

Pursuing Racial Justice (4 of 4) Small Group Discussion Questions

SUNDAY WORSHIP DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The global pandemic COVID-19 has forced us to adjust and adapt how we do church and stay connected to one another as a congregation. We're not closed as a church, we're just doing church differently! So, please stay connected to the body at Grantham Church. Join our congregation for worship online at 10:30 am each Sunday morning. Follow the worship liturgy and watch our [Vimeo](#) videos at granthamchurch.org/liturgy.

As usual, the sermons will be posted to the [recent sermons page](#) on our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for engaging with us online!

Sunday, January 31st 2021



Sermon Title: Putting On Our Blue Jeans

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 7:1-15; Zechariah 9:9-10; Mark 11:1-24

Sermon Focus: How can we be a witness that the Kingdom of God is about peace, love, and justice? Consider the careful and strategic Messianic demonstration of Jesus at the Temple in Jerusalem. Listen as Drew Hart (author and theologian) invites us to reimagine grassroots justice work in the way of Jesus and how we can get to work as disciples of Christ in a broken world where many are disproportionately suffering.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group in person, by phone, or video call! Use the following questions to guide your small group discussion:

1. Read Mark 11:1-24 together. Drew Hart read this entire story in its context (i.e., triumphal entry, fig tree, clearing the temple). What did you find insightful about reading this story in its context? How did Drew's reading and interpretation help you to see what Jesus was really up to and what he was doing that day?
2. Drew said that Jesus' actions in the temple should be understood as an intentional, pre-meditated display of "prophetic theater." Jesus was embodying God's attitude toward the injustice of the temple system (see Jeremiah 7:1-15). Consider how Jesus first came to the temple, but only looked around and then went away in an anti-climactic decision to return the next day. Why do you think that is? How should Jesus' decision inform the way we live and protest injustice?
3. The supportive crowds on Palm Sunday likely had the expectation that Jesus was about to institute a Messianic militaristic regime and a violent overthrow of Rome's occupation in Jerusalem and Judea. But instead, Jesus fashioned a whip as a prophetic act, which is far from him taking up the sword! Why do you think so many Christians today refuse to embrace the non-violence of Jesus and trust in co-suffering love to advance the Kingdom, especially when it's quite clear that violence begets violence? Why is this especially hard for Americans?
4. Drew talked about how the church is called to share in "prophetic disruptions" in a non-violent way. While protests in the streets can be helpful, let's think beyond that and consider other practical things we can do as individuals and as a church. What might "prophetic disruptions" look like in our financial decisions? What about in our local communities, schools, businesses, etc.? And what might it look like in our church and the way we teach, serve, and do ministry?
5. One way we can pursue racial justice is by becoming more diverse as a church. For example, we can hire people of color. It's an important step, to be sure. However, people of color must be willing to come serve at Grantham, which is a big hurdle for a lot of people. Think about it. We're predominately white (living in a white area), more traditional/liturgical, and we are non-charismatic in our worship. Let's be honest, we mostly worship like *white* people. Therefore, it begs the question: How willing are we to change our worship and ministries to be more inclusive (e.g. music styles, longer services, dress, outreach, etc.)? Also, what other relational, grassroots level diversity work can we do?
6. What was your biggest takeaway from our *Pursuing Racial Justice* series?