

Junior Soldiers

Unit 6 : Lesson 3

The injustice of poverty



PURPOSE : For children to explore and understand that poverty exists in the world, but it is not part of God's plan; God requires his people to act justly, love mercy and humbly obey him. What can we do to live out Micah 6:8?

'See that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God.'

Micah 6:8

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Micah 6:1-8

Leader Planning Note: This lesson takes a lot of organizing and careful preparation and, hopefully, will bring incredible understanding about poverty to the children. Make sure you have read all the way through the instructions and chosen your options before beginning your preparation.

God has rescued us! God saves us! God is merciful! God tells us what is right and asks for our humble obedience. God wants justice to be done and for mercy to be our first concern.

- Take some time to think about your relationship with God.
- Do you recognise his love, his grace, his mercy in your daily life?
- Compare and reflect on Micah 6:8 from different translations.

Justice requires us to seek the good of others, even those who have wronged us. Christian justice has no place for vengeance or self-righteousness. Mercy is to be spared or rescued from judgment, harm, danger, or trouble. Through Jesus, we have mercy, the withholding of judgment against us, granted to us for all of eternity.

- What does it mean to act justly? Do you act justly?
- Are you prepared to show mercy to others? When and how do you do this?
- Are you walking humbly with God?
- What things do you need to change in your life to live out Micah 6:8?

This lesson is a starting point for children to consider the injustice of poverty. There are many resources you can use if you would like to take this further and this lesson could be used to tie in with the Global Project component of the Award work.

In the connecting in section you will use some fact sheets from Compassion. These are great resources for this type of lesson. However, you will notice that they promote child sponsorship through Compassion, it is important to let the children know that there are also opportunities to sponsor children through The Salvation Army.

The challenge of living on \$2 a day for food is suggested in the Home & Beyond section as a possible project that could also involve the children's families if they wanted to participate. This suggestion comes from Live Below the Line (www.livebelowtheline.com/au-thechallenge).

The Main Thing in this lesson is a poverty simulation game. These games are a lot of fun as well as fantastic learning experiences as long **as they are well debriefed at the end**. This would be a great opportunity to invite families along, include your entire youth and children's ministry or your whole corps! It may take longer than the regular time you have together so think about how this will work for you.

If you have a very small group or only one Junior Soldier and your corps does not want to participate in order for you to provide a simulation game experience you could join with another corps or find out if your DHQ can offer assistance. You may decide there is enough material in the lesson to explore the issue without the Poverty Simulation Game if you are a very small group. Another alternative is to look at some websites with information about the issue of poverty and choose something to get involved in to make a difference. The Salvation Army has projects you could support and Micah Challenge, Compassion, TEAR and World Vision all have good information.



What you will need

Connecting In – Build It Challenge

- Resource envelopes – enough for each child and leader in your group.
 - The envelopes should contain different amounts of resources for the task. Some envelopes should have lots of resources – enough to complete the task, other envelopes should have a reasonable amount of resources – enough to almost complete the task; and some envelopes should have very few resources – making it almost impossible to complete the task or perhaps even to start it.
- Suggested resources for envelopes:
 - Coloured match sticks, paddle pop sticks, straws, plasticine, pieces of coloured paper (various shapes and sizes as well as different amounts, staples, paper clips, tokens (to hire equipment))
- Extra resources for hire:
 - Scissors (token), stapler (must have own staples in envelope to obtain stapler hire), glue (token)
- Print out fact sheets. Put these up on the wall where you will be able to refer to them during discussions.
 - Mazlo's hierarchy of needs.
 - Poverty, hunger and education facts sheets from Compassion.
 - Butcher's paper or a whiteboard for answers and responses.

The Main Thing - Poverty Simulation Game

- Decide how you are going to set up the area for the game, then organise what you need, e.g. masking tape, furniture, whiteboard and markers, butchers paper, print out or make signs etc. Read the set up instructions in the game to assist you.
- Print out game cards – enough for one per participant. Print more of Game Card 1 than Game Card 2 (ratio 3:1)
- Give those with Game Card 1, income stamps in one or more sessions to start the game with. Vary the number from card to card (give stamps to about 1/5 of the cards you are giving out).
- Print out role instructions and make sure those performing understand what is required of them in the game.
- Stamps and markers for game sheets (as needed for roles)
- If you are going to have work activities or offer real food and drink, you will need to organise those resources as well (see game instructions).
- Read the instructions for the game to ensure you understand what you need.

The Main Thing – Bible

- Print out copies of Micah 6:8 and highlight or bold different words to change the emphasis when reading.
- Bibles

Tying In

- Mazlo's Hierarchy sheet

Home & Beyond

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.
- Printout for selected option



Connecting In

Build It Challenge

This challenge is suitable for one-on-one, small groups and larger groups. If you are working with one or very few children give them the envelope with the required resources to complete the task. Then give them the envelope with very few resources and let them attempt the task again. Talk about the different experiences they had.

Tell the children that they will each receive an envelope and not to open it until you give the instruction to do so.

- As each child and leader receives their envelope remind them that they should not open it yet.
- Explain what is going to happen in the challenge.
- Each child/leader needs to make best house they can out of what is in their envelope. It must be free standing.
- They will have 10 minutes to complete the task.
- There will be some equipment on the table that anyone can use but there may be some conditions you need to comply with in order to use the equipment.
- Someone will need to man the equipment and ensure hire conditions are met.
- When they begin to open the envelopes they will discover that every envelope does not contain the same resources.
- Avoid getting involved in complaints about this and tell everyone to try their best to accomplish the task.
- Allow participants to share resources with each other. Don't suggest it, let them get to that point on their own.
- At the end of the time ask the participants to show what they have made.

Debrief questions

It will be helpful to write the answers on a white board or butchers paper to refer back to later.

- What did you notice about this activity?
- Who had difficulty completing the task?
- Why was that?
- How did you feel if you had very few resources?
- How did you feel if you had all or most of the resources you needed?
- What did you do that helped you complete the task?
- Did you do anything that helped someone else complete the task?
- How do you think this activity was like real life?
- What are some situations you know of around the world where people do not have enough?

Ask a few of the children and leaders in the group to read some of the facts from the Compassion print outs. Encourage everyone to take a closer look at these later.

- Does that happen in Australia? Are there people in this country who do not have enough to live on?
- What do you think is enough? What should everyone have in order to live well?
- Introduce Mazlo's 'Hierarchy of Needs' pyramid. The bottom level of the pyramid shows the most basic things humans need.

The Main Thing

Poverty Simulation Game...

This game will help your group explore some of the issues of poverty. All of the instructions you need are at the end of the lesson for printing. If you are a small group you may not have enough people for every role. It is possible to have someone act in more than one role however it would be a great opportunity to ask some other members of the corps, Big Buds, leaders etc. or another section to join you. Or choose one of the alternatives suggested in the 'Consider and Prepare' section.

After you have debriefed the game:

- Read Micah 6:8.

Have different members of your group, children and leaders, read this verse out using different voices and putting the emphasis in the places that you have highlighted. The rest of the group follows along in their Bibles. If you have a larger group you could do this in a number of different translations as well.

Or you might like to give each child a copy of each different version and have everyone read together. For example:

The LORD God has told **US**
what is **RIGHT** and what he **DEMANDS**:
'See that **JUSTICE** is done,
let **MERCY** be your first concern,
and **HUMBLY** obey your God.' CEV

The LORD God has **TOLD** us
WHAT is right and **WHAT** he demands:
'**SEE** that justice is done,
LET mercy be your first concern,
and humbly obey **YOUR** God.' CEV

The LORD **GOD** has told us
what is right and what he demands:
'See that justice is **DONE**,
let mercy be your **FIRST** concern,
and humbly **OBEBY** your God.' CEV

- What do you think Micah is talking about?
- What is justice? Can you think of situations where justice is not done?
- What is mercy? Can you think of situations where mercy is not shown?
- What does it mean to humbly obey God? Is this different from just obeying God? How is it different?
- Can you think of any situations that help you to understand this scripture?



Tying In

How important...

Use the Mazlo's Hierarchy of Needs pyramid to help children assess what needs they think were met in the game and what needs are met in their real life.

They could try to work out what level of the pyramid they were in in the game and what level they might be in in real life.

→ Why are those things important for us?

(NB If you have children in your group who claim that any of the basic needs on the first level of the pyramid are missing in their real life, consult your local child protection guidelines.)

Thinking about Mazlo's Pyramid and Micah 6:8

- Do you think justice was done in the game we played?
- How do you feel about the injustices that you experienced in the game and that you see in the world?
- Did you see any examples of mercy in the game? What were they?
- How do you think we can humbly obey God to ensure that mercy is our first concern and that justice is done in the world?

Prayer:

Invite the children to pray for the needs that they understand better today. Pray in a circle with the children praying one at a time, and squeezing the hand of the next child when they have finished. You may want to do this in small groups or as one large group.



Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

There are two options below for Home & Beyond. It would be a good idea to talk to the children, their parents and Big Buds to help you decide which option will work best for your group.

Option One – Can you live on \$2 a day?

- Take the challenge to try living on \$2 per person a day for food.
- People who live on \$2 a day (or less) are considered to be living in extreme poverty.
- This challenge is designed to help you understand some of the difficulties associated with poverty.
- You could do this for one day or for five days. It's up to you.
- You might even like to get sponsors and raise some money to donate to a project!
- If you have never heard of this challenge you could go to www.livebelowtheline.com/au-thechallenge

If you have already taken the \$2 a day challenge in Unit 4 Lesson 6 you can still choose either option.

Option Two

- Share with your parents, carers or Big Buds about your experience of the game today.
- Ask them to share what stands out for them in Micah 6:8.
- Ask them where they see injustice done in the world and talk about what you could do to see justice is done.

Home & Beyond

The injustice of poverty...

Option Two

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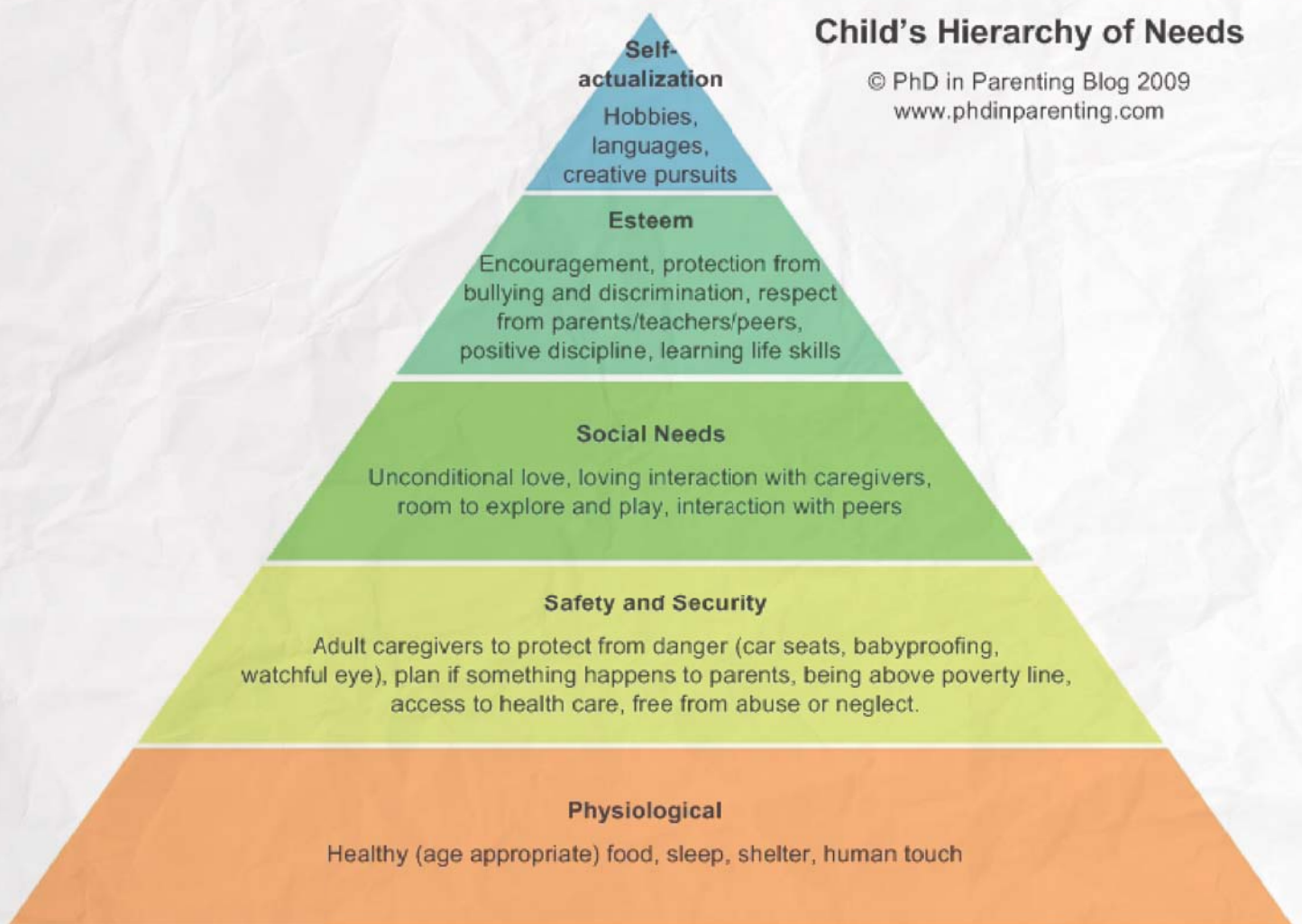


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Child's Hierarchy of Needs

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SELF-
ACTUALIZATION
Pursue Inner Talent
Creativity Fulfillment

SELF-ESTEEM
Achievement Mastery
Recognition Respect

BELONGING - LOVE
Friends Family Spouse Lover

SAFETY
Security Stability Freedom from Fear

PHYSIOLOGICAL
Food Water Shelter Warmth