



The Salvation Army      Southern  
Africa Territory      Moral & Social  
Issues Discussions

MASIC 2018

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men should do nothing.” How will you engage with the Moral and Social challenges we face in Southern Africa today?

**MASIC**  
MORAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES COUNCIL



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# Introduction

South Africans face many moral and social problems such as corruption, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual issues, HIV/AIDS pandemic, poverty, teenage pregnancy, violence and family disintegration. We are confronted by these problems every day and are challenged to make decisions about how we will respond to these situations. As Salvationists we must ensure that we meet these challenges in a practical way from a Biblical perspective.

Salvationists need to be ready to not only give a reason for the hope we profess (1 Peter 3:15) but also have a responsibility to be ready to lovingly speak truth into crucial issues that our friends, families and communities are grappling with. *“The word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword”* (Hebrews 4:12 NIV) that needs to be utilised, applied and lived out in our confused, broken and hurting world.

It is hoped that these Bible Studies and discussion starters will help Salvationists engage with issues from a Biblical perspective and further expose them to The Salvation Army's positional statements on these moral and social issues. The Bible studies deal with some of the most common issues facing Salvationists in Southern Africa. They are intended for use in small group settings such as women's and men's meetings, youth meetings, cell groups and kraal meetings. However, Corps should be free to adapt and use them in the way that best suits their Soldiers. It is further hoped that the Bible studies would lead to action by the Salvationists in our Corps and communities. All verses are from the New International Version unless specifically stated.

We would welcome your comments and input regarding The Salvation Army Positional Statements. Please feel free to contact the Moral & Social Issues Council of the Southern Africa Territory at [MASIC@SAF.Salvationarmy.org](mailto:MASIC@SAF.Salvationarmy.org) for more information or to engage with us on moral and social issues that you may be aware of.

Approved statements for circulation in our territory can be found at <http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council>.



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Abortion

### Introduction:

Abortion is defined as the deliberate termination of a human pregnancy most often performed in the first 28 weeks, not to be confused with miscarriage when the pregnancy ends due to natural causes.

In South Africa, a female over 12 years old can get an abortion by simply requesting one with no reasons given if she is less than 13 weeks pregnant. If she is between 13 and 20 weeks pregnant, she can get the abortion if (a) her own physical or mental health is at stake, (b) the baby will have severe mental or physical abnormalities, (c) she is pregnant because of incest, (d) she is pregnant because of rape, or (e) she is of the personal opinion that her economic or social situation is sufficient reason for the termination of pregnancy. If she is more than 20 weeks pregnant, she can get the abortion only if her or the foetus' life is in danger or there are likely to be serious birth defects. This is because the courts ruled that the foetus is not a human being.

The Salvation Army believes in the sanctity of all human life from the moment of fertilisation, considering each person to be of infinite value, and each life a gift from God to be cherished, nurtured and preserved.<sup>1</sup>

1. Do you know of any pro-choice arguments that people use to justify abortion?
2. What does the Word of God say about life?

### Explore:

Genesis 1:27

On the 6<sup>th</sup> day God said "Let us make man in our image" and so we believe that because God created life – all life is valuable and to be cherished.

Proverbs 6:15-19

There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, **hands that shed innocent blood**, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

3. How does God feel about the killing of innocent lives?

### Discussion:

Psalms 139:13-16

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise

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<sup>1</sup> Positional Statement

you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

4. Why do you think God gives value to the unborn child?
5. How should we advise those who are considering an abortion?
6. What should our response be to those who have had abortions in the past?
7. What should the role of men be considering they are involved in this process?

**Action:**

- Spend time in prayer for the unborn child in South Africa.
- Teach “safe sex is no sex till you’re married.”
- Form teams and help get rid of illegal abortion signs – you will be helping your municipality as well.
- Let’s unite, pray and engage on this topic.
- Lobby for change with your local government officials.
- Support local initiatives that are against abortion.
- Consider what you can do to support and care for those who have gone through an abortion both voluntary and involuntary.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 5OvgQW6FG4>

**Spend some time in prayer for those who are pregnant. Ask God to give our policy makers, health care, social service practitioners and those helping pregnant women guidance and wisdom.**

For The Salvation Army’s official Positional Statement on Abortion go to:

<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Addiction

### Introduction

Addiction is the state of being enslaved to a habit or practice or to something that is psychologically or physically habit-forming, such as narcotics, to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma<sup>2</sup>. Usually people think about addiction as applying to dependence on a substance, such as drugs or alcohol. However, people may become addicted in other ways.

### Different Types of Addictions

Examples of substance addictions are:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco

These addictions are characterized by craving, compulsion and an inability to stop using the drug. They also cause lifestyle dysfunction (relationship problems, crime etc.).

1. Can you think of other substances that cause addictions?

Behavioural addictions are those not involving a substance. Examples include:

- Food (eating)
- Sex
- Exercising
- Shopping
- Gambling

2. Can you think of other behaviours that may become addictive?

Though the Bible never specifically uses the word, there are many biblical passages relating to addiction. Addiction is often associated with the loss of control which God opposes strongly.

### Explore:

Galatians 5:22-23 tells us that “*the fruit of the Spirit is .....self-control*” and Proverbs 25:28 says “*Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control*”

3. What is self-control? What are the dangers of losing self-control?
4. If you become addicted to a substance or behaviour can you still exercise self-control?

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<sup>2</sup> Addiction | Define Addiction at Dictionary.com. (n.d.). Retrieved August 18, 2018, from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/addiction>

2 Peter 2:19 tells us "*people are slaves to whatever has mastered them.*"

5. How is this true of addiction?
6. Do you think people can become slaves to substances or behaviours?

Proverbs 20:1 tells us that "*Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.*"

7. Why do you think the Bible says people can be led astray by alcohol?
8. What is the relationship between slavery, addiction, self-control and freedom?

**Discussion:**

9. What are the consequences or effects of addiction in relation to the following?
  - ☐ Bodily harm
  - ☐ Behaviour change
  - ☐ Relationships with others
  - ☐ Economic effects
10. What can we do or not do to help protect ourselves from becoming addicted?

The Salvation Army's soldiers covenant includes the promise: "I will abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult and all else that could enslave the body or spirit"<sup>1</sup>.

11. What other things, not mentioned in the covenant, "could enslave the body or spirit"?
12. Do you think abstinence from certain substances and behaviours is an effective way of preventing addiction?
13. What can be done for people who are currently struggling with addiction?

**Action:**

This can be a sensitive topic. Sometimes people are in denial about addiction.

- Pray for those affected by addiction
- Care for and support those who are affected because of a family member who is addicted.
- Set an example by abstaining from harmful activities

For The Salvation Army's official Positional Statement on Alcohol and Gambling go to:  
<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>

Further information and resources can be found at:

<https://www.ixande.co.za/support/>  
<http://www.sancanational.info/>

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<sup>1</sup> Articles of War, Soldiers Covenant





# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Ancestral Worship

### Introduction:

Ancestral Worship is the worship and offering of sacrifices to the dead. Generally, deceased loved ones are seen as intermediaries between the Creator and mankind, sought for healing, revelation, protection and blessing. <sup>2,3</sup>

Examples of ancestral worship include:

- Consultation of sorcerers to inquire about the dead (e.g. sangomas, palm readers, psychic, Long Island medium, Jonathan Edwards)
  - Belief that the dead can influence the natural world
  - Ceremonies to give thanks to the dead
  - Offering of gifts to the dead (eg flowers, snuff, libation)
1. Can you think of other examples of ancestral worship?
  2. Why do you think people engage in ancestral worship?
  3. What is the differences between remembering those that have passed away and practicing ancestral worship?
  4. As a Christian do you think it is okay to engage in ancestral worship?

### Explore:

Read 1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus

1. What is a mediator?
2. Who in your community sets themselves up as a spiritual mediator?
3. Why should Jesus be the only mediator?

Deuteronomy 18:10-12 states *“Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD; because of these same detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you.”*

4. Why do you think God finds consulting the dead detestable?

Read Matthew 4:10

Jesus said to him, *“Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only’*

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<sup>2</sup> <http://africanpastorsconference.com/2008/04/ancestor-worship-biblical-or-not/>

<sup>3</sup> Turaki, Y., 2010, African Bible Commentary - The Role of the Ancestors p. 280

5. What is worship?
6. How important is worship?
7. To who should our worship be directed?

**Discussion:**

8. What should you say to a friend who consults or communicates with the dead?
9. What do you do when family and friends are participating in ancestral worship?
10. How do we deal with “culture” that may prescribe practices that seem to be ancestral worship?
11. How would you respond if your in-laws or parents expect/demand you to participate in ancestral worship ceremonies?

**Action:**

We need to do more than just discuss ancestral worship. What ways can your group think of, to address ancestral worship? Below are some examples of practical things you could do:

- Speak to your leader and corps officers on how to deal with ancestral worship in the family.
- Tell family and friends about the good news of Jesus Christ being the only necessary mediator with God.
- Equip youth with truth about scripture.
- Study Salvation Army Doctrine 2 that speaks into this issue.
- Pray that God would give you greater insight and understanding on how to deal with issues of ancestral worship.

**Spend some time as a group praying for leaders in our families, people who do not know Christ, churches and people grieving. Pray that we would boldly stand by what we believe and not be wavering Christians.**

For The Salvation Army’s official Positional Statement on ancestral worship go to:

<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Corruption

### Introduction:

“Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain”.<sup>4</sup> Every year the Transparency International Corruption Index ranks countries with a score out of 100. A score of less than 50 indicates that there is a significant corruption problem in the country. South Africa, along with many other African countries has received a score of less than 50 since 2012.<sup>5</sup> It’s clear that we still have a huge corruption problem in our country.

Examples of corruption include:

- A business individual pays a bribe to a government official in order to be given a government contract or license
- The use of government-owned resources, such as motor vehicles, for private purposes
- An official takes advantage of his or her position to favour a family member or business associate for a job or tender contract. This is commonly called nepotism
- A police officer solicits a bribe or a member of the public offers one in order to escape lawful punishment.<sup>6</sup>
- Paying for exam papers in advance.
- Paying an official for fraudulent papers or licences.

1. Can you think of other examples of corruption?
2. Do you think “Honesty is the best policy”?
3. Are there any exceptions to this (i.e. white lie)?

### Explore:

Read Exodus 23:1-9

*“Do not spread false reports. Do not help a guilty person by being a malicious witness. <sup>2</sup> “Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, <sup>3</sup> and do not show favouritism to a poor person in a lawsuit. <sup>4</sup> “If you come across your enemy’s ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to return it. <sup>5</sup> If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help them with it. <sup>6</sup> “Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits. <sup>7</sup> Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty. <sup>8</sup> “Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see and twists the words of the innocent. <sup>9</sup> “Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt.*

4. To which of the Ten Commandments do you think these laws relate (Exodus 20:3-17)?

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<sup>4</sup> UN Global Compact. (2011, April 30). Global Compact Principle 10.

<http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/principle10.html>

<sup>5</sup> Annual Report. (2016). Retrieved May 25, 2017, from <http://www.corruptionwatch.org.za>

<sup>6</sup> Our Definition of corruption. (N.D.). Retrieved May 25, 2017, from <http://www.corruptionwatch.org.za>

5. How does this passage relate to corruption?
6. What are the things that they should not do and how do they relate to today's world?
7. What can happen to leaders if they act corruptly (1 Samuel 8:1-5)?

Ephesians 5:11 says *"Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them."*

8. How can we do that as Christians?

Galatians 6:6-7 says *"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life."*

9. Can people really get away with corruption?

#### **Discussion:**

10. How does God's ideal compare with your typical way of doing business and life?
11. How important do you think integrity is for Christians?
12. How can you show justice and mercy to fellow workers, students, customers, family or strangers because of what God has done for you?
13. What are you doing with the "fruitless deeds of darkness"? Do you do something to expose them?

#### **Action:**

We need to do more than just discuss the problem of corruption. What can you or your group do practically to deal with the problem of corruption? Below are some examples of practical things you could do to combat corruption:

- Report corruption in The Salvation Army through the structures.
- Report corruption from government to corruption watch (<http://www.corruption-watch.org.za>)
- Join with and support the many organisations that fight against corruption.
- Express yourself in your community in a creative way to show your stance against corruption.
- Repent if you have been involved in corruption or have been silent in exposing corruption.

Many of the contact details for reporting corruption problems can be found at:

<http://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/take-action/report-corruption/who-else-can-help/>

Read more about The Salvation Army's Accountability movement:

<http://www.salvationarmy.org/accountability/home>

**Spend some time as a group praying for leaders in our country, government, churches and organizations. Pray that we would be intolerant of corruption in our society and that leaders would be brave enough to deal with corruption.**

For The Salvation Army's official Positional Statement on corruption go to:

<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Discrimination

### Introduction:

Discrimination may be defined as treatment of a person based on the group, class, or category to which that person belongs rather than on individual merit.<sup>71</sup> This is not the same as simply acknowledging differences between races/genders/religions etc.

1. What forms of discrimination are you aware of?

South African Employment Equity law says “No person may unfairly discriminate, directly or indirectly, against an employee in any employment policy or practice, on one or more grounds including race, gender, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, HIV status, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language and birth.”

2. What do you think “unfairly” means in this context?
3. What might discrimination that is “fair” look like?
4. Are there any forms of discrimination that are tolerated by the church?
5. Are there any that are enforced by the church?

### Explore:

Read James 2:1-13

*My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favouritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say “Here’s a good seat for you”, but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet”, have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom He promised those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of Him to whom you belong? If you really keep the royal law found in scripture “Love your neighbour as yourself”, you are doing right. But if you show favouritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For He who said “You shall not commit adultery” also said “You shall not murder”. If you do not commit adultery but commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker. Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgement without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgement.*

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<sup>71</sup> Dictionary.com

6. Who was James addressing in these verses?
7. Can you think of examples where a Christian understanding of discrimination might be different from that of society?
8. In what circumstances might the following discrimination be fair or unfair?
  - i. When officers and local officers eat separately from the rest of soldiers at events
  - ii. only certain people can preach in the church
  - iii. the poor/unemployed people are rarely local officers
9. How do we treat those different from us?
  - i. Muslims
  - ii. Alcoholics
  - iii. Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people in our church

A certain organisation believes that “persons of a homosexual or lesbian sexual orientation are called to celibacy as a way of life. While we appreciate the sense of fidelity and commitment inherent in legal same-sex unions, there is no scriptural support for such unions as equal to, or as an alternative to heterosexual marriage”<sup>8</sup>.

10. Is this statement discriminatory?
11. How would you engage the members of this organisation?
12. Does the Salvation Army have any policies, beliefs or positional statements that are discriminatory?

### **Discussion:**

13. Is the Bible unconstitutional?
14. How do we live as citizens obedient to scripture and to the laws of the land?
15. Ought we to engage in social and moral issues publicly or is it sufficient to preach about them from our pulpits and discuss them at our Bible Studies?
16. What does it mean to love your neighbour as yourself?
17. What can we do to put into practice what we’ve discussed today?

### **Action:**

We must have compassion on our neighbours and we must act to fulfil God’s mandate to us to “go and make disciples of ALL nations”. Some practical things to do:

- Educate yourself about issues of diversity by reading, attending a function or a discussion on the subject matter
- Read the Bible and hear what God says about all kinds of diversity
- Get involved and support the work of your corps Community Care Ministry
- Partner with other organisations in sharing the love of God to “Whosoever...” (John 3:16)

**Spend some time as a group praying for those who are discriminated against in our society. Pray that we would be aware of our own prejudices, especially directed against those in our church. May God’s Word teach us how to love our neighbour, may God’s Holy Spirit empower us to love like Jesus loves and may God’s love overflow in us so that we can share it with those different from ourselves.**

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<sup>8</sup> Salvation Army, Southern Africa Territory Positional Statement on Human Sexuality



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Female Virginity Testing

### Introduction:

Virginity testing is a practice and process of inspecting young women and girls to determine if they are sexually pure. It typically involves an examination of a woman's genitalia to determine whether or not she is a virgin. Conclusions are often drawn from looking for the hymen - a torn hymen signalling that a girl/young woman has had sexual intercourse. Certificates are awarded to girls who are found to be virgins.<sup>9</sup> Other aspects of virginity testing include assessing eyes that "look innocent" or have "known men", examining whether breasts and abdomen are "firm and taut" and finally whether the muscles behind the knees are "tight and straight". There is uncertainty regarding the frequency, manner, setting (location) of testing or the qualifications for one to be recognised as a tester (abahloli).<sup>10</sup> All of these methods are rejected by medical doctors as there is no definitive way to test for virginity.

The Children's Act number 38 of 2005 stipulates that virginity testing of children under the age of 16 is prohibited and virginity testing for those above 16 may only be performed if:

- The child has given consent
- Has had proper counselling

The Act further states that the results of virginity testing may not be disclosed without the consent of the child. The body of a child who has undergone virginity testing may not be marked.<sup>11</sup> Virginity testing is widely practiced in parts of South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.<sup>12 13</sup>

1. What are some of the challenges with this definition of virginity testing?
2. What are the purposes of virginity testing?
3. What are some of the negative consequences of virginity testing?

### Explore:

Read Deuteronomy 22:13-19

<sup>9</sup> Jabulile Favourite Mbulu. Exploring the experience of virginity testing by female adolescents in the uthungulu district of kwazulu-natal. Thesis for Masters of Public Health, University of South Africa, Feb 2016. Accessed online [uir.unisa.ac.za](http://uir.unisa.ac.za) on 05 Aug 2017

<sup>10</sup> Louise Vincent. Virginity testing in South Africa: Re-traditioning the postcolony. Culture, Health & Sexuality. Jan-Feb 2006; 8(1). Routledge

<sup>11</sup> Prinslean Maherty. Virginity Testing and the Children's Bill, Discussion Paper. University of Cape Town's Children's Institute Oct 2005. Accessed online [www.uct.ac.za](http://www.uct.ac.za) on 05 Aug 2017

<sup>12</sup> Roselyn Hanzi. Sexual abuse and exploitation of the girl child through cultural practices in Zimbabwe: a human rights perspective. Dissertation for Masters of Law, University of Pretoria, Oct 2006. Accessed online [www.repository.up.ac.za](http://www.repository.up.ac.za) on 05 Aug 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Fiona Scorgie. Virginity Testing and the Politics of Sexual Responsibility: Implications for AIDS Intervention. African Studies, 61(1). Carfax Publishing



*"If a man takes a wife and, after sleeping with her, dislikes her and slanders her and gives her a bad name, saying, 'I married this woman, but when I approached her, I did not find proof of her virginity,' then the young woman's father and mother shall bring to the town elders at the gate proof that she was a virgin. Her father will say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, but he dislikes her. Now he has slandered her and said, 'I did not find your daughter to be a virgin.' But here is the proof of my daughter's virginity." Then her parents shall display the cloth before the elders of the town, and the elders shall take the man and punish him. They shall fine him a hundred shekels. That is, about 2 1/2 pounds or about 1.2 kilograms of silver and give them to the young woman's father, because this man has given an Israelite virgin a bad name. She shall continue to be his wife; he must not divorce her as long as he lives."*

4. Whom does this passage place the responsibility of sexual purity on?
5. Do men have any responsibility when it comes to sexual purity?
6. Are we as Christians responsible for perpetuating female virginity testing?
7. How serious does this Scripture treat purity? Are we equally serious today?

In John 8 a woman was caught in adultery. After Jesus deals with the woman's accusers Jesus asks the woman, *"Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"* *"No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."*

8. Why do you think Jesus did not condemn the woman?

#### **Discussion:**

9. What would your friends say about these passages?
10. How should Christians celebrate sexual purity?
11. As Christians how should we treat others that are not virgins?
12. How do/should Christians deal with debates around culture and human rights?
13. Whom are we ultimately accountable to? How does that influence our discourse with regard to virginity testing?

#### **Action:**

We need to pray for ourselves and our world to remain committed to Christ's values and teachings. We must daily immerse ourselves in scripture while staying informed and influencing discourse in our communities. Specific actions to take:

- Boldly preach the gospel in word but more importantly in action
- Encourage young boys and girls to remain holy not just sexually but in all spheres of their lives
- Be sensitive to those who have been sexually assaulted
- Reconcile those who have lost their way to Christ and to the family of Christ

**Spend some time as a group praying for purity; for yourself, for each other and for your community.**

Familiarise yourself with The Salvation Army's Positional Statements on various topics (<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>)





# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Gambling

### Introduction:

Gambling is the wagering of money or something of value on an event with an uncertain outcome with the primary intent of winning money or material goods.<sup>14</sup>

Gambling thus requires three elements to be present:

- Consideration (the person must pay something of value upfront)
- Chance (the person has no control over the outcome of the game) and
- Prize (the person has a chance to win something of value)<sup>15</sup>

Examples of gambling: casinos (including online), sports betting, bingo, lotteries or raffles etc.

- 1) What forms of gambling are available in your community?
- 2) Why do you think people gamble?
- 3) What are some of the dangers of gambling?
- 4) What does the Bible say about gambling?

### Explore:

Hebrews 13:5 says *“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”*

- 1) How do you think this verse relates to gambling?

Proverbs 28:19 says *“Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies will have their fill of poverty.”*

- 2) What does it mean to chase fantasies?
- 3) Most of us are not farmers, what does “work their land” mean for us today?
- 4) Do you think hoping to win the lotto could be considered a fantasy?

Proverbs 13:11 states *“Wealth from get-rich-quick schemes quickly disappears; wealth from hard work grows over time.”*<sup>16</sup>

- 5) Why do you think the Bible values work (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12) over get-rich-quick schemes?

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<sup>14</sup> Gambling. (2018). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Gambling&oldid=854930612>

<sup>15</sup> Gambling (Criminal) Definition in 2018. (n.d.). Retrieved August 18, 2018, from <https://www.truthfinder.com/glossary/gambling-definition/>

<sup>16</sup> New Living Translation

**Discussion:**

The Bible does not specifically condemn gambling, betting, or the lottery. The Bible does warn us, however, to stay away from the love of money (1 Timothy 6:10; Hebrews 13:5). Scripture also encourages us to stay away from attempts to “get rich quick” (Proverbs 13:11; 23:5; Ecclesiastes 5:10). Gambling most definitely is focused on the love of money and undeniably tempts people with the promise of quick and easy riches.

The Salvation Army is opposed to gambling. The nature of gambling lends itself to exploitative, deceptive and manipulative practices. It is contrary to our Christian principles of love, freedom from oppression and concern for others. As such it should not be a means of income generation or economic development, whether by government agencies, charitable organisations, church or commercial interests<sup>17</sup>.

1. What potential damage does gambling cause? Individuals? Families? Communities?
2. How can we help people overcome the problems caused by gambling?
3. Can proceeds from the lotto/lottery please God? Why/why not?
4. Should we be using raffles to fund raise?

**Action:**

- Let's unite, pray and engage on this topic.
- Support local initiatives that are against gambling.
- Consider what you can do to support and care for those who are affected by gambling problems and their families.
- Be prepared to explain why Salvationists do not participate in gambling practices.
- Salvationists are encouraged to make an outright contribution in cash rather than take part in raffles or other gambling activities for the purposes of fundraising<sup>18</sup>.

**Spend some time in prayer for those who are affected by gambling. Ask God to give social service practitioners and those helping those affected guidance and wisdom.**

For The Salvation Army's official Positional Statement on gambling go to:

<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>

**Recommended Resources:**

Gamblers Anonymous Web site <https://gasouthafrica.wordpress.com/>

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<sup>17</sup> The Salvation Army International - Positional Statement: Gambling. (n.d.). Retrieved August 18, 2018, from <https://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/ipsgambling>

<sup>18</sup> O&R for Soldiers.



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Lobola

### Introduction:

Lobola is a tradition practiced in many parts of Southern Africa whereby the family of the groom pays a certain sum of money to the family of the bride. Some of the purposes of lobola include to unite the family of the bride and that of the groom, to assist the family with wedding celebrations, to assist the new couple to set up their own house, a gesture by the groom's family to thank the bride's family for raising the bride, for the groom to demonstrate that he is capable of financially supporting his bride, to determine the groom's sincerity and seriousness in marriage as a covenant relationship<sup>19</sup>. In South Africa a customary union is legally recognised under the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act of 1998 after registration at Home Affairs<sup>20</sup>.

1. What are some of the advantages of lobola?
2. Are there any disadvantages to lobola?
3. Does the Bible say anything in support of or in opposition to lobola?
4. How is the value of lobola decided?
5. Does lobola have an effect on the marriage or divorce rates in society?
6. How do we deal with instances where people from two different cultures get married?

### Explore:

Read Genesis 24:47-58

*<sup>47</sup> "I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' "She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor, whom Milkah bore to him.' "Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms, <sup>48</sup> and I bowed down and worshiped the LORD. I praised the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother for his son. <sup>49</sup> Now if you will show kindness and faithfulness to my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, so I may know which way to turn." <sup>50</sup> Laban and Bethuel answered, "This is from the LORD; we can say nothing to you one way or the other. <sup>51</sup> Here is Rebekah; take her and go, and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has directed." <sup>52</sup> When Abraham's servant heard what they said, he bowed down to the ground before the LORD. <sup>53</sup> Then the servant brought out gold and silver jewelry and articles of clothing and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave costly gifts to her brother and to her mother. <sup>54</sup> Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night there. When they got up the next morning, he said, "Send me on my way to my master." <sup>55</sup> But her brother and her mother replied, "Let the young woman remain with us ten days or so; then you may go." <sup>56</sup> But he said to them, "Do not detain me, now that the LORD has granted success to my journey. Send me on my way so I may go to my master." <sup>57</sup> Then*

<sup>19</sup> Bill Scheidler. What the Bible says about Lobola. Bill Scheidler, 2010

<sup>20</sup> Dorrit Possel and Stephanie Rudwick. Marriage and ilobolo in contemporary Zulu Society. Accessed online scholar.google.com 19/12/2017

they said, "Let's call the young woman and ask her about it."<sup>58</sup> So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?"  
"I will go," she said.

7. Is this a form of lobola?
8. What are the similarities and differences between this event and lobola?

Genesis 2:24 states *"That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh."*

9. Does this Scripture contradict or support the purpose of lobola?
10. Does lobola create a union between two people or between two families?
11. How does the practice of lobola and marriage relationships in our culture compare with God's plan for marriage (Ephesians 5:21-28)?

#### **Discussion:**

12. How should Christians deal with issues of culture such as lobola and white weddings?
13. What happens to men/families who cannot afford lobola?
14. Does the price of our modern lifestyle (lobola, weddings, and funerals) make it harder for young people to live holy/godly lives? For example if two young people who are not working are in love and want to be together but can't get married because they can't afford it.
15. How should families treat young people who want to get married but can't afford it?
16. What does Scriptures say about spending within our means?

#### **Action:**

We need to pray for ourselves and our world to remain committed to Christ's values and teaching. We must daily immerse ourselves in Scripture while staying informed and influencing discourse in our communities.

- Research the original purpose of lobola and discuss how it has changed in recent times.
- Talk about how Salvationist parents should act in the lobola negotiations.
- Don't rush to get married, make it a topic of prayer.
- Understand your Bible and if not, critically discuss with your Officers.
- Be critical of your culture especially the things that are contrary to Scripture.
- Celebrate those aspects of culture that are in line with Scripture such as chastity, seriousness of marriage, encouraging marriage etc.

**Spend some time as a group praying for purity; for yourself, for each other and for your community. Pray against divorce in our community. Pray for godly spouses.**

For The Salvation Army's official Positional Statements go to:

<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Pornography

### Introduction:

The Salvation Army believes that people are created equal and in God's image and that human sexuality is a divine gift. Pornography is the distorted portrayal of this gift in a manner which exploits it. Pornography refers to any material written, audio or visual designed to arouse erotic feelings, and which tend to corrupt the individuals who are exposed to the material. Particularly, pornography focuses on the indulgence of individual desires, becoming progressively addictive and detrimental to the way people perceive sex, love and self-worth.<sup>21</sup>

A Science professor and a group of students were observing a pot of boiling water on a stove. The professor took a frog and tossed it into the water. Immediately the frog leaped from the water and appeared to be unharmed.

The professor then filled the pot with cold water, put it back on the stove and placed the frog into the water. The little creature seemed quite happy at first but, as the water grew warmer, its movements became slower until, and finally, it turned over on its back and lay motionless and dead.

The boiling water had shocked it into action and safety but the slow boiling heating of the water had conditioned it until, when it could not help itself, it had been killed. Right now South Africans are being conditioned and softened up as inroads are made into its moral and spiritual structure.

Examples of how Pornography is offensive and dangerous:

- It shows an entirely false, artificial and unhealthy image of a world in which sex can be detached from everything else. (sex out of context)
- It is addictive and progressive (from 'soft' porn to 'hard' porn)
- It is degrading – words from exploited women **"It killed my soul"**.
- It is cruel – '*Pornography is the theory, rape is the practice!*'<sup>22</sup>
- It is exploitation by making money out of weak and vulnerable people. It can be a gateway for human trafficking.

1. Can you think of other ways pornography is subtly communicated?
2. Is it an 'alternative' for having sex?
3. Does it have a place in a marriage union?

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<sup>21</sup> Ihq PS

<sup>22</sup> Graffiti quote

**Explore:**

Matthew 5:27-28 states: *"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."*

4. What does the Bible say about Pornography? – Matt 5:28
5. Is pornography wrong even when it does not lead to sexually immoral acts – Col 3:5

Hebrews 13:4 tells us *"Marriage is to be held in honour among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."*

6. Is it ok to watch pornography with your spouse?

James 1:14-15 reminds us that *"each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death."*

7. Why is pornography sinful?
8. What can engaging in pornography lead to?

**Discussion:**

9. How do people become progressively addicted to pornography?
10. How is Social Media 'adding' to this problem?
11. Should parents be encouraged to have access to their children's social media eg. cell phones, computers, etc.?
12. What can help you to avoid the use of pornography (Amos 5: 14,15; Job 31:1; 1 Cor 10:13)

**Action:**

The question is: 'What can the Christian do about it?' We must take action in opposing pornography and everything that degrades. If we do not – who will? Certainly we cannot put out a raging fire by spitting on it. The Salvation Army recognises the inherent human dignity in each person, and has a long history of efforts to protect that human dignity, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable members of society.

- How are you accountable to what is on your phone, social media and internet use?
- What are you doing to protect your family/those around you from pornography?
- How can you help others struggling with these issues?

Testimony to watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3RbpLxOSZs>

The History of Pornography: [www.feedtherightwolf.org/2011/07/history-of-pornography-and-how-it/](http://www.feedtherightwolf.org/2011/07/history-of-pornography-and-how-it/)

**Spend some time as a group praying for those caught up or struggling with pornography. Pray that God, who is sovereign, will give us wisdom and boldness to stand up against pornography.**

For The Salvation Army's official Positional Statements go to:  
<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Premarital Sex

### Introduction:

Premarital sex is voluntary sexual intercourse engaged in by persons who are not yet married. This is not in line with the Christian sexual ethic, which maintains that sexual intercourse is to be reserved for marriage, specifically monogamous marriage.

According to Mashau (2006:44–46), factors contributing to the crisis of premarital sex amongst the South African youth include, amongst others, the following:

- Peer pressure
- Experimenting with sex
- The reality of sin in our lives
- Drug and alcohol abuse

1. Can you think of other reasons why people engage in premarital sex?
2. Has the practice become “normal” in your community? Why?
3. How do people justify the practice of premarital sex?
4. What are the similarities and differences between adultery and premarital sex?

### Explore:

The Bible uses the term sexual immorality or fornication to refer to a range of extra marital sexual practices including premarital sex. Galatians 5:19-21 states *“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

5. What are the Biblical consequences of premarital sex?
6. Why has God restricted sexual activity to the context of marriage?
7. Is He opposed to sex?

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 states *“Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”*

8. How can premarital sex be harmful to us?
9. After reading this Scripture do you still think there are any benefits to premarital sex?
10. What does it mean that our bodies are the temple of God?

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 says *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain*



*from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God...."*

11. What should people do to control their own bodies?

**Discussion:**

12. Are there any other consequences to practicing premarital sex (social, emotional, physical etc.)
13. What about those that say premarital sex is a test for compatibility?
14. How might the incidence of sexual abuse contribute to the possibility of premarital sex?
15. Is it possible for a person to remain a virgin until they get married?
16. How should we deal with those who have had premarital sex?

**Action:**

What can you or your group do to practically engage with this topic in your community? Below are some examples of practical things you could do to combat premarital sex:

- Adequate sex education should be provided for our youth including the dangers of having multiple partners and STD's. Talk about the spiritual, physical and emotional consequences.
- We need to teach young people all about sex in the church (biblical) and not the schools alone.
- Early on, parents need to speak with their children about God's expectations in regard to marriage.
- Christian congregations need to study God's Word on this issue often and not ignore the problem, but deal with it faithfully.
- Work lovingly with individuals engaging in premarital sex, praying that the Holy Spirit will guide them.
- If you've had sex before marriage, all hope is not lost. Repent. God is more than able to forgive you.

More information about premarital sex in South Africa can be found at:

[http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0259-94222011000200008](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0259-94222011000200008)

Also see:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FZPPEZa6aM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWXoFyPEuhl>

**Spend some time as a group praying for unmarried people. Pray that we as Christians would uphold the sanctity of marriage and would live as holy people.**

For The Salvation Army's official Positional Statement on Human Sexuality go to:

<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>





# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Prostitution

### Introduction:

Prostitution is the buying and selling of sex (including sexual acts) for money, goods or services either regularly or occasionally. This includes getting “things” such as clothes, cars, etc. for sexual favours. This often occurs in the ‘blesser/blessee’ phenomenon. ‘Blessers’ are those that exchange gifts or money to ‘blessees’ (usually a vulnerable person) for sexual favours. Prostitution however, is not restricted to gender, age or race stereotypes.

As the Church we believe in the dignity of every human life. Therefore we affirm that anything that degrades or lessens the dignity of a person is wrong in the sight of God.

The buying and selling of sex is illegal in South Africa – this is under discussion at the moment in our country. There are some calling for the decriminalization of Prostitution – the buying and selling of sexual acts. There are others calling for the partial decriminalization which would make the selling of sex legal but the buying of sex illegal. (Which means the clients are arrested not the prostitute - the Nordic model) and still others calling for the continued prosecution of prostitution both the buying and selling of sex but asking for some changes to the law, such as, deviation programmes for prostitutes wanting to exit prostitution, more stringent arrests of clients (so far this is not done in South Africa), more determined effort to track down the various ‘bosses’ of these operations and prosecute organised crime operations.

The Blesser /Blessee phenomenon is another form of prostitution in that sex is usually the price for the pleasures received. As the buying and selling of sex is illegal it follows that this practice should also be seen as being illegal.

### Explore:

Read 1 Corinthians 6:15-17.

*Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, “The two will become one flesh.” But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit.*

1. What does this scripture tell you about your body?
2. If our body is the Temple of God why do we need to protect it and why do we need to keep it pure?

Leviticus 19:29 tells us *“Do not degrade your daughter by making her a prostitute, or the land will turn to prostitution and be filled with wickedness.”* and Proverbs 23:27-28 states *“for an adulterous woman is a deep pit, and a wayward wife is a narrow well. Like a bandit she lies in wait and multiplies the unfaithful among men.”*

3. What do these verses say about prostitution?
4. Can a prostitute be forgiven?

Read Luke 7:36 – 50.

5. Who was in the house?
6. When the woman came in did everyone know she was a prostitute?
7. What did Jesus say about the woman's offering of worship?
8. What did Jesus warn the Pharisees about in Matthew 21:31-32
9. Were the Pharisees losing out on Salvation and were those you never expected to go to heaven finding peace?
10. Based on John 3:16 is there salvation even for those caught in prostitution?

**Action:**

- Be the hands and feet of Christ and love the unlovable.
- Pray for the prostitutes on your streets and find ways to reach out to them with love and prayer.
- Speak up against the blessee/blesser phenomenon and have these difficult conversations.
- Make your Corps more "user friendly" for broken people to find peace there.
- Repent and stop involvement in prostitution if you have been involved.

For more information and resources go to: <https://cesesa.org.za/>

**End the time with a prayer for those involved in prostitution. Pray that they would repent and strive for holiness. Pray for the families affected by prostitution. Pray for wisdom for policymakers.**

For The Salvation Army's official Positional Statements go to:  
<http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Protest Action

### Introduction:

Protest Action has almost become a way of life for South Africans. Police responded to 14,740 crowd-related incidents in 2014/5 with 2,289 of those incidents turning violent or causing unrest.<sup>23</sup> An analysis of media reports alone indicate that there is an average of 3 protests and labour strikes per day in South Africa.<sup>24</sup> As South Africans, protest action has become our default means to try and bring about change and highlight the need for change.

Examples of protest action include:

- Service Delivery protests & Labour Strikes
- “Fees must fall campaign” “Not in my name” “#men are trash”
- Picketing, Marches, Strikes, Boycotts, Sit In’s and Civil Disobedience
- Petitions to remove a leader

1. Can you think of other examples of protest action?
2. What are some of the reasons why people get involved in protests?
3. Do you think protest action produces positive or negative results? Why?
4. Why are protest actions perceived as the most effective ways of getting attention from the leadership?

### Explore:

Read Romans 13:1-7

*Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. <sup>2</sup> Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. <sup>3</sup> For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. <sup>4</sup> For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. <sup>6</sup> This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, who give their full time to governing. <sup>7</sup> Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour.*

5. What do you think it means to be subject to the governing authorities?
6. Who establishes the governing authorities? Rom 13:1
7. As Christians, who is our ultimate authority?

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<sup>23</sup> 14 740 service delivery protests recorded in SA. (2015, May 15). from <http://citizen.co.za/382924/14-740-service-delivery-protests-recorded-in-sa/>

<sup>24</sup> Africa Check. (2016). Retrieved August 8, 2017, from <https://africacheck.org/reports/are-there-30-service-delivery-protests-a-day-in-south-africa-2/>

8. What are the consequences of rebelling against the governing authorities?

Acts 4:19-20 says “But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

9. Why do you think Peter and John refused to obey the authorities in this situation?

10. Do you think that Peter and John were disobeying Romans 13:1-7?

Philippians 2:3 says *“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.”*

11. Do you think this means we should only take part in protest action on behalf of others?

12. Biblically, are we allowed to protest for our own grievances and benefit?

### **Discussion:**

13. Under which circumstances would you disobey the authorities?

14. How should we demonstrate our dissatisfaction with authorities?

15. If others in your organisation want to protest but you object, what should you do?

Romans 13:7 says *“Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour.”*

16. What does that verse mean for you personally and practically?

### **Action:**

What can you or your group do practically to deal with the problems we face in our country? Below are some examples of practical things you could do:

- Begin to pray for authorities (1 Timothy 2:1-4).
- Before taking any other action hold a half night of prayer and fast for the particular problem or situation.
- Know what the law says about legal protest actions before taking part in any gathering (Regulation of Gatherings Act -1993).<sup>25</sup>
- Examine your own conduct and motive. Is there anything we are doing that oppresses or causes others pain?

Review the Right2Know guidelines for legal protests in South Africa:

<http://www.r2k.org.za/2016/03/21/r2k-protest-guide/>

**Spend some time as a group praying for unjust situations in our country and communities. Pray that God, who is sovereign, will intervene and give us wisdom and boldness to stand up against injustice.**

For The Salvation Army’s official Positional Statement on Civil Disobedience & Protest Action go to: <http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>

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<sup>25</sup> Regulation of Gatherings Act | South African Government. (1993.). from <http://www.gov.za/documents/regulation-gatherings-act>



# Moral and Social Issues Discussion

## Racism

### Introduction:

Racism, a form of discrimination, is the belief that characteristics and abilities can be attributed to people simply on the basis of their race and that some racial groups are superior to others.<sup>26</sup> Discrimination may be defined as the practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people. It also involves bias or prejudice resulting in denial of opportunity, or unfair treatment regarding selection, promotion, or transfer.<sup>27</sup>

Examples of racism may include:

- Inappropriate jokes, insults, name-calling directed at a person because of their race
- Making employment decisions based on peoples race
- Poor attitudes toward mixed race relationships
- Using a language to deliberately exclude or disadvantage a race group.

1. What is race?
2. Can you think of other examples of racism?
3. Have you personally experienced racism?

### Explore:

Read Luke 10:25-37

When Jesus told this story there was strong racial tension between the Jews and the Samaritans. Both groups held different views on religion and had major cultural differences. The Jews did not mix with Samaritans and vice-a-versa. Jews even considered the Samaritans dirty and unholy.

4. Why do you think Jesus specifically used a Jew and a Samaritan in the Parable?
5. Why do you think the Samaritan went out of his way to help the man?
6. What was the point Jesus was making?
7. How do you think this applies to how we treat people of other races?

Acts 10:34-35 says *"I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right."*<sup>28</sup>

8. If God shows no favouritism, what does that mean for us that are trying to follow His example?

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<sup>26</sup> Racism still lingers in South Africa-UNISA online article-<http://English.People.com>

<sup>27</sup> MASIC Positional Statement on Racism and Discrimination

<sup>28</sup> See also Romans 2:11

John 7:24 says “Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.”

9. What does it mean to “judge correctly”?

Revelation 5:9 tells us that “*persons from every tribe and language and people and nation*” will be present in heaven.

10. What does this verse tell us about God's attitude toward different races?

**Discussion:**

17. Who is your “neighbour”?

18. Is there something you can do to practically show love to your neighbour?

19. How are you building relationships with those who are of a different race from you?

20. What can you do when those around you (perhaps friends or family) act in a racist way towards others?

**Action:**

We need to do more than just discuss racism. We need to be a voice for those who are treated poorly by others and step out of our comfort zones to embrace others that are different to us. What can you or your group do practically to deal with the problem of racism? Below are some examples of practical things you could do to show the world a different way of acting:

- Organise a social gathering or meal where you specifically invite people who are different to you. Eating together often helps break down barriers.
- Host a “What’s your Story” event at your church or in your community. Understanding where each other come from or past experience often leads to respect and new friendships. Resources can be found at: <http://whatsyourstory.online/>
- Watch the “The Miners” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gl8lqLWuk0s>) or use the Acceptance discussion resource from Heartlines (Living Godly Values - <http://heartlines.org.za/our-resources/resources-projects/#8films>) to further explore racism in South Africa.
- Express yourself in your community in a creative way to show your stance against racism.
- Respect and honour other races by engaging with people.
- Educate yourself about cultural differences.

**Spend some time as a group praying for our country, past hurts and atrocities. Pray that God would begin to heal those affected and that we would show no favouritism but treat those who are different from us with love.**

For The Salvation Army’s official Positional Statement on Racism and Discrimination go to: <http://salvationarmy.org.za/moral-social-issues-council/>