

Bible Study 3 - Just Food: Relational Food

1. Jargon Buster

Get into three or four groups and give each group a piece of paper with a word / term written on it – e.g. *'free range'*, *'organic'*, *'seasonal'*, *'factory farm'* or *'food miles'*. Ask each group to discuss the term together and then explain the meaning to the rest of the group without using the words on the paper. For example, the group who have 'food miles' could say 'the distance the things we eat travel from where they are grown' and everyone else will try to guess the answer.

Or...

Food Charades

Split into two groups and create a list of different food 'terms' that you want group A and B to act out (no term should be repeated; for example, you might give group A 'free range', 'organic', 'seasonal', 'GM' and 'supermarket' and you might give group B 'factory farm', 'farmer's market', 'chemical fertiliser' and 'food miles'). One at a time, alternating between group A and B, whisper the chosen term to the participants and ask them to act out the food related expression for their group. After the game you could discuss the terms in greater detail.

2. Yes / No Game

Ask everyone to stand in the middle of the room and explain that one end of the room is 'Yes', the other end is 'No' and 'Not Sure' is somewhere in the middle. Then read various statements and ask everyone to position themselves in the room depending on their point of view. The statements can be things like, 'I think that buying factory farmed meat is fine', or 'I always buy fair trade products'. When everyone has found 'their' place in the room, the person who read the statement then asks different people to explain and justify why they are standing where they are. As the debate continues, people can then reposition themselves if they have been persuaded to change their perspective. This is a brilliant game and a really good way of thinking about different issues!

3. Leviticus 25:1-12 and Luke 4:16-21 (The Message)

Leviticus 25:1-12 God spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai: "Speak to the People of Israel. Tell them, When you enter the land which I am going to give you, the land will observe a Sabbath to God. Sow your fields, prune your vineyards, and take in your harvests for six years. But the seventh year the land will take a Sabbath of complete and total rest, a Sabbath to God; you will not sow your fields or prune your vineyards. Don't reap what grows of itself; don't harvest the grapes of your untended vines. The land gets a year of complete and total rest. But you can eat from what the land volunteers during the Sabbath year - you and your men and women servants, your hired hands, and the foreigners who live in the country, and, of course, also your livestock and the wild animals in the land can eat from it. Whatever the land volunteers of itself can be eaten."

"Count off seven Sabbaths of years - seven times seven years: Seven Sabbaths of years adds up to forty-nine years. Then sound loud blasts on the ram's horn on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement. Sound the ram's horn all over the land. Sanctify the fiftieth year;



make it a holy year. Proclaim freedom all over the land to everyone who lives in it - a Jubilee for you: each person will go back to his family's property and reunite with his extended family. The fiftieth year is your Jubilee year: Don't sow; don't reap what volunteers itself in the fields; don't harvest the untended vines because it's the Jubilee and a holy year for you. You're permitted to eat from whatever volunteers itself in the fields."

Luke 4:16-21 He came to Nazareth where he had been reared. As he always did on the Sabbath, he went to the meeting place. When he stood up to read, he was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written,

God's Spirit is on me;
He's chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor,
Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind,
To set the burdened and battered free,
To announce, "This is God's year to act!"

He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the assistant, and sat down. Every eye in the place was on him, intent. Then he started in, "You've just heard Scripture make history. It came true just now in this place."

4. Thought for Food

- What does Jesus mean when he says he has been sent to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour? (see also Isaiah 61)
- Why do you think that God says we should let the land lie fallow and 'rest' every seven years?
- What are the social, economic and environmental consequences of 'Sabbath', 'Jubilee' and of Jesus' manifesto in Luke 4? How can we apply these to our society today?
- Do you think about where your food comes from and about how it was grown?
- What benefits to our society do we think a 'slow food' culture could produce?
- Do you think it is a good use of money to buy organic and / or fair-trade food? How much extra – 10%? 20%? - are you prepared to pay for an easier conscience?

5. 'Just Food' Video Clip

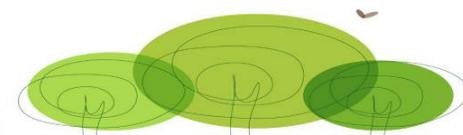
Watch the 'Just Food' Video Clip from the resource pack as a group.

6. 'Just Food' Spider Diagram

Why not try re-imagining a food system based around relationship and justice and mapping your ideas out as a spider diagram. What do you think this kind of 'just' food system would look like? You could try thinking about either the Eat LESS principles (in the sermon on 'Just Food' – LESS = Local, Ethical, Seasonal, Slow), or the LOAF principles (local, organic, animal friendly, fair-trade) and discuss the positive impacts that these ideas might have on your local community?

7. Pray

Thank God that we are made in His image and that we are being continually renewed and transformed. Ask Him to help us to care for all that He has made and approach food in a way that glorifies Him. As a group you could also try praying for the farmers that produced the food you ate today.



8. Suggested Film: The Power of Community

'The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil' is a documentary looking at how Cuba had to rapidly alter its food production system when the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s – removing almost all Cuba's oil and 80% of its food imports. In the film, Cubans share how they transitioned from a highly mechanized, industrial agricultural system to one using organic methods of farming and local, urban gardens.

The film is available from sources including www.amazon.co.uk and www.lovefilm.com.

What Do I Need?

- Jargon Buster terms - pieces of paper/card
- 'Just Food' Video Clip from Resource Pack
- Large piece of paper and pens for 'Just Food' Spider Diagram
- DVD of 'The Power of Community' if wanted.

