

cell outline
NOVEMBER 2020

These Cell Outlines are written by Youth and Children's Ministries. They are available every month from our web site. For more information and other Cell resources, visit salvationarmy.org.uk/children-and-youth-resources

OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Our focus for October's cell was justice and we looked specifically at the issue of human trafficking. For the next few weeks we'll be taking a broader view of issues around justice. We'll also look at how to commit to change and social justice. Throughout its history, The Salvation Army has sought to bring about transformation for the marginalised and vulnerable through practical action, advocacy, campaigning and prayer, motivated by the teaching in the Bible, the example of Jesus and the early apostles.

We'll be allowing ourselves to be inspired by the person and work of Jesus and contemporary figures to consider how God might be asking us to use our lives, circumstances, gifts and talents to make a difference.



ADVOCACY

WELCOME

Unpopular Opinions

On Radio 1, Greg James invites people to share, with minimal judgment, their most unpopular opinions. The catchy jingle 'Come and give us your unpopular opinion, something up 'til now that you've been scared to say...' is followed by statements that have included 'Hawaiian is the best pizza!' 'Horses are pointless'.

Some of these are just as unpopular as the song would suggest, others have surprising support.

As a group, play your own game of unpopular opinions. Each member can say one thing, with complete impunity, that they've also thought they'd be judged hard for. You may want to watch some clips of the original on YouTube or the BBC website, so you are comfortable with the format and maybe even sing the jingle!

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p086sxq7

If your group is nervous about speaking up initially, use the share screen function to show one of the 'Unpopular Opinions' videos as this is likely to provoke a response and discussion.

Once everyone has had a chance to speak, ask the group:

- * How does it feel to voice an unpopular opinion?
- * Did you feel nervous about what kind of reaction you'd get?
- * Were you surprised by who may or may not have agreed with you?
- * Did someone else's opinion encourage you to think about something differently or understand a new perspective?

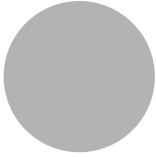
Sometimes, using our voices to speak up against the status quo can be really nerve-racking, and when we're speaking for those that are vulnerable or marginalised it can often mean taking a stand against people or systems with more power. Sometimes it can feel easier or safer to not say anything at all; but as we'll see, following the example of Jesus means using our voices. Advocating for others can make an extraordinary difference.

WORD

As a group, read the following passages:

¹Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. ³The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group 'and said to Jesus, 'Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁴In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?' ⁵They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁶When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.' ⁷Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁸At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. ⁹Jesus straightened up and asked her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' ¹⁰'No one, sir,' she said. 'Then neither do I condemn you,' Jesus declared. 'Go now and leave your life of sin.'

John 8:1-11



¹³People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' ¹⁶And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Mark 10:13-16

Tell the group that on the surface these stories seem quite different, and ask if they can name some of the key differences.

Say: Although, in the story in John's Gospel, Jesus puts himself between religious leaders and a woman caught in the act of adultery, and in Mark's story Jesus was just hanging out with his some friends when some children came along, both accounts speak to Jesus' commitment to advocating for those without power.

In both the historical and cultural context Jesus lived in, women and children were seen as the lowest of the low. They had no rights, were not allowed in the inner places of worship and were legally the property of men.

Ask: How did Jesus speaking up make a difference to the women in the story?

How did Jesus speaking up make a difference to the children in the story?

How do you think Jesus impacted the others involved in each situation?

What was the cost to Jesus of his advocacy?

Say: Over the last few weeks, the news has been full of stories of Marcus Rashford and his advocacy for children living in poverty who rely on their free school meals. He is using his voice to persuade the Government to continue the provision of food through school holidays.

(If you're not familiar with his story, you can find out more here – <https://fareshare.org.uk/marcus-rashford>)

Ask: What do you think inspired Marcus Rashford to use his voice for children living in poverty?

What difference has Marcus's advocacy made?

Explain that Marcus was aware of this need because of his own experience. He has now chosen to use his privilege and opportunities to speak up for those less powerful. Even with his significant influence, he wasn't able (so far) to cause the change he wanted to make, but his voice has encouraged others to get involved and respond. Your voice can make a difference. Even if the end goal is ambitious, and seems impossible, helping people see something they haven't seen before or encouraging those around you to consider a different perspective can cause a ripple effect that creates change.

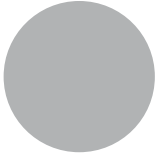
WORSHIP

Proverbs 31:8-9 says, 'Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.'

Invite the young people to spend some time asking God what or who they should be speaking up for. Marcus Rashford was inspired to speak up for children experiencing food poverty because of his own experience. What have you seen, heard or experienced, that God can use? If you are meeting in person, use a large piece of paper – or if on Zoom, use the white board or chat function – to write down some of those people and groups. As you read those names or groups that are written, invite the young people to pray for them. You could also encourage the young people to pray for courage for themselves and one another.

WITNESS

Although the events of the New Testament occurred over 2,000 years ago, we know that both females and children are still discriminated against and have fewer opportunities because of their gender and/or age. Watch this video, produced for International Day of the Girl: www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRlkA0Kx9Pg



In this video, young women talk about what they would do if they ruled the world. What would you do? What would you change first? You may not feel like you have very much power, but you are free to use your voice. Sometimes just adding your voice to those of others fighting for the same cause can make a huge difference.

Thinking about the change that you would want to make, can you find a petition or online campaign that you can get involved with so that you can use your voice to speak up for those that are either unable to use their own, or whose own voices need to be amplified? If there isn't one, why not create it?