school. To every 'massive' social justice issue there is also a local response. In other words, we can change the way we live and that change, no matter how small, can make a difference in the world.

*Surely there is no injustice quite like dying of hunger, especially in light of the ample provision of food in the world. I remember turning on the television while I had a quick lunch break one day. I was eating eggs and toast, and thought I was pretty hungry. I sat down all settled and watched Anderson Cooper (CNN reporter) being interviewed. The question was 'what stories have been the most impacting on you?' and he began to tell of some coverage he did of a famine in Africa. He showed some of the documentary. In the clip he interviewed a doctor who treated children suffering with malnutrition. I'll never forget it because the doctor described the process of dying from hunger by showing the symptoms of the child he was treating. He lifted the child's arm and showed the skin that was still on the table. 'This happens because there is not enough water in the child to keep the skin on the body,' said the doctor, so every time the child touches something or rubs up against something he/she loses their skin.*

*He showed the inability the child has to blink. There is not enough zinc (mineral) in the child's body to produce the water necessary for blinking. This means the child has no defence against flies or dirt in their eyes. They often go blind before they die of infection. The child*

*dies a slow, painful and horrible death. Then the camera panned over a whole field of graves, none of them marked, for there was no money to make a marker—a whole field of nameless, faceless children who had died unnecessary deaths because they had no food.*

*I couldn't swallow. It's one thing to think about malnutrition and the deaths caused by hunger and a whole other thing to watch how that death happens. To understand the slow and painful process that could be stopped with some basic food is to feel a big pit growing in the bottom of your own stomach. The eggs turned to stone. I couldn't eat. I couldn't eat because something was terribly wrong with the world. It was injustice. I felt it. Danielle*

We ask how and why these injustices can be reality. We can see the injustice, but the causes run deep. At the heart of it is a complex layering of causes: local unemployment, drought, struggling economies in a global system that protects the interests of the wealthiest at the expense of the poor. Glocal issues have glocal solutions. We are connected to the problem and to the answers.

### **A global Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army is a global movement. In the early days, William and Catherine Booth understood that God's Kingdom was meant to expand and invade the systems of the whole world. Catherine Booth said, 'I believe that this Movement is to inaugurate the great final conquest of the Lord Jesus Christ.'<sup>42</sup> General Evangeline Booth penned the words, 'The world for God'. If anything characterised the early Salvationist spirit, it was a global advance. They saw Salvationists as 'world-changers' and lived for the transformation of the whole earth. This, of course, was matched to their theology. They were a people who believed in the imminent return of Christ and the coming judgement.

C.S. Lewis in his book *Mere Christianity* wrote: 'If you read history you will find that Christians who did the most for the present

world were those who thought the most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.<sup>243</sup>

Recently a professor lecturing on William Wilberforce (the English abolitionist), suggested that if Wilberforce were alive today we would label him a narrow-minded fundamentalist and relegate him to an American platform of a revivalist preacher. Largely, Wilberforce did what he did because he believed wholeheartedly in 'judgement'. He understood (as did the Booths) that Jesus was coming back and would judge us. Our gifts, our money, our time, our efforts were for something other, larger and bigger than ourselves. We were given them in order to use them for the benefit of the Kingdom of God. This understanding shapes how we live. The Booths understood this as well. When Wilberforce started 'seeing' the evil of the slave trade it had a similar effect as when Booth 'saw' the plight of the poor in the East End of London—it started a fight. All of their energy, means and privilege were spent for those who had none. Gifts were not given to be squandered, but used for the expansion of the Kingdom. Catherine Booth put her children to bed at night and told them they were born to change the world. She didn't just want them to be happy; she wanted them to be global citizens advancing the Kingdom of God. This understanding was embedded into a Salvation Army work ethic with social justice implications. We understand to be Salvationists means we have been called to change the world.

William Booth said, 'Salvationism means simply the overcoming and banishing from the earth of wickedness'<sup>244</sup> and early Salvationist poet William Pearson wrote, 'to tear hell's throne to pieces and win the world for Jesus'<sup>245</sup> to emphasise our mission. We were an aggressive force for change. Not only a church with a social conscience but a movement of people on the advance with the Kingdom of God. The Salvation Army is best understood not as a metaphor but as a movement. Social justice is not a byproduct of Salvationism; they are one and the same. Reading stories of

early Salvationists seeking to change the world through initiatives such as the matchbox factories or the Maiden Tribute in Modern Babylon (see chapter 3), it is easy to see that we didn't exist to simply build a church but to change the world. From Fredrick Booth-Tucker's advance to India and George Scott Railton's worldwide travels, we were constantly on the advance.

Recently the Officers Endowment Fund has been created at IHQ. This is an opportunity for Salvation Army officers serving in the developed world to contribute part of their income directly to developing world officers salaries. It's one of the closest things I can find in a large corporate context to a 'common purse' found in Acts in the early church. It's the same with child sponsorship. We don't need to set up new places for child sponsorship to happen (the distribution of wealth from those who have too much to those without enough)—our work is already going strong in those countries—we just need to get the money to the right places. Our connection, our mission, our covenants, theology and practice are a tight system of incredible advance for the Kingdom of God. Now the challenge is using the opportunities of globalisation to help us maximise the impact for long-term social justice. The challenge and opportunity of globalism for The Salvation Army is to harness its energy and use it to change the world.

We contend that the scope of a movement like The Salvation Army can thrive through globalism; it isn't a threat, it's a blessing. Now, more than ever before, our work can be connected through relationships. The power of connecting intimately through a common movement in a global context is an incredible witness to the world of what a global village could achieve. There are amazing stories of Salvation Army soldiers and officers demonstrating to the world how we can break down issues of discrimination and prejudice of 'the other'. Christ calls us to model a different way, for he is a relational God. We are not just connected as citizens in a global community but as soldiers in an advancing army. As we start to fight global issues such as human trafficking, we have

an incredible position to be a voice around the globe. As a global army, we are also locally present.

**Prayer**

May you have ears to hear what the Lord is saying and eyes to see what the Lord is doing. May you have a mind to learn what the Lord is teaching and a heart to love the Lord and your neighbour as yourself. Amen.

## Chapter Five: The Three Justices

Finding tools to ‘unpack’ injustice is difficult. There are many of them, but often they are complex. The Emetsystem provides a simple and helpful framework for a deeper grasp of oppression.<sup>a</sup> The framework suggests that true social justice consists of three distinct but interlinked, inseparable justices: egalitarian, distributive and legislative.

We’ve already offered two models of response. This is another model that will help us both see and, in our analysis of the context, break down complex injustices into workable pieces. Sometimes in order to get to the heart of an injustice all the layers have to be pulled back and examined.

The tri-justice model also fits nicely with Micah 6:8.

**Egalitarian justice: walk humbly** (this is recognition of our creator who has created us in his image and therefore our brother/sister as well).

**Distributive justice: love mercy** (to understand the generous and open-handed spirit of God himself who has given the world more than enough to share).

**Legislative justice: act justly** (rules and laws to establish protection and guidance in order that justice will be lived out through community).

Every group (community, family, or national structures) is measured by the three justices. They are deeply connected. So, when one area is violated, it impacts the other two. Likewise, when one area is improved, it will improve the others. This approach is three parts: like body, spirit and soul.

We’ll explore the basic concept of each section, but keep in mind that, because they are three, they have to work together. No one section is the explanation complete. In justice work, people have

<sup>a</sup>The Emetsystem is a concept that comes from a French psychotherapist and manager school. This approach develops some ideas of Jacques Lacan. The only person, perfectly harmonised is Jesus.

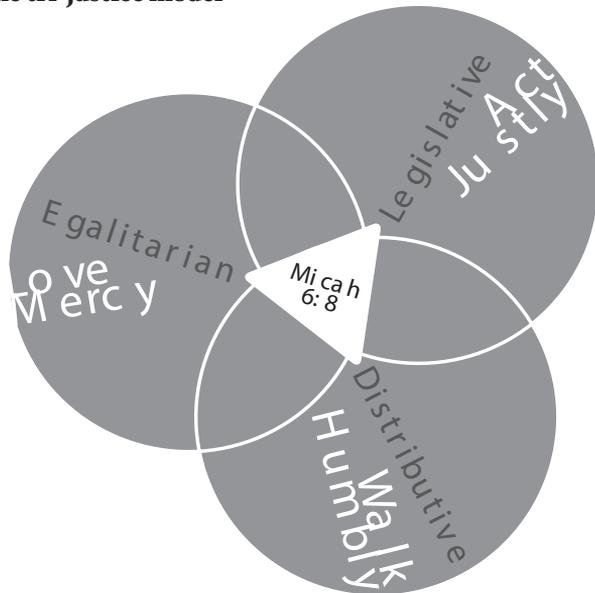
**It’s annoying but justice and equality are mates. Aren’t they? Justice always wants to hang out with equality. And equality is a real pain.**

Bono

different expertise in various areas. These can become camps that create barriers, and we assign value based on what camp we prefer. So, a lawyer may argue that legislative reform is the only way to really challenge injustice; social workers may insist that equality is the way and welfare economists might focus on redistribution. Biblical justice is a celebration of these parts working together. Micah 6:8 is a triune command from a triune God that unites our efforts as one.

To achieve true social justice, we need people advocating for all three parts. ‘Too often we have wasted our energy being dismissive and cynical of each other’s roles. We have to work together to complement each other’s gifts. We have to become good listeners. We have to listen to the poor, those in hands-on ministry, and those in advocacy. We have to listen to each other. If we combine our experience and gifts, then we can do great things.’<sup>246</sup>

### The tri-justice model



## Egalitarian justice

‘So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.’ (Genesis 1:27, NIV)

‘For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.  
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.’  
(Psalm 139:13-14, NIV)

‘Imago Deo’ is a Latin term the early church used to form its earliest belief statements. Every person is made in the image of God and as such has equal value. There is an intrinsic value within every person; no matter what they look like, their social class or where they are from, people are to be treated with respect and deserve equality. Equal treatment and respect are not based on where we’re from or what we do but who we are, a child of God made in his image.

Egalitarian justice favours equality for all. This means equality within the system—legally, economically and socially. In the words of Mother Teresa,<sup>47</sup>

*‘There is only one God and he is God to all;  
therefore it is important that everyone is seen as equal before God.’*

## Distributive justice

Distributive justice is concerned about a just, or fair, distribution of wealth and goods among a society. If the world were a big pie, then it ought to be cut in ways so that everyone could have a piece. For those of us who consider equality and egalitarian justice as important, it is distributive justice that calls us to re-examine our excessive lifestyles in a world where people are literally dying of hunger. ‘Inequality is not something that is bad in itself, but

rather something that is bad insofar as it leads to oppressive relationships...<sup>48</sup> Those with the largest piece of the pie have the power to rob those with less of their equality. Many wars and conflicts have been centred on distributive injustice.

Distribution is central to God's Kingdom and to our discipleship. Ched Myers highlights this link through the story of the rich man in Mark's gospel:

'Who, then, can be saved?' (Mark 10:26). Mark's epilogue to the call of the rich man (Mark 10:17-25) anticipates our incredulity: Does Jesus really expect the "haves" (that is, us) to participate in Sabbath wealth redistribution<sup>a</sup> as a condition for discipleship? Can we imagine a world in which there are no rich and poor? To the disciples' skepticism, and to ours, Jesus replies simply: "I know it seems impossible to you, but for God all things are possible".<sup>49</sup> (Mark 10:27)<sup>49</sup>

For the church with a clear mandate to assist the poor, it is disturbing that 'in most churches, less than five cents of every dollar goes for overseas missions. Over 600 Protestant agencies combined had less to spend in a recent year than the potato chip budget of the US. A congregation in Texas works to match every dollar they spend on themselves with a dollar to help other people. And a congregation in South Korea commits at least 60 cents of every dollar to help other people. So most of us can do much more.'<sup>50</sup>

While redistribution might seem to suggest charity, distributive justice is also about preventing the gross inequality of wealth distribution within the system to begin with. While campaigns such as 'Trade Not Aid' address legislative concerns, these issues are also grounded in our individual consumer choices. We purchase, support and therefore create consumer demand for the products of companies that are exploiting the poor. We are contributing to the problem of distribution and extreme poverty. In this global system, we are all linked. An example of a campaign and action against unfair distribution and remuneration for labour is the concept of fair trade.

<sup>48</sup> Myers explains, 'The theology of Sabbath economics and its ethic of regular and systemic wealth and power redistribution—most clearly summed up in the Jubilee release of slaves, deconstruction of debt and return of foreclosed land—is neither utopian nor abstract. It arose out of the concrete Hebrew experience of slavery in Egypt, and so is both corrective and preventative. I believe it continues to offer communities of faith today, a way out of our historical and persistent slavery to the debt system, with its competing theology of meritocracy and its alienating and cruel practices of wealth and power concentration and social stratification.' [www.earthministry.org/3e/pmap/sabbath.htm](http://www.earthministry.org/3e/pmap/sabbath.htm)

*‘The fair trade principle is an international movement that aims to ensure producers in third world countries get a fair deal for their products. Producers of crops such as coffee, tea, cocoa and rice are paid a fair price and offered long-term contracts to guarantee a sustainable livelihood. Fair trade strives for a more just distribution of revenues resulting from global trade relationships. The working and living conditions of producers and workers in economically disadvantaged regions should be improved by creating market access for their products and fair conditions. Fair trade fosters sustainable development. It strives for social justice, economic development, environmental protection and the maintenance of cultural diversity as well as contributing to stronger trade relations between countries in the southern hemisphere.’<sup>c</sup>*

## **Legislative justice**

‘For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world.’ (Ephesians 6:12, NIV)

Justice is driven not only by the laws of the land but also the regulations implicit or explicit that establish what is or is not allowed. Legislative justice is therefore the establishment and upholding of laws that provide protection for those most disadvantaged in society. Martin Luther King Jr. said, ‘It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me, but it can stop him from lynching me, and I think that’s pretty important.’<sup>51</sup>

This is evidenced as a priority of God through the Levitical code (the ‘laws’ set up for Israelites to settle in their land). Included was a solid framework of legislative justice to ensure equal opportunities and protection for the poor.

Every society has a social agreement on which its laws are established and enforced. But it is important to recognise that not all of them are based on a ‘just’ framework. Many societies would have been established on slavery, for example. Many trade practices throughout history have been unjust in their

<sup>c</sup> For more information on fair trade, visit the Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand at [www.fairtrade.com.au](http://www.fairtrade.com.au). For technical info on fair trade, such as fair trade standards for different products, visit the international governing body, Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO) at [www.fairtrade.net](http://www.fairtrade.net)

**Poverty is not a natural state of affairs, but a function of deep inequities in the national and global systems. The poor and the rich may be physically segregated from each other, but there is a systemic connection between them. Obviously, these connections are both politically and empirically complex as both poverty and inequality are multidimensional concepts and phenomena that are difficult to define and measure.<sup>52</sup>**

Fantu Cheru and Colin Bradford

If we use the systemic justice framework to unpack an injustice it might look something like this: —————>

outcomes. Many multinational corporations, despite statements of social responsibility, continue unjust practices in the name of ‘progress’ and are not held accountable by their stakeholders (e.g. shareholders, suppliers, customers). These systems need to be exposed and challenged through solid legislative law reform.

It is important to note that legislative justice is not only about punishment or criminal justice. It is about establishing laws that protect the vulnerable. It’s not just about prison time, but also about rehabilitation. It’s not about retribution but restitution. It is about legislation that upholds the dignity of all persons, even those who have violated the law.

An example of this is the ‘John schools’ in North America. Men who have violated the law by exploiting women through prostitution are offered the opportunity of a ‘diversion’ program called ‘John School’. The program bypasses the court system, but includes a steep fine which pays for the school and exit programs for women in prostitution. It is an opportunity to learn the truth about prostitution. The perpetrators go to ‘school’ on a weekend and hear the testimonies of women who have suffered from being exploited. The results of the John Schools are amazing. Men who take a long, hard look at prostitution through the stories of women caught in its grip rarely participate in it again. It’s a legislative justice that upholds not only the letter of the law but the spirit of it as well.<sup>53</sup>

### **The three justices: human trafficking**

#### *What is trafficking?*

The United Nations defines it as: ‘Trafficking in human beings’ shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent

of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.<sup>4d</sup>

*What is the scale of human trafficking?*

Men, women and children are trafficked within their own countries and across international borders. Trafficking affects every continent and almost every country.

Due to the hidden and illegal nature of human trafficking, gathering statistics on the scale of the problem is a complex and difficult task. There are no reliable national or international estimates as to the extent of trafficking. Figures are usually counted in the countries that people are trafficked into and often fail to include those who are trafficked within their own national borders. The following statistics may represent an underestimation of trafficking, but are the most credible and frequently quoted.

- At least 12.3 million people are victims of forced labour worldwide. Of these, 2.4 million are as a result of human trafficking.<sup>54</sup>
- 600,000-800,000 men, women and children are trafficked across international borders each year. Approximately 80% are women and girls. Up to 50 per cent are minors.<sup>55</sup>
- An estimated 1.2 million children are trafficked each year.<sup>56</sup>
- The majority of trafficked victims arguably come from the poorest countries and poorest strata of the national population.<sup>57</sup>
- Trafficking is the fastest-growing means by which people are caught in the trap of slavery.
- Human trafficking is the third largest source of income for organised crime, exceeded only by arms and drugs trafficking.<sup>58</sup>
- It is the fastest-growing form of international crime, already generating \$US7 billion per year in criminal proceeds. There are reports that some trafficking groups are switching their cargo from drugs to human beings, in search of higher profits at lower risk.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>4d</sup> Definition from Article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (Palermo Protocol)

- People are trafficked into prostitution, begging, forced labor, military service, domestic service, forced illegal adoption, forced marriage etc.
- Types of recruitment include: abduction, false agreement with parents, sold by parents, runaways, travel with family, orphans sold from street or institutions.

It is obvious that human trafficking is a major injustice plaguing the world today. Like most injustice, it is complex and fraught with layers of oppression. Often people become aware and passionate about a social injustice, they learn about its definitions and accompanying statistics, but then feel helpless to combat it. In order to make an impact, we need to take a deeper look at the issues surrounding human trafficking.

### **Using the three justices model through a global view**

#### **Equality**

One of the main reasons human trafficking is flourishing around the world is the damaged reality of *imago dei* (the image of God in people). Intrinsic value is not something that we can take for granted. Often cultures, economies and bottom-line profits have denigrated the treatment of ‘people’ to ‘things’.

Reducing people to ‘commodities’ with a monetary value is one of the key issues at the heart of the human slave trade. *How much for a person?* Pope John Paul II spoke prophetically on this to people around the world. ‘The greatest threat to the next generation is excessive capitalism and the death of children not yet born.’<sup>60</sup> The idea suggests the problem inherent in human trafficking is much deeper than it appears. A society that insists people are disposable commodities is in danger of excessive exploitation.

Human trafficking is essentially revisiting the slave trade all over again. The trade flourished because people convinced themselves that ‘black’ people weren’t the same as ‘white’ people. Although

this is difficult to admit, people who are different to us are often treated that way as well. Victor Malarek in *The Natasbas: Inside the New Global Sex Trade* writes, ‘While it’s difficult to comprehend the wall of complacency trafficked women face each and every day, there is an ugly reality behind it—racism.’<sup>61</sup> This can be in attitude or in laws, and is most often gender based. More than 80% of trafficked victims are women and children.<sup>62</sup> In many cultures the rights of women and children are neglected. Laws are created in many societies that force women to be subservient to and dependent on men, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and virtually powerless to protect themselves.

This is linked to issues of gender and nationality. In his book *One World: The ethics of globalization*, Peter Singer talks about the discounted value we place on lives outside our national borders.

*‘We put the interests of our fellow citizens far above those of citizens of other nations, whether the reason for doing so is to avoid damaging the economic interests of Americans at the cost of bringing floods to the people of Bangladesh, to avoid risking the lives of NATO troops at the cost of more innocent lives in Kosovo, or to help those in need rather than those in need abroad.’*

*‘If those “at home” to whom we might give charity are already able to provide their basic needs, and seem poor only relative to our own high standards of living, is the fact that they are our compatriots sufficient to give them priority over others with greater needs? Asking these questions leads us to consider to what extent we really can, or should, make “one world” a moral standard that transcends the nation-state.’*<sup>63</sup>

Ultimately, walking humbly requires us to treat others, no matter their culture, as sacred. They are also made in the image of God and worthy of dignity and respect. Jesus laid this out clearly in the two greatest commandments, summing up the law with ‘love your neighbour as yourself’. Our neighbours include people different to ourselves. They include the women and children (and sometimes

men) caught in the injustice of human trafficking. They are our sisters and brothers in Christ, made in the image of God.

### **Distribution**

Extreme poverty is one of the major factors contributing to human trafficking. 'Economic need is often the condition that paves the way for human trafficking. Every year, hundreds of thousands of people respond to what they believe are economic opportunities in a distant urban centre or another country. They venture out on what they expect to be a one-year contract to perform cleaning services or factory work but are lured into a trafficking scheme that relegates some of them to prostitution and others to remote labour environments.'<sup>64</sup>

Poverty leaves people despairing and without hope. This is often associated with a breakdown in community that traffickers exploit—situations where individuals can't turn to family, friends and the community for support. Desperate people do desperate things like selling their children or themselves in the frantic hope of survival. People are willing to risk all to be part of the great life they 'see' in the Western world.

In some ways our heritage in the Western world is similar. Many of our great-grandparents risked everything on the hope of a new life in a new world. We are the beneficiaries of helpful immigration policies that saw the need to spread resources and opportunities. The Salvation Army was involved in relocating thousands of immigrants from England to Canada in 1902 (in one year!).<sup>65</sup> Part of William Booth's vision for social reform was relocating people to colonies and teaching them to work the land to provide them with opportunities to defeat extreme poverty.

Today, immigration requirements are based on the perceived needs of the host country. As a result they are often biased against people most in need. Poor women and children are the least likely

to be able to access the legal possibility of a new life. This leaves them even more susceptible to the illegal trade of humans. Even in nations where prostitution has been legalised, most of the women surveyed would get out of it if they thought they could make a living any other way.

Donna Hughes reports, 'In contrast to many myths and misconceptions about prostitutes, women do not want to be in prostitution. A 1998 study on the sex industries in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand found that 96% of those interviewed would leave prostitution if they could. A nine-country (Canada, Columbia, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, United States and Zambia) study of 854 individuals in prostitution found that 89% of them wanted to escape prostitution. A 1995 study of women in prostitution in San Francisco reported that 88% of 130 women interviewed wanted to get out of prostitution. These research findings overwhelmingly demonstrate that women on every continent want to be free of prostitution.'<sup>66</sup>

Selling your body, your children, your future, your life, is not a decision made when you have other viable choices. Extreme poverty creates a vacuum that only redistribution can fill.

### **Legislative**

Often laws do not exist that adequately protect children and women from the sex trade. In some countries, tourism has been established around the selling of women and children for the pleasure of visiting Western men. Many business trips are offered in Asia for this reason. Furthermore, even if laws to protect the vulnerable do exist, they are rarely enforced and, tragically, police can be complicit in the illegal trade.<sup>67</sup>

*'Corrupt police systems around the world also contribute to the problem. There are numerous documented cases of police officers being bribed to*

*pick up people in a supposed raid. Some of these individuals are never booked—they just disappear without a witness or a word. They are shipped to a remote farm or other location, where they live out the rest of their lives in an environment that is entirely foreign to them. Sometimes, they can't even understand the language. All they know is that if they don't do a solid 14-hour day at the place they have been taken, they will be punished.*<sup>68</sup>

People get caught up in human trafficking through what can be categorised as push and pull factors. Things that push people into slavery include extreme poverty. Those that pull people into slavery include enticing advertisements that suggest economic security in a foreign land. Biased immigration laws are a significant push factor that contributes to illegal movement of persons. But there are many more legislative issues surrounding human trafficking that perpetuate this injustice.

The International Justice Mission was born out of a desire to uphold and institute legislative reform to provide justice for victims of trafficking around the world. Vice-President of Government Relations with the International Justice Mission, Holly J. Burkhalter, testified before the US Senate in Washington in 2007, 'Today, slavery is illegal virtually everywhere. Yet this most durable of crimes against humanity continues. Millions of women, men and children suffer a daily physical reality of forced labour and lives of the bleakest misery...Members of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives in our day have already risen to the challenge of abolishing in fact as well as law the violent, degrading, injurious, unpaid, forced, and coerced conditions of labour at home and abroad...The authors of the Millennium Challenge Act conditioned access to large amounts of foreign assistance to meeting a standard of good governance that included an end to corruption—a key factor in the existence of slavery today. While these and other statutes might be improved by various amendments and excisions, the most difficult and significant work for this Congress is to insist on the execution

of existing laws that we have in our hands... If supported and enforced, these laws could contribute substantially towards the abolition of these crimes in our lifetime.<sup>69</sup>

In developed nations we have legislative shortcomings as well. In Australia today, almost every victim of human trafficking faces the real possibility of being arrested, detained and then deported.<sup>6</sup> Treated as criminals, they are re-victimised and returned to desperate situations, turned away by a legislative system that refuses to protect them.

*In a typical brothel raid or street sweep in cosmopolitan cities throughout the world, foreign prostitutes are rounded up and charged. For the most part, the authorities don't treat these women as victims of crime; they are regarded simply as illegal migrants. No attempt is made to determine whether they were trafficked. They are jailed, processed for immigration or labour violations and deported as quickly as possible. Innocent women, in other words, are stigmatised and then victimised over and over again.<sup>70</sup>*

The survivors of human trafficking are only the beginning of legislative justice; even deeper injustices are found in societal views and demand for sex. A paper by Donna Hughes et al. from the University of Rhode Island proposes three main components to the demand for commercial sex:

1. The primary level component being the men (and occasional women) who seek out women, children and sometimes men, to purchase sex acts—these are the clients, also commonly referred to as ‘johns’. Without them making the decision to buy sex acts, prostitution would not exist.
2. The profiteers of the sex industry, those who make a profit by meeting the demand—these are the traffickers, pimps, brothel owners, corrupt officials, etc.
3. The culture that indirectly creates a demand for victims by normalising prostitution. The media glamorises public opinions on sex such as stripping and lap dancing, and overlooks the violence and victimisation involved in the exploitation and abuse of victims of the global sex trade.

<sup>6</sup> We recommend you watch *The Jammed*, an Australian documentary about trafficking, government deportation and the sex slave trade in Melbourne.

*'All of these factors are supported by cultural attitudes that relegate women and girls to second-class status in society. In places where women and girls or certain ethnicities or classes of women and girls are devalued, there is more acceptance of prostitution and the exploitation of a female relative in prostitution to financially support the family.'*<sup>71</sup>

### **Action plan**

Understanding oppression should lead to strategies for action. These strategies are not answers but the beginning of the journey toward solutions. Often, it is only when we take the first steps towards a solution that the larger strategy emerges.

After unpacking some of the oppression behind human trafficking, what is an appropriate response?

As we have alluded to before, because our world is linked the response is both global and local—it's glocal. Depending on context, our responses will differ. One example of a widespread global awareness campaign is Stop the Traffik.<sup>72</sup> Other responses go much deeper. It's important to realise that people and communities have the capacity to fight injustice in their own context. We need to journey with people in order to help them recognise their own voice and gifts and use them. Those working locally in a developing country can ask how we build a community's capacity to respond in a village where families have been prey to traffickers. One successful initiative in the Philippines has been to teach local villagers how to spot a trafficker. They are empowered to deny the trafficker the right to exploit their young people. It is important we build healthy communities that work together to strengthen people to help prevent and fight injustice.

A glocal response can range from general advocacy and awareness to specific, intentional interventions. A person in a financially secure home, living in a seemingly secure neighbourhood, may enter the social justice fight by choosing to become aware of

human trafficking and then spread that awareness within their sphere of influence. That's a genuine and good response. Another may choose to find the local brothels hidden in the fabric of their neighbourhood, or one close by, and confront the injustice head on. Yet another may choose to sponsor an asylum seeker and use their extra bedroom to house a global neighbour at risk.

One person may respond to extreme poverty by contributing to income-generating projects (e.g. loaning interest-free capital to women in the developing world). Another may feel compelled to go to a developing country to facilitate such economic development models and train local leaders to administer the program. Yet another may choose to confront the excesses of materialism in their own life and live simply, or realise they've objectified women and choose to confront and change their beliefs and behaviours. All are good responses. All are necessary. All of these responses are rooted in a deep understanding of this injustice, both its root causes and potential long-term solutions.

What follows is a brainstorming exercise exploring the potential strategies that emerge after a systemic framework analysis.



# Glocal Response: Brainstorm

## Equality

### Awareness about gender inequality:

- Promotions for equality/human rights around the globe
- Treating women and children with respect
- Empowering women and children
- Creating equal opportunity for economic security
- Teaching theology on gender equality
- Exposing prejudices regarding people and race
- Not tolerating inequality
- Speaking up

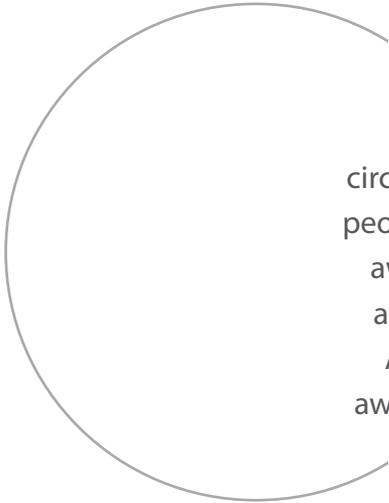
*'Study after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women. No other policy is likely to raise economic productivity, or to reduce infant and maternal mortality. No other policy is as sure to improve nutrition and promote health—including the prevention of HIV/AIDS. No other policy is as powerful in increasing the chances of education for the next generation.'*—Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General, International Women's Day 2005

This was an important focus for Muhammad Yunus as he established the Grameen Bank. He found women lacked basic rights and freedom to access paid employment. By lending them capital, they could work themselves out of the poverty cycle. Empowering them became a strategy for alleviating poverty in the country.

Sometimes the church has not helped this cause, with its worst offenders using the Bible to promote inequality and gender discrimination. The Salvation Army has a glorious history of confronting this injustice, even within the church. A careful examination of scripture will inevitably lead to the promotion of women's rights.

'Pornography and sexual violence; the connection has been made that when we objectify another person's gender, we leave that person open to pure utilisation. The humanity of the person disappears when we perceive him or her simply through our personal sense of pleasure or gratification. Women's bodies ultimately finance the pornography industry that generates billions of dollars in revenue annually. But at what cost to their bodies?' —Tony Campolo<sup>73</sup>

→ Stop sexual oppression (pornography and sexual violence)



Equality is a fierce commitment to the rights of every person—treating people from all walks of life and circumstances with respect. It is a determination to know people other than us and celebrate the differences. It’s an awareness of human rights violations around the world and doing something about the problem. For example, Amnesty International started when one man became aware of an unjust prison sentence and has grown into a global advocacy group.



## Personal reflection questions

Do I treat all people as equal?

How many people unlike me do I even know by name?

Who is being treated unfairly in my community?

Who is being treated unfairly in the world?

How am I contributing to the equality of persons?

What are my views on sex?

Do I see prostituted persons as objects that can be bought?

## Distribution

### → What are your views on money and wealth?

*We met a family who taught their children that everything they had belonged to Jesus and he was simply letting them use it. This was great stewardship teaching for young kids. We liked it so much we started to teach our son the same thing. I wasn't sure he was catching on until one day he was jumping on the bed and I told him, "Stop jumping on my bed!" to which he replied, "It's not your bed, it's Jesus!" And he's right. A 'me' culture will only widen the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. In order to fight this ruggedly individualistic, wealth-saturated cultural reality we have to get fierce with our generosity.*

Danielle

### → Solutions to extreme poverty:

- Financial resources such as micro-credit
- Exit strategies for women and children caught in oppression (rehabilitation centres that offer job training for survivors who need other employment options)
- Provision for the survivors of trafficking—UN Palermo Protocol outlines the basic needs
- Join a campaign calling on the national government and governments around the world to uphold the promises of the protocol
- Join larger campaigns such as Make Poverty History, ONE and the Micah Challenge
- Share your own resources
- Challenge your church to give more to developing world projects

### → Personal reflection questions

How much of my expendable income do I spend on my family or myself?

How much of my personal wealth do I contribute to the developing world?

How much of my business?

Am I open-handed with my things?

Do I pray about the money I spend?

- Join a campaign placing pressure on countries to uphold and enforce the law regarding human trafficking—including stiff penalties for those who break it and retraining and provision for the victims.
- Advocate for trafficking visa reform in developed countries. This will ensure that victims of trafficking aren't treated as criminals because of immigration regulations. There needs to be protective legislation that ensures survivors can access the provision they need to recover and not be re-victimised and/or re-trafficked.
- General immigration reform.
- Welcoming communities. Asylum seekers need support that goes beyond legislation. One of the ways we can help is becoming sponsors to refugees.
- Pressuring national governments to uphold promises and laws.
- Prostitution and human trafficking link. Inform yourself of the alternative solutions to prostitution in society. Sweden offers one model (see next chapter) and there are others. Get informed and then become an advocate for a just solution.
- Get to know the forgotten and oppressed.
- Become a 'learner' of the poor. Knowing them will help you understand unjust legislation.

Legislative

For example, an inquiry into the controversial mandatory detention laws in Australia found that many basic rights outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child were denied to children living in immigration detention. In a letter to former Prime Minister John Howard, the Human Rights Watch wrote: 'Human Rights Watch and the U.S. Committee for Refugees are concerned by the ways in which the recent amendments to Australia's Migration Act of 1958 (the "Migration Act") and other Australian legislation will severely affect the human rights of asylum seekers and refugees. In particular, we are concerned that the new law prevents asylum seekers from accessing refugee determination procedures, narrows the definition of a refugee, broadens safe-third-country provisions, and increases detention of asylum seekers and refugees.' To read the full letter go to: [www.hrw.org/press/2001/10/australia1031-ltr.htm](http://www.hrw.org/press/2001/10/australia1031-ltr.htm)

IHQ recently formed a positional statement on the link between trafficking and prostitution. To read it go to [justsalvos.com](http://justsalvos.com)

Muhammad Yunus uses this term to explain what he did in order to understand oppression in Bangladesh.

## → Personal reflection questions

How many petitions have I signed in order to change an unjust law?

Am I aware of legislative reforms needed in my country?

Do I know the concerns of the 'poor' in my own neighbourhood or city?

Have I ever met a prostituted person?

Would I consider sponsoring an asylum seeker?

### → **Prayer**

Let us go out from our customs and our habits and  
learn to hope from the bible.

Let us go out and cross the frontiers  
so that we may infect life with hope.

Let us ignore the barriers,  
and look only to the One who breaks them down.

He is risen.

Jesus is risen indeed.

Blessed be the Lord for ever and ever.

Amen.





# Just:Speaking

Excerpts from the field

Jesus' New Economy of Grace  
Ched Meyers

### Jesus and Jubilee...

Discipleship thus means forsaking the seductions and false securities of the debt system for a recomunitised economy of enough for everyone. In such an economy, which Jesus calls the 'kingdom', there are no longer any rich and poor—by definition, therefore, the rich 'cannot enter' it (Mark 10:23-25). So contrary is this vision to our accepted horizons of possibility, however, that disciples ancient and modern have difficulty truly believing (Mark 10:26).

Jesus' call for radical social restructuring at all levels, from the household (Mark 3:31-35) to the body politic (Mark 10:35-45), is summarised by the Jubilee ultimatum: 'Many who are first will be last, and the last first' (Mark 10:31). He typically chooses the venue of table fellowship in order to both show and tell object lessons that illustrate this. Meals lay at the heart of ancient society: Where, what, and with whom you ate defined your social identity and status. Thus the table was a 'mirror' of society, with its economic classes and political divisions.

In the extended banquet story in Luke 14, Jesus systematically undermines prevailing conventions and proprieties, while advocating a new 'table' of compassion and equality. The opening episode deals (not surprisingly) with a dispute over the Sabbath practice (Luke 14:1-6). Next comes Jesus' attack on the dominant system of meritocracy, with its hierarchies, prestige posturing, and ladder climbing, and his invitation to 'downward mobility' (verses 7-11). He then offends his host by criticising his guest list, rejecting the reciprocal patronage system of the elite, and calling instead for a focus upon 'those who cannot repay' (verses 12-14). The series concludes with Jesus' pointed little fable about an exemplary host who finally understands the bankruptcy of meritocracy and decides instead to build a Jubilee community with the poor and outcast (verses 15-24).

## Grace vs. Mammon

There is no theme more common to Jesus' storytelling than Sabbath economics. He promises poor sharecroppers abundance (Mark 4:3-8, 26-32), but threatens absentee landowners (Mark 12:1-12) and rich householders (Luke 16:19-31) with judgement. In order to teach the incompatibility of the economy of grace with the dictates of 'Mammon', Jesus spins a parable that portrays a hapless middleman caught in the brutal logic of the debt system who decides to 'trade' instead in Jubilee-style debt release (Luke 16:1-13). When faced with a dispute over inheritance rights, Jesus counters with a parable about the folly of storing up wealth (remember the manna), and then exhorts us to learn the lessons of grace and subsistence from the 'great economy' of nature (Luke 12:13-34; see James 5:1-6)

These are some of the 'Jubilee footprints' in the Jesus story. It is important to note that the early church which produced these gospels also practised Sabbath economics. The most obvious example—similarly maligned or ignored by modern exegetes—is the Acts account of the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost—the Jubilee-tinged celebration of Shavuot (Acts 2). This occasions a portrait of the church's first experiment in wealth redistribution, echoing the manna story with the report that 'assets were distributed to any as had need' (Acts 2:45, 4:35). Similarly, central to the itinerant ministry of the apostle Paul was his invitation to the new Gentile churches to learn Sabbath economics by practising interchurch mutual aid. Significantly, in his most elaborate articulation of this commitment (2 Corinthians 8-9), the one scriptural justification Paul employs is a citation of the manna story: 'As it is written, "those who had much did not have too much; and those who had little did not have too little".' (2 Corinthians 8:14-15)

Go to: [www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=magazine.article&issue=soj9807&article=980724](http://www.sojo.net/index.cfm?action=magazine.article&issue=soj9807&article=980724) for the full article.

**Receiving the chairman's award at the 38th NAACP Image Awards** (Los Angeles, CA, 2 March, 2007)

You see, I grew up in Ireland, when Ireland was divided along religious lines, sectarian lines. Young people like me were parched for the vision that poured out of the pulpits of black America, and the vision of a black Reverend from Atlanta... A man who refused to hate because he knew love would do a better job.

These ideas travel, you know. And they reached me clear as any tune, lodged in my brain like a song. I couldn't shake that. This was Ireland in the '70s growing up... And people like me looked across the ocean to the NAACP. And I'm here tonight and that feels good. It feels very, very good.

Well today the world looks again to the NAACP. We need the community that taught the world about civil rights to teach it something about human rights. I'm talking about the right to live like a human. The right to live, period. Those are the stakes in Africa right now.

Five and a half thousand Africans dying every day of AIDS—a preventable, treatable disease. Nearly a million Africans, most of them children, dying every year from malaria—death by mosquito bite. This is not about charity, as you know here in this room. This is about justice. It's about justice and equality.

Now I know that America hasn't solved all of its problems. I know AIDS is still killing people right here in America. And I know the hardest hit are African-Americans, many of them young women. Today at a church in Oakland I went to see such extraordinary people. This lioness here, Barbara Lee, took me around with her pastor, J. Alfred Smith. And may I say that it was the poetry and the righteous anger of the black church that was such an inspiration to me, a very white—almost pink—Irish man, growing up in Dublin.

This is true religion. True religion will not let us fall asleep in the comfort of our freedom. Love thy neighbour is not a piece of advice. It's a command. And that means a lot. That means a lot. That means that in the global village we're gonna have to start loving a whole lot more people—that's what that means. His truth is marching on.

Two million Americans have signed up to the ONE campaign to make poverty history. Tonight the NAACP is signing up to work with us. And so can you. His truth is marching on.

Because where you live should not decide whether you live or whether you die.

And to those in the church who still sit in judgement on the AIDS emergency, let me climb into the pulpit for just one moment. Because whatever thoughts we have about God, who he is or even if God exists, most will agree that God has a special place for the poor.

The poor are where God lives.

God is in the slums, in the cardboard boxes where the poor play house. God is where the opportunity is lost and lives are shattered. God is with the mother who has infected her child with the virus that will take both their lives. God is under the rubble and the cries we hear during war-time.

God, my friends, is with the poor.

And God is with us, if we are with them.

This is not a burden. This is an adventure.  
Don't let anyone tell you it cannot be done.

We can be the generation that ends extreme poverty.<sup>74</sup>

## Nelson Mandela

As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality persist in our world, none of us can truly rest. Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times—times in which the world boasts breathtaking advances in science, technology, industry and wealth accumulation—that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils.

The Global Campaign for Action Against Poverty can take its place as a public movement alongside the movement to abolish slavery and the international solidarity against apartheid.

And I can never thank the people of Britain enough for their support through those days of the struggle against apartheid. Many stood in solidarity with us, just a few yards from this spot.

Through your will and passion, you assisted in consigning that evil system forever to history. But in this new century, millions of people in the world's poorest countries remain imprisoned, enslaved, and in chains.

They are trapped in the prison of poverty.  
It is time to set them free.

Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural.  
It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.

And overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom.

### **Trade justice**

The steps that are needed from the developed nations are clear.  
The first is ensuring trade justice.

I have said before that trade justice is a truly meaningful way for the developed countries to show commitment to bringing about an end to global poverty.

The second is an end to the debt crisis for the poorest countries. The third is to deliver much more aid and make sure it is of the highest quality.

In 2005, there is a unique opportunity for making an impact.

In September, world leaders will gather in New York to measure progress since they made the Millennium Declaration in the year 2000.

That declaration promised to halve extreme poverty.

But at the moment, the promise is falling tragically behind. Those leaders must now honour their promises to the world's poorest citizens.

I say to all those leaders: do not look the other way; do not hesitate. Recognise that the world is hungry for action, not words. Act with courage and vision.

### **Call to generation**

... Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation. Let your greatness blossom.

Of course the task will not be easy. But not to do this would be a crime against humanity, against which I ask all humanity now to rise up.

*At the Movies: The Constant Gardener*

There is a scene where Justin Quayle, a British diplomat, is fleeing from a raid by violent rebels and running onto a waiting plane. With growing compassion for the plight of the local people, he wants to bring a young African girl fleeing alongside him on board. It is a scene of heart-wrenching inequality between those with rights in our world because of race (and wealth) and those without.

Jonah (pilot): I'm sorry. I can't take the girl.

Justin: I'm not leaving her.

Jonah: We're only allowed to evacuate aid workers.

Justin: Well, to hell with what's allowed...Look, how much do you want for her? There's \$800.

Jonah: Don't embarrass me. You can't buy this. The rules are made for good reason, please.

Justin: This is a child's life! There are no rules to cover that!

Jonah: Look, there are thousands of them out there. I can't make an exception for this one child.

Justin: Yes, but this is one we can help! Here. Abuk! Abuk! Abuk!

Jonah: Listen, that's the way it is here. Keep your money. Strap yourself in, and let's go.

Justin: What...what'll happen to her?

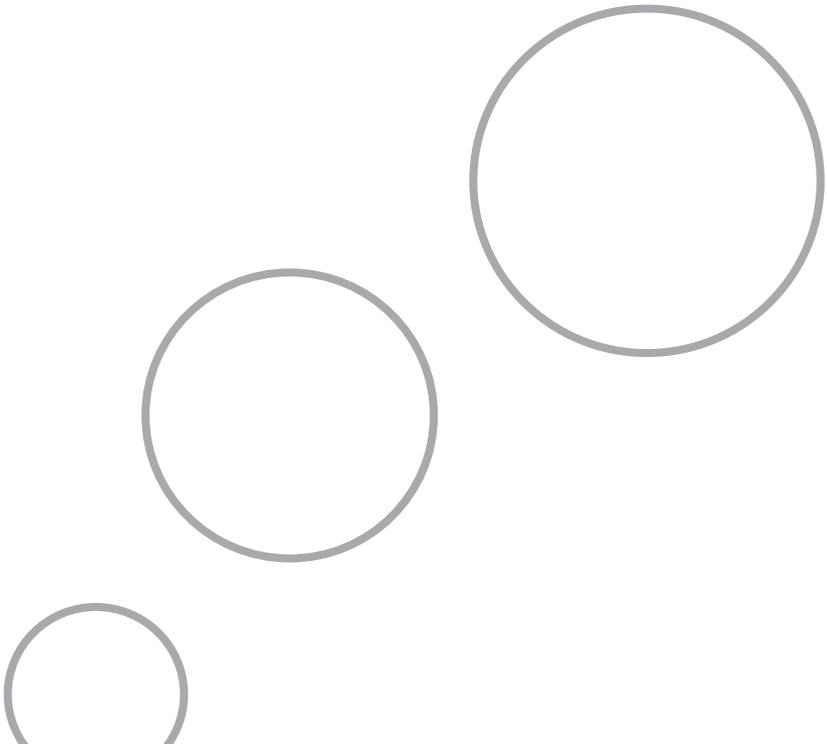
Dr. Brandt: She might make it to a refugee camp... if she's lucky.

There is a powerful moment in the movie *Hotel Rwanda* that social commentator Mano Singham talks about in his blog where ‘a foreign TV cameraman (played by Joaquin Phoenix) is at the hotel bar and asks a local journalist what the difference is between a Hutu and a Tutsi and how the conflict arose. The journalist replies that Tutsis are supposed to be taller and have narrower noses. He also says that the Belgian colonial powers favoured the Tutsi minority and groomed them into the elite. This caused resentment among the Hutu majority, which retaliated when they obtained power after independence. Two women are also seated at the bar and Phoenix asks them and which ethnicity they are. One replies that she is Hutu and the other that she is Tutsi. Phoenix wonderingly muses “they could be twins”.

‘And there you have it in a nutshell. Each group of people likes to think of themselves as somehow special and invent qualities that they think distinguish themselves from other groups, however absurd or irrational the grounds for such beliefs.’<sup>75</sup>

But by far the hardest-hitting moment in the film follows when European UN troops arrive at the hotel to rescue foreigners and no Rwandans are allowed to leave. Caught within and angered at the injustice of it, Colonel Oliver tears off his blue UN beret and throws it to the ground. Angry and red-faced, he goes straight to the hotel bar where he makes it clear to hotel manager Paul Rusesabagina that his entire country will soon be abandoned by the Western world.

Colonel Oliver turns to Paul and in intended irony says, ‘We think you’re dirt, Paul...you’re black, and you’re not even a nigger; you’re an African.’





Three:  
Let Justice Roll



## Chapter Six: Imagining a Better World

The great social reformers are people who let justice fire their imagination and spirit into dreaming and working for a better world. Gunilla Ekberg is such a person, fearlessly campaigning for the rights of women in Sweden. Leading a controversial Bill through Parliament that made the purchasing of sex illegal, she works to end the sexual oppression of women.<sup>a1</sup> At the height of the move, the Swedish government proclaimed on its website, ‘We want the world to know that in Sweden, women and children are not for sale.’ In the midst of Europe’s sliding prostitution laws and reforms, one country created a completely new approach. Ekberg suggests that if we are going to change the behaviour of people and nations we need to be able to imagine a better world.

Imagine your country at its best. Would poor women have to sell their bodies several times a day in order to eat? If we take Ekberg seriously, then the lack of better world systems is largely due to a lack of imagination. Muhammad Yunus imagines a world where his grandchildren will have to visit and learn about poverty in a museum. ‘For we can only build what we are able to imagine. Only if we conceptualise a world without poverty can we start to build it.’<sup>76</sup> William Wilberforce faced an incredible task. Some would have said it was impossible to dismantle the economic and societal norms of the slave trade in his day. He committed his life to end it because he could imagine a better world. William Booth, as he wrote *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, understood that God had another plan for society—a plan that was just, fair and held dignity for all people. He strove to live a gospel that not only imagined another world, but also brought it to bear in living colour. These reformers of imagination inspire this book *Just:Imagine*. We want to re-ignite our imaginations of a better world and challenge the notion that changing the world is impossible.

David Ruis in his book, *The Justice God is Seeking*, says,

*‘At the core of His [Jesus] Kingdom summons is this mind and heart-altering challenge... repent, for the Kingdom is upon you. To repent is to*

<sup>a1</sup> She advocated a three-pronged approach—decriminalising of prostitutes, criminalising of ‘johns’, and major funding for exit programs to ‘re-enter’ women into society. Check it out: [action.web.ca/home/catw/attach/Ekberg.pdf](http://action.web.ca/home/catw/attach/Ekberg.pdf)

*change your way of thinking—or more precisely to change the way you see life. The Greek is clear...metanoia (repent) means to shift the way you perceive. There is an alternative reality beyond what we see through the fallen sight of our natural eyes. There is another way to live; a way higher than the one we are comfortable in or resigned to.<sup>177</sup>*

Is it really any wonder that many social reformers throughout history have been Christians? So important is a new image of the world that God doesn't leave it up to our imaginations alone. Consistently, he is helping us imagine a world where there is no poverty, where health, healing, wholeness, fullness, restitution and liberation are a part of our everyday lives. Jesus calls us to imagine what life here on earth would be if it really were 'as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10, NIV). He invites us to pray for that very thing! The Bible has given us a blueprint to imagine a better world. Prophets spoke it, Jesus personified it, and Revelation paints a picture of a perfect and coming world.

#### Revelation 21:1-4 (NIV): The New Jerusalem

'Then I saw the new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a beautiful bride prepared for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will remove all their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever."

Ekberg also asserts that if we are to imagine a better world we need to understand the nature of oppression. In order to release the prisoners, we need to understand how to unlock the prison doors.

Bramwell Booth understood this strategy well, utilising people living closest to oppression to be the ones reaching out to others

still in it. This meant those doing the work implicitly understood the systems and realities of the evil they were fighting against. When Booth and Stead set out to expose the evil of children caught in prostitution on the streets of London, they did it with their ‘eyes wide open’ to the system of oppression that existed. To better understand the implications and the working of the ‘trade’, they got help from a former brothel owner. They employed a Salvationist woman (Rebecca Jarrett) in a covert operation inside a brothel to collect information. Stead went undercover as a customer in order to find out more. Eventually their efforts rescued one girl, which blew the lid of secrecy off the situation and led to the national laws being changed and enforced in London.<sup>b</sup> These were people unsatisfied with a simple hope and a prayer. They were committed to bringing heaven on earth and did so by taking a long and hard look at oppression. It is not easy work. Indeed, Booth, Jarrett and Stead took some hard hits in the process.<sup>c</sup> Yet this identification helped them to imagine and work for a better world.

In the introduction, we mentioned that Martin Luther King Jr. decided to move into a slum in Chicago. Only then did he understand the implicit oppression that the northern black community was facing. Wilberforce slept in a coffin made to the exact measurements of a slave hold in a ship. Sometimes he would even wear the chains because he wanted to understand the oppression in order to fight it effectively. Yunus was confronted with extreme poverty during the famine of Bangladesh and it changed him forever. As the head of economics department at Chittagong University he struggled to reconcile the ‘elegant theories of economics’, in light of the extreme poverty of his people. ‘Suddenly, I felt the emptiness of those theories in the face of crushing hunger and poverty. I wanted to do something immediate to help people around me, even if it was just one human being, to get through another day with a little more ease.’<sup>d</sup> The theories just didn’t seem to be relevant or helpful in the reality of the everyday. He decided to find an answer by choosing to

<sup>b</sup>: Check out the whole story in *Insane*, Chapter Four ‘The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon’.

<sup>c</sup>: Rebecca Jarrett received a sentence of six months, Stead three months and Booth was acquitted.

<sup>d</sup>: For the full Nobel Peace Prize speech go to: [http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2006/yunus-lecture-en.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2006/yunus-lecture-en.html)

<sup>e</sup>For more information on the Grameen Bank go to: [www.grameen-info.org/bank/](http://www.grameen-info.org/bank/)

become a student of the poor. What emerged was a system that is now breaking the back of extreme poverty in Bangladesh and the world through micro-credit financing.<sup>e</sup> After criticising the ineffectiveness of the World Bank to address poverty, Yunus was asked what he would do differently. 'If the overarching objective of the World Bank is to combat world poverty, then it seems to me the bank should move to a location where poverty is rampant. In Dhaka, the World Bank would be surrounded by human suffering and destitution. By living in close proximity with the problem, I believe the bank would solve the problem much faster and more realistically.'

World-changers understand that if imagining a better world is going to lead to the defeat of oppression, we need to know our enemy well.

### ***Bingo***

*When we were working in the downtown eastside of Vancouver (a modern ghetto of drug users confined to a 10-block radius), we were constantly wondering how we could change the neighbourhood for the better. We recognised the need to impact the children who would, without good intervention, be the adults we would help later. Upon a wider look at the oppression of the whole city we recognised that the cycle of addiction and violence started much earlier in the next suburb where kids at risk were already part of the cycle. So we started to build relationships with kids in that neighbourhood after school in the local park. We continued to pray that God would open the doors to really impact the kids, and change the cycle of systemic poverty.*

*One day, out of the blue, I received a phone call from a realtor. He had heard we were doing some 'work' in the neighbourhood and wondered if we wanted to take a look at a building available for rent. So two of us went to see the building, a huge hall right smack dab in the middle of the neighbourhood we had been praying and working for. We sensed the Lord in the connection and continued the conversation with the group wanting to rent us the building.*

*It turned out that the owners of the building were a non-profit community centre from the nice part of town. They had used the building for bingo nights as an income-generator to build an ice rink in one of Vancouver's wealthier suburbs. Eventually, the government pulled the plug on local bingos in order to centralise gambling revenue. Now the community centre was stuck with an empty building. As I met with the local leadership of the group and began to explain why we were interested in that neighbourhood (kids at risk, poverty central, broken families, aboriginal population, family violence etc.) it began to dawn on everyone that there was something grossly wrong with the situation. The distribution of wealth in this relationship between the owners and the community was messed up. It didn't take a rocket scientist to connect the dots as we reflected on one of the wealthiest neighbourhoods building an ice rink with money from the community most in need, by using the carrot of winning instant cash.*

*I later learned that all the parents who volunteered at the bingo nights were given a discount on fees to the ice rink for their own kids. Before this, I had some illusions about the people in that richest neighbourhood not really understanding how they raised the funds. But after that conversation I knew that many wealthy parents had come and helped collect the money from the poorest people in Vancouver to get the discount they didn't really need.*

*The meeting was a bit awkward after that. I hadn't intended a guilt trip. But it was so obvious, so wrong, that the injustice of the situation was clear. Needless to say, the rent was cheap. And it should be. I humbly suggested that perhaps now we understood what had really been happening over the last 10 years it was time for the wealthy community with the nice new ice rink to give back to the people who had funded it. It wasn't an easy journey and is still an ongoing one. But it highlighted to me the insane ability the wealthy have to treat the poor unjustly. And who knows? Who cares? It happens all the time. Danielle*

Studying reformers who have changed the world confirms Ekberg's ideas. We must imagine a better world and understand injustice. Jesus embodied this. He imagined and portrayed to his followers

a better world. A world where slaves and masters were friends and sisters, gender didn't determine rights and distribution of wealth was just.

The frustration of injustice is that it creates situations that seem unsolvable. In Cape Town, South Africa you can go from one of the most notorious slum cities in the country to a state-of-the-art shopping centre. A shopping centre built on a landfill project which was actually the remains of a 'coloured' community that had been bulldozed to the ground, and the inhabitants relocated, during apartheid. A visitor to the centre said she felt as though everything she bought from that centre was contaminated. It was dirty by association. Would it rectify the situation if the shopping centre in Cape Town was demolished? The real gem of true social justice is an acknowledgment that our world is broken. Even if 'poor' kids could shop for free it could never undo the hurt, suffering and generational damage done. But what can be done is to take the present-day realities created by past mistakes, and imagine how they can be different.

Often what blocks us from being able to imagine a better world is the inability to forgive, not only individually but corporately. How do non-indigenous Australians and New Zealanders really say sorry for the injustices to Aborigines and Maori and how do Aborigines and Maori forgive white Australians and New Zealanders for their colonising past?

Instrumental in bringing about peace and reconciliation in South Africa after apartheid was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In the foreword to R.T. Kendall's book, *Total Forgiveness*, Professor Washington Okumu talks about the need for nations 'to forgive each other for their past exploitation and suppression of their weaker neighbours just as much as individuals need to do'<sup>78</sup> and advocates for mediation and a 'policy of reconciliation, forgiveness and restorative justice and not just retributive justice'<sup>79</sup>.

He goes on to say: ‘Bitterness, however justified, will just consume our souls and achieve nothing. We must, therefore, learn to forgive even if we don’t forget. Nelson Mandela is perhaps the best example in the twentieth century of a man who has taught us how to forgive. After 27 years of political incarceration—the longest-serving political prisoner in the world—he emerged unscathed and told his people to forgive their former white oppressors and instead fix their attention on the future: on building a new united nation. In spite of the devastating trauma of apartheid, Mandela chose the path of forgiveness and reconciliation rather than the policy of revenge and vindictiveness...’<sup>80</sup>

This was the great question of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission: we know it’s been unfair, unjust and just plain wrong, but what now? Do we seek revenge or work together towards forgiveness and restorative justice?

Brad Jersak says, ‘Prophetic peacemaking is restoring shalom wherever it has been lost or broken:

- Between God and people (reconciliation)
- Between one person or people and another (mediation)
- Between people and themselves (healing)
- Between people and creation (environmentalism)’.<sup>81</sup>

It is the prophetic imagining of a healed world.

## **Worship**

Worship plays an essential part in being able to conceive a different world and finding the power to forgive in the face of present injustices, because they require significant spiritual sustenance. Worship not only sustains the fight for justice but, at its best, consistently keeps before us the vision and dream of a better world. Good worship fires our imagination. God instructs ‘true’ worship in scripture, and we offer it in the grit and grime of

everyday living, acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly. But the fight for justice can also be celebrated and cultivated through collective worship.

The early Salvationists used passionate ‘fight songs’ about vanquishing the enemy and the triumph of Christ to rally the troops in their exuberant worship. They put to song the passion and purpose of The Salvation Army. Booth’s In Darkest England scheme was even set to music to help people imagine the outworkings of its content. General Evangeline Booth, moving the Army toward the heart of God for the whole world, wrote;

*The world for God, the world for God!  
There is nothing else will meet the hunger of my soul.  
I see forsaken children, I see the tears that fall  
From women’s eyes once merry, now never laugh at all;  
I see the sins and sorrows of those who sit in darkness;  
I see in lands far distant, the hungry and oppressed.  
But behold! On a hill, Calvary! Calvary!*<sup>82</sup>

Bono was once asked if he’d ever leave rock music to become a politician and he replied, ‘Well, a speech can really impact you—but a song, that becomes a part of you.’ The impact of music has been felt in every social reform. ‘Amazing Grace’ is a great example of the clarion call of transformation, offering hope for the slave and the slave-trader alike. Slaves used gospel songs as a way of keeping hope alive in desperate situations and reminding themselves of the biblical vision of the future. ‘We Shall Overcome’ was the theme song of the civil rights movement. Worship as a tool for re-imagining is a common theme in scripture as well. The Israelites often sang in celebration of victory and in declaration of its inevitability. The Psalmist put every justice thought and injustice tension to song and sang them publicly. They were often sung as corporate worship songs.

Psalm 137 explains the angst of trying to re-imagine the Kingdom in captivity.

‘By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the poplars we hung our harps, for there our captors asked us for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”

‘How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem my highest joy.’

Is it any wonder we’ve lost our prophetic imagination when our current worship is almost always individually focused? Our songs are often about feeling emotional faith in a personal relationship with God. Sometimes called ‘boyfriend songs’, contemporary worship is almost completely devoid of justice language, or justice issues.

US scholar and author Walter Brueggemann outlines what can happen when the Christian community begins to believe the alternative reality of the Kingdom, ‘A community rooted in energising memories and summoned by radical hopes is a curiosity and a threat in current culture...the church has no business more pressing than the reappropriation of its memory in its full power and authenticity’.<sup>83</sup>

Living counter-cultural lives is at the root of justice. It’s telling an established unjust system that there is another way to live, not just with words but with our lives. Sustaining the vision of this alternative reality is essential through intentional divine sustenance, through worship. We remember Zion (the promised presence of God) by singing the songs of Zion. What better way to imagine the kingdom of God coming with justice than to sing about it? The challenge remains for us to rediscover the prophetic imagination and the great song of justice through our corporate worship. This imagination is awakening. Echoing the cry of Evangeline Booth, Nathan Rowe’s worship song, ‘Let Justice Roll’, says:

*There's a river that is flowing  
Full of mercy, justice and grace  
From the Father to the nations  
Every colour, every race.*

*Who will live, untainted by this world?  
Who will die for the gospel of our King?  
Who will bear the weeping of our Lord?  
He calls...*

*Who will be my hands and feet?  
To the lost, the last, the least?  
Who will stand? Who will go?  
Who will walk this world in white?  
Who will take a stand and fight?  
Who will stand? Who will go?  
Let justice roll.<sup>84</sup>*

The image of the Kingdom coming is one that will impact us but one that will also become part of us. The ethos of God's world emerging is something worth living for. Once we have the vision we recognise what we are aiming at. To simply imagine it will not be enough. Our imagination compels us to help make it a reality and work towards achieving the vision. William Wilberforce did just this:

*"To fathom the magnitude of what Wilberforce did we have to see that the "disease" he vanquished forever was actually neither the slave trade nor slavery. Slavery still exists around the world today, in such measure as we can hardly fathom. What Wilberforce vanquished was something even worse than slavery, something that was much more fundamental and can hardly be seen from where we stand today; he vanquished the very mind-set that made slavery acceptable and allowed it to survive and thrive for millennia. He destroyed an entire way of seeing the world, one that had held sway from the beginning of history, and he replaced it with another way of seeing the world.*

*Included in the old way of seeing things was the idea that the evil of slavery was good. Wilberforce murdered that old way of seeing things, and so the idea that slavery was good died along with it... the idea that slavery is inextricably intertwined with human civilisation, and part of the way things are supposed to be, and economically necessary and morally defensible, is gone.<sup>185</sup>*

**Prayer:**

Rise up with Christ into a new day, a new life;  
because for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation.  
The old has gone and the new is here.  
Therefore, go forth in joy.  
Amen.

**Imagine a world where spectators are only found at sporting events. Where everyone is fully engaged and actively helping their neighbour. Racism and ignorance are virtually invisible and every Christian represents Jesus well. Just imagine.**

# Chapter Seven: Prophetic Response

The modern generation has been massively impacted by the prophetic voices of visionaries such as Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and others who asked big questions and were involved in real change. But the prophetic work of the church in our generation cannot be left to the 'big prophetic voices'; it needs the prophetic involvement of every Christian. To see what is required, it is helpful to look at the biblical prophets. From this four principles emerge:

1. Prophets comprehend context. They always hear and understand the plight of people.
2. Prophets analyse the situation. Biblical prophets are analysers; they continually ask why.
3. Prophets bring a God perspective. They are God-led people, seeking God's perspective in every circumstance.
4. Prophets identify action. Their understanding and analysis always leads to a call for action.

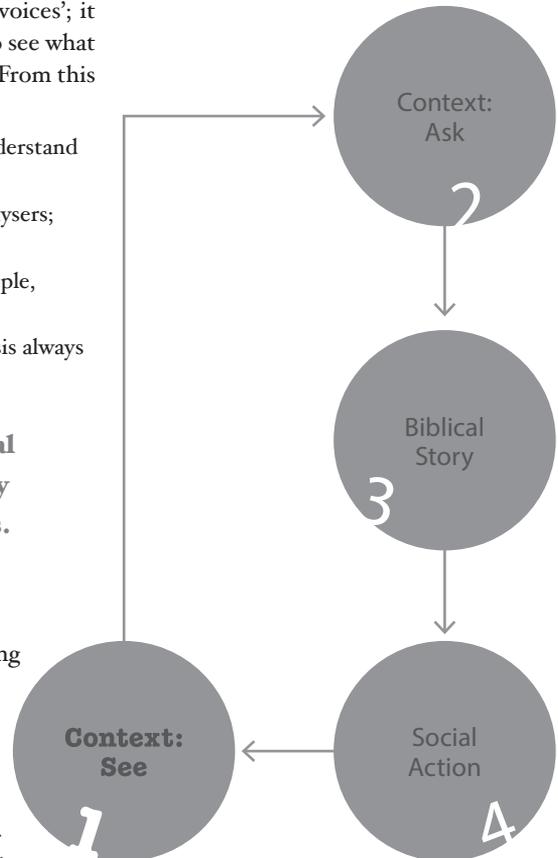
**To understand our prophetic role in a biblical prophetic ministry within the contemporary world we need to undertake these four steps.**

## Looking at context: See

Biblical prophets start by sitting among the people, feeling their pain and understanding the nature of their lives. Their model is the God of the Exodus.

'The Lord said, I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians...' (Exodus 3:7-8, NIV)

Living among the people, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Amos all knew what the people were feeling and the injustice that impacted them. Most



<sup>a1</sup> Incarnational communities are people choosing to join existing economically challenged neighbourhoods in order to bring the Kingdom near. Some emerging communities in The Salvation Army Western world include: NEOs in the UK, 614s worldwide, and the JUSTLive network in Australia.

effective prophetic work is done when we live in areas where our neighbours and street friends are people suffering injustice. When we see their tears and feel their anger or see their depression at the times they are treated unjustly, our sense of justice needing to be done is fired up.<sup>a</sup>

For the prophets, God was not a distant, remote or presidential God but a God who lived among his people. The prophets also knew they needed to see, hear and feel the sufferings of those they lived with. When we are in the context, feeling the pain of people, we start hearing and experiencing the heart of God. It is only when we empathise with the pain of others that a passion for action starts to arise in us. God's tears become our tears, God's love for people becomes our love for people, and the outrage God feels against those things that crush his children kindles our anger to subvert and change those systems. Social justice is not about professional detachment and managed relationships, it is about seeing the pain of the world as God sees and experiences it. It's where injustice impacts us and the pain becomes personal. Sitting in the context of injustice is not easy, because the evil is so overwhelming. Often all we can do is call out to God in desperation.

This happened to Moses. When God confronted Moses he told him that he had heard the cry of his people in Egypt and asked him do something. Moses, overwhelmed, tried to get out of the responsibility. He does what we often do; he gives excuses for not being involved. 'I can't speak and the Israelites won't listen.' 'Who am I to go and represent you the almighty God, Yahweh?' Eventually, Moses' response causes God's anger to flare, because God cannot stand inaction and abdication. He isn't fond of excuses when it comes to tackling injustice.

When we start considering injustice in the context of our lives, we are going to be confronted with discrimination, racism, corrupt structures and unhealthy cultural practices that leave us to think 'Who are we to change the status quo?' 'What can I do to change

the situation?’ Like Moses, we may be inclined to offer the Lord and the oppressed a similar argument, ‘Who am I to do something? I’m not a person of influence or authority. I can’t change things, I’m not a social worker, political lobbyist, doctor, teacher; I don’t have the skill set necessary.’ We can try all these arguments. God usually finds them deficient.

In the end, Moses relents and obeys God—not just out of duty, but because he remembers the oppression of people and the tears in their eyes. He remembers what he had seen as a young man growing up in Egypt; the oppression, the unfairness and the exploitation of his family tribe and nation. So Moses relents and takes up God’s invitation to take the journey into justice.

### **Understanding context: Ask**

When we start to really see and experience the injustice around us, it leads to the necessity to ask deeper questions.

In both New Zealand and Australia, indigenous peoples have high rates of imprisonment, addiction, poverty, child abuse and unemployment. We can see this and be tempted to immediately blame the victim rather than ask more fundamental and searching questions.

In response to the 2007 ‘Little Children are Sacred’ report on child abuse, former Prime Minister John Howard banned the sale of alcohol to Aboriginal adults and announced tight controls (‘quarantines’) on welfare benefits, including cuts if children failed to attend school. Aboriginal families are now required to spend at least half their fortnightly welfare at approved outlets for food and essentials.

The decision was a response to what appeared to be the surface issues affecting these Aboriginal communities. Deeper questions, however, exist regarding the treatment of Aboriginal people. With

<sup>b</sup>: On 12 February 2008, the newly elected Rudd Government offered a formal apology to all Indigenous Australians. 'We apologise for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians. We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country. For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry. To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry. And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry. We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.' For a full transcript of the apology go to: [www.abc.net.au/news/events/apology/](http://www.abc.net.au/news/events/apology/)

the colonisation of Australia they lost their traditional lands and many died with the introduction of European diseases. Thirty per cent of Aboriginal children were removed from their families and culture between 1910 and 1970. Aborigines were not counted in the census until 1967. Currently Aborigines are Australia's most impoverished community, with life expectancy more than 17 years lower than the national average. Although asked many times, Howard refused to apologise, arguing that it is not the current generation's responsibility to apologise for injustices committed in the past.<sup>b</sup>

History clearly shows when a group of people are deprived of their land, culture and children the effect on their social and economic wellbeing is dramatic. To control their use of alcohol or restrict their rights often leads to further problems. In New Zealand, as a result of colonisation, Maori were alienated from their land. Today, Maori are over-represented in social deprivation, crime, poor housing and economic deprivation statistics. In considering the social and economic plight of Maori in New Zealand it is necessary to analyse and understand the long-term effects land and cultural alienation have had.

Analysis is needed because the obvious can be misleading. Analysis means we ask questions when we see people experiencing injustice and deprivation. In the ocean, a disturbance on the surface of the water is usually caused by an object or occurrence under the surface. Where there are disturbances in our community, often the causes are under the surface. Analysis tries to understand what that underlying cause or problem is.

A client requested food assistance from a Salvation Army food bank in New Zealand. Checking on the background of the person seeking assistance, the Salvation Army officer discovered that the family had been the victims of the activities of a rogue car dealer. The car dealer fraudulently sold them a damaged vehicle, using their house as security. After only two weeks of driving, the

car needed a costly engine overhaul and the family was unable to meet the car payments. The dealer promptly put their house up for auction. The intervention of Salvation Army officers and the media at the auction sale resulted in the house being withdrawn from sale, the exposure of illegal practices, and a TV investigation that uncovered other victims. The fraud was exposed. That family was able to keep their house, receive assistance to help them through a tight spot, and recovered quickly to be well-functioning and self-supporting. Without the officer asking deeper questions about the situation, the family may have entered into a downward spiral of poverty and need.

In our analysis, we may ask questions to help find causes of suffering and injustice.

- What are the factors contributing to this injustice? Greed, fear, alienation, apathy, power imbalance, etc.
- Which of these factors are obvious; which are hidden?
- Why are people behaving unjustly?
- What belief or cultural systems are keeping this injustice in place?
- Are there political or organisational systems contributing to this injustice?
- What is a personal failure here? What is a system failure?

### **Engaging God: Biblical story**

Prophets bring a divine perspective; they hear the voice of God.<sup>c</sup>

Any social reformer would consider the context and analyse what is going on, but engaging the sacred story is a point of difference for the prophets (people) of God—those who would act with social justice from within the Christian tradition. Christian social justice cannot stop with simply understanding the context and analysing the political, economic and social systems that underlie it. Christians are required to engage the God perspective, primarily obtained from understanding and studying the Bible

<sup>c</sup> **Isaiah:** ‘For the Lord speaks’ (Isaiah 1:2)

**Micah:** ‘The word of the Lord which came to Micah’ (Micah 1:1)

**Amos:** ‘Two years before the earthquake the Lord gave me several messages’ (Amos 1: 1)

**Joel:** ‘This is the message the Lord gave to me’ (Joel 1:1)

with seriousness. That biblical consideration is further enhanced by prayer and its consideration within a context of worship, which has proper regard for keeping our imagination alive as God would want it to be. Christian social reformers hear the voice of God and not until this is done properly do the right actions become clear.

One of the criticisms of social justice response is that people rush straight into action without analysis or a proper regard for the divine perspective.

When Moses tried to deal with injustice in a rush, it ended badly. In one swift, rash moment, he murdered the oppressor, and became the oppressed. When Moses started listening to God, a whole new approach to overcoming oppression emerged. He was able to defeat oppression and lead his people to freedom in ways he could not have imagined. We are led and guided by God's word. When we consider social and economic injustices alongside the promise and reality of a biblical view, we have the ability to deliver permanent damage to injustice.

### **Social action**

Prophets inspire, lead and take action.. They don't just see, they're not just moved, they don't just weep, they don't just analyse and work out what is wrong, they don't just hear the voice of God in scripture and prayer; they do something or, in the theme of the co-founder of The Salvation Army, William Booth, they fight. They challenge wrong with just action

Bramwell Booth, son of founders Catherine and William Booth, was concerned about the age of young girls involved in prostitution. He certainly learned all he could about what and why this was happening. He prayed and then preached that the use of girls in prostitution was a breach of God's purpose for their lives. But he did not stop there. He acted to get things to change. He stirred up a national debate about young girls being taken as sex slaves.

Then, to prove what was happening, he and William Stead got themselves arrested for procurement. When these actions created a movement for change, Booth commenced a national petition that eventually got the law amended.

Bramwell experienced the tragedy of what was happening to young girls (understood the context), researched what was going on (analysed the context), prayed and preached (engaged the divine perspective), and then took action (social action).

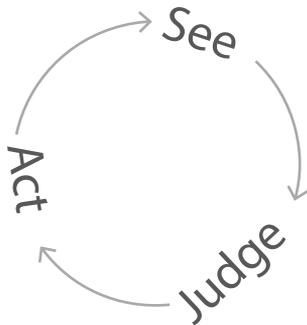
When faced with injustice, two errors have sometimes characterised the Christian response. Either we have seen, analysed and heard the voice of God to do something and not responded, or we have rushed into action without seeing, analysing and hearing the voice of God.

Another common error is to forget in our analysis that the people and communities actually living within the injustice are best able to defeat it. They are the ones who will help us understand the depths of the issue, and they have capacity to help lead in the fight. So often we overlook the knowledge and strength that exists within communities by doing our analysis and acting on their behalf without true consultation.

The Salvation Army has made, and still does make, all of these errors.

As Christians we need to know culture and context, analyse it using the best of tools, introduce to it the sacred story and then involve ourselves in changing the world.

The Catholic Young Christian Workers movement developed a second model for theological analysis: See, Judge and Act. This model was used to help its members examine the underlying causes and consequences of social injustice, challenge existing structures on those issues, achieve change in the individual and



their environment, and activate others to take action. They developed the See, Judge and Act model as a way of living out the gospel.

See, Judge, Act is a way of undertaking social justice ministry either personally or in a group. It represents the simple application of biblical truth to life events in a way that can be hugely impacting.

It involves three things:

1. See. Recognising what is happening in a particular situation.
2. Judge. Analysing what is going on from a theological, economic and social etc. framework.
3. Act. Undertaking some action to bring about change.

### **See**

Seeing involves asking a number of questions:

- What is actually happening?
- What is this doing to people?
- Why is this happening?
- Who is doing something about this?
- What effect are these actions having?

The first step in any Christian social justice approach requires that we understand, see and feel the situation. Rob Harley, a New Zealand documentary maker, once described Salvationists as 'having the smell of the streets on you'. To have the smell of the streets on us is essential if we are to engage in social justice action. We must know the reality at street level. It can't be from a distance, from an office somewhere else, removed from the situation. It must be from the 'heat of the battle'. Far too many decisions on social action made by The Salvation Army today are from offices, boardrooms and places removed from where the real pain is occurring. The concern to act is commendable, but there

is an enormous risk in taking on social evil when you are distant from the people whose lives are impacted by injustice.

In the theological action/reflection process this street level engagement is called ‘understanding the context’. In this model, the term is ‘seeing’. We dare not proceed into action without this understanding, feeling and experiencing the lives of people impacted by social evil. It is sitting where they sit.

Jesus says to Zaccheus, ‘I am coming to your house for tea.’ Why? Because he knew that this identification, this close encounter and personal knowledge, was going to build the base for repentance and change. And so it proved to be.

This is an approach to adopt as individuals and in our communities. The Salvation Army also needs to become a learning organisation, linking local action and response with organisational change. The partnership between those in the field and those in policy is crucial if we are going to remain relevant in our ever-changing communities. In other words, policy needs to be consistently informed by field experience.

*‘A key pathway for developing and maintaining dynamic positive partnership and sustaining learning is the systematic involvement by organisations in learning.’<sup>86</sup>*

Beyond the formality of leaders visiting a Salvation Army corps, we need to invite policy makers and leadership to participate in the community environment, invite them into the context—literally, into the homes, as Jesus modelled. We need to share space for learning together so they too can empathise and understand the current reality of the injustices. We need to create opportunities for ‘mutual sharing of vision, as well as the challenges and struggles faced by both the local team and the leadership’.<sup>87</sup>

The Booth-Tucker Institute in Vancouver was designed for leaders. Part of its design is to place leaders into the thick of the

<sup>d</sup> Find out more about the Booth-Tucker Institute at [www.thewarcollege.com/bti\\_info.html](http://www.thewarcollege.com/bti_info.html)

poorest people in the city. Instead of a retreat centre for escape, the leadership school is created to give an immersion experience to leaders who, by the nature of their job, have been distanced from the people they have been called to serve. Gone is the decent hotel and offered in its place is a slum rooming house. In only a week, leaders consistently go from being distant advocates for the marginalised to friends of the poor. Experience has shown their ministry takes on a new vibrancy and their passion is re-ignited for the Kingdom.<sup>d</sup>

*In the 1980s I was appointed as a community officer to the very needy communities of South Auckland in New Zealand. I decided that for the first three months I would not to undertake any action but would spend my time discovering the situation, needs, deprivation, economics and social structure of the community. I did this by spending each day talking to people in the community about what they saw as the situation of South Auckland. I talked to people in shopping malls, went house to house in neighbourhoods, visited community activists, the mayor, social agencies, the local authorities, the police, judges, lawyers, doctors, people sweeping the street, the rubbish collectors, Maori leaders, people running early childhood centres. In the course of three months I talked to people of all ages, ethnicities, gender, social status and wealth. It enabled me to gain a picture of the community and its needs before making any attempt to intervene in its life or offer help and assistance.* Campbell

### The five principles

When we are with people in their context, we need to question what we are experiencing because our own inculturation and personal history can send us down the wrong track. Robert McAfee Brown suggests what he calls the five principles of hermeneutic suspicion when we are doing and ‘seeing’ the context.<sup>e</sup>

**Principle one:** What we see is not necessarily what is there.

Brown suggests that seeing contexts as a Christian or with the eyes of God is a particular way of looking at the world. This is

<sup>e</sup> The Five Principles are from Robert McAfee Brown’s *Theology in a New Key, Responding to Liberation Themes* (Philadelphia, PA Westminster Press, 1978). We have included them as a tool for analysing context.

reflected through the Old Testament prophets. As you read, it becomes clear that they saw the world in a different way to most. Their view was often a minority one, often not shared by those in leading positions.

We should look with a realisation that what we see is not necessarily what is there.

Someone may ask for shelter but as we really get to know them we may discover what they actually need is help to get employment, support in challenging an injustice, or long-term housing assistance so that they don't pay 70% of their income just maintaining a roof over their heads.

In the words of author Rob Bell, 'This is really about that.'<sup>88</sup>

Sometimes people, local authorities and governments go to some trouble to stop us seeing what is really happening. In the days of apartheid the South African government would often bring visitors to South Africa to show them that black people were happy and living well under the system. The visitors never got to see the places where black misery was rife. They 'saw', but it was a controlled glimpse. When the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Summit was hosted in Auckland in 1999, the council moved all the homeless out of sight. A similar thing occurred in Melbourne for the Commonwealth Games in 2006. Often the unpleasant parts are hidden. In Vancouver, Canada, the index of a tourist map for the downtown area was placed over the poorest section of the city.

At other times we can live somewhere and not see what is going on in our own backyard, or we justify it with a different interpretation. As recorded in the Bible, Amos saw things others did not see—as did Jesus.

We can visit a country as a tourist and not understand a great deal about the politics, social health or true wellbeing of people in that

**As a Salvation Army corps officer I often had someone from headquarters visit the corps. On most occasions what the HQ leader saw was not what was usually happening. People came who we didn't usually see, the musicians practised harder and everyone helped make the occasion very special. Of course there were also those who complained to the leader about things they had never mentioned before. I am sure that most of the leaders were wise enough to know what they were seeing was part of the truth but not all of it.**

Campbell

country. We have listened to people who have become 'experts' on a place they visited for a week. Would we see all that you see? A tourist does not gain an accurate picture of the political system of a country.

So we need to have a natural suspicion and question what we see, asking, 'Is this really the truth?'

**Principle two:** What we see depends on where we are standing.

What we see depends on our own experience, beliefs, friends, social standing and upbringing, just to name a few. We are not unbiased when we experience a situation or are with certain people. Our own position and history impact upon our worldview and affect how we interpret different events.

If you asked the question of how a country is doing, we can predict that an unemployed person, a successful businessman, an indigenous person or the minister of finance would each give you a valid but different view. Their view would be impacted by their position, history, training and experience.

*During my school career I gained one view of the settlement and history of New Zealand. That viewpoint was extremely biased towards a positive view of British colonisation and European settlement. As I started to learn later in life the same history from a Maori viewpoint I realised that many of the assumptions on which I had developed my attitudes and views were incorrect and needed to be rethought in light of my new information from Maori history.* Campbell

A number of things can affect how we view what is happening—our upbringing, our religion and family, even our politics. How the average American views the success of the Iraq war will be impacted by whether they are Republican or Democrat.

**Principle three:** When others tell us what they see, we need to know where they are standing as well as where we are standing.

The Salvation Army needs to consistently ask whose voices have the most effect on what we do. Is it the poor we work with, those who are addicted, the Indigenous women who are numerous in our community services, or our donors, politicians, those who offer us public relations or marketing services or the advisory board? The way Jesus lived suggests we should be most influenced by the voice of the poor. Questioning who we listen to enables some sifting and evaluation of opinions, which are invariably biased according to their viewpoint.

Sometimes our ministries are flawed because we have not updated our understanding of what is happening to people, or our perspective is disconnected. If where we are located determines our viewpoint, then our response to the biblical injunction to side with the poor will be highly significant in choosing where we live, where we work, where we govern and what organisations we give our time to.

**Principle four:** No matter how much anybody sees, nobody sees it all.

This means that one must listen to a variety of observations, information sources and data in order to arrive at the truth. In some ways this has become easier with the Internet; and in other ways, it is more difficult. There is more information, and access to different views on an issue, than ever before, but with so many different voices it is hard to discern which ones we should listen to.

We need to have contestable advice, a variety of sources that we explore. It is not sensible to rely on just one source for our view of what is going on. We also need to be constantly testing past sources of information to see if they are still reliable.

**In my current appointment, I frequently meet with those who are among New Zealand's 100 wealthiest people. They often give me their views on welfare, health care, education and other social issues. In weighing up what they say, it is really important for me to know a little about them and to consider where they are coming from in relation to me. What is their belief structure? Have they any friends who are poor? How do they feel about the gospel? How much do they have to gain or lose through what they are saying? What vested interests do they have?**

Campbell

**Principle five:** What we see is always subject to correction.

If our viewpoint is always going to be biased, we can never make claims to fully possess absolute truth. This does not deny the concept of absolute truth. It simply negates any individual human's possession of it. We always need to be ready to correct our view.

Having regard for McAfee Brown's principles, how then do we gain information on social injustice that enables clarity on the issue? One of the answers is to have a variety of sources of information. There are two important questions that need to be asked to gain reliable information. What material may be useful and where can it be accessed? Then we need to ask what will be helpful in understanding the context of this situation.

What material may be useful?

- Actual stories of what is happening
- Facts on the situation
- Statistics
- Reports and research studies
- Photos and videos.

Having determined what material may be useful, we then need to determine where this information can be accessed.

- National statistic sites (world wide web)
- Library
- Archives
- Community centres
- Community surveys (stories of people).

Finally, having collected the data, we need to ask further questions to understand the context of our information:

- What is its level of reliability?

- What information is missing?
- What does it tell us?
- What are the actions needed?
- What further information do we need?
- What are the macro issues impacting this issue:
  - Economics
  - Social pressures
  - Political pressures
  - History of the area
  - Past injustice
  - Environment
- How do they impact our work?
- Do they make a difference to what we do?
- Do they add new information?
- Who are the organisations and groups that might be helpful in working with this problem?
- Who else is effectively doing something about this problem?

Through taking regard of the above, we will start to see what is occurring in the issue that concerns us and we are ready to start the process of judging.

## **Judge**

Judging is analysing and asking ourselves some key questions from our Christian tradition.

What do I think about this as a Christian?

What does the Bible say?

- Are there gospel narratives and themes that might be relevant?
- What are some relevant teachings of Jesus?
- What are the themes of scripture that apply?

What does the Holy Spirit reveal to me as I pray about this? What is the relevant teaching and experience of The Salvation Army? Are there any lessons that apply from the social teaching of the Church? Faced with this situation, how have Christian communities acted in the past?

Recently, The Salvation Army Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit in New Zealand issued a report on crime and punishment in that country. Although this was a public report aimed at politicians and law-makers, it looked at the issues and problems of the New Zealand justice system from the viewpoint of what the Bible and Christian teaching had to say about the treatment of offenders and systems of punishment. Judging does not involve the application of a few proof texts to situations of injustice. It requires understanding the treatment of injustice in the historical context of scripture and then the testing out and meaning of those truths where contemporary injustice impacts people's lives.

And after this application of biblical truth has occurred, then it is time to act.

### **Act**

If you want to change the situation of people currently homeless, are you happy to provide housing for the people you know, or do you want to permanently change the housing policy of the country so that everyone has the right and access to adequate housing?

It is necessary to ask what actions are needed now (short-term goal). On the way to changing the national housing policy, you may want to try to provide immediate temporary accommodation for some people who are homeless.

Having decided on what you want to do, it is then necessary to decide what methods will be most effective. Staying with the problem of homelessness, a number of methods would be

*In thinking about acting for social justice there are some important questions to ask:  
What exactly is it that you want to change (long-term goal)?  
Do you see something that can be permanently altered?*

possible. An advocacy response that helps people access existing housing, a political response that puts pressure on government for the provision of public housing, a practical response that partners with private or public funding to actually build and supply housing, or a policy response that develops research and reports that help to change national housing policy and start a program to eradicate homelessness. Most social justice actions usually require a mixture of methods dealing with various aspects of the problem.

Having identified the method, it is important to identify what spiritual resources are necessary to undertake this action. Prophetic action can be an uphill struggle. You can be misunderstood and you can often be working against the status quo wisdom. The result can be tiredness, hurt feelings, some confrontation and a sense of isolation in the struggle for justice. If a Christian is to survive these pressures, it is vital they think through a way of being spiritually well-resourced.

It is then important to decide who can be involved in this action. Who are the allies, what skills are needed, how will the team be formed to ensure success? In a struggle to defeat homelessness we need many skills—including practical, advocacy and research abilities. Finally, do not forget to include the injustice you are acting upon in the context of worship. Worship is the place where our imagination of what God's world is like is fired up; it should be a place of social justice empowerment and a place where we celebrate the triumph of justice over evil.

### **Summary**

Both the 'Biblical Action Reflection' and the 'See, Judge, Act' methodologies have three major components in the work of Christian social justice.

They require that we:

- i. Confront the injustice, having regard for its context and cause.

2. Ask questions of the injustice in light of scripture, Christian thought, history and prayer.
3. When this results in some action, evaluate its result and celebrate what is achieved .

**Prayer**

May I have ears to hear what the Lord is saying and  
eyes to see what the Lord is doing.

May I have a mind to learn what the Lord is teaching  
and a heart to love the Lord and my neighbour as myself.

Amen.

## Chapter Eight: Political Response

In 2007, The Salvation Army Australian Southern Territory held a community conference, ‘Connections07’, where a range of speakers from other organisations participated on the panels of the plenary discussions. At the opening session entitled ‘How connected are we?’ they were asked what they would like to say to The Salvation Army today. On the panel, Father Peter Norden (Associate Director of Jesuit Social Services and Convenor of the Victorian Criminal Justice Coalition) responded with:

*In my experience in areas of social justice (within the prisons for example) the Anglicans, Uniting Church... we could rely on them to be there. But if there was any point of conflict (with authority or with the establishment) the Salvos wouldn't be there... [why?]. It could be theological difference—I guess it's about avoiding conflict and maintaining respectability. Often in dealing with the poor you are dealing with a conflict situation. We are not politicians but what we do has social and political implications... sometimes when we go to Canberra to lobby we are more concerned about getting funding for our services instead of trying to change the system itself.’<sup>89</sup>*

Such sentiments were backed up by Dr Eileen Baldry (Associate Professor in the School of Social Sciences and International Studies, Associate Dean (Education) of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of NSW). ‘It's certainly my observation that The Salvation Army is very committed to social justice in one-to-one or family intervention (even community work). But how social justice translates to systemic change, to the way in which we understand the country we live in and the way in which we understand our (organisation) perspective has been lacking and in decline (if it was there at all). Another aspect to that is all of us (as Australians) have bought into the ‘fear campaign’ in speaking out (and not being conservative) over the last ten years... this has been reflected in the way The Salvation Army operates both publicly in its statements and its public dealings with the governments (I'm not sure about privately). The Salvation Army is viewed by most of the people in the social justice field I'm associated with as a generous, warm-hearted but very conservative organisation.’<sup>90</sup>

**Just imagine a world where politics delivers just systems not riddled with corruption and bribery; political systems that deliver to every child in the world adequate levels of food, education and health care; politicians who don't rely on war, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction to settle differences and allocate land and oil. World political systems that allow mothers to go to bed at night knowing their children are safe and that they can have a future free of need, injustice and discrimination. Just imagine.**

<sup>a:</sup> Salvo is defined in this context as all those associated with The Salvation Army (e.g. employees, volunteers, soldiers, officers and supporters)

<sup>b:</sup> We recognise some governments have a clear bias against those who speak up politically. The funding reality can be a valid issue that we need to grapple with but certainly not shy away from.

For those listening to the discussion, most amazing was the welcoming response to the comments from the predominantly ‘Salvo’ audience.<sup>a</sup> It was clear their comments struck a chord and have since stirred a lot of discussion from within about the territory’s fourth mission value, ‘Reforming Society: acting on the structures of society to restore justice’.

In recent times within The Salvation Army, officers who have made statements or challenged an action of the government or a political party have often been criticised. Politics, particularly when it means siding with one side of the political divide, is seen to be messy and risky. There is a fear that to criticise the government means we will threaten our funding, or that we’ll lose their respect and our reputation. The reality is that governments, although they may be angry or annoyed at the criticism, are unlikely to respond by withdrawing funding if the criticism is well-founded and robust.<sup>b</sup> But regardless of whether they do or don’t, the guiding principles for people of the gospel must always be to stand and speak for truth no matter what the cost. After all, the one we follow was crucified because he spoke out about the abuses of power and the oppressive practices of the ecclesiastical leadership and politics.

To engage in political activity is also difficult because within any population there are a variety of views held.

In considering political action as part of a social justice ministry, two major issues arise. Firstly, what is the legitimate role of politics in the life and ministry of a Christian; and secondly, how do we use political action within The Salvation Army to challenge injustice?

Although we should be suspicious of an approach to social justice ministry that sees involvement in politics as the *only way* to tackle injustice in the world, we must acknowledge that politics has an important and legitimate role in a Christian ministry of social justice. Some important theological principles lie at the heart of political action:

- The Bible does not differentiate between the spiritual and the secular, the personal and the public, the evangelical and the political.
- God is biased towards the poor and expects his disciples to change political and government systems if they stand in the way of justice.
- The prophetic role of the faith community is to both denounce those things inconsistent with gospel truth and to enunciate the Good News.
- Any response to sin and evil involves the challenging of evil at both a personal and structural level.

Politics often takes on a false mystique, but at its heart politics has to do with the organisation of human affairs. It describes the regulation, ordering and ideological underpinning of human society. As such, politics is an almost universal concept, encompassing a wide spectrum of life and experience. The idea that certain areas of life such as sport or religion are free from politics must be resisted. These activities are political both internally and in relation to society at large.

For instance, in considering the way sport is structured internationally, issues like power, rules and money are all political issues. In society, sport will play a function in the lives of citizens, and therefore be regulated and perhaps even sponsored by a central government. At times (1981 New Zealand Springbok tour, 2007 Australian Zimbabwe cricket tour, 2008 Beijing Olympics)<sup>d</sup>, sport or an aspect of it may become a major political issue, affecting the lives of those who would normally have no contact with it.

There is no option for Christians to exist in a non-political way. People who do not vote, or who withdraw from involvement in political issues, are, in fact, lending support to the status quo. As the industrial society becomes more complex, technology has enabled greater centralisation and a global consciousness has emerged. Political issues have become ever more pervasive and universal.

*In 1981, New Zealand was nationally divided over South Africa's Springbok rugby team tour of the country. The issue became intense and the feelings for and against the tour were passionately held. Having considered apartheid in light of the gospel, I had come to the view that I needed to oppose the tour and join with those who protested the presence of the South African team in New Zealand. Some of my Salvationist colleagues took an opposing view and did not take kindly to my public involvement in uniform in demonstrations opposing the tour. Political action for social justice is often a difficult call to make and may separate us from people who share our faith commitment.*

Campbell

<sup>d</sup>: There has been a lot of controversy surrounding China hosting the 2008 Olympic Games. For more information see <http://china.hrw.org/>

Langdon Gilkey, in his book *Reaping the Whirlwind*, says we experience history as either a stream of possibility in which we have freedom and influence, or as a capricious tide of events by which we are trapped and over which we have no control. These two ways of experiencing life are characterised by Gilkey as destiny and fate respectively. The task of politics is to turn fate into destiny; to enable us to gain a sense of control over history.

This, however, is a fundamentally religious question. If we believe that God is working in human history for his purpose, and that he is sovereign, then the fundamental question of all concrete political life is a faith question. If God is involved in the shaping of history—and this is the testimony of scripture—then politics will always be a religious issue. In the movie *Amazing Grace*, William Wilberforce debates whether he should serve God or his country, until an abolitionist suggests that, if he pushes to end slavery, he can do both.

In seeking to work in the political realm of social justice, sometimes the gospel may be in harmony with the policies and actions of a government or political movement, while at other times the actions of politicians and governments may contradict a gospel understanding.

As Christians, it is important we do not choose neutrality from politics as the safe and comfortable option. Saying nothing or remaining neutral is in fact supporting the current political climate. While it is true that the primary purpose of the church is not politics but the creation of a just society, this vision has political consequences.

Pastor Martin Niemöller wrote:

*In Germany, they came first for the communists,  
And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a communist;*

*And then they came for the trade unionists,  
And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist;*

*And then they came for the Jews,  
And I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew;*

*And then . . . they came for me . . .  
And by that time there was no one left to speak up.<sup>91</sup>*

### **The Role of Politics in The Salvation Army**

So, should Salvationists and The Salvation Army be involved in politics? It has already been demonstrated from the biblical tradition that certain elements of faith call for a response that is political. The concern for justice—the protection of vulnerable groups within society—and the call for social responsibility from those in power are issues that can only be fully addressed in contemporary society through political involvement.

The following of Jesus through active discipleship requires a reordering of priorities, a change of lifestyle, the breaking of castes, conflict with the powers and authorities, and the announcing of a Kingdom that will bring to an end all temporal powers. The choice for The Salvation Army is therefore not between involvement or non-involvement in politics, but between biblical faith and non-biblical faith.

Why then is there the perception today that The Salvation Army often sits on the sidelines and sees political involvement as a distraction from its main business?<sup>92</sup> Some of the possibilities are:

*1. The presence of a false spirituality militates against social or political involvement.*

This makes spirituality a private inner experience with no connection to the outside world. This is a spirituality that says it is possible to love God without loving your neighbour.

<sup>91</sup> You can purchase the audio recordings and DVDs of Connection07 from [www.salvationarmy.com.au/supplies/default\\_store.asp](http://www.salvationarmy.com.au/supplies/default_store.asp)

*2. A desire to protect The Salvation Army.*

A major reason for political non-involvement is the institutional structure of The Salvation Army. In order to survive over time, the organisation has adopted strong institutional forms. As politics is about power and inevitably involves conflict, The Salvation Army has retreated from conflict with governments and politicians as a means of self-preservation. It has also avoided becoming unduly concerned where political involvement may threaten funding sources.

*3. A reluctance to accept a contemporary call to the cross.*

Recovery of the wider dimensions of the gospel in the modern world results in confrontation with the world and, often inevitably, the cross.

*4. A misunderstanding of political alignment.*

The Salvation Army is not uninvolved in politics, but is often a bastion of conservative political thought. That is, through its life and teaching, it promotes the conservation of the way things are. It therefore unwittingly lends support to injustice.<sup>f</sup>

*5. A desire to manage the risk.*

It is a legitimate activity to want to protect the organisation by managing risk. Risk, however, is part and parcel of the gospel and we need to be willing to take risks. The greatest asset The Salvation Army in Australia and New Zealand has is the high public regard in which it is held. Sometimes this regard may need to be risked on behalf of the poor. The Salvation Army in Dunedin, New Zealand decided to support the families and children of rubbish collectors who had been on strike for weeks by providing them with food. Members of the public, however, who had not had their rubbish collected for six weeks, were incensed that the Army's action might prolong the strike. The Army's decision was made as a response to the gospel; some donors were lost but the integrity and commitment of the Army to the gospel it preached was preserved.

<sup>f</sup> Both Australia and New Zealand territories have offered Salvation Army focused discussion guides for the elections (2006/2007) to help aid people in critical thought and debate regarding political discussions—these are innovations to re-engage in political justice.

Social justice requires a conversion from these approaches and a commitment to be involved in the affairs of men and women, whether personal, social or political, so that The Salvation Army can be the church of the poor. The mission of Christ means now, as it always has, an involvement.

### **Possible political approaches**

It would be helpful to consider some of the different political approaches to social justice used in history. These fall into the following categories:

#### *1. Party politics option*

Christians can become active members of existing political parties or stand for political office. This approach takes the political situation seriously and argues that, if Christian ideals are to be attained within history, it will only be through participation in the existing political processes. Christians who gain political power are able to have direct influence on real issues. Those active in party membership are 'salt' within the organisation. They do not retreat from the difficult issues or ambiguity of the real world. On the negative side, the party system is such that one is bound by the confines of party loyalty, which often calls for compromise and even contradiction of faith-convictions.

#### *2. The revolutionary option*

Revolutions are another form of direct political involvement. The revolutionary option allows involvement with political change without (at least initially) the compromise associated with party politics. Revolutions often result from a sustained identification with the poor and victims of an unjust society. To take the revolutionary option is to be so convinced of the rightness of one's own position as to 'push' history in a certain direction. This involves a large degree of presumption. It is helpful to remember that the 'Christian' state of America was established through revolution, and that respected theologians such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer have been involved in revolutionary activity.

### *3. The alternative option*

Some Christians argue that the responsibility of Christians is to model a different way of living based on the Kingdom of God; to provide the world with an alternative model of human existence. Though not directly involved in politics, such a community will have political significance because it stands as a challenge to the existing order. Jesus did not directly participate in political life, yet by positioning himself with the marginalised he had a great deal of political impact. The church is to challenge the status quo through its very life and existence.

This is an enormously attractive approach in that it allows the Christian to maintain ethical purity and avoid compromise. It picks up on the biblical theme of light, and operates through persuasion rather than employing the more brutal tools of power politics.

### *4. Standing with the poor option*

Often, those who respond to the poor by working with them become aware of the social and political causes of such poverty. To simply meet the immediate needs of a disadvantaged group is not enough as it may help maintain the situation of injustice that has disadvantaged them in the first place. To make a more effective response normally requires intervention at the political level. Christians working with the poor and involved in social service can do this well from the base of established credibility, as they are more informed and in touch with the reality of the situation. Political action often grows out of a ministry situation, and responds to the concrete issues involved. It allows for long-term strategies, local knowledge, and easy evaluation of developments. The ministry of Martin Luther King Jr. is a good example of an issue-related political response, which grew out of working alongside an oppressed people. King demonstrated how traditional Christian symbols like public prayer and preaching could become instruments of social and political change.

In a situation of injustice, it is sometimes a political action even to serve the poor, because this brings attention to the unpleasant facts that governments would prefer remained hidden. There is a certain inevitability about the conflict that arises when Christians choose to side with the poor rather than the powerful.

This approach to political involvement is not tied to a particular political analysis or ideology, but grows instead from active discipleship. Salvationists are able to maintain Christian authenticity by acting in a way consistent with faith, which has the added benefit of dealing with political issues as they affect real people, rather than in the abstract.

Social justice engagement with politics needs to consider which of these options offers the most viable way ahead for action and then decide on the method for involvement.

### **Useable methods in political action**

The methods that can be used to involve politics in social justice action are many and varied and need to be appropriate to the cause or issue being addressed. Since its early history, one of the methods the Army has used is that of protest. Protesting the right to use the street for meetings and protesting the age of consent to the English Parliament through petition are some early examples. It seems, however, that protesting is not a welcome methodology in the modern Salvation Army. In places such as Australia and New Zealand, where we have become highly respected institutions in the community—the upholders of values of decency and correctness—using protest doesn't seem to fit. But there is still a place for protest. Sometimes the issues are so big, and the resistance to change so strong, that the only political statement that can be made for justice is to protest on the street or in a public place. When a rent freeze was not working in New Zealand, the simple but effective placement of an old broken-down freezer with a sign 'The rent freeze is not working' in the

foyer of the Government Housing Corporation created national media interest and stimulated a public debate that resulted in a change of policy and approach to rent assistance. Protest is often a way of giving power to the victims; they can become engaged and help to achieve change for themselves.

Often political action can be triggered by research documents that provide alternatives in an area of injustice. In *Darkest England* and the *Way Out* provided a model and detailed plan of how life could be different for England's submerged tenth. William Booth used the *Darkest England* plan on a world tour to engage politicians and people of influence. Through reports such as 'Beyond the Holding Tank' and 'Re-building the Kiwi Dream', The Salvation Army Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit in New Zealand has been successful in triggering changes to corrections policy and housing policies. These reports researched the problems and then offered solutions to meet them. Research, however, does not need to be limited to national issues. A well-researched and argued report on a local issue can often be a helpful instrument for change. Research of this type needs to use sound and trustworthy methodologies, be well-presented and distributed with good follow-up.

The Salvation Army often uses the media to advertise and inform people of its work and appeals for public financial support. But the media is also a key weapon in bringing about political change. To motivate politicians to act often requires education that will change public opinion towards the solutions being argued for. When sensitively and strategically used, the media can be a powerful tool for social justice action. A regular 'Poverty Indicators' report by the Council of Christian Social Services that highlighted the plight and circumstances of people attending Salvation Army Social Services brought a new awareness of poverty and provided a platform for government policy initiatives that improved the living standards of low-income New Zealanders. Influential media work requires strategy, training and appropriate timing.

Often an effective way of challenging injustice and bringing about social change is by becoming part of the political process. Christians committed to social justice are needed at a political and official level in local and national governments. Salvationists need to encourage and support these people as they work for public office. Ways of assisting include providing training, help with the election process, support and mentoring<sup>8</sup> when these individuals are elected, and surrounding them with prayer.

In addition to direct political involvement, it should be recognised that important decisions and policy change are undertaken by working parties, commissions and other government consultative mechanisms. The Salvation Army should always have lists of Salvationists committed to social justice categorised in various areas of activity. As vacancies are advertised for these groups, they should be offered for membership and involvement. Officers and soldiers who are offered the opportunity to contribute to government committees and working parties should be supported and encouraged by the Army to allow them to be involved. Additionally, there are always opportunities to partner with other organisations and campaigns in social justice projects. In New Zealand the engagement of The Salvation Army in the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services has both informed and given a voice to the Territory, which has been able to directly contribute to social justice action and change.

Meeting with local and national politicians can provide useful opportunities to present documentation and argument for social change. Social justice action requires identifying people who can influence change—they too need to build relationships that will enable them to receive reports and information on situations of social injustice that need attention. Regular reporting by one corps on poverty in their area triggered a mayoral task force on poverty and the initiation of community support.

<sup>8</sup> Recognising that the political arena can be a difficult place, it is particularly important for The Salvation Army to create meaningful and direct relationship-based support and mentoring.

Most Salvation Army territories have a MASIC (Moral and Social Issues Council) or similar social policy or social justice group within their territorial headquarters charged with examining social and political issues and making responses. Such responses are normally in the form of position papers, submissions to government or public statements.

If social justice is to happen, we must engage politically. Climate change, poverty, HIV and AIDS, sexual trafficking, unjust trade practices and homelessness are just some of the areas in which politics must be engaged if real change is to occur.

The methods of political involvement are not fixed. There are tried and proven ways but the answer in a particular situation may be something innovative that has not been tried before. This is a ministry for imagination and divine creativity.

*During his two years as Bishop of Santiago de Maria, Oscar Romero crisscrossed his diocese on horseback, talking with labouring families to learn how he could best serve them. The reality of their lives horrified the bishop. Every day he discovered children dying because their parents could not pay for simple penicillin; people who were paid less than half of the legal minimum wage; people who had been savagely beaten for 'insolence' after they asked for long overdue pay. Romero began using the resources of the diocese—and his own personal resources—to help the poor, but he knew that simple charity was not enough. He wrote in his diary:*

*'The world of the poor teaches us that liberation will arrive only when the poor are not simply on the receiving end of handouts from government or from churches, but when they themselves are the masters and protagonists of their own struggle for liberation.'*

*Similarly, in a pastoral letter released in November 1976, he reflected on the plight of the thousands of coffee plantation workers in his diocese:*

*“The Church must cry out by command of God: “God has meant the earth and all it contains for the use of the whole human race. Created wealth should reach all in just form, under the aegis of justice and accompanied by charity...” It saddens and concerns us to see the selfishness with which means and dispositions are found to nullify the just wage of the harvesters. How we would wish that the joy of this rain of rubies and all the harvests of the earth would not be darkened by the tragic sentence of the Bible: “Behold, the day wage of labourers that cut your fields defrauded by you is crying out, and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord”.’ (James 5:4)<sup>92</sup>*

**Prayer:**

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:5-6, NIV)

Amen.



## Chapter Nine: Practical Response

Taking practical action is the risky part—because there is no prescription, no ‘one magic solution’ to stop injustice, no marked-out route to get there. There is instead a response and an invitation to journey towards justice which all of us can walk together. The problem is that we want to get there in 10 easy steps. But humans are complex and, more often than not, the journey is cyclical—we take a step forward and need to re-assess, learn and take another step. There are a million steps to be taken, all of them equally important and requiring unity in the body of Christ. But as Gary Haughan, founder of the International Justice Mission, pointed out in his book *Terrify No More*, often the hardest part of social justice is simply getting started.

To move forward you need to wade through many things, both inside and out. Inside, we battle against depression, cynicism, fear and guilt. Outside, we battle against apathy, indifference, defiance and greed. All foes are formidable, but we suggest, like David facing Goliath, if we throw our lives on God we’ll emerge with the right strategy to bring down the giants of injustice.

Practical responses to injustice need to occur on a number of levels, both individually and corporately.

These are not mutually exclusive and, in our shrinking world, a particular injustice may need to be tackled at the individual, community, national or international level through a connected and expanding effort.

### **Individual response**

The first level consists of individuals deciding to do something about injustice in the world. This is probably the simplest yet most challenging path for us to travel. It is about consistently choosing a path of justice in the face of temptation and trial.

**Just imagine a world where every Christian and the church are passionate to live justly. Where Christians toss and turn at night because children die due to a lack of clean water, or because other children step on landmines while they play; a world where the church is restless to do something about poverty, racism, malnutrition and environmental destruction; a world where Salvationists all have friends who are poor, friends of another skin colour and ethnicity, and friends whose hope has been extinguished. A church where our commitment to God is measured not by how many love songs to Jesus we sing in an hour, but by our actions to bring justice, mercy and faith to other people. Just imagine.**

Individual social justice action is often more about the way we live than what we do. In the words of Walter Brueggemann, ‘Social action ministry does not consist of spectacular acts of social crusading or of abrasive measures of indignation. Rather it is offering in the everyday an alternative perception of reality and in letting people see their own history in the light of God’s will for justice. Not in the big issues of the day but wherever people try to live together and worry about their future and their identity.’<sup>93</sup>

Action generally doesn’t start until we begin to feel and understand the injustice people suffer in their lives. We are then only sustained in that journey as Christian disciples when biblical justice starts to take personal root and shape how we live and act.

To start to live and act justly, we propose:

- Actively paying attention to the theology of justice in the Bible
- Shaping worship and prayers to help us imagine God’s ideal of freedom and justice for all people
- Asking ourselves how we can change aspects of our daily living to lessen the pain or injustice others are suffering, or avoid creating more injustice in the world
- Starting to take small steps to tackle injustice.

This means that, depending on where we are starting from, our practical responses will be different. For some it may mean taking the uncomfortable step of placing yourself in proximity to the poor. For others, it is a commitment to live simply.<sup>a</sup> The responses are endless. Just imagine.

Individual practical response could be:

- Increase your tithing/offerings<sup>b</sup>
- Volunteer at a local organisation—help out at a soup van, tutor new migrants, befriend youth ‘at risk’
- Share your home with an asylum seeker
- Practise hospitality

<sup>a</sup> There is a great new resource available called *Living Simply, Studies in learning to live as Jesus did*, by Murray Sheard, released by Tear Fund and World Vision. Email mheard@auckland.ac.nz for a copy.

<sup>b</sup> Extravagant generosity is the basic level for the New Testament church on giving...our typical 10% variety of tithing is at best a poor reflection of basic biblical stewardship.

- Practise generosity
- Support an advocacy campaign, read up and get informed
- Sponsor a child/community
- Go 'op shopping' (charity shops) and say no to the excessive demands for 'new things'
- Have a 'Buy Nothing Day'<sup>c</sup> once a week
- Go Fair Trade
- Choose to support local small businesses
- Find ways to drive less
- Become aware of injustices behind your consumer choices, e.g. labour abuses in sweatshops
- Move into an incarnational community.<sup>d</sup>

In *Everybody Wants to Change the World* by Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman there is an endless list of individual and local action suggestions. Also in *Breaking with Business as Usual: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals* by Caritas Internationalis there is a range of ideas to get involved. Check them out.

While no individual can address every issue of injustice, the world would be dramatically different if every Christian took an area of social injustice in their community and imagined it differently. Imagine everyone acting to confront and defeat injustice. Christians can support the rights of Maori and Aborigines, they can stand alongside asylum seekers and refugees, they can make direct efforts to communicate with those who are alone, homeless, addicted or whose minority status means they are unsupported. The actions of Christians should make sure that the people society discards and marginalises know and feel they are loved children of God.

Living justly starts alternative ways that support those who suffer injustice and deprivation which spread to others. One person deciding to look into the issues surrounding trade and consumer choices can stimulate others to buy fair trade products.

<sup>c</sup>: 'It's a day where you challenge yourself, your family and friends to switch off from shopping and tune into life. The rules are simple—for 24 hours you will detox from consumerism and live without shopping.' For more info see: [www.buynothingday.co.uk](http://www.buynothingday.co.uk) or [www.adbusters.org.bnd](http://www.adbusters.org.bnd)

<sup>d</sup>: There are many incarnational communities which have agreed lifestyle commitments. These include individual and communal commitments. Urban Neighbours of Hope (UNOH) are one such community. Commitments include practical response such as 'Hospitality', 'Voluntary Poverty', 'Just Stewardship' and 'Servanthood'. Check out: [www.unoh.org](http://www.unoh.org) for more information.

## Community response

Just as God created us to live in community, he calls us to seek justice together. There is no doubt that as you start to engage with issues you will want to seek out others who are passionate about social justice in order to join them in a mutual commitment to fight.

This may mean joining a group, linking to an organisation working for social justice or participation in a campaign to bring about social or economic change. Groups can often make a far greater impact than an individual. Groups provide a place for support in the journey toward justice. So what starts as an individual commitment develops into a collective commitment, in which each of us plays an important role. In Australia and New Zealand, there are a number of local organisations tackling an area of injustice. Support them; join them.

Similarly, a Christian community should always make sure there is a mechanism to support people in the congregation as they work out their social justice passions. Communities need to give every encouragement and spiritual nourishment to continue their efforts.<sup>e</sup>

Worship should be planned to regularly provide a vision of how the world should be when justice reigns. It can continually challenge people to live counter-culturally, confronting consumerism and environmental destruction, calling us to be people living for justice.

A possible mechanism to foster and encourage social justice action is the formation of social justice clusters, small groups that come together for social action. They can provide the opportunity for discussion on the biblical and theological aspects of acting for social justice. The prophetic 'See, Judge, Act' methods can be used by the group. Clusters can be places where people pray through

<sup>e</sup> Recently the Australian Southern Territory established Divisional Social Justice Representatives whose role it is to support and encourage social justice work on the local front. Each corps is encouraged to find local soldiers who would provide leadership to the community for justice initiatives.

areas of injustice and encourage the development of an action plan. Providing the opportunity to develop and support living justly is an essential part of dynamic discipleship. Working for social justice can sometimes create opposition or misunderstanding, and a cluster provides the place for pastoral support and reflection on the appropriateness of actions undertaken.

### **Practical responses in community**

- Community gardens/kitchens
- Simple Life—co-op vegies
- Relational tithes<sup>f</sup>
- Common purse
- Community dinners
- Lobby local councils, governments—raise awareness about issues facing the community
- Sponsor a community as a community<sup>g</sup>
- Host community discussion groups to stimulate action on issues in the local community.

### **National (territorial) and international responses**

Sometimes certain injustices are so widespread that the causes and impact go beyond the local and require a national or international response. Child Poverty Action<sup>h</sup> is an example of a national response in New Zealand, where local and regional groups cooperate to raise awareness about the incidence and impact of child poverty in New Zealand. Amnesty International<sup>i</sup>, Stop The Traffik<sup>j</sup>, and Greenpeace<sup>k</sup> are examples of human justice and environmental justice campaigns that have moved across national borders to become international campaigns.

At these levels we often feel powerless to change the situation. However, it is important that as individuals, local communities and national organisations we continue to voice our discontent

<sup>f</sup>: [www.relationaltithe.com](http://www.relationaltithe.com)

<sup>g</sup>: For example, as a corps or small group you could sponsor a microfinance trust bank which empowers women in the developing world.

<sup>h</sup>: [www.cpag.org.nz/](http://www.cpag.org.nz/)

<sup>i</sup>: [www.amnesty.org/](http://www.amnesty.org/)

<sup>j</sup>: [www.stopthetraffik.org](http://www.stopthetraffik.org)

<sup>k</sup>: [www.greenpeace.org](http://www.greenpeace.org)

<sup>l</sup>: At the 2002 Monterrey Conference, leaders of the world's wealthiest countries reaffirmed their commitment to the UN target of 0.7% ratio of Official Development Assistance (aid to the poorest countries) to Gross National Income. To date, most countries are still far behind this target. In 2006, compared to Sweden's impressive 1.02%, Australia was at 0.30, New Zealand 0.27, Canada 0.29, United States 0.18, United Kingdom 0.51, and Japan 0.25  
Sources: UN ([www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/Monterrey\\_Consensus.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/Monterrey_Consensus.htm)) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([www.oecd.org/dataoecd/7/20/39768315.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/7/20/39768315.pdf))

<sup>m</sup>: Each territory and division within the Salvation Army has partners in mission.

<sup>n</sup>: Sally Ann Ltd. is an exciting fair trade business of The Salvation Army where handmade interior home décor products are manufactured by the disadvantaged in Bangladesh and exported for retail sale in industrialised countries. [www.salvationarmy.ca/2006/06/29/disadvantaged-in-bangladesh-have-hope-and-possibilities-for-independent-development/](http://www.salvationarmy.ca/2006/06/29/disadvantaged-in-bangladesh-have-hope-and-possibilities-for-independent-development/)

with the situation, calling for justice and change from the places of power.

National organisations often provide coordinated vehicles for action against larger social injustices. In Australia and New Zealand, there are national organisations working to alleviate poverty, protect the environment, institute prison reform, stamp out human trafficking, assist refugees and support AIDS victims. Corps and centres can form helpful partnerships with these organisations in their efforts to undertake a social justice ministry.

### **National and international practical responses**

- Get involved and support national and international campaigns
- Lobby your government to fulfil their promise of the 0.7% Official Development Assistance Goal<sup>l</sup>
- Engage in advocacy/political intervention for the poor
- Use the power of The Salvation Army for social justice issues (not just fundraising)
- Train and equip people for lives of justice
- Build strong international partnerships between mission territories<sup>m</sup>
- Create outlets for products made overseas, e.g. Sally Ann.<sup>n</sup>

Nationally, the work of social justice needs co-ordination. In both the Australian territories there are officers who have territorial appointments to co-ordinate, encourage and develop a ministry of social justice. The Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit in New Zealand works with policy influencers by preparing reports on national areas of injustice, makes submissions to select committees, uses the media to advocate and conducts meetings with politicians and other influence-makers. The unit has been able to encourage changes in policies impacting on the poor and vulnerable. Most importantly, at a territorial or national level two responsibilities must be met: the education and informing of Salvationists on issues of injustice, and the articulation of a clear voice for social

justice, fostering social and economic changes that will benefit the poor and the vulnerable.

At an international level, the recently formed International Social Justice Commission coordinates an international response to the United Nations and other international bodies. It also ensures that international leaders are informed and well-briefed on issues of social injustice.

### **How and where to start?**

#### *1. Keep looking, asking, questioning and thinking*

One of the great temptations in this generation is to ‘shut off’. We don’t want to think or probe because it ends up making us feel uncomfortable. But that is exactly where we need to be in order to create change. It’s not an easy option, but we encourage you to be wide-eyed in your living and watching.

#### *2. Get closer to the people who suffer from injustice*

Proximity is an important key to the solution. Become a ‘learner’ of the poor. Shane Claiborne explains, ‘...It is a beautiful thing when folks in poverty are no longer just a missions project but become genuine friends and family with whom we laugh, cry, dream, and struggle...that’s when things get messy. When people begin moving beyond charity and toward justice and solidarity with the poor and oppressed, as Jesus did, they get in trouble. Once we are actually friends with folks in the struggle, we start to ask why people are poor, which is never as popular as giving charity.’<sup>94</sup>

#### *3. Identify an injustice and become informed about it*

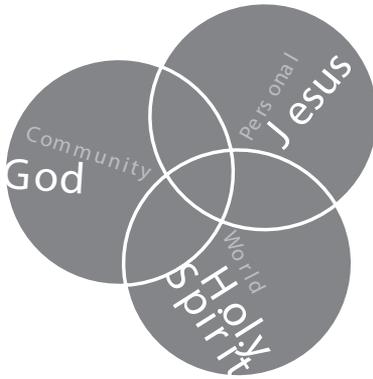
Remember that in today’s world ignorance is a choice. Be intentional about awareness.

#### *4. Use prophetic and systemic tools to uncover the roots of the injustice*

This will protect you from shallow responses that end up in discouragement. It will enable you to produce strategies that will be long-term and bear fruit. The process may take longer, but the results will be worth it.

**My friend Elizabeth once told me about a friend of hers from the developing world finding her on Facebook. Excited to have made the connection, she also shared how conscious she became of her lifestyle—asking herself what her Facebook profile page and photos looked like from a developing world perspective. The fear of transparency is a natural one. There was a clear tension in feeling superficial and rich in light of the context her friend came from.**

Danielle



### 5. *Accountability*

We use accountability a lot in personal situations, such as exercise, diet and finances. Why not justice? Since justice is about relationships, it makes sense that we create accountability structures around and through our justice journey.

The following guide is one way of structuring that accountability.

### **JUST: Tri**

We've already offered a systemic model for breaking down large-scale injustices. The journey towards justice also needs to be broken down into smaller steps because endurance is key to a long trip. This accountability system, we want to suggest now, is in keeping with the previous three-parts model and offers a way of incorporating justice into our everyday lives. Offered here is a brief explanation of some accountability questions to use in a group.

#### **Personal circle: Jesus-focused**

A personal connection with God is central to social justice. Mother Teresa thought her nuns were scraping by on two hours of personal prayer and meditation every day. John Wesley thought four hours were adequate. In *Be A Hero*, Court and Campbell suggest that 'praying the Bible' is the first step to becoming a hero. 'Prayer glorifies God, disciples our own hearts, and brings his will on earth. Prayer is the beginning of the first commandment and it will inevitably lead you to the second.'<sup>95</sup>

Certainly anyone who connects with God in the Bible will start to share his heart for the poor. Our personal connection and relationship with God is made alive in Jesus. He redeems us and is saving us daily. Paul prays, 'May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord and Saviour

Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.' (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, NIV). We are not alone on this journey. Injustice can lead to despair if we don't allow God to show us the final picture. Keeping ourselves alive and spiritually healthy is an important part of the journey.

The three parts of our personal circle: —————>

- Spirit: our God connect (prayer life, Bible study, God's presence)
- Soul: mind, will, emotions
- Body: shape, weight, health.

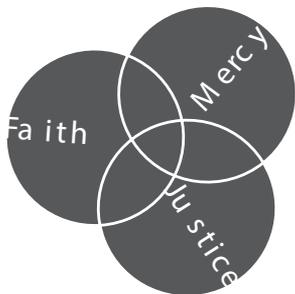
Questions for accountability in the personal circle:

- Is my spirit connecting to God? How?
- Are my mind, will and emotions submitted to God's will?
- Am I hearing his voice?
- Am I reading his word?
- Do I honour God with my body?

### **Community circle: God the Father-focused**

Somehow, in the midst of a ruggedly individualistic society, we have made our faith personal. We've made it a 'quiet time' between God and ourselves where 'our' relationship with God is no one else's business. This has not only destroyed the essence of Christian community but has damaged Christianity itself. Our faith was never intended to be about 'me and God'. There is no 'individual' focus in the Word of God. Our faith only makes sense in community. It is worked out in love through relationships. The breakdown of community has had a tragic effect on the world. It is due in part to the erosion of Christian community. We are the salt of the earth. Our ability to relate to people around us with love and compassion is what offers hope and meaning to life. Without this presence in the world, Christ is unrepresented, and hope is lost.





To restore the priority of community we can hold each other accountable to the following areas:

← The three sections of our community circle:

- Faith: how our faith is working out in community/true humility
- Mercy: how we express God's compassion through mercy in our communities
- Justice: how we engage with God's heart for justice.

Questions for accountability in the community circle:

- Am I actively involved in Christian community?
- Do I share my life with others?
- Am I merciful? Does mercy flow through me? How?
- What kind of justice is on my heart? How am I actively pursuing justice right now?

### **World circle: Holy Spirit-focused**

Jesus began his ministry with a declaration, 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me' (Luke 4:18, NIV). When he had completed his mission and was headed heavenward, Jesus instructed his disciples to wait for the Spirit to come upon them with power, 'and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8, NIV). This Kingdom is an ever-expanding one. Those who believe in King Jesus will soon catch the vision that his gospel is for the whole world. God is not limited by colour, language, size or place of origin. He paints a picture of a multitude in heaven from 'every tribe and tongue' that is praising God together. His influence is continually expansive. Love expands.

Relating to the glocal reality of justice, this circle challenges us to be present for Christ where we live—in our Jerusalem. All acts of love are done in small ways and small things. Sometimes it will be to show grace to your own spouse or child; sometimes to your

colleagues at work. It will also relate to your Samaria, or the places that are ‘off limits’ in normal everyday life. Samaria was a place that the disciples wouldn’t choose to go. It was ‘dirty’ and considered less valuable to a Jew. God was being specific about his call to the church to take the Spirit to the last, the lost and the least.

Finally, this good news is for the whole world. God’s plan may have started with a little baby, but it ends with the whole world redeemed. His gospel is global ‘good news’ and should always be celebrated as that. ‘The world for God,’ writes General Evangeline Booth, ‘I’ll do my part. I’ll give my heart.’

The three sections of our world circle: —————>

- Jerusalem: our current circles of influence/family/home church
- Samaria: the places on the margins/outside the religious camp
- World: beyond our scope/global vision and impact.

Questions for accountability in the world circle:

Am I a representative of Jesus at home?

Do I love my family? How?

Am I intentional about making relationships with people who aren’t like me?

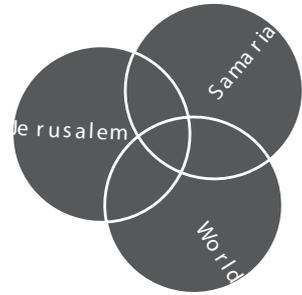
Have I been ‘outside’ the religious camp recently?

Am I aware of the world’s needs?

In *Breaking With Business as Usual: Achieving the millennium development goals*, Caritas Internationalis gives some great suggestions to also help you get started:

### **Become involved**

- By acquiring information and training for community organising and consciousness-raising about the moral issues relating to the MDGs
- By making personal or local commitments that support the global initiatives of the MDGs, e.g. low energy-consumption, recycling,



care of natural resources, freedom with regard to consumerism, solidarity-based economics

- By developing ongoing theological development and JPIC (Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation) educational programs for parishes, schools, reflection groups, candidates for the consecrated life and the priesthood, and for leaders of Christian communities
- By tracking and making public the work of the World Summit which took place in Rome in May 2007, and whose purpose was to assess the progress made with regard to the Millennium Development Goals.

### **Participate**

- In local and international projects aimed at achieving the eradication of poverty
- In meetings of human rights groups, social forums, solidarity committees, awareness raising campaigns, and demonstrations against poverty
- In ecumenical and inter-faith celebrations and prayer services for justice, peace, conversion and solidarity.

### **Support and promote**

- Initiatives that help to eradicate poverty
- Processes that encourage participation, gender equality, open communication, and mutual collaboration
- ‘Grassroot groups’ that hope to achieve social improvements, especially in the fields of education and healthcare.

### **Help**

- To raise awareness among Roman Catholics that the MDGs and Catholic Social Teaching are closely related and are an essential part of the Gospel
- To promote distributive justice so that the ‘first world’ shares its resources with the poorest countries rather than robbing them
- To support the voluntary services and development projects of NGOs by offering your time, skills and/or money.

### **Connect**

- With other groups to create solidarity networks that will collaborate for a common cause
- Establish links with civil institutions for any assistance and social promotion they can provide.

### **Denounce**

- Oppressive ideologies
- Global imbalances
- Corruption of governments, institutions and organisations.

### **Lobby and advocate**

- The respect of human rights
- The accountability of governments for their promises and actions
- The achievement of the MDGs in your country by contacting appropriate government officials.

### **Prayer:**

I pray God will transform you through inevitable moments of disunity,  
I pray you will experience, without doubt,  
God's faithfulness and presence in your journey.  
And I pray that those with whom you meet will see in you a unity of  
spirit and action, a harmony of word and life.  
Because it is in this unity that others will find Jesus.  
Amen.



# Just:Speaking

Excerpts from the field

## **Nobel Lecture, Oslo, 10 December, 2006**

### **Grameen Bank**

Today, Grameen Bank gives loans to nearly seven million poor people, 97% of whom are women, in 73,000 villages in Bangladesh. Grameen Bank gives collateral-free, income-generating, housing, student and micro-enterprise loans to poor families and offers a host of attractive savings, pension funds and insurance products for its members. Since it introduced them in 1984, housing loans have been used to construct 640,000 houses. The legal ownership of these houses belongs to the women themselves. We focused on women because we found giving loans to women always brought more benefits to the family.

In a cumulative way the bank has given out loans totalling about \$US6 billion. The repayment rate is 99%. Grameen Bank routinely makes profit. Financially, it is self-reliant and has not taken donor money since 1995. Deposits and own resources of Grameen Bank today amount to 143% of all outstanding loans. According to Grameen Bank's internal survey, 58% of our borrowers have crossed the poverty line.

Grameen Bank was born as a tiny homegrown project run with the help of several of my students, all local girls and boys. Three of these students are still with me in Grameen Bank, after all these years, as its topmost executives. They are here today to receive this honour you give us.

This idea, which began in Jobra, a small village in Bangladesh, has spread around the world and there are now Grameen type programs in almost every country.

### **Second generation**

It is 30 years now since we began. We keep looking at the children of our borrowers to see what has been the impact of our work

on their lives. The women who are our borrowers always gave topmost priority to the children. One of the Sixteen Decisions developed and followed by them was to send children to school. Grameen Bank encouraged them, and before long all the children were going to school. Many of these children made it to the top of their class. We wanted to celebrate that, so we introduced scholarships for talented students. Grameen Bank now gives 30,000 scholarships every year.

Many of the children went on to higher education to become doctors, engineers, college teachers and other professionals. We introduced student loans to make it easy for Grameen students to complete higher education. Now some of them have PhDs. There are 13,000 students on student loans. Over 7,000 students are now added to this number annually. We are creating a completely new generation that will be well-equipped to take their families way out of the reach of poverty. We want to make a break in the historical continuation of poverty.

### **We create what we want**

We get what we want, or what we don't refuse. We accept the fact that we will always have poor people around us, and that poverty is part of human destiny. This is precisely why we continue to have poor people around us. If we firmly believe that poverty is unacceptable to us, and that it should not belong to a civilised society, we would have built appropriate institutions and policies to create a poverty-free world.

We wanted to go to the moon, so we went there. We achieve what we want to achieve. If we are not achieving something, it is because we have not put our minds to it. We create what we want. What we want and how we get to it depends on our mind-sets. It is extremely difficult to change mind-sets once they are formed. We create the world in accordance with our mind-set. We need to invent ways to change our perspective continually and

reconfigure our mind-set quickly as new knowledge emerges. We can reconfigure our world if we can reconfigure our mind-set.

### **We can put poverty in the museums**

I believe that we can create a poverty-free world because poverty is not created by poor people. It has been created and sustained by the economic and social system that we have designed for ourselves; the institutions and concepts that make up that system; the policies that we pursue.

Poverty is created because we built our theoretical framework on assumptions which underestimate human capacity, by designing concepts which are too narrow (such as concept of business, credit-worthiness, entrepreneurship, employment) or developing institutions, which remain half-done (such as financial institutions, where the poor are left out). Poverty is caused by the failure at the conceptual level, rather than any lack of capability on the part of people.

I firmly believe that we can create a poverty-free world if we collectively believe in it. In a poverty-free world, the only place you would be able to see poverty is in the poverty museums. When school children take a tour of the poverty museums, they would be horrified to see the misery and indignity that some human beings had to go through. They would blame their forefathers for tolerating this inhuman condition, which existed for so long, for so many people.

A human being is born into this world fully equipped not only to take care of him or herself, but also to contribute to enlarging the wellbeing of the world as a whole. Some get the chance to explore their potential to some degree, but many others never get any opportunity, during their lifetime, to unwrap the wonderful gift they were born with. They die unexplored and the world remains deprived of their creativity, and their contribution.

Grameen has given me an unshakeable faith in the creativity of human beings. This has led me to believe that human beings are not born to suffer the misery of hunger and poverty.

To me poor people are like bonsai trees. When you plant the best seed of the tallest tree in a flower-pot, you get a replica of the tallest tree, only inches tall. There is nothing wrong with the seed you planted; only the soil-base that is inadequate. Poor people are bonsai people. There is nothing wrong in their seeds. Simply, society never gave them the base to grow on. All it needs to get poor people out of poverty is for us to create an enabling environment for them. Once the poor can unleash their energy and creativity, poverty will disappear very quickly.

Let us join hands to give every human being a fair chance to unleash their energy and creativity.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>: For the full speech go to: [www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2006/yunus-lecture-en.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2006/yunus-lecture-en.html)

I Have a Dream  
Martin Luther King Jr.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, 'When will you be satisfied?' We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by a sign stating: 'For Whites Only'. We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until 'justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream'.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. And some of you have come from areas where your quest—quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair,  
I say to you today, my friends.

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow,  
I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of ‘interposition’ and ‘nullification’—one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; ‘and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together’.

This is our hope, and this is the faith that  
I go back to the South with.

With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

Excerpt from Martin Luther King Jr.’s  
‘I Have A Dream’ speech (full text and  
audio found at [www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihavedream.htm](http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihavedream.htm))

## Complexity of Simplicity Shane Claiborne

When we talk of materialism and simplicity, we must always begin with love for God and neighbour, otherwise we're operating out of little more than legalistic, guilt-ridden self-righteousness. Our simplicity is not an ascetic denunciation of material things to attain personal piety, for if we sell all that we have and give it to the poor, but have not love, it is meaningless (1 Corinthians 13:3). Simplicity is meaningful only inasmuch as it is grounded in love, authentic relationships, and interdependence. Redistribution then springs naturally out of our rebirth, from a vision of family that is larger than biology or nationalism. As we consider what it means to be born again into a family in which our sisters and brothers are starving to death. Then we begin to see why rebirth and redistribution are inextricably bound up in one another, as a growing number of evangelicals have come to proclaim. It also becomes scandalous for the church to spend money on windows and buildings when some family members don't have water. Welcome to the dysfunctional family of Yahweh.

So it's important to understand that redistribution comes from community, not before community. Redistribution is not a prescription for community. Redistribution is a description of what happens when people fall in love with each other across class lines. When the Bible tells the story of the early church in the book of Acts, it does not say that they were of one heart and mind because they sold everything. Rather they held all in common precisely because they were of one heart and mind, as rich and poor found themselves born again into a family in which some had extra and others were desperately in need. Redistribution was not systematically regimented but flowed naturally out of a love for God and neighbour.

**Leader: Lord, you are God of the nations.**

All: Let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like a never-failing stream.

**Leader: Lord, you place kings and leaders on their thrones.**

All: Let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like a never-failing stream.

**Leader: Lord, you see the dark places of our cities.**

All: Let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like a never-failing stream.

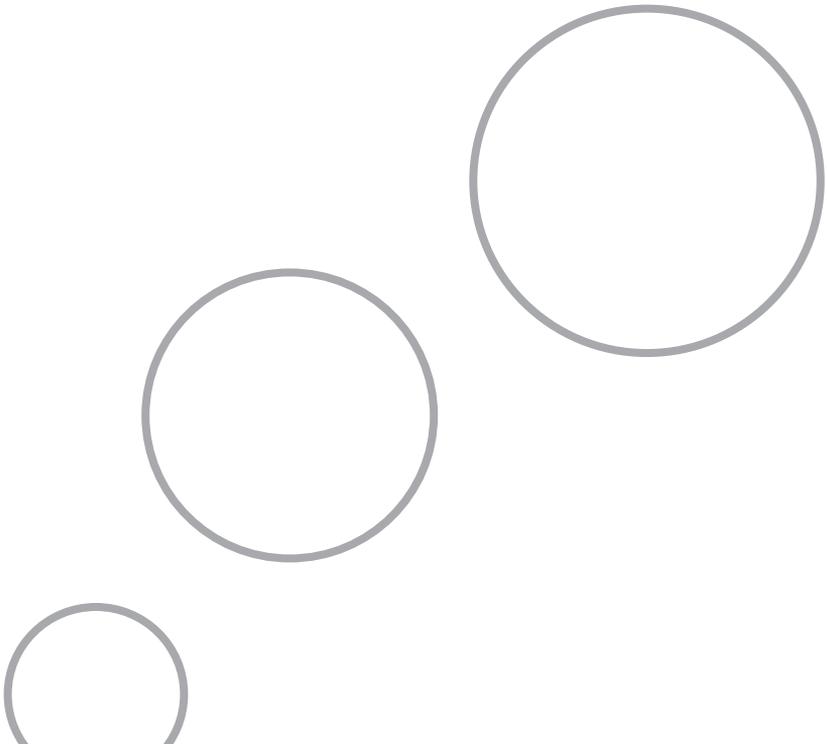
**Leader: Lord, you are the defender of the widow and the orphan.**

All: Let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like a never-failing stream.

**Leader: Lord, we pray for the poor and for the downtrodden.**

All: Let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like a never-failing stream. Lord, forgive us when we organise our meetings, only to forget the poor. May justice and righteousness be present in our churches and in the way we live our lives. Amen.

A liturgy taken from the book  
*Punk Monk: New monasticism and the ancient  
are of breathing* by Andy Freeman with  
Pete Greig.





Conclusion:  
Live the Dream



# Conclusion: Live the Dream

By definition social justice is a new way of seeing the world and a commitment to join the fight against injustice and usher in the Kingdom rule of Christ.

There was a time when extreme poverty was something everyone assumed was going to be around forever. You may have even heard the ideology that we can never eradicate poverty. The mantra is 'Jesus said the poor will be with you always'. But Jesus' commitment to alleviate suffering and his instructions for believers to do the same leads us to believe that his statement is more a call to fight poverty than simply accept it. During the first glimpse of widespread famines, people equated social justice issues with depressing views of the world. The time has changed.

You've now heard world-shapers—in history and in the present—who are singing a new tune. Able to imagine a different world, more and more people are nailing their colours to the mast, ready to join the fight. They're armed with the belief that good is more powerful than evil, that darkness can never extinguish the light and that there is living hope of a new world. We are seeing Jesus' words fulfilled when he said to his disciples, 'What is impossible with man, is possible with God' (Mark 10:27, NIV). How this fight takes place is in a myriad of colourful campaigns for justice. We celebrate the diversity of approaches.

A key to starting your journey is to understand that social justice is not a lone ranger fight. In order to really fight injustice we need to do it in, through and with community. Christian community will always be God's preferred strategy to combat injustice.

We've attempted to arm you with some foundational truths—offering both the biblical tradition of justice and the foundations within the movement of The Salvation Army.

We've given you some specific tools to deal with injustice from both an international and local perspective—a prophetic response

**Imagine that it wasn't just Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King Jr., William Booth, Mother Teresa and Bono who created a better world. Imagine it was you. Imagine that from this moment you are passionately committed to living a life that would help create the world as God wants it. Just imagine.**

(engaging scripture and the prophets for a just posture), a systemic response (tools for unpacking the roots of oppression) and we've deliberately dealt with some of the practical politics of social justice to unpack the essentials.

We are calling you to Just Imagine. We wholeheartedly believe that the social justice fight can be engaged only with our imaginations aflame with justice. We want to be able to taste, smell and touch justice, to allow the familiarity with how things 'could' be to drive us to create a better world.

In the following section (justice resources) we've provided a list of campaigns and movements emerging on the social justice scene that we can recommend but there are many, many more. Other initiatives are emerging every day and we'd encourage you to get informed and involved. It's time to live the dream.

**Benediction:**

May the Lord disturb you and trouble you,  
May the Lord set an impossible task before you,  
    And dare you to meet it.  
May the Lord give you strength to do your best;  
    And then—but only then—  
May the Lord grant you peace.  
Amen.



## Justice Resources



**JUST Salvos**  
Australian Southern Territory  
[www.justsalvos.com](http://www.justsalvos.com)

**Campaigns include:**

JUSTLive  
JUSTGifts  
JUSTLose  
Fairtrade  
JUSTPray

International Justice Commission  
[www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/](http://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/)

Social Policy & Parliamentary Unit—New Zealand,  
Fiji and Tonga Territory  
[www.salvationarmy.org.nz/](http://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/)

International Development—UK and Ireland Territory  
[www.salvationarmy.org.uk/id](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/id)

National Anti-trafficking—USA  
[www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/](http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/)

**Other justice campaigns you should check out:**

The Micah Challenge ([www.micahchallenge.org/](http://www.micahchallenge.org/))  
Make Poverty History ([www.makepovertyhistory.org](http://www.makepovertyhistory.org))  
Global Call to Action Against Poverty ([www.whiteband.org/](http://www.whiteband.org/))  
Stop The Traffik ([www.stopthetraffik.org](http://www.stopthetraffik.org))  
ONE ([www.one.org](http://www.one.org))  
Human Rights Watch ([www.hrw.org/](http://www.hrw.org/))  
International Justice Mission ([www.ijm.org](http://www.ijm.org))  
Fair Trade ([www.fairtrade.com.au](http://www.fairtrade.com.au) and [www.fairtrade.net](http://www.fairtrade.net))  
Oxfam ([www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org))  
Caritas Internationalis ([www.caritas.org](http://www.caritas.org))  
Caritas Australia (<http://ozspirit.info/index.html>)  
Bread for the World ([www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org))  
The Forgiveness Project ([www.theforgivenessproject.com](http://www.theforgivenessproject.com))  
Buy Nothing Day (<http://adbusters.org/metast/eco/bnd/>)  
Live Simply ([www.livesimply.org.uk/](http://www.livesimply.org.uk/))

### **Books we dig on justice**

*Insane: The stories of crazy salvos who changed the world*,  
by Neilson Munn & David Collinson

*Make Poverty Personal*, by Ash Barker

*Not for Sale*, by David Batstone

*Banker to the Poor*, by Muhammad Yunus

*Say to this Mountain*, by Ched Myers

*Aggressive Christianity*, by Catherine Booth and Cory Harrison

*Be A Hero*, by Stephen Court and Wesley Campbell

*Christianity Rediscovered*, by Father Vincent J. Donovan

*Cry of the Urban Poor*, by Viv Grigg

*John Paul the Great*, by Peggy Noonan

*Life Together*, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*Martin Luther King Jr.*, Autobiography

*No Future Without Forgiveness*, by Bishop Desmond Tutu

*Red Moon Rising*, by Peter Greig

*The Cost of Discipleship*, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*The Emperor*, by Ryszard Kapuscinski

*The End of Poverty*, by Jeffrey Sachs

*The Irresistible Revolution*, by Shane Claiborne

*The Long Walk to Freedom*, by Nelson Mandela

*The Mustard Seed Conspiracy*, by Tom Sine

*The Weight of Glory*, by C.S. Lewis

*Darkest England and The Way Back In*, by Gary Bishop

*God's Politics*, by Jim Wallis

*The Little Book of Biblical Justice*, by Chris Marshall

*Exclusion and Embrace*, by Miroslav Volf

*Speeches that Changed the World*, by Murdoch Books Pty Limited

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