JUSTICE (LARGE GROUP)

Lesson 2: Modified Monopoly Situation

Objective: The following simulation is designed to give students an experience of injustice and inequality

CITY LIFE®

MODIFIED MONOPOLY

SUPPLIES:

Option 1: Multiple Monopoly Games (depending on your group size-max of 8 players per board)

Option 2: One Monopoly Game displayed on PowerPoint (max of 8 players/everyone else watches)

Option 3: Create your own board on a large piece of cardboard. (images of board can be found online) Pieces could be pennies, nickels, dimes, or checkers.

Divide your group into 3 by randomly assigning colors to each student. Blue, Yellow, Green construction paper will work well. The Blue group will be the upper class. The Yellow group will be the middle class and the Green group will be the lower class.

A. INHERITANCE-Prior to beginning the game, let players know that they have received an inheritance from their ancestors. Blue will receive $2500, Yellow will receive $1000, and Green will receive $250.

B. SALARIES- As each player passes go, salaries will be $250 for Blue, $200 for Yellow and $150 for Green.

C. PROPERTY- Blue can purchase any property on the board, Yellow can purchase any property minus utilities and/or railroads, Green can only buy purple or light blue properties.

D. JAIL- Blue can roll out of jail if they roll an odd number. Yellow can roll out of jail if they get an odd number and pay $50. Green has to pay $50 and has no chance to roll out of jail. If anyone complains about the rules for jail, they are sent to jail immediately.

Play no more than 10 rounds. Pay attention to the interest level of your students. If disengaged, then call the game over. Clean up and begin the discussion.

Leader: Who won the game?

Student: Responses vary. More than likely the Blue group will have won the game.

Leader: Ask the winners what color group they were a part of.

Student: Blue.

Leader: Did anyone other than the color Blue win?

Student: Responses will vary. (More than likely, only Blue will win.)

Leader: Why do you think that only the Blue group won?

Student: They had advantages. They started off with a huge amount of money. They could buy any property. They rarely went to jail. The game was rigged.

Leader: If you won, why did you win?

Student: Allow them to explain. They may admit that they had advantages. Some may claim they are extraordinary Monopoly players. Allow any responses as to their reasoning for winning.

Leader: What is the American dream? Many would say that it is to make money, have a home, and live a good life. Unless you refuse to see it, the American Dream game IS rigged. I want you to think it through. Where is the injustice? Where is the racism? Make the connections in your head.

Let's watch a video and see if it helps us to understand the game we just played.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e68CoE70Mk8

Leader: Share some ideas with someone nearby. How does the video help you to make sense of the Monopoly game we just played? Have you figured what your color represented?

Student: Responses will vary

Leader: What does it feel like to lose each time? What were some of your thoughts as you played this "rigged" game of Monopoly.

Student: I wanted to give up because I knew I could never win. I was angry because I was not being treated fairly. I tried teaming up with the other players and tried to make deals so that we could get ahead.

Leader: How are some of the thoughts and feelings experienced by you in this game similar to real people in this country? Give me some examples.

Student: Possible responses: If I am an immigrant, then people don't give me the opportunity to prove myself because they think I am less intelligent, less capable, or illiterate. If I am a Muslim woman, people ignore me because of what I am wearing and don't know what to say. If I am an African-American teenage boy, shopkeepers watch me more carefully because they think I am going to steal their stuff. If I am a member of the LGBTQ community, I get beat up or made fun of online.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION:

The system and its leaders give advantages to one group and do not give the same advantage to another. That by definition, is unequal. We are in the 21st century and we are still seeing the same issues that were happening in the 50s. If we are honest, racism is still alive and has just shifted, adapted all the way back from the Civil War and slavery. Unbelievable!

This was God's charge against His own people Israel. Listen to Micah 3:1-3

And I said: Hear, you heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel. "Is it not for you to know justice?-you who hate the good and love the veil, who tear the skin from off my people and their flesh from off their bones, who eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones in pieces and chop them up like meat in a pot; like flesh in a cauldron."

God's leaders had set up a "rigged" system where they became the beneficiaries and the people who they were charged to protect continually lost. Read the book of Micah and you will see for yourself. The leaders took bribes, they cheated people out of their hard-earned money and property. Priests would take money to tell people what they wanted to hear instead of God's truth. They were evil because they only cared about themselves. That is where inequality comes from. That is where racism is born. When you become your own god, you will do the unthinkable and say the most hurtful things to keep yourself or, people like you, in control. The Monopoly game was set up for one group to win and another to lose. The video taught us that Whites were set up to win and African-Americans to lose when it came to buying a home. Racism will always produce "winners' and "losers". God expects more from people. He hates injustice and racism in all forms; the easy to see and hear in moments like a hateful slur or in the not so easy to see or hear like in a "rigged" system that gives one group advantage and privilege over another. God is sick of it! How do I know? The Bible is clear.

CITY LIFE®

God destroyed the city of Jerusalem, where the priests, prophets, and leaders, called their capital, were wiped out by the Romans. *"Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins. . ."* Nobody, including those evil rulers, wanted to hear this news.

Micah, a spokesperson for God, in Ch 6:8, told these evil rulers what was expected of them by God. "He has told you, O man , what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God?" The leaders did not do this and their rule was removed. They were supposed to care and protect God's people and they did not do it. They paid the price.

A price always has to be paid when we don't follow God and His ways. We are living through it today. You might think that this does not apply to you because you are a person of color. How can you be evil or racist? You can't right? Wrong. If you treat one group differently over another, you are being unjust. We are supposed to make things right but if we do nothing, we are guilty. Just as guilty as those evil leaders. What? I am not that bad. I haven't hurt anyone. That might be true. What have you thought and how have you treated people unlike you?

"The line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either – but right through every human heart…." Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Do you believe that? Evil in your heart? In mine? Sadly, this is true. God hates injustice and evil and the actions that result from it like racism. God does more than hate. He loves. How do I know? I have experienced it. I agree with the statement about evil in my heart because I know me. If I am honest about my thoughts and feelings, I don't always treat people fairly and justly.

What can be done? God is a god of justice. He makes things right. He gives us a gift of a new heart by sending His Son to pay the price that we could never pay; the one we would never want to pay. Jesus, God's Holy Son, lived a perfectly obediently life treating all people fairly and justly. He died a cursed death on a cross next to criminals to pay the price required by God. "*Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin.*" Hebrews 9:22 If you trust Him completely, then Jesus takes care of that evil in your heart. He washes your filthy heart and it comes out new and clean and you will be changed forever. Jesus sends His Spirit to come live in You so that evil that used to reside there diminishes over time. This is amazing news! How will you respond? Let me encourage you to pray and think about the offer Jesus is making. The amazing news gets better because now, with the Holy Spirit, we can DO justice, and LOVE kindness, and WALK humbly with God. What will you do now?

CITY LIFE®