



Resources for Schools

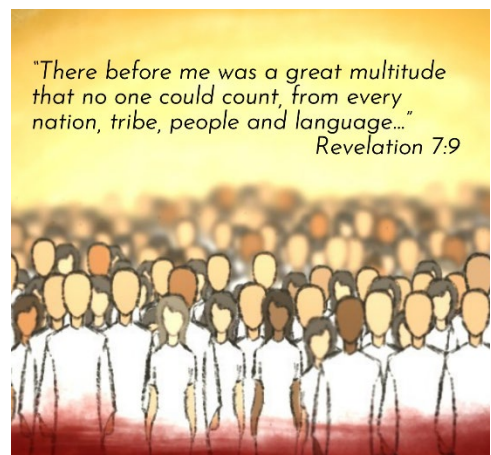
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# **Does our behaviour really matter? – Racial injustice**



## KEY CONCEPT/MESSAGE:

The Bible teaches from the start that everyone is created in the 'image of God' and therefore has infinite worth. Right at the end of the New Testament, we see a picture of what God's kingdom will look like – a place where people of every race, country and language come together, all equal and all enjoying being together. However, in reality, we see that not everyone is treated equally, fairly or kindly. We hear God warning people to 'act justly', but instead of celebrating how wonderfully different we all are, people have instead mistreated or hurt others – just because of the colour of their skin. The Bible says this makes God very sad and angry, and challenges us to do better – to love ALL our neighbours.



### What does it mean to 'love my neighbour'?

- How can we help bring about the sort of world God intended, where all are free, equally valued and able to live life to the full?
- How can we celebrate our differences?
- How can we stand up for people who are hurt and mistreated?
- How can we show with our words and our actions that racial injustice is wrong?
- How can we 'be the change'?

## BIBLE PASSAGE OF THE WEEK:

### ‘Who is my neighbour?’ ([Luke 10:25-37](#))



(The Good Samaritan by Dinah Roe Kendall)

#### The parable of the good Samaritan

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ In reply Jesus said: ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. “Look after him,” he said, “and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.”

‘Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?’

## Gathering

Close your eyes and imagine a party – a really amazing party, in fact, the perfect party!

I wonder who’s invited to your party?

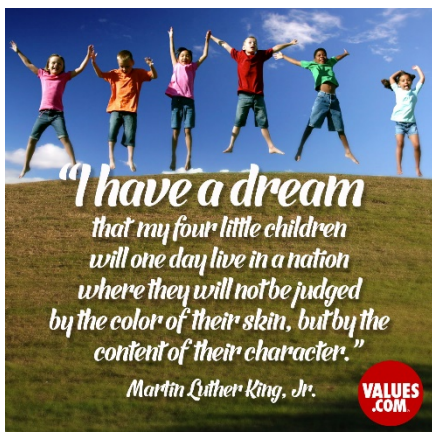
What do the guests look like? How do they talk, dance, play, celebrate?

Now look again. I wonder if anyone is missing from this party.

Does everyone look the same? Or can you see people who look and sound different?

Why might there be people missing?

The Bible describes quite a lot of parties – and at God’s parties, everyone is invited. God’s biggest party – what the Bible calls ‘The Kingdom of God’ – includes people from every single country, every different race, every different language.



But, sadly, life is not always like this. Very often, people are missing because they have been left out, or even worse – they have been hurt or mistreated.

Why are they left out? Why are they treated unfairly?

For the simple reason that they look different; because they have a different skin colour to other people.

The Bible teaches that when we leave people out, we are actually the ones missing out. Missing God’s great party where ALL are invited.

When we treat people unfairly, we are spoiling God’s world and not loving our neighbours as ourselves.

## Engagement

Today's Bible story asks the question 'who is my neighbour?' and thinks about how we should treat one another.

Let's think about this as a virtual party!

→ Provide an empty grid (3x3, 4x4 or 5x5, depending on age)

	Me	

Draw yourself in the middle window of the grid. Now in the windows around you, add in the people you would invite to this party.

They might be people you know, famous people, or people you have heard about whom you would like to include.

Now think about what the screen would look like if it was God's big party.

Who do you think you would see in the different video windows?

How many windows would you actually see on the screen?

Would the windows all appear the same?

What might you do together at this party?

Would everyone get a chance to join in?



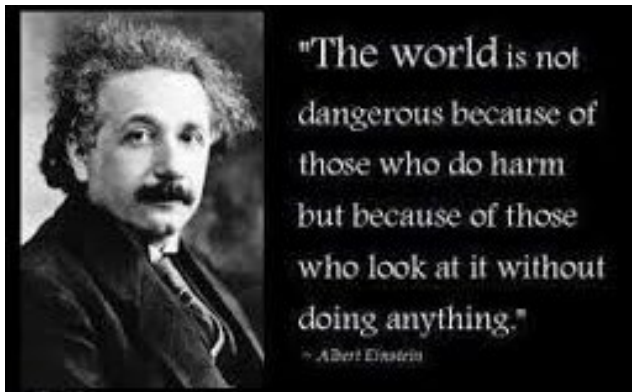
What if some of the people at the party were unable to speak? What if some were sick or injured? What if some had been mistreated? What if the reason they were muted, hurt or badly treated was because of the way they looked – because of the colour of their skin?

What would you do? What do you think God would do? What would other people at the party do?

In today's Bible story, someone was mistreated (beaten up) and injured, but for a long time no one helped him. Why do you think they ignored him and walked away?

**What would you have done?**

Read the story together (or use the retelling from the Faith at Home video) and talk about why you think the first 3 people did nothing. What do you think stopped them from helping?



Consider this quote from Albert Einstein:

Do you agree? Do you think this is fair? Is it just as important to speak up when we see injustice (people not being treated at all fairly) as it is to try and do the right thing in the first place?

## Response

Have you ever had an experience where people treated you unfairly and no one did anything? How did that feel? What did you want to happen?

We live in a world where some people are treated very unfairly because of the colour of their skin. We call this **racial injustice**. Even though lots of people think it is wrong, it still continues because not enough people speak out and act when they see it happening.

In today's Bible story, when Jesus talks about a 'neighbour', he doesn't just mean the people who live next door to us. He is talking about ALL the people God has made – both those who are like us and those who are different to us. He means people of all colours and from all countries. And he says we should 'love our neighbours'.

What, then, do you think it really means to 'love your neighbour'? We see in the story that it was the Samaritan – the one who was from a different culture – who was the true neighbour.

What if 'loving your neighbour' means:

- taking the time to listen to one another's stories, particularly the stories of people who are different to us?
- finding out about and celebrating the history, culture and practices of everyone in our school/ community/ country?
- speaking up when someone says something unkind, hurtful or offensive to another – whether that's in our school, or happening somewhere else?
- taking action to make sure things are fair for people of all skin colours?



Think about the person in our Bible story who *did* help. He was from a different culture, but that didn't stop him from seeing a person in need. He gave up his time and his money to help this injured person.

Is this something we are willing to do, even if it costs us our time, our money, our reputation?

(Mafa Jesus – Good Samaritan)

Loving our neighbours isn't always easy, but unless we all work together to speak out against racial injustice, we won't experience the wonderfully diverse world God created for us to live in. St Paul wrote 'if one part suffers, we all suffer; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it' (1 Corinthians 12:26).

## Sending

What ideas can you think of to show love for ALL your neighbours – both near and far? Why don't you create a class charter agreeing together how you will show that you 'love your neighbour'?



Hand out/ provide a range of different coloured hearts and ask the children to each take one and add to the charter, saying what they each pledge to do to help.

You can then revisit this charter regularly to check whether you have been active in speaking up for all your neighbours.

What might we need to do more of?

What could we do differently?

What new ways can we show that we truly love ALL our neighbours?

Listen to the song 'Better' by Hezekiah Walker, showing people from all over the world singing together:

<https://youtu.be/InrcZQliOGI>

How can we work together to help make things 'Better' – looking towards God's happy ending for our world, where people of every colour, culture and language enjoy fullness of life together?

You might like to finish by asking for God's help in being the better neighbours we would all like to be.

Loving God, we ask for:

Listening ears to hear others' stories,

Watchful eyes to see who's left out,

Outstretched hands to lift up the hurting,

Quick-to-stand legs to walk alongside,

Courageous hearts to spur us to action,

And fearless mouths to speak up for what is right.

Amen

*(You might like to point to each body part as you read out the prayer)*

## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

*(practical ways to help us explore faith and develop spiritually at home together)*

### EXPERIENCES that can help us ENCOUNTER:

One of the ways in which we can get to know our neighbours around the world better is to hear their stories. The **LYFTA** website is full of wonderful examples of people globally sharing their life experiences. Find out what it's like to live in another part of the world, at the click of a button! Perhaps you could ask different class members to research the backgrounds of the different people whose stories you hear, then share these with one another?

<https://www.lyfta.com/>



## Bible Characters in Art

Find out about different characters in the Bible and the countries they came from or visited. Can you find these places on a map? What do people who live in these countries today look like?

Compare the images with the pictures we see in Bible story books, on stained glass windows, on Christmas cards and in artwork. Are they a true representation?

Can we create our own artwork which shows what these Bible characters *actually* looked like?

Perhaps, research artforms which are popular in those cultures and use them as a starting point?

Here are some Bible characters to get you started: find out about [Jesus](#), The Magi, Moses

Pictured: Simon of Cyrene, the Queen of Sheba, Pharaoh



## ACTIVITIES that can develop PRACTICES-HABITS:

Learn more about how to become Anti-racist by reading Ibram X. Kendi's book 'Antiracist Baby'.

Or watch it being read here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gezd\\_Y\\_Kqc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gezd_Y_Kqc)

The book gives 10 key steps towards becoming an antiracist, which you could take one at a time to start a class discussion.



Watch Amanda Gorman's poem at President Biden's inauguration: [Biden inauguration: Amanda Gorman performs poem The Hill We Climb - CBBC Newsround](#) (More suitable for older pupils)  
What does it look like to 'be the light'?  
Why does it require bravery?

Ask each child to write their own name inside the outline of a lightbulb. What brave action could I take that would be 'light' to ALL my neighbours?



## PRAYERS that can help us REFLECT:

Use the Examen prayer to reflect on finding a direction and the stamina to stay on track. It has 5 steps, so you might like to count them on your fingers.

1. GIVE THANKS ...for all the wonderful people God has made – people of every colour.
2. ASK FOR HELP ...for ways to stand up and speak up for what is right and just.
3. REFLECT ...on what life is like for people of different races and backgrounds.
4. SAY SORRY ...for the times when I didn't stand up for people who were mistreated.
5. DECIDE ...to love ALL my neighbours, celebrating with them, listening to them and speaking out for them.

You can find more prayers for racial justice from Derby Diocese [here](#).



## CONVERSATIONS which CONNECT COMMUNITIES:



Sometimes, people are a bit unsure about how to start a conversation about racial injustice. They worry about saying the wrong thing. But we all make mistakes. If we don't even try, nothing will change.

Isn't it more important to speak up when we see injustice than worry about what people think?

Why don't you start by listening to one another? Share stories from your own experiences, from experiences heard about or seen e.g. on TV, read books together that explore these topics e.g. *Windrush Child* (Benjamin Zephaniah), *Coming to England* (Floella Benjamin), *Black and British* (David Olusoga). CLPE's booklist has plenty more suggestions:

<https://clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/booklists/black-history-booklist>

Who from your community could you invite to come and share their story?

### INVITATIONAL

Everyone is welcome to take part in collective worship, as much or as little as they or their parents and carers are comfortable with. This means we use invitational language and consider carefully our choice of words and songs. Children are invited to pray but are not compelled or expected to do so; they always have a choice. We invite them to pray or reflect in whatever way they would usually as a family, if that is part of their home experience.

### INCLUSIVE

Acts of worship need to be inclusive of all. Therefore, we choose topics and ideas that are shared by different faiths and worldviews. When we present Christian teaching, we make it clear that this is 'what Christians believe', saying things like:

'I wonder why this story might be important to Christians?'

'The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians), which teaches that ...'

Our worship should be accessible for children and young people with a range of different backgrounds, and so we take care that activities do not require expensive resources. We also offer a variety of activities, so that children and young people with differing needs can all find something they can engage with.

### INSPIRING

We aim for our acts of worship to inspire those engaging with them. How might it engage their emotions, enabling a sense of peace, comfort, hope or motivation? How might it inspire them into action, into thinking differently and considering their behaviour or actions? How might it inspire them to reflect on their faith or beliefs, and on the faith or beliefs of others?