



**GO DEEPER**

## SESSION 11: WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS BASED ON?



### **Aim**

To consider the origin of the concept that humans have inherent worth, dignity and rights.



### **Starter**

Option 1

Play a game of 'Animal, Mineral, Vegetable'. The first player thinks of either an animal, mineral or vegetable. The rest of the group have 20 yes/no questions to guess what it is. If you want to make the game more fast-paced introduce a timer for each round.

Option 2

Print out the cards on page 4-5 and distribute them amongst the group. One at a time, ask them to lay their cards under the heading 'human right' or 'human desire' depending on whether they think the item on the card is something we have a right to, or just something we want. Ask them to explain their decision and invite others to agree or disagree.

This session will consider human rights and where they come from.



### **Video**

Watch the video [What Are Human Rights Based On?](#) (Running time 4:41)



### **Questions**

Encourage pupils to write any questions on sticky notes as they occur to them.

Answer questions of understanding about the video straight away unless these will be answered later in the session. If there is not time for a question, confirm you will answer it another time. Consider using the 'car park' so pupils know you will not forget.



### **Exploring the Bible**

We might disagree on what things should be human rights and what are just things we would like to have, but most of us would probably agree that humans have value. In the video, Andy Bannister argues that this is not obvious if we have no belief in God. Before Jesus, your value as a human was very dependent on your status.

### Discuss

**Can you think of people or people groups who are disadvantaged today because of their status?**

Some examples:

- *Refugees – those displaced by conflict and now have no home or livelihood*
- *Disabled community – often excluded because of their additional needs; dependent on government financial support for their lives and freedom in some cases*
- *Black community – subject to racist attacks and other discrimination*
- *LGBTQ+ community – subject to homophobic attacks*
- *Those of low socio-economic status – they often have worse health, lower education outcomes and shorter life expectancy*

It would be easy to blame the Government for the poor treatment of some people and groups, and our leaders are not perfect, but we all have responsibility for how others are treated.

Read Philippians 2:1-11

Discuss

**How do verses 3-5 tell us we are to treat others?**

- (1) *We are not to trample on others to achieve something for ourselves*
- (2) *We are not to look down on others or use them to make ourselves feel good*
- (3) *We are not to focus on our needs but those of others*
- (4) *We are to have the same attitude or mindset as Jesus*

**From verses 6-8, how did Jesus treat others?**

- (1) *He made himself nothing and became like a servant, concerned for helping others*
- (2) *He humbled himself, even to the point of giving up his life for others*

**From verses 1-2, why are we to treat others in this way?**

*We are to do this because of all we have been given in Christ:*

- (1) *Comfort in his love*
- (2) *Encouragement because we are united to him*
- (3) *Sharing in the Spirit*
- (4) *We are commanded to*



## Reflection

Individually or as a group, make a list of the ways that the same attitude as Christ could be displayed in treating others with value.

Some examples:

- ◆ *Practical acts of service towards others*
- ◆ *Listening to friends*
- ◆ *Loving your enemies and praying for those who persecute you (Matthew 5:44)*
- ◆ *Forgiving other people when they sin against you (Matthew 6:14)*
- ◆ *Writing to your MP or MSP about issues relating to human dignity and value*
- ◆ *Committing to educate yourself on behalf of a people group who need your voice and influence*
- ◆ *Attending a demonstration*
- ◆ *Praying for your leaders*
- ◆ *How could you support each other in these actions and keep each other accountable?*



### Further resources

How to find to your **Member of the UK Parliament (MP)** or your **Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP)**

**Jesus, Racism and Me** A panel discussion with British Christians

**Living Out** A charity supporting same sex attracted Christians



## Starter Activity



Owning a mobile phone	Having your own bedroom
Being free from violence	Being able to say whatever you want to
Being able to marry/ not marry whoever you want	Having food
Being able to believe what you want without being treated badly	Being free from responsibility to look after others
Having internet access	Having friends
Being able to drive	Having clean running water

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Being able to have children	Being treated the same as others regardless of your skin colour
Having an education	Having access to feminine hygiene products
Being able to consent/refuse consent to sex	Being able to carry a gun or other weapon
Having access to essential medical treatment	Being able to change your body through cosmetic surgery
Being free from hurtful comments	Being able to think whatever you want to
Having access to music	Having privacy
Having access to orthodontic treatment	Having a nice house