



DEFINING MOMENTS

Process Tool

Just Courage

Summary

Over the years, the evangelical church has poured millions of dollars into aid and projects to help alleviate extreme poverty and provide relief to those in crisis. While more and more churches are involving themselves in compassion initiatives, churches have been slower to respond to the injustice issues that are the root cause of the crises that perpetuate the need for compassion in the first place. In this edition of *Defining Moments*, Gary Haugen, president and CEO of International Justice Mission, joins Willow Creek Community Church senior pastor Bill Hybels and host Nancy Beach to discuss questions related to compassion, justice, and God's call on the church.

Outline

I. Risking Failure

- A. Before Gary started International Justice Mission (IJM), he worked for the U.S. Justice Department.
- B. Leaving his job was a big point of tension for him.
 1. He and his wife had small children at home.
 2. At first, he wanted to be both brave and safe by asking his supervisor for a leave of absence, so that if his ministry idea didn't work, he could come back.
 3. They weren't willing to do that, so he had to just end his career.
 4. Gary made lots of excuses for why leaving his job was so tense, but at the bottom of it was fear.
 5. When he thought about what he was actually afraid of, he realized that he was afraid of humiliation — of putting his big idea out there and having it turn out to be a flop.
 - a. His family wasn't going to starve if it didn't work; he could have gotten another job.
 - b. If the idea flopped, it would either be because it was a bad idea or because Gary was a bad leader; either way, it would have been humiliating.
 6. He had to choose to either risk humiliation or risk being 50 years old and having had a dream of doing something meaningful for God and never trying it.
 7. Seeing the choice in that way helped him to go for it.
- C. Bill has heard hundreds of stories of people who left careers in the marketplace to do something in ministry, or vice versa.
 1. Those transitions are often moments of truth when it's just you and God, and you're trying to following the promptings of the Holy Spirit as best you understand them, and things get painted in stark contrast in your mind.

- D. When Bill left his family company to start Willow, he thought his father would generously allow him to keep the toys and credit cards he had enjoyed all his life, but quite wisely his father told him that the day he left, he had to turn it all in.
 - 1. His father didn't want to be Bill's back-up guy — either God was in this and He was going to prove Himself faithful, or He's not.
 - 2. In hindsight, that was one of the best things that could have happened.
- E. It was important for Gary to imagine what would happen if his ministry idea failed.
 - 1. He needed to be able to imagine himself still being OK with God if it failed.
 - 2. It occurred to him that if it was intolerable for the ministry to fail, that might mean that he would be willing to do anything to try to keep it from failing.
 - 3. There could be corners he'd cut, edges he'd round, and truths he'd hedge on.
 - 4. He had to be able to say, "God, I think you've given me this ministry to be done, but it's up to You to make it happen. If it doesn't work out, you and I can still be OK and I'm loved by you."

II. Missing the Adventure

- A. In the opening of Gary's book *Just Courage*, he says that a lot of Christians are going on the trip but missing the adventure.
 - 1. When Gary was a kid, his dad took him and his older brothers on a trip to Mount Rainier.
 - a. His dad wanted them to climb halfway up the mountain.
 - b. Gary's two older brothers were very excited to go, while Gary wanted to stay at the visitor's center.
 - c. Gary's dad let him spend the afternoon in the visitor's center while they went on the great adventure.
 - d. They came back filled with great stories of their adventure.
 - 2. Gary's brothers got to do this extraordinary thing with their dad while Gary went on the trip but missed the adventure.
 - a. Gary didn't think he could do the climb; he was afraid that his dad would invite him on an adventure that he couldn't actually do.
 - b. Because he didn't trust his father, he sheltered himself in a safe place.
 - 3. Gary's sense is that many of us feel that Jesus has invited us on this trip together but we're missing the adventure — that more demanding climb into the world where His kingdom is being built.
 - 4. Because it looks a little scary and seems to take us beyond our comfort zone, we'd rather stay where we can be safe.
 - 5. God did not send Jesus so we could be safe; God sent Jesus so we could be brave.
 - 6. All of us want to experience the courage that Jesus offers by trusting how much He really loves us.
 - 7. Gary's dad didn't invite him on the adventure because he was trying to punish him or because he needed him; he did it because he loved Gary.
 - 8. God is inviting us into a great adventure in the world, but we are going to need to actually trust Him for it.
- B. Bill often says that being a Christ-follower should be the greatest adventure of all time.
 - 1. It has the highest stakes of anything that's going on.
 - 2. The stakes are bigger than reputation or money.

3. When you are on God's program, when He's leading your life every day, there's a distinct possibility that something supernatural is going to happen.
 4. He may have your path cross with someone else's, someone whose life is going to impact you or change the trajectory of your path in ways you'll never understand.
 5. You'd miss all that if you didn't fundamentally believe in a really good God who has a good plan for your life to have a lot of meaning.
 6. Bill would rather risk being on God's program and live with the outcome of that than put his own program together, which will have lesser stakes and be more predictable.
- C. As Gary observes Christians, he sees a lot of bored and restless people.
1. In a fallen world, life can feel threatening — for ourselves, our families, and the things we've acquired — so safety can become the goal of life, and safety becomes boring.
 2. What Jesus came for was not that our life would be safe or that the goal of life would be to make the world safe; He came so that the goal of life would be to transform the world.
 3. In Gary's mind, it's the difference between playing defense and playing offense.
 - a. It's the difference between a kid who is knotted up in anxiety on the soccer field because he's afraid someone's going to score a goal and the kid who's having all the fun, because he is actually scoring goals for his team.
 - b. Jesus said that His Kingdom would advance in the world and the gates of hell would not prevail against it (Matthew 16:1).
 - 1) The gates of hell aren't out there advancing and knocking things down; they're in a defensive posture.
 - 2) Satan is on the defensive while Jesus is building His Kingdom through His people.
 - 3) That picture of hope releases us from the boredom of safety and allows us to step out with courage into the adventure that Jesus yearns for us to have, because He loves us.
- D. How we view the Christian life — as adventure or boredom — affects how we tend to present the Gospel.
1. If you present the Gospel as a way to avoid hell, once people are saved, they have nothing to do but just hang out until heaven.
 2. God is calling us to be forgiven and saved not just to avoid hell but so that we can become part of the redemptive drama.
 3. Bill grew up in an environment where they talked a lot about what they were saved *from* but didn't really talk about what they were saved *for*.
 4. Bill likes to present the Gospel as the way you get on the team that God has committed to lead and use to do some amazing things in this world.

III. Breaking Out of the Small Christian Life

- A. To break people out of the small Christian life, leaders need to challenge them.
 1. The people need to be exposed to people like Gary who stand up and tell them to think more dangerously.
 2. You only have between this day and your final day to do something radical for God.
 - a. How many more movies do you need to rent?
 - b. How much more take-out food do you have to consume?

- c. Is that what you want your life to be about?
 - d. Most of us would like to leave a legacy more redemptive than that.
- B. Gary refers to the small Christian life as a "*Groundhog Day* life."
1. In the movie *Groundhog Day*, Bill Murray keeps waking up and repeating the exact same day over and over.
 2. Sometimes, in the eyes of the folks as they're driving into the church parking lot, Gary can see a sort of repeat day of mild Christian niceness.
- C. When that's compared to the description in the Bible about the dramatic transformation of the world that Jesus is calling us into, it seems that many of us, deep in our hearts, are yearning for more.
1. When people are confronted with that invitation from Jesus, it resonates with what's true in their being.
 2. We can try to push down that yearning for more, but Jesus won't let us; he wants to keep calling and challenging us.
 3. Gary grew up in a context where it was all about being saved and going to heaven, and he's glad that he could find out how he could be saved.
 4. Still, he wondered why we're all still hanging around after we're saved.
 5. Ephesians 2:10 says that we were "created ... to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (NIV).
 6. What Gary wants to discover is the great work that God has for him.
 7. Matthew 5:16 says that it's through these good works that people will bring glory to our Father in heaven.
- D. How we overcome fear has to do with the most fundamental question of the Christian life: is God trustworthy?
1. If God is good, if He's all powerful and loves you completely, then it's all good.
 2. The Bible says not to be anxious about anything (Philippians 4:6) and that perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18).
 3. With that knowledge, we can take risks in following Jesus.
 4. However, if we want to risk for our own sort of kingdom and ambitions, God won't necessarily vouchsafe those outcomes.
 5. When we follow God and his work of love and truth in the world, He promises to go with us.
 6. To overcome fear, we need to first understand that fear is the problem.
 - a. Many times Gary wants to think that the problem is something other than fear, because fear just doesn't sound very manly or attractive.
 - b. He wants it to be about wisdom or prudence or providing for his family, but when he's honest, it's about fear.
 - c. His fear then points him to consider what he doesn't believe about the God who made him and loves him.
 - d. Dallas Willard says that you believe something not when you say you believe it but when you act as if it is true.
 - e. Gary has seen some Christians live their lives surprisingly liberated from fear, and once you see what that's like, you want to live like that.
 - f. Living that way seems to come when you actually believe that what Jesus taught is true.
 7. Bill suggests telling yourself, "I will trust Jesus until He proves Himself untrustworthy to me."

- a. If you try it the other way, not trusting Jesus until He proves Himself trustworthy, you'll never make a move.
- b. The difference between trusting first and waiting for it to be proven is the difference between people moving ahead and getting on the great adventure and people giving way to the pettiness of their lives.
- 8. What Gary has found is that this isn't an all-at-once thing; it's incremental.
 - a. Take that next little step of courage.
 - b. Gary has found that God disproportionately rewards that little step of courage.
 - c. After a while, Gary started getting the point, and when God showed up, it made it easier to take the next step.
 - d. If you never take the first step, you'll never see God's power and faithfulness.

IV. Being Courageous

- A. Most people don't think of themselves as courageous.
- B. It comes down to this: If you really do believe that God is unfolding the next step for you, are you going to keep your hand in His and walk in the direction He's asking you to go?
- C. Bill doesn't look at it so much as courage but as obedience.
 - 1. Those times when God asks you to do something aren't courage assessment times but obedience times.
 - 2. One of the Willow board members would freely admit that he's been a fear-driven person his entire life, stemming from some horrible things that happened in his background.
 - a. Bill has watched that board member grow in his ability to trust God and move out in faith — even when the resources aren't there or there is no promise of success.
 - b. After the last board meeting, he told Bill that he's learned how to obey God by being on that board, watching Bill and others obey what they felt was the next step from God.
- D. Courage isn't fearlessness but doing the right thing in the presence of fear.
 - 1. Fear is going to be there for all of us; the question is if we respond with courage.
- E. Courage doesn't come from something inside of us but from a confidence that God grants us.
 - 1. If there was no all-loving, all-good God, nobody would do anything that took courage.
 - 2. If we truly believe in what Jesus teaches about the nature of God, then we're armed for actual courageous actions.

V. The Struggle for Justice

- A. Gary believes that the pathway out of a nearly-comatose state of boredom, ineffectiveness, and triviality lies in the struggle for justice.
 - 1. Gary has never seen anyone bored or feeling trivial while engaged in the struggle for justice.
 - 2. The struggle for justice is one of God's great passions in the Bible; it's the more demanding climb of the Christian faith.

- a. We can start to feel familiar with sharing the gospel, even despite some fears, and we can go a step farther and help out those who are hungry with acts of mercy.
 - b. But when you confront someone who is suffering because of the intentional abuse of power, that's a tougher challenge.
 - 1) Imagine the story of the Good Samaritan, but instead of coming across the man after he had been beaten up, you encounter him while he's being beaten.
 - 2) In that situation, you're confronting the challenge of a violent, strong man.
 - c. We are called to this, but it feels scary.
- B. Injustice is defined in the Bible as a particular kind of sin.
- 1. Injustice is about the abuse of power, using power to take from others the good things that God intended for them — their life, liberty, dignity, or the fruit of their love and labor.
 - a. This is the sin that David committed when he abused his power as king to take another man's wife and then take that man's life.
 - b. It's also the sin that John the Baptist named when he called people to repentance, mentioning tax collectors abusing their power to steal from people, soldiers using threats and extortion, and King Herod abusing his power to take another man's wife.
 - 2. The question for Christians is how to love those who are suffering because of the abuse of power — that's the challenge of God's call to do justice.
- C. In Gary's book, he describes how many Christian ministries generously fund building shelters and providing food and clothing — all what he'd call compassion ministries — but if you look at how many Christian resources go to fighting injustice and stopping the abuse of power, it's quite a small percentage.
- 1. When Bill read that, he wondered why that is, because the ongoing oppression is what creates the conditions that require all this compassion.
 - 2. He realized that he had to change that resource allocation.
 - 3. Micah 6:8 says, "... What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (NASB).
 - a. Jesus repeats the same things when he says in Matthew 23:23, "[You] have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith" (NRSV).
 - b. We've been strong on the faith side — evangelism, discipleship, etc.
 - c. We also do well with mercy — feeding the hungry, caring for the homeless and the sick, etc.
 - d. But we don't focus so much on justice — confronting violence and oppression, helping those who don't have the freedom to worship, feed themselves, own land, or work, all because of injustice.
- D. The work of justice is getting to the root of many problems, and it's a demanding root.
- 1. We need God in this work.
 - 2. In that desperate neediness for God, we're going to get to experience Him, and that's why there's such a joyful experience even in the struggle.
- E. Many of those at IJM have legal or law enforcement backgrounds, but this call to the work of justice isn't limited to them.

1. The Bible didn't say, "Oh lawyer, this is what the Lord requires of you" — it's for all Christians.
 2. Similar to how some people have the gift of evangelism but we're all told to go and make disciples, we're all told to be engaged in the work of justice, whether or not we have a special gift.
 3. We're all qualified to do the work of justice, which is why IJM is so eager to equip whole congregations to be engaged in this work.
- F. To be empowered for effective action against injustice, we first need to see injustice the way that God does.
1. True commitment in the work of justice comes from a biblical conviction that justice matters to God.
 2. In our Christian life, it's empowering whenever we step into what God cares deeply about.
- G. Next, we need to not only know that God cares about justice but that He promises to go with us as we work for justice.
1. When God called Moses to return to Egypt and confront Pharaoh, Moses doubted his own qualifications.
 2. God didn't tell Moses about his qualifications but told Moses that He was going to go with him.
 3. God did use what was special about Moses in that ministry of justice and liberation, but what really mattered was that God went with him.
 4. We can know that every single day we go into the work of justice on behalf of those who are being abused, we are going with God.
 5. God doesn't give us a ministry without the power to do it.

VI. The Link Between Worship and Justice

- A. When we think of worship, most of us picture an auditorium filled with Christian people with their hands raised and voices expressing praise and adoration — and that's very important.
- B. Still, the Bible talks about not just worshiping with your lips but worshiping with your life, offering your life as a living sacrifice.
 1. We like easy praise in the Western church, and worship with the lips is pretty easy.
 2. Worship with your life is totally different.
- C. The reason that Bill likes what Gary is bringing to the Kingdom these days is that it's a redefinition of Christian worship and Christian living.
- D. Worship flows most powerfully from authentic, fall-on-your-face amazement at God.
 1. How many of us get to see God doing amazing things where we just fall on our faces in worship?
 2. In the work of justice, you see God do those things.
 3. Gary has seen God do miracles where the only response was passionate worship.
 4. The work of justice brings forth tremendous, heartfelt, joyful, tearful worship.
- E. We can see in Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah that God has a dim view of worship without justice.

VII. Charging the Darkness

- A. Gary talks about "charging the darkness."
 1. The phrase comes from how Gary would try to get his kids to go to bed when they were little and scared of the dark.

2. Gary would “charge the darkness” by backing up and dramatically charging into the dark room to see what would happen.
 3. Of course, nothing would happen, and everyone would laugh.
 4. Then, the kids would charge the darkness and see that there was nothing spooky about it.
- B. It’s easier for us to charge into the darker places of the world when we’ve seen others do it.
1. It’s important for us to remember the history of Christians being on the leading edge of the work of justice.
 2. That’s why IJM tells stories of seeing the people of God go into the darkness.
 3. From the stories, they can see that there are tough things out there but the power of God is so overwhelming that it is actually safe for us to follow Him, even into the dark places.
- C. We charge the darkness because light is always stronger than darkness.

VIII. **Confronting Injustice Versus Extending Compassion**

- A. Facing injustice is scary because violence is intentional — it’s not bad luck or disease or weather — it’s confronting someone intent on hurting someone else.
- B. The average Christian leader has a more developed understanding of compassion than they do of the work of justice.
1. When leaders see hungry people, they understand that they need to feed them.
 2. When they see people without shelter, they understand that they need to provide shelter.
 3. The difference is that it’s quite likely that someone has pulled power levers in such a way that masses of people are winding up hungry or without shelter.
 4. It’s time that the church pays attention to those people on a more systemic level.
- C. Gary once met a widow in Zambia named Venus.
1. She had three kids and watched her youngest die of starvation.
 2. They were starving because after her husband died, bullies came and stole her land.
 3. With her land, she would have been able to grow food to provide for her family, but that basic tool was ripped away from her by violence.
 4. We can come along and give her some food, or we can defend her on her own property so that she can grow her own food and provide for her family.
 5. If you choose to defend her and do that enough times, they stop taking the property.
- D. The good news about violence is that the people who abuse other people are not brave; they do it because they can get away with it.
1. All you have to do is hold a few of the bad guys accountable for what they do, and then they leave the poor people alone.
 2. They’ll try to scare you but the fact is that when we show up on people’s behalf as Christians have done over the ages, the Kingdom of God comes in justice, and it’s a beautiful and powerful thing.
- E. Bill recently heard a pastor friend explain to another the difference between compassion and justice like this:
1. When most pastors teach about the parable of the Good Samaritan, the moral to the story is that when you see someone in need, help that person.
 2. What Bill’s friend teaches is that not only should they help that person, but they should also fix the road — changing the conditions so that people don’t get robbed on it every day.

- F. The reason that IJM initially started rescuing kids out of slavery in India is that there were Christian ministries that were trying to provide school for the kids there.
 - 1. You can't get the kids to school if they're working in rock quarries and brick factories.
 - 2. IJM became the leaders against slavery, child labor, and police corruption.
 - 3. Now the people in those communities enjoy a substantial amount of justice, because they were fought for.
- G. The average pastor in the Western church only gets hints of the amount of injustice that's still going on in the world.
 - 1. They tend to be either oblivious or, if they've seen a presentation about the overwhelming, dark, and violent injustice out there, they get stuck in the paralysis of despair.
 - 2. We can't make people focus on a problem without some vision of how you can do something about it.
 - 3. Many times we look away from injustice, because we don't know what could possibly be done about it.
- H. Last summer, the United Nations came out with a report that said that most poor people in the world live outside the protection of the law.
 - 1. Imagine if there were no law in your community, if anyone could abuse you or take from you without restraint.
 - 2. Only the strong survive in those circumstances.
 - 3. Experts now know that the fundamental barrier to the poor actually moving forward is that they're not safe.
 - 4. We can give all kinds of goods and services to the poor, but if we don't defend them from bullies who take it all away, it won't do any good.
- I. IJM focuses specifically on the kinds of injustice and violence afflicting poor people that keep them poor.
 - 1. The first kind is sexual violence.
 - a. In the developing world, about 40 percent of women and girls are the victim of rape or attempted rape by age 14.
 - b. That is why many of them don't walk to get water, don't go to school, or aren't allowed to go out of their homes.
 - 2. The second is slavery.
 - a. There are about 27 million slaves in the world today, more than ever before in the history of man.
 - b. A smaller percentage of human beings are in slavery today than before, but because there are so many more people in the world today, there are more slaves now than were taken from Africa during the 400 years of transatlantic slave trade.
 - c. The poor don't get enforcement of the laws against slavery.
 - 3. The third is land seizures.
 - 4. The fourth is false imprisonment.
 - a. In poorer countries, somewhere between 60 and 85 percent of the people in prisons and jails have never been convicted with or even charged with a crime.
 - 5. The fifth is police abuse.
 - a. The World Bank did a study and found that most poor people saw the police as a source of insecurity for them.

IX. What Churches Can Do

- A. IJM has partnerships with many churches.
- B. One church, Cornerstone Fellowship in Ohio, has 4,000 attenders.
 - 1. They began their partnership by first getting educated about the biblical call to do the work of justice.
 - 2. They found that teaching about justice was a way to reach out, because the rest of their community wanted to hear about justice.
 - 3. They set up classes to study what the Bible says about justice.
 - 4. They set up a justice team to spearhead the effort.
 - 5. They came to IJM's global prayer gathering to pray with justice workers and learn from their experience.
 - 6. Then, they sent teams with IJM to India to work on the problem of sex trafficking and meet with the IJM team there about the ways they could serve.
 - 7. So, first they got educated, and then they went on the ground somewhere that they could start to examine the justice needs and how they could link with IJM.
 - 8. The church is helping do operations that extend IJM's aftercare help.
- C. Another church, River Church in northern California, has around 400 attenders.
 - 1. They also started by getting educated and getting connected in a place where they were already ministering.
 - 2. They began to learn more about the problem of sexual assault against women and girls and linked up with IJM's office in Peru.
 - 3. They found that they had gifts inside their church that they didn't realize they had — people who had counseling skills, law enforcement expertise, or medical skills.
 - 4. They brought some officials up from Peru to the United States to get training on dealing with the problem.
 - 5. They helped fund an investigator for IJM's office in Peru.
- D. A third church, New Heart Church, is located in southern California.
 - 1. They got educated and sent some teams to a place in the world where they had a heart to examine the justice needs and figure out what they could do about it.
 - 2. They were in the middle of a building program, but they decided to hold off on the building and build an aftercare center for IJM in the Philippines.
 - 3. This church has 90 regular attenders.
- E. Whether a church has 4,000 or 90 people, engaging in justice work starts with getting educated first in Scripture and then in how to do the work of justice.
- F. The next step is to connect with IJM or another neighbor somewhere in the world and figure out some tangible ways to do the work of justice, and then share the story.
- G. It's important for churches to find organizations to come alongside and work with.
 - 1. Organizations like IJM can help educate people in the church about justice.
 - 2. Almost every local church is already doing something somewhere in the world, but there are amazing possibilities if churches can link up with an organization like IJM to add some justice work to their compassion efforts.
 - 3. IJM has a DVD called *As You Go* to train short-term mission teams to have eyes and ears for justice during their trip.
 - a. Many times people affected by injustice won't talk about the problems because they don't think there are any solutions.

- b. The people may not tell you what's happening with their children, police, prisons, or abuses in the community, but there are appropriate ways to open up those conversations.
- c. After doing a "needs assessment" of sorts, often the team discovers upon coming home that there's a unique match between some of the gifts in that church with the needs in that community.
- d. They won't be able to meet all the needs, but there will be some priority needs that they can address.
- e. IJM can help churches make that move from auditing what the needs are to figuring out how the church might be uniquely matched by God to meet some of those needs.

X. The Importance of Prayer

- A. IJM's emphasis on prayer has become less of a matter of discipline and more of a matter of desperation.
 - 1. Mother Teresa said that she couldn't imagine doing her work for more than 30 minutes without prayer.
 - 2. Sometimes Gary wonders how many of us have a life's work that we can't imagine doing for 30 minutes without prayer.
 - 3. If we don't have that kind of work, perhaps we need a new life's work, or we need to do an old life's work in a new way.
- B. The struggle for justice will bring you down to your knees, but that is where they have experienced God most powerfully.
- C. At IJM, they start every day with 30 minutes of stillness, prayer, and spiritual preparation for the day.
- D. They also gather at 11:00 to pray together.
- E. They do this because they really need God, and in exchange for that neediness, they get to see God and experience Him.

XI. A Message of Hope

- A. Our spiritual adversary would love to have us beaten down with this picture of darkness, gloom, injustice, and violence that we can do nothing about, but that's not what we have to be consumed with — we can have a message of hope.
 - 1. Jesus says things like, "...take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, NIV).
 - 2. Our hope comes from the courage to look at injustice while realizing that God has called us to do this work, and He doesn't call us to a ministry that He doesn't give us the power to do.
 - 3. The history of the Bible and of Christianity over the last 2,000 years has shown God's faithfulness to go with Christians in the struggle for justice.
 - 4. Gary encourages leaders to travel with IJM, if for no other reason than to hear the stories of how day after day God is working through His people to overcome the most brutal forms of injustice in the world.
 - 5. Hope is found in Scripture and in the stories of how God is working today.
 - 6. Gary hopes that as people walk around with the message of hope, that people ask them the reason for the hope they have (1 Peter 3:15), and in those moments we can provide a testimony to the power and goodness of God.

- B. So many pastors who are all fired up about evangelism and discipleship — as they should be — get nervous when they move into the area of compassion.
 - 1. They may think that they're focusing on social things or that it's about politics.
 - 2. Those who have worked for a long time in compassion start to understand that once you go into the realm of compassion, it inevitably leads you to justice.
 - 3. You'll be doing compassion forever if you don't address some of the systemic injustices that require confrontation, legal action, and hard work.
- C. Gary once spoke to this young Christian leader who said she grew up in a church where she heard about compassion ministry, but now she's really drawn to the struggle for justice.
 - 1. Gary considers that progress, because when he grew up he didn't even hear about compassion — just evangelism and discipleship.
 - 2. There is progress, and God does do new things.
 - 3. God is eager to move us through compassion to get to the deeper issues of injustice.

Process Questions

- 1. Gary talked about "going on the trip but missing the adventure" and how many live a small, *Groundhog Day* Christian life.
 - a. Think about your own Christian life and circle a number on the scale below to indicate how it typically feels to you.

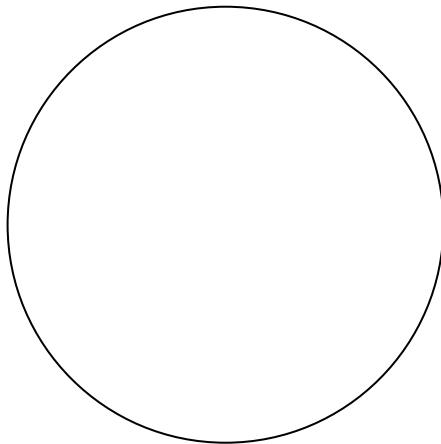
My Christian life feels boring/trivial.											I daily feel like I'm on a grand adventure with God.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
 - b. If you feel like you're on an adventure, great! If not, Gary indicated that boredom in the Christian life often comes from pursuing safety. Do you think that's true for you? If you'd like, write some thoughts below.

c. Gary believes that the pathway out of boredom, ineffectiveness, and triviality lies in the struggle for justice. Based on your assessment and reflection, are there any next steps you personally feel led to take in the area of justice? Some suggested steps are listed below. Feel free to choose one or write in your own.

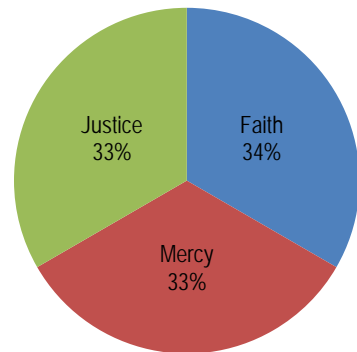
- Study what the Bible says about justice.
- Do some research on the justice work being done in the world (you could start at www.ijm.org).
- Look into traveling with IJM or another organization to witness the injustice happening around the world.
- _____

2. In Matthew 23:23, Jesus says, “[You] have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith” (NRSV). Many churches are strong with faith (evangelism, discipleship) and mercy (feeding the hungry, etc.) but don’t focus much on justice (confronting violence and oppression).

a. Assess how strongly your church emphasizes faith, mercy, and justice by dividing the pie chart below into three pieces.



Sample



b. Based on your assessment and what you heard, are there any next steps you feel led to take? If so, write them below.

3. Gary and Bill discussed many other aspects of justice, courage, and obedience in this interview. Some of the topics they discussed are listed in the chart below. If there is one or two that resonated with you, take a few moments to jot down your thoughts, insights, and/or next steps.

Being OK with God despite failure (p. 1-2)	
Being courageous/obedient in the presence of fear (p. 4-5)	
The link between worship and justice (p. 7)	
Charging the darkness (p. 7-8)	
What churches can do (p. 10-11)	
The importance of prayer (p. 11)	