



isiphambano

CENTRE FOR BIBLICAL JUSTICE



Cross-Centred Justice Study Cohort

Study cohorts exist for those wanting a more in-depth programme of theological and practical reflection in understanding and applying cross-centred, contextual justice to the South African context. In-depth study and reflection on Scripture will form a central tenant of this course, which will also include discussion of church history, the history of South Africa, sociological understandings of race and power, and reflections on relevant theologians or theological schools of thought. This course will give the participant not only a robust theological understanding of Cross-Shaped Justice but also a practical framework for actually doing justice and mercy in contemporary South Africa.

What Format Does a Cohort Take?

Cohorts usually run for ten months from February to November each year. Each unit consists of a monthly contact session taking place each month, supplemented by prepared readings, short preparation exercises and course notes. Each year we run a number of different cohorts who meet up on different days and at different times suitable to each cohort.

The contact sessions themselves are a mixture of seminar, group discussions, case studies and contextual learning exercises. A full set of electronic course notes will be provided for each participant.

Cohort Options for 2021:

We are offering a number of potential cohort options for 2021. Please note that all cohorts are dependent upon having a sufficient number of participants. Note that exact dates and times are flexible and may be changed to suit the cohort participants. Upon registering please indicate which is your preferred cohort. [Click here in order to register](#).

Option 1: Monday Evenings:

CAPE TOWN BASED. 19:00 - 21:30 (once a month). Venue and exact dates and times will be confirmed with participants upon registration and may be changed to suit cohort participants needs where possible. Facilitator: John Scheepers

Option 2: Thursday Mornings:

CAPE TOWN BASED. 9:30 - 12:30 (once a month) Venue and exact dates and times will be confirmed with participants upon registration and may be changed to suit cohort participants needs where possible. Facilitators: John Scheepers and Jeremy Koeries

Option 3: Online Cohort

ALL LOCATIONS. With the online format the exact time of this cohort can be at the discretion of the participants and will be discussed with participants upon registration. All contact sessions will take place using the Zoom Video Conferencing Platform (there will be no extra cost for participants for this). Facilitator: John Scheepers

Option 4: Gauteng Cohort

JOHANNESBURG BASED: This cohort will be offered either on a Wednesday Morning or a Thursday evening (once a month) depending on participants availability. Venue and exact dates and times will be confirmed with participants upon registration. Facilitator: Ryan Saville

[Click here in order to register.](#)

What Does it Cost?

The cost for 2021 will be R 1000 per quarter due at the beginning of each school term (January, April, July, October). A R 300 registration fee is also payable upon registration.

**** ASSISTANCE WITH COHORT COSTS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST ****

How do I apply?

[Click here in order to register](#) and send the proof of payment for your R300 Registration Fee to admin@isiphambano.com.

Contact:

Any queries of further questions please contact admin@isiphambano.com

Banking Details:

Bank: Standard Bank

Account Name: Isiphambano Centre for Biblical Justice

Account Number: 070629609

Branch: Thibault Square

Branch Code: 020909

Swift Code: SBZA ZA J

What content will be covered?

Each cohort will comprise of ten units, each unit being the topic of one contact session.

Unit One: Locating Yourself in the Story:

This unit will focus on who we are and what we bring into the process of learning. None of us start a process of learning from a neutral position. All of our stories are a complex interaction of personal journey, inherited theology, contextual and historical formation, as well as personal spirituality and individuality. This unit will prepare us for the learning process by helping us recognise who we are and what we bring “into the room” with us. In particular how has your story influenced how you understand the gospel, church, theology, race, and justice? This unit will also briefly examine the contextuality of our faith, theology, and Scripture.

Unit Two: What is the Gospel?

This unit will examine the gospel as story proclaimed from all of Scripture and comprehensive in scope, encompassing all aspects of creation, individual and corporate, personal, and structural, political, economic, social, and environmental. The holistic gospel sees both evangelism and justice as integral and inseparable aspects to the goal of the redemption story – the restoration of shalom. This unit will also briefly examine the Exodus as paradigm for salvation and the nature of the Kingdom of God in the ministry of Jesus.

Unit Three: What is The Mission of the Church?

This unit will explore the concept of integral or holistic mission. In particular we will probe the relationship between evangelism and social action in the life and mission of the church. Are they both equally valid components of God’s mission? Is there a priority for evangelism? What about the danger of the social gospel? Using the framework of “mission in creative tension” this unit will explore the role of the Great Commission, as well as the historical “Great Reversal” and the recovery of an evangelical social conscience.

Unit Four: Biblical Economics:

This unit will explore a biblical understanding of the roots of poverty as both relational and structural. Discuss what role God's people ought to play in caring for the poor and the marginalized, and develop a brief biblical theology of economics, power, and wealth among God's people. In particular this unit will focus on the Law as a paradigm for Christian ethics, the warnings of the Old Testament Prophets, the poor in Luke-Acts and the writing of Paul.

Unit Five: The History of the South African Church and Inequality:

This unit explores the complex and inconsistent history of the church in South Africa, through on the one hand, silent complicity, and active promotion of apartheid's racial and economic oppression. Whilst on the other hand the providing the seeds of liberation and the struggle for inequality. This unit will examine how division and inequality has permeated her own structures and significantly shaped her mission to the world. Particular attention will be given to the role of evangelicals and apartheid.

Unit Six: Decolonisation: Christianity as a non-Western Faith:

This unit will explore briefly explore some principle of contextualization and the contextual nature of the gospel. We will then explore further questions around contextualizing the gospel for Africa and how context affects how we read the Bible and formulate our theology? What is a colonising theology? What is decolonisation and does our theology need to be decolonised? Does the Bible itself need to be decolonised? What might a non-Western or decolonised faith look like?

Unit Seven: Race, Culture and Ethnicity in The Bible

This unit will explore a biblical understanding of the differences between race, culture, and ethnicity. Including a biblical study of diversity and division; giving particular attention to the concept of the Image of God, unity in diversity, and the one new humanity found in the work of Christ. This unit will also raise questions around the ethnicity or "race" of the characters found in the biblical record and in church history.

Unit Eight: Race, Racism, and the Church:

This unit will examine the origins of race as a historical and sociological phenomenon. Particular focus will be given to the exploration of race as a social construct used to empower and enrich and justify slavery. What is racism and how has it been used in order to construct a racialized society and racialized identities? In what way have our churches and theologies been racialized – including examination of social dynamics in multi-racial churches. This unit will briefly explore what biological foundations exist for the concept of race, as well as the development of scientific racism and eugenics. Finally, this unit will touch on concepts such as anti-racism, critical race theory, and white privilege.

Unit Nine: Reconciliation and Restitution:

This unit will explore a biblical understanding of reconciliation and restitution as well as the contextual implications for us today within the South African context. Particular attention will be given to the relationship between repentance, restitution and reconciliation, and the importance and role of lament in the process of reconciliation and healing.

Unit Ten: A Spirituality for the Road

This final unit will explore the cultivation of a spirituality which can sustain the work of justice. This unit will contain a brief introduction to the concept of prophetic imagination, a process shaped by Scripture and context which opens up our imagination to the possibility of a different world, shaped by God's vision for the world. This unit will also invite participants to engage in their own process of prophetic imagination. This unit will also outline some disciplines and actions to enable us to pursue justice in our everyday lives.

What previous participants have said:

“It is with real delight that I commend the Isiphambano Study Cohort, which I had the opportunity to partake in this year. I have so appreciated being exposed to outstanding scholarship regarding the history and mission of the church and learning about perspectives of significant evangelical leaders in the 'two thirds' world. What was even more valuable was engaging with this material in a diverse group of men and women from different churches across the city. These monthly learning moments were facilitated with skill and grace and the opportunity to reflect on what my theology and practice is in relation to the biblical call for cross-centred and contextual justice has been invaluable.”

Leigh Berg

2018 Participant

“The Isiphambano Cohort is a phenomenal space to grapple and grow Theologically with the issue of Justice. The yearlong cohort has helped me fill in some of the blind spots I have around this critical issue in our time, and it has also informed the way I do theology. I would encourage anyone seeking to grapple and develop a contextual ministry philosophy to be a part of this.”

Grant Porthen, Jubilee Community Church

2018 Participant

"The cohort has introduced me to work of remarkable, Southern Hemisphere-based evangelical leaders like Samuel Escobar, Ruth Padilla Du Borst and Rene Padilla. Prior to joining the cohort, I had never heard these names. I am thankful to have been exposed to their work in the justice arena. The prescribed readings in the cohort are engaging and challenging and helps to sharpen my theological perspectives on justice."

Jeremy Koeries,

International Lead Team and South Africa Country Leader, J-Life Africa

2018 Participant

“The Study Cohort has been an amazing engagement as we met as Christians of different churches. Both the readings and group discussions cut to the core of one’s everyday life experiences on matters of justice. Lessons learnt in the study cohorts compel you to reflect deeply on how far the church (your church) is dealing with matters of justice in our times. It’s sad to admit that we still lack behind as we did pre-democracy in SA. I encourage every maturing Christian to take part in such studies. They will sharpen your everyday Christian living in our times.”

Katleho Meslane

St Thomas’ Church, Heideveld

2018 Participant

“The Isiphambano Centre for Biblical Justice is providing a much-needed voice in the justice arena. Through the Study Cohort, I have learned essential paradigms and frameworks that equip me to be faithful to God’s text and the context of South Africa. Through the cohort, a diverse group of South Africans have been grappling and discussing rich theology. This cohort creates an environment that makes this a heart journey, shaped by the Word. I recommend this cohort to anyone who wants to ensure that the cross is at the centre of their passion and practice of justice.”

Richard Lundie

Common Good Congregational Support Team Leader

2018 Participant

Being part of the Isiphambano cohort sessions were (for me) a definite life changing experience. The cohort was an open and comfortable space to interrogate, discuss and evaluate how we as God’s people, His church, His Kingdom; understand His justice and righteousness. The readings and discussions helped not only reflect on our church, societal or political structures and systems; they decanted deep self-reflections. I believe the cohort was my first step in living an articulate life of God’s justice and love.

Ulibo Maake

2019 Cohort Participant