

Healing brokenness and seeking justice

What Does This Mean?

By chapter 3 of Genesis there is brokenness in God's good world when Adam and Eve decide to go their own way and assert themselves over God. However we understand the story of Genesis, one thing is clear: the world is not now as God intended. We now live in a Humpty Dumpty world, full of brokenness and sin. Sin in the Bible is not just breaking the rules; it is breaking a relationship. The various words used for sin express its different aspects, such as missing the mark, disobedience, twisting (i.e., bending the truth). When he started his ministry, Jesus outlined his role by quoting from the prophet Isaiah ([Isaiah 61:1](#)), who talks of the coming One who will heal the brokenhearted. Jesus came to bring good news, to heal the brokenness of our world, and to deal with human sin—all this he did by his death and resurrection ([Matthew 1:21](#)).

The word *salvation* means wholeness, healing, and restoration. Jesus healed broken minds and bodies, making people whole again. Christians are called to carry on the work of Christ by the help of the Holy Spirit, bringing healing and wholeness to broken bodies, minds, relationships, and *communities*.

God calls people to follow “justice and only justice” ([Deuteronomy 16:20](#)). In her song, Mary reflects on a God of justice who humbles the proud and lifts the poor ([Luke 1:51-52](#)). Jesus welcomed the *marginalized* by mixing with the poor, the rejected, people labeled “sinners” ([Matthew 9:10-12](#)). God's justice shows itself in acting on behalf of the powerless, often represented as the orphan, the widow, and the stranger—those who have no one to defend them and who often are treated unfairly. God expects his people to be just, making justice and redressing wrongs their aim ([Isaiah 1:13-17](#), [Micah 6:8](#)).

Charity is no substitute for justice withheld. St. Augustine

In the moral sphere, every act of justice or charity involves putting ourselves in the other person's place and thus transcending our own competitive particularity. C. S. Lewis

Injustice angers God. The prophet Amos thundered against the injustices of his day, where the vulnerable were oppressed and the rich just got richer. He called for justice to roll like a river ([Amos 2:24](#)). People seem to have an innate sense of the need for justice

and are rightly outraged at the injustice they see in the world ([Malachi 2:17](#)). When we resist injustice, we acknowledge the opponent as a responsible moral agent. To resist is to pay people the compliment that they are responsible for their actions.

What Does This Mean in School?

Justice can be highlighted across the curriculum by the way a subject is taught and the topics and actions chosen, as can brokenness and healing. The healing can be of relationships, communities, minds, and bodies.

- Plan to use justice as part of an objective where it fits the material (e.g., when looking at some abolitionists).
- Be intentional and focus on brokenness and making whole in a text, in a period in history, within communities, or in relationships.
- Use these two concepts as ways of understanding certain art works and texts; let them frame the whole lesson or unit.
- Create dissonance by putting two situations together so that the contrast shows up the injustice.
- Give students the opportunity to take part in creating justice (e.g., by taking part in a campaign).

Think of a lesson where justice was an issue or where brokenness was part of the content. Think of ways in which you could make more of this.



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