

3

A PROPHETIC GENERATION

Prophets are people willing to speak up and tell the truth, truth that those in power might not want to hear. They are brave enough to show us God's vision for a better world, to point us towards a better way when we've lost sight of what matters.

WHAT ARE THE THINGS IN OUR SOCIETY THAT WE SHOULD BE SPEAKING OUT ABOUT, EVEN IF IT SEEMS DIFFICULT?



YOU WILL NEED:

Bibles, awards for future achievements (eg chocolates or mini trophies/printed cards with the winning categories)



GET STARTED: Seeing the future?

Give out some 'future' awards to the group!
Nominate the person most likely to become a TV presenter, most likely to become Prime Minister, most likely to be famous, most likely to win an Oscar,

most likely to get married first, most likely to win an Olympic medal, most likely to break a world record, most likely to become a comedian, most likely to become a vicar/youth leader etc.

What do you think of when you hear the word prophetic? Do you think you're prophetic?

Explain that, actually, being prophetic isn't about being able to predict what will happen in the future:

In the Bible, prophets were people who saw how the future should look; who saw that we were off track from the future God wants for us all. They were people who spoke out about things that were wrong in the world, they told the truths that no one else wanted to hear, and they pointed people towards a better way of living. They saw how people were going wrong and tried to show how the future could look if we lived differently.



READ:

Amos 5:21-24, Micah 6:6-8, Isaiah 58:1-10



DISCUSS:

What's the key message that the Prophets are warning against? (That religious ritual is meaningless if it is not accompanied by a just way of living.)

- Can you think of any modern day prophets, speaking out against unjust systems even when doing so comes at great personal risk?
- What do you think are the main qualities of a prophet? Do you know anyone who has some of these qualities? (Think about wisdom, to see the world as God wants it to be; courage, to speak out to religious leaders or those in power; compassion, to stand in solidarity with those who are suffering.)
- What are the things in our world that need challenging or speaking out against?
- How can we become a prophetic generation?
- What truths might we need to hear ourselves that we might not want to hear? What rituals do we get caught up in that get in the way of showing each other love?
- What are the 'false prophets' in our lives, holding us back from reaching our full potential as children of God?
- Dom Hélder Câmara, a Brazilian Archbishop, once said: 'When I feed the poor they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor are hungry they call me a communist.' People who challenge the way things are, often face opposition and sometimes even suffer for speaking the truth. What sorts of things might hold us back from challenging injustice?



ACTIVITY:

Shouting out against injustice doesn't always need to be loud. There are ways we can speak the truth gently, but powerfully, that might give those around us a glimpse of the Kingdom. Explore creative examples of people trying to show those around them that another way is possible: think about Mother Teresa giving up



everything to care for the poor; Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat on the bus; people who have refused to fight in a war that they don't agree with; people who go on hunger strike in solidarity with those facing injustice; or people who don't buy certain products because of how they are made. What are the merits, or drawbacks, of these methods of protest or living differently? Explore creative methods of campaigning and see if you can think of any new ways to show the world that there is a better way.



PRAY:

- Practise using your voice for the vulnerable, by shouting out prayers for people that need to feel God's love this week.
- Think about all of the different leaders and influencers in your lives and share who they are: church leaders, local politicians, national leaders... Agree to pray for one of them every night this week. Pray that they are open to listen to the prophetic voices around them.



PLEDGE:

- Sign up to receive the Collective ezine and get up to date campaign actions when they launch.
- Could you speak to your MP regularly to encourage them to use their power for good? Sign up to be a Collective lobbyist and we will email you four times a year with an issue for you to raise with your MP or local politician. You can write to them and send them our briefing sheet or, even better, go and see them with some friends. If your group is interested in having a workshop on how to lobby an MP or local politician, get in touch with **collective@christian-aid.org** and we will try to provide a local speaker or resources to help.
- Think about how else you might be able to be a prophetic voice in your community. Could you lead a prayer or reflection in your church about the Prophets in the Bible and our calling to speak up?