

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

God is Not Distant - Week 4: Activism

1. Was there anything in the message on Sunday that stood out to you? What was most helpful for you? In what ways did it stretch your thinking?
2. Would you describe yourself as an activist? Why or why not? How has your understanding of activism evolved over time?
3. Reflect on a moment when you felt called to take action for a cause. What motivated you to get involved, and what impact did your actions have?
4. During the message, we looked at a Wikipedia definition of activism with the phrase “to partner with God” added to it. Read the definition below. Is there anything you would change or add to it?

Activism (or advocacy) consists of efforts to promote, impede, direct or intervene in social, political, economic or environmental reform with the desire [to partner with God] to make changes in society toward a perceived greater good.

5. Discuss the role of privilege in activism. How can those with privilege use it to support marginalized communities in their activism efforts?
6. Explore the concept of intersectionality in activism. How do various social identities (such as race, gender, sexuality, etc.) intersect to shape individuals' experiences and inform their activism?
7. On Sunday, we briefly explored Moses as an example of activism. Can you think of any other Bible characters who are activists? What makes you call them activists? What can we learn from their actions?
8. Make a list of causes that resonate with you. Then, spend time alone or in a group praying for the individuals and communities involved and the people acting to make a difference.

Practice for the week: A prayer liturgy for a more just world

In the pursuit of justice and the betterment of our world, activism becomes both a calling and a responsibility. It's a journey that demands courage, empathy, and resilience. This prayer practice is designed to ground activists in their purpose, nurture their spirits, and provide strength for the challenges ahead.

Opening Prayer:

Divine Source of Compassion,
Guide us as we embark on the path of activism.
Grant us wisdom to discern right from wrong,
Courage to speak truth to power,
And compassion to uplift the marginalized.

Reflection:

Take a moment to reflect on the injustices you seek to address through your activism. Consider the individuals or communities affected and the systemic issues at play. Allow yourself to feel empathy and determination to make a positive difference.

Prayer for Strength:

Creator of all,
As we face the trials of activism,
Grant us the strength to persevere.
May our spirits remain steadfast,
And our hearts filled with hope.

Silent Meditation:

Enter into a period of silent meditation, focusing on your breath and allowing any thoughts or emotions to arise and pass without judgment. Use this time to connect with your inner strength and find peace amidst the turmoil.

Prayer for Unity:

Eternal One,
In the face of division and discord,
Unite us in our common purpose.
Help us to see the humanity in one another,
And to work together towards a world of justice and equality.

Action:

Think of one concrete action you can take to advance your cause. It could be attending a protest, volunteering with a local organization, or initiating a conversation with someone about the issues that matter to you.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious Spirit,
As we conclude this time of prayer and reflection,
May we carry the light of justice wherever we go.
Guide our steps, strengthen our resolve,
And inspire us to be agents of positive change.
Amen.