



BIBLICAL JUSTICE

**Biblical Justice Education and JESUS
Instruction Guide- Lesson 1**



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FORMATION BEFORE INFORMATION

Opening Prayer

Consecrate our minds, our sight, and our service.

PRAY TOGETHER

God of justice and mercy, align our minds with Your truth. Give us eyes to see the people and pain we have learned to overlook. Free us from definitions shaped more by preference than by Your Word. Show us Jesus again. Make our faith visible through love, courage, wisdom, and repair. Let what we learn become what we live. In Jesus' name, Amen.

“Let what we learn become what we live.”

Before we begin: What are you asking God to reveal, challenge, or strengthen in you during this module?

HOW WE WILL HOLD THE ROOM

Our Covenant for Learning Together

Get Close Enough to See Clearly

Biblical justice requires proximity. We cannot faithfully respond to people, pain, or systems we refuse to understand. Throughout this course, we will examine race, racism, inequity, and injustice in the United States through the truth of Scripture and the ministry model of Jesus.

Allow Scripture to Challenge the Narrative

Come prepared to examine what you have learned, question what you have assumed, and receive what God may reveal. Growth requires the humility to admit that our current understanding may be incomplete.

Be Willing to Experience Discomfort

Some conversations may challenge your theology, traditions, experiences, or assumptions. Discomfort is not always an indication that something is wrong. Sometimes it is evidence that God is expanding our understanding. We will reach for our growing edge and wrestle with difficult truths together.

Hold On to Hope While Facing the Truth

The realities of injustice can feel heavy and overwhelming. We will not avoid brutal facts, and we will not surrender our hope. Biblical hope gives us the courage to face what is wrong while believing that restoration, redemption, and transformation remain possible.

These principles are informed by Bryan Stevenson, author of *Just Mercy*.

PRESENCE • TRUST • CONFIDENTIALITY • ACCOUNTABILITY

Commit to the Learning Community

- Participate fully and remain present throughout the session.
- Respect the people in the room and trust the learning process.
- Keep your camera on whenever possible. Your presence matters, and seeing one another helps us build trust and community.
- Remain muted unless you are speaking to reduce distractions.
- Practice confidentiality. Protect the stories, experiences, and vulnerabilities shared in this space.
- Do not record, post, reproduce, or share course content without permission.
- Listen to understand. We are here to learn and grow, not to win arguments or prove points.
- Speak from your own experiences without assuming that your experience represents everyone.
- Make room for voices and perspectives that have often been overlooked.
- Extend grace while remaining accountable to truth.
- Remember that no one person's story is the whole story.

OUR SHARED COMMITMENT

We Think Right, See Right, Make Right, Do Right, and Lead Right. We are not entering this space to leave unchanged. We are asking God to transform how we think, deepen how we see, and strengthen how we respond. Justice requires more than agreement. It requires engagement.

THINK RIGHT

Movement 1: God Defines Justice

THINK RIGHT

Before justice becomes action, it must become revelation. Scripture governs the definition.

Micah 6:8 • KJV

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

Context

Micah speaks into eighth-century Judah, where worship continued while exploitation, corrupt leadership, and economic injustice violated covenant life. Verse 8 answers exaggerated proposals for sacrifice in verses 6–7. God is not bargaining for a bigger religious performance. He requires a formed life: justice practiced, covenant loyalty loved, humility embodied.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

God never intended worship to become a hiding place from obedience.

Where might religious activity be functioning as a substitute for obedience in the spaces you influence?

REFLECTION

What Formed Your First Definition of Justice?

We all arrive with a definition. Discipleship asks whether our definition can survive Scripture.

FAMILY What did home teach you about fairness, punishment, mercy, or power?	CHURCH What did your faith community explicitly or implicitly teach about justice?
LAW + POLITICS What public ideas or institutions shaped your definition?	PAIN + EXPERIENCE What experiences made justice personal for you?
SCRIPTURE Where has the Word affirmed or corrected what you believed?	OPENNESS What are you willing to reconsider in light of God's revelation?

Justice used to mean _____. Tonight I am open to _____.

BIG IDEA

You cannot pursue Biblical Justice if you define justice outside of God.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

A borrowed definition will eventually produce a borrowed obedience.

HEBREW VOCABULARY THAT WORKS TOGETHER

Justice Is Both Correction and Cultivation

MISHPAT**Right judgment**

- Fair decisions
- Protection of rights
- Consequences for wrongdoing

TZEDAQAH**Righteousness**

- Right relationships
- Faithful generosity
- Conditions where people can flourish

Mishpat can refer to judgment, legal decisions, rights, or the ordering of communal life. Tzedakah describes rightness, covenant faithfulness, and conduct that sustains right relationship. Scripture often pairs the terms, as in Psalm 89:14.

REMEMBER

Justice repairs what is wrong. Righteousness builds what is right.

Think of a problem in your ministry or community. What would “repairing what is wrong” require? What would “building what is right” require?

GOD'S REIGN HAS A MORAL ARCHITECTURE

Justice Is God's Nature

Psalms 89:14 • KJV

"Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face."

The psalm locates justice and judgment at the foundation of God's throne. Justice is not a ministry trend or an optional department of discipleship. It belongs to the moral architecture of God's reign. Mercy and truth are not enemies of justice; they move before God together.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

Justice is not merely something God does when the world gets bad. Justice is part of who God is while God rules.

How does your understanding of justice change when you see it as part of God's nature rather than a ministry topic?

PRACTICE BEFORE FLUENCY

Justice Must Be Learned

Isaiah 1:17 • KJV

“Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.”

Context

Isaiah 1 confronts Judah’s worship because bloodshed and injustice contradict their assemblies. “Learn” makes justice a practiced discipline. The commands move from inner formation to public advocacy: seek, correct or relieve, defend, plead. Fatherless children and widows represented people with limited social and legal power.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

An anointed gathering cannot compensate for an abandoned neighbor.

Whose well-being is easy to praise in a sermon and expensive to protect in a system?

FROM VISITS TO FLOW

Beyond Occasional Charity

Amos 5:24 • KJV

“But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.”

Amos addresses the northern kingdom during prosperity marked by exploitation and religious performance. God rejects songs and offerings disconnected from justice in Amos 5:21–23. Water imagery signals consistency and abundance, not a seasonal drip.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

God is not looking for justice that visits. God calls for justice that flows.

Application

Consider how ministry can move from event-only benevolence toward reliable pathways, policies, partnerships, and accountability.

Where does your ministry currently “visit” a need? What would it look like to create a dependable flow of response?

CONSECRATION BECOMES VISIBLE

Holiness Has a Social Witness

SET APART

God forms a people whose life reveals His character.

RIGHTLY RELATED

Love of God reshapes how power, resources, truth, and neighbors are treated.

PUBLICLY VISIBLE

Holy living becomes credible through mercy, integrity, protection, and repair.

Holiness includes consecration to God and moral transformation. In Scripture, devotion and neighbor-love cannot be severed. We should avoid reducing holiness to private avoidance or justice to public activism without spiritual formation.

LEADERSHIP INSIGHT

The holiness we celebrate in the sanctuary must be recognizable in the way people experience our leadership.

How do people experience your holiness through your decisions, access, mercy, truthfulness, and use of power?

A QUICK EXAMINATION OF OUR THINKING

Three Marks of Biblical Justice

1

IMPARTIALITY

Justice refuses favoritism.

2

INTEGRITY

Justice joins righteous motives with righteous actions.

3

TRUTH

Justice is anchored in God's Word rather than personal opinion.

CORE QUESTION

Is your thinking truly reflecting the mind of Christ?

A Biblical Justice Diagnostic

- Does it agree with God's revealed character?
- Does it tell the truth about harm?
- Does it protect dignity and restrain wrongdoing?
- Does it move people and relationships toward right order?

Use the diagnostic on one current decision, ministry practice, or issue you are carrying.**What becomes clearer?**

SEE RIGHT • MAKE RIGHT

Movement 2: Jesus and the Ministry of Restoration

SEE RIGHT • MAKE RIGHT

Once God defines justice, Jesus demonstrates what it looks like in motion.

Jesus did not avoid brokenness. He moved toward it.

Luke 4:18–19 • KJV

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

In Nazareth, Jesus reads Isaiah 61 with echoes of Isaiah 58. His Spirit-anointed mission addresses spiritual, embodied, social, and economic realities. “Good news to the poor” is not less than salvation from sin, yet it refuses a gospel indifferent to lived captivity and exclusion. The “acceptable year” evokes divine favor and Jubilee-shaped release.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

Jesus did not announce an anointing with no address. His mission had people, pain, and places attached to it.

WHAT CAN PEOPLE HEAR AND SEE?

The Evidence of the Kingdom

Matthew 11:1–6 • KJV

“And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.”

John’s question comes from prison, a place where expectation and experience collide. Jesus points to observable works echoing Isaiah’s promises. The answer is embodied evidence: healing, cleansing, life, and good news.

LEADERSHIP INSIGHT

When people ask whether our ministry is real, our titles are weak evidence. What can they hear and see?

EVANGELISM INSIGHT

Kingdom credibility leaves receipts in people’s lives.

What “receipts” of the Kingdom should be visible in the lives of people touched by your ministry?

COMPASSIONATE OBEDIENCE

Mercy Over Performance

Matthew 9:13 • KJV

“But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

Jesus answers criticism about eating with tax collectors and sinners by citing Hosea 6:6. Table fellowship becomes a mercy-shaped ministry space. “Mercy, not sacrifice” does not abolish worship; it exposes worship used to avoid compassionate obedience.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

Mercy is what holiness looks like when it gets close enough to help.

Where might “proper religious performance” be keeping us at a safe distance from people who need mercy?

LOVE CROSSES THE DISTANCE

Incarnational Ministry

2 Corinthians 8:9 • KJV

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

Paul grounds generous participation in the self-giving grace of Christ. The verse sits inside a collection for believers in need. Christ’s descent becomes the theological pattern for generosity, solidarity, and shared responsibility.

THEOLOGICAL CAUTION

This is not a promise of individual material wealth. Paul’s immediate concern is grace expressed through generous sharing and fairness in the community, as 2 Corinthians 8:13–15 makes clear.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

Incarnation means love refused to help us from a safe distance.

Where are you being invited to cross distance rather than simply send help?

A MINISTRY MODEL THAT MOVES TOWARD PAIN

Jesus' Restoration Pattern

NOTICE	See the person
MOVE	Cross the distance
TOUCH	Honor dignity
RESTORE	Address the loss
REJOIN	Return belonging

This pattern is synthesized from repeated Gospel encounters. It is a teaching tool, not a claim that every story follows identical steps. Jesus sees people others reduce to categories, crosses boundaries, restores bodies and dignity, and often returns people to community.

LEADERSHIP TENSION

Presence without power can pity. Power without presence can control. Jesus brings both.

Which step does your ministry do well? Which step are you most likely to skip?

CHARITY, DIGNITY, AND THE QUESTIONS BENEATH THE NEED

Case Study: The Church Pantry Line

SCENARIO

A church pantry serves 180 households monthly. Guests wait outdoors for two hours, complete the same intake form every visit, and cannot choose their food. Leaders celebrate growing numbers. Volunteers never ask why the same families remain food insecure.

SEE RIGHT: What pain, dignity issue, or barrier has been normalized?

MAKE RIGHT: What could change tonight?

What requires policy, partnership, or advocacy?

Reflection note

Relief responds to an immediate lack. Restoration also examines repeated barriers and agency. Strong ministry can distribute food and redesign the experience through appointments, seating, choice, simplified intake, resource navigation, listening, and partnerships that address repeated barriers. Immediate help matters. The justice question asks what faithful love requires next.

DO RIGHT • LEAD RIGHT

Movement 3: Justification and Justice

DO RIGHT • LEAD RIGHT

Jesus saves us by grace and then forms us into people whose faith works through love.

Romans 3:26 • KJV

“To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

Romans 3 announces God’s saving action in Christ after establishing universal sin. Justification is God’s gracious declaration that sinners are put right through faith, grounded in Christ rather than human merit. The cross reveals God as both just and the One who justifies.

THEOLOGICAL GUARDRAIL

We do not perform justice to earn justification. We pursue justice because grace reconciles us to the just God and begins forming a new kind of life.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

Grace is free. It is never fruitless.

GRACE DEVELOPS EVIDENCE

Faith Becomes Visible

Galatians 5:6 • KJV

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”

Paul rejects identity markers as the basis of standing in Christ. What counts is faith energized or expressed through love. Love is not sentimental approval. In Galatians it serves the neighbor, carries burdens, and refuses destructive fleshly patterns.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

Faith has roots in grace and evidence in love.

James 2:14–17 • KJV

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”

James confronts claimed faith that remains verbally orthodox and materially inactive. Words of blessing without provision expose a faith claim with no pulse. James does not teach salvation earned by works; he challenges a profession that produces no faithful action.

EVANG EWING INSIGHT

A prayer can be sincere and still become an excuse when God has placed provision in our hands.

ALLEGIANCE TO THE KING

Jesus Identifies With the Vulnerable

Matthew 25:35–40 • KJV

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

In the judgment of the nations, the Son of Man identifies himself with people experiencing hunger, thirst, estrangement, exposure, sickness, and imprisonment. Interpretive traditions debate the precise scope of “my brethren,” yet the text unmistakably makes treatment of vulnerable people a matter of allegiance to the King.

LEADERSHIP INSIGHT

Budgets, calendars, policies, and access practices reveal who leadership has learned to see.

EVANGELING INSIGHT

Jesus keeps placing His name on people we are tempted to make invisible.

KEEP THE GOSPEL ORDER CLEAR

Grace → Formation → Faithful Action

GRACE

God acts for us in Christ

**FORMATION**

The Spirit reshapes our desires and vision

**ACTION**

Love becomes visible in practice and leadership

SAY IT ALOUD

Works do not purchase grace. Works reveal that grace is at work.

Justification is received by faith, not achieved through justice work. Sanctifying grace produces love, obedience, mercy, courage, and concern for neighbor. Ephesians 2:8–10 offers the same order: saved by grace, created for good works.

Where have you seen grace produce visible change in how a person or ministry treats others?

8 MINUTES • CHOOSE ONE REAL EXAMPLE

Small-Group Conversation

Choose a real ministry, community, workplace, or public-system example without naming private individuals.

1. Where is harm being managed instead of made right?

2. Who is absent when ministry decisions are made?

3. Which tenet is missing: Think, See, Make, Do, or Lead Right?

4. What is one faithful next step within our authority?

REPORTER SENTENCE

We noticed _____, and faithful action could look like _____.

REVELATION • RESPONSIBILITY • REACH

Debrief Without Defensiveness

REVELATION

What did Scripture help us see?

RESPONSIBILITY

What belongs to us to address?

REACH

Who else must be involved?

LEADERSHIP WISDOM

Accountability asks, “What is mine to do?” Wisdom asks, “Who must do it with me?”

When an action exceeds your authority, identify the next influence point: research, relationship, referral, partnership, policy recommendation, or escalation.

MOVE FROM CONVICTION TO A FAITHFUL EXPERIMENT

Ministry Implementation

PEOPLE

Who is most affected?

TRUTH

What is happening beneath the surface?

POWER

Who decides, benefits, bears cost, or lacks voice?

PRACTICE

What can we test in the next 5–10 days?

PROOF

What evidence will show dignity or outcomes improved?

KEEP THE EXPERIMENT FAITHFUL AND LEARNABLE

Choose a step small enough to begin and meaningful enough to teach you something. Evidence may include stories, wait time, participation, referral completion, representation in decisions, complaint reduction, or another measure appropriate to the ministry.

WRITE ONE SENTENCE FOR EACH

Activation: Learn • Shift • Act

I LEARNED...

The truth I cannot unknow:

I MUST SHIFT...

The belief, habit, policy, or posture that must change:

I WILL ACT...

One specific step, one date, one person who will know:

MAKE IT SPECIFIC

By [date], I will [action] with [person/group] so that [desired change].

JUSTICE ISN'T ADMIRER. IT'S PRACTICED.

Final Charge

FINAL CHARGE

Biblical justice begins when God renews the mind, Jesus retrains the eyes, and faith moves the feet.

Closing Exhortation

Think right, because every action begins with an interpretation. See right, because what we refuse to see we will never feel responsible to change. Make right, because compassion must mature into repair. Do right, because conviction without movement becomes spiritual clutter. Lead right, because somebody else's access, dignity, and future may be sitting inside a decision you have the authority to make.

Closing Prayer

PRAY

God, seal truth in us. Give us courage without arrogance, compassion without avoidance, wisdom without delay, and action without self-glory. Make our churches places where mercy and truth meet, where dignity is protected, and where the life of Jesus becomes visible. Amen.

My final note to myself after Module 1:

WANT TO GO DEEPER?

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