

BIBLICAL STUDIES

11-12C

Biblical Responses to Social Justice Issues

In light of the Gospel, how do Christians engage in God's reconciliation, redemption, and restoration of the world?

MAY 2022

The Lord requires us to seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly.

Worldviews are formed from individual and collective experiences that also inform our understanding of social justice issues.

The causes of social injustices are complex and the solutions require a Biblically-informed response.

Christians can promote God's shalom and help transform individuals, communities, and systems.

LEARNER ATTRIBUTE GOALS



HOPEFUL & THRIVING



FAITH-INFORMED DISCERNMENT



SERVANT STEWARDSHIP



PURPOSEFULLY DISCIPLINED



GRACE-FILLED INTEGRITY



ENGAGED & FAITHFUL

- Use inquiry processes, scripture, and reasoning skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas. (Purposefully Disciplined)
- Evaluate assumptions, biases, and worldview beliefs to reflect on practices that promote wholeness, wellbeing, worship, spiritual formation, and healing. (Purposefully Disciplined)
- Explain different perspectives on past and present people, places, issues, and events, and distinguish between worldviews by engaging in respectful dialogue. (Grace-Filled Integrity)
- Assess and compare the significance of people, places, events and apply a Biblical perspective to what is revealed about issues of social justice in the past and present. (Engaged & Faithful)
- Determine and assess the long- and short-term causes and consequences, and the intended and unintended consequences, of an event, legislative and judicial decision, development, policy, or movement to empathize with the lived experiences of vulnerable people and their communities. (Engaged & Faithful)
- Communicate findings and decisions related to major issues concerning communities of faith, vulnerable and marginalized populations, consequences of actions, real people, real needs, real problems, community wellness, and social inequity. (Servant Stewardship)
- Investigate perspectives of environmental, social, and economic stewardship by examining sources, restorative efforts, and issues pertaining to people and communities. (Servant Stewardship)
- Create plans that demonstrate collaborative solutions and determine what individuals acting out of Christ-like love can do to partner with the reconciliation work of the Spirit through sustainable actions. (Servant Stewardship)
- Develop a Biblical and ethical reasoning framework to make judgments about controversial actions in the past or present after considering the context and standards of right and wrong. (Faith-Informed Discernment)

CONTENT LEARNING GOALS

- Genesis 36-50; James; Luke
- Defining, modeling, and interpreting social justice as an expression of the Gospel
Sample topics: The Gospels and the Ancient-Greco Roman world- social issues of the ancient world and how Jesus navigated the ideas; the Sermon on the Mount; Matthew 25 verbs- care, steward, clothe, visit, invite, walk among, empathize, engage; the social justice movements of the Early Christian church (Acts 2; the ethic of care for women and the subsequent radical ethic of inclusion to people who were disabled in the Greco-roman world - ancient literature) up to modern Christian movements
Sample inquiry questions: What is social justice? What are some origins of social justice movements across the Christian tradition? What do the Gospels tell us about social responsibility? Why is there evil and suffering in the world?
- Exploring local, national, and global issues pertaining to social injustice
Sample topics: Colonialism, Indigenous relations in Canada and around the world, truth and reconciliation; social justice issues (race, religion, poverty, LGBTQ2S+ peoples, women, environmental and ecological, peace, globalization, technology, disabilities, elderly, and marginalized and vulnerable peoples)
Sample inquiry questions: How should we make sense of colonialism, the sins of our ancestors, the present ramifications with the treatment of Indigenous peoples, the role of the church, and what truth and reconciliation might mean for Christians? What should be the posture of Christians today towards moments in history when it has not reflected the love,

grace, and posture of Christ? How do we engage with systemic issues pertaining to gender, inequity, racism, bullying, and injustices to minority populations around the world? How do we make sense of religious persecution?

- Participation in God's reconciliation, redemption, and restoration of the world; advocacy, service, and learning
Sample topics: Model of service learning; framework for participation in restorative practices; advocacy and activism; courage to stand up for others; Biblical discernment to identify, emotion coaching model for building relationships, connecting, and supporting people through issues with empathy.
Sample inquiry questions: What are the wider systemic implications of sin and the brokenness in humanity and what does the Bible say about this?
- Understanding personal, group, systemic, institutional, governmental, non-governmental issues of inequity and injustice
Sample topics: Power and leadership; refugees and immigrant populations; international laws; rights and responsibilities; decision-making
Sample inquiry questions: Can you be good without God? Is there a moral law written into human existence? How should we understand non-Christian social justice movements? How should we think about liberation theologies?
- Process, methods, and a framework to promote holistic wellbeing and shalom
-Sample topics: Theological diversity; shalom; when helping hurts; brokenness; social, economic, and political systems
-Sample inquiry questions: Is it possible to see God in beauty, creation, suffering, and others? How does art help us to reflect on transcendence? What can we learn from the experiences and narratives of people of visible minorities and marginalized populations?

BIBLICAL STUDIES 11-12 (C) RATIONALE

In the senior Bible 11/12 Social Justice Course Stream, we will seek to explore the impact of the fall and devastation that sin has caused in the created order in contrast to God's plan for restoring the world in the new creation. Students will investigate Biblical texts that provide an assessment of God's reconciliation, redemption, and restoration of the world and how the church is to partner with God's work. Students explore concepts of land, covenant, identity, Indigenous people and relations in Canada, and the church's response to social issues to make sense of justice, shalom, healing, advocacy, conflict resolution, rights and freedoms, power, and equality. Students will learn to study the Biblical text inductively and deductively and understand how key social justice movements have at their root, theological and soteriological considerations. By applying a Biblical model of discernment to understand social injustices and inequities locally, in our nation, and globally, students will reflect on personal, group, community, and systemic/institutional issues. They will be equipped with strategies and practices that encourage them to develop their capabilities as leaders, their responsiveness to issues of injustice with vulnerable and marginalized people and communities, and participate collaboratively in projects and partnerships that build empathy, perspective, and values. The course intends to encourage students to love God with their heart, soul, mind, and strength and love their neighbor as themselves. And students will apply their learning experientially as they participate in service learning initiatives, while cultivating themselves as caring, open-minded, and people who take initiative towards God's healing in the world.

REQUIRED RESOURCES

To be developed.

