

PARENTS & TEACHERS
Information

Week 5
Justice

Justice is God's plan for the world: a future when societies and nations are in harmony with each other, and work together to care for creation. This is a wonderful vision of how God wants the world to be. It's difficult to understand why God doesn't simply make it happen. Why not now?

God doesn't force human beings to act in certain ways. If God made the world into a place of peace and harmony, but human beings didn't change, the world would soon return to the way it was before. The practice of justice—getting in line with God's plan for the world—is for the sake of the world, but it is for our own sake, too. When we begin to see people as God sees them, as beloved children or brothers and sisters, it changes our attitudes and our actions.

Children may not be able to build houses or dedicate a year of volunteer service, but they can cultivate attitudes which defeat prejudice and fear, and learn habits of listening to and caring for those beyond their family or church family. Praying on behalf of themselves or others is an important practice for children to develop, but children need to be told clearly that prayer does not have “magical” powers. Prayer does not guarantee a certain outcome. When we pray for someone, we are asking that God's plan for them will happen. We are also asking God to make us part of that plan. This means we might have to act—to keep praying, or go visit, or learn more about the situation. There may be times when we pray, listen, and act and things still don't work out the way we asked for. We can't always understand God's plan, but we know that God is with us and cares for us even when we are angry or sad.

Guiding a child's spiritual formation can be daunting, enlightening, and occasionally hilarious. Be sure to hold in prayer the children in your care, and ask them to pray for you, too.