



# **SURVIVING THE HUNGER GAMES**

**A CONVERSATION GUIDE**

**TIM SHANGLE**



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## “Surviving the Hunger Games”

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# HUNGER IS NOT A GAME



## I. Hunger is **NOT** a Game

Hunger is a feeling that few in America and the Western World feel. *The Hunger Games* details Katniss' experiences of hunger. She struggles throughout the book with many episodes of hunger and near starvation.

One of the most graphic descriptions is of her early childhood. In her attempt to provide for her family after her father's death, she became so desperate she attempted to steal from the trash.

Peeta's mother chases her off. Peeta, having seen this, burns two loaves of bread. He then discards them into the trash. These two loaves provide enough nourishment for Katniss, her mother, and sister Prim to survive for another day. It is only out of Peeta's generosity that Katniss is able to provide for her family.

Another time that Katniss experiences not only hunger, but dehydration is on her first night within the Hunger Games. She struggles for motivation to move on further. She contemplates giving up and succumbing to death. But she pushes onwards, until she finally ends up at a small pond. This provides fresh water for her survival.

It is difficult to relate to this extreme type of dehydration and hunger, but many throughout the world experience this every day.

One in Eight people lack access to safe water supplies.

Approximately 3,575,000 people die each year from water-related disease.<sup>1</sup>

Just as Peeta risked the temper of his mother to provide for Katniss, we should try to overcome the problems which stand in our way to help those who suffer from hunger. Hunger is not a distant thing. In every town, city, and county there are those in need.

Malnourishment is a very real problem, but sadly it is hidden behind the walls of our homes. Katniss and Prim still went to school every day. However, they were still suffering from hunger. **More than 31 million children** participate in the National School Lunch program within the United States of America.<sup>2</sup>

Often we think of those who suffer from hunger as being homeless, but as in Katniss's example, this is not always true. Often those who

<sup>1</sup> "Water.org." *Water Facts: Water*. Web. 08 Mar. 2012.

<sup>2</sup> "USAD Food and Nutrition Service." *National School Lunch Program*, Web, 08 Mar. 2012.

are malnourished or hungry, have a home and family. They are simply unable to provide enough food and nourishment for their household.

We should be aware that Hunger is a very real problem within our communities and offer compassion to those in need. Peeta did not question when he gave. Often, like the Capitol, we attempt to set rules for those we show compassion towards. Peeta did not ask why Katniss was hungry, or ask why her mother could not provide, he simply gave.

Showing unconditional compassion is difficult to do. Sometimes children are better at doing this than adults. Peeta's mother failed to give, but Peeta was able to demonstrate unconditional compassion. We must develop this type attitude when helping those who suffer from hunger.

## Thought-provoking Questions

Have you ever suffered from hunger? When were you most hungry? Have you ever seen anyone who hungered? What was your reaction to them? Do you wish your reaction to the hungry people you saw was different? Would your reaction be similar to what Peeta did for Katniss? How would you react if someone came to you who had a roof over their head, but still suffered from hunger?

The working poor within the United States is described as a group that works and has an income, but is unable to provide for their families. Many adults argue over the definitions of work and poor. How would you define work? How would you define poor? Should there be a limit to compassion? Would you ever question someone suffering from hunger? Have you ever blamed someone for their own hunger?

What would you do if you were in the situation that Katniss found herself in? If your parents or guardians were unable to provide for you, what would you do? Would you try to find a job, if so, where? Would you drop out of school? What impact would this have on your future? Do you have younger or older brothers and sisters that you would have to provide for?

## Active Learning

Fasting can be a wonderful tool to experience hunger and become better aware of what you eat on a daily basis. It also helps to make you self-conscious of what role food plays in your life. For this activity choose one meal that you engage with others. Maybe it is a family meal or a lunch with friends. Pick a meal where normally everyone enjoys eating.

At this meal either drink only water or have a very plain meal in relation to everyone else. If everyone else is enjoying a pizza buffet, try eating only saltine crackers and drinking water. The purpose of this meal is to see how food can be taken for granted. Also it helps point out how consuming a meal is a social event. This allows you to experience what it is like to be with little food when others have plenty.



## Countercultural Wisdom

*The founder of Methodism, John Wesley, spoke often on “works of mercy” and “works of piety.” He was an advocate to bring about social justice and often addressed the issue of hunger. The following is a short abridged excerpt from his sermon “Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount II,” where Wesley talks of a spiritual hunger.<sup>3</sup>*

We should observe, first, that hunger and thirst are the strongest of all our bodily appetites. In like manner this hunger in the soul, this thirst after the image of God, is the strongest of all our spiritual appetites, when it is once awakened in the heart: Yea, it swallows up all the rest in that one great desire—to be renewed after the likeness of Him that created us.

We should, secondly, observe, that from the time we begin to hunger and thirst, those appetites do not cease, but are more and more craving and importunate, till we either eat and drink, or die. And even so, from the time that we begin to hunger and thirst after the whole mind which was in Christ, these spiritual appetites do not cease, but cry after their food with more and more importunity; nor can they possibly cease, before they are satisfied, while there is any spiritual life remaining.

We may, thirdly, observe, that hunger and thirst are satisfied with nothing but meat and drink. If you would give to him that is hungry all the world beside, all the elegance of apparel, all the trappings of state, all the treasure upon earth, yea thousands of gold and silver; if you would pay him ever so much honour—he regards it not: All these things are then of no account with him. He would still say, “These are not the things I want; give me food, or else I die.”

The very same is the case with every soul that truly hungers and thirsts after righteousness. He can find no comfort in anything but this: He can be satisfied with nothing else. Whatever you offer besides, it is lightly esteemed: Whether it be riches, or honour, or pleasure, he still says, “This is not the thing which I want! Give me love, or else I die!”

<sup>3</sup> John Wesley, *Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, II*, §II. 3

## Digging Deeper

Isaiah 58:6-12 • Luke 6:20-23

John 6:35 • James 2:15-17

### Prayer

*“God of Life”*

God of life.

God of those who walk miles for water,

God of those whose only supply is  
contaminated, bringing death, not life.

May water, clean and life-giving,  
be available to every living creature.

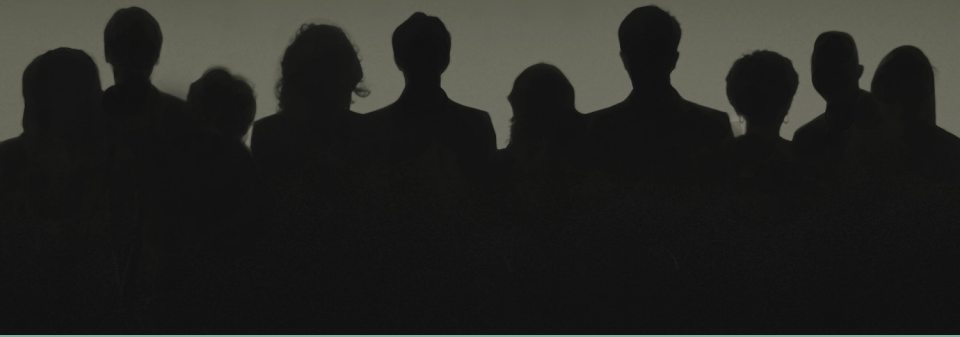
May that vision move forward.

May your will be done.

—*Christian Aid*, Great Britain<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> “Prayer Resources.” *Church World Service*. Ed. Christian Aid, Great Britain. Web. 8 Mar. 2012.

# OUR IMPERFECT FAMILIES



## II. Our Imperfect Families

Katniss, Peeta, and Gale all come from families that have significant problems. Katniss and Gale's fathers died in a mining accident. As a result, they both have to provide for their families. Peeta comes from a two parent household, but suffers from an abusive mother.

As these three character's lives intertwine we realize no family is perfect. Katniss and Gale hunt to survive and attempt to help their imperfect families. Peeta performs acts of kindness to offset his mother's temper.

In the United States, **more than one in four children** lives with one parent.<sup>5</sup> Much like Katniss and Gale, these children struggle to survive. Though they may not have to resort to hunting, they may endure other unforeseen hardships.

Whenever significant change happens within a household, the family must adapt to it. As in the case of a death of the parent, this change is unwanted and grief ensues. The family must continue their daily routine, even though a significant part of their life is gone. Peeta suffers from a different type of family problem. He is trapped by an abusive parent. Peeta is not alone in this struggle.

Every ten seconds a case of child abuse or neglect is reported.<sup>6</sup>

Many families are broken and fail to live up to the ideal family we often see in television and movies. It is important that we build relationships with our family and our friends, so that like Katniss and Gale, and later Katniss and Peeta, we have someone to turn to when we are in need.

When Katniss volunteered as a tribute for her sister, Prim, she entrusted Gale to provide for her family. When families are broken, it is important that we share our thoughts and feelings and seek help from others. This is especially true if you are a victim of abuse.

Another important lesson to take away from *The Hunger Games*, is no matter where a family lives, or how much money a family has, they can still suffer from brokenness. Peeta is the son of a baker, and lives in the merchant area. He is not from the Seam. However, he still suffers from abuse. No one is immune from a broken family.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce. "Census Brief." *Census.gov*. Sept. 1997. Web. 8 Mar. 2012.

<sup>6</sup> "National Child Abuse Statistics." *Childhelp.org*. Web. 8 Mar. 2012.

## Thought-provoking Questions

Does your family resemble: Katniss, Gale, or Peeta? Do you know a family that does? What would you say to a family that was experiencing the brokenness that these three characters experienced? Read the following quote:

*Yet aren't all families "broken" in some way? Marriage customs bring together two people from different lineages and place them under a common roof. By definition, marriage is a joining of unlike elements.<sup>7</sup>*

Do you agree with this assessment that all families are broken? Is your family broken by this definition? Katniss's mother was from the merchant area, and her father was from the Seam. One was rich, the other poor. How do you think these cultural differences played out within her home? Does your family have cultural differences?

## Active Learning

Think about a family member who has meant a lot to you. Begin to list why this person means so much. Write a letter that details the times in your life that they were significant to you. Be descriptive and share from your heart. If possible, deliver the letter in person.

<sup>7</sup> Lupton, Ellen. "In Praise of the Broken Home." *Opinionator*. New York Times, 2 Aug. 2010. Web. 08 Mar. 2012.

## Countercultural Wisdom

*Who does Jesus consider his mother and brothers? Read Mathew 12:46-50.<sup>8</sup>*

### Obedience Is Thicker than Blood

While he was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers showed up. They were outside trying to get a message to him. Someone told Jesus, “Your mother and brothers are out here, wanting to speak with you.”

Jesus didn’t respond directly, but said, “Who do you think my mother and brothers are?” He then stretched out his hand toward his disciples. “Look closely. These are my mother and brothers. Obedience is thicker than blood. The person who obeys my heavenly Father’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”

## Digging Deeper

Isaiah 40:29-31 • II Corinthians 1:3-4 • Psalm 127

## Prayer

*The prayer below is a traditional children’s prayer.*

*As you pray it aloud, remember the children that need special care.*

### “God Hear My Prayer”

God in heaven hear my prayer,  
keep me in thy loving care.  
Be my guide in all I do,  
Bless all those who love me too.  
Amen.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *The Message*. Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.

<sup>9</sup> “Prayers For Children.” *GodWeb*. Web. 08 Mar. 2012.

# FINDING COMMON GROUND



## III. Finding Common Ground

As Katniss and Peeta prepare to enter the arena, they encounter the tributes from the other districts. Each district is unique in its individual endeavors...

District 1 –luxury items, 2–stone quarries, 3–general electronics, 4–fishing, 5–power, 6–transportation, 7–lumber, 8–textiles, 9–grain, 10–livestock, 11 –agriculture, and 12–coal mining

Presiding over all the districts is the Capitol. It does not manufacture or produce. It governs and consumes.

Though each tribute comes from a different culture and region in Panem, many form alliances in the games. One of the most notable and touching is the alliance between Katniss and Rue.

Katniss is from District 12, the place where coal is mined. Rue is from agriculture, District 11. Rue is small and agile, leaping from tree to tree. Katniss is a loner, looking out for herself and trusting no one. At first it appears as though they have nothing to offer each other. However, they soon realize friendship is much needed within the Hunger Games. They quickly become friends.

**They came from differing backgrounds, but they found things in common.** Rue reminded Katniss of her sister Prim. Rue trusted Katniss, because she identified the mockingjay on the necklace of Katniss. These two small things allowed them both to begin a friendship that changed the games.

Often our differences are the first thing that we notice, but once we really look at each other, like Katniss and Rue, we realize how much we have in common with one another. Though we are all different, we all have families. Some are big families, with a mother, father, and lots of children. Some are small with only one child and an ever-changing foster-parent. But each of our families has similar dynamics. We have sad times and happy times. Some families have more happy than sad, but we can all relate in the ups and downs.

Katniss and Rue did this when they shared a meal together. Many Districts were close to starving or already suffering from starvation. So, in sharing a common meal, they were able to celebrate a happy time. They had food in front of them. This was a blessing for them.

When we see someone that is different from us, we should try to see what we have in common. I have witnessed differences coming together through a single moment. Young and old people, slow and fast people, smart and smarter people. One event, where this happens regularly, is



a sunset on Lake Michigan. It never ceases to amaze me how watching this one simple thing can bring a sense of awe over all who are watching.

I've seen the same sort of thing at Yellowstone National Park on a very dark, starry night. These awe-inspiring moments help us to realize how *similar* we are to the *different* people around us.

## Thought-provoking Questions

Do you have any friends that are different from you? Think about this question. Do you only seek friendships with people that are like you? Do you pay attention to the differences or similarities when you meet someone new?

Have you ever felt uncomfortable because you felt you were the one who was different in a group of people that all seemed so similar to each other? This often happens when we travel to a different region or a different country. How do you think it would make you feel if you were separated like Katniss, away from your home and family and you had to adapt?

Have you ever been to an event where many people that were seemingly different, became unified around an awe-inspiring moment or a common goal? What was it like to witness this event?

Katniss was able to find similarities with Rue, but she had trouble identifying with the inhabitants of the Capitol. The people from the Capitol had differing mannerisms, styles of dress, and ways of speaking. The Capitol citizens lived in luxury, while those that lived in the districts suffered from hunger. Do you think Katniss had similarities with the Capitol citizens? Do you have more in common with Katniss or the Capitol?

## Active Learning

Find someone that is different from you that you do not know closely. Maybe it is an exchange student or someone who speaks a different native language. Take them out for lunch and figure out something you have in common with each other. Use this as an opportunity to focus not on your differences, but on your similarities.

## Countercultural Wisdom

*Martin Luther King Jr. was a preacher and civil rights activist. He was tragically assassinated on April 4, 1968. The following is an excerpt taken from his sermon, "Loving Your Enemies":<sup>10</sup>*

This is why Jesus says love. There's something about love that builds up and is creative. There is something about hate that tears down and is destructive. So love your enemies.

You remember when Abraham Lincoln was running for president of the United States, there was a man who ran all around the country talking about Lincoln. He said a lot of bad things about Lincoln, a lot of unkind things. And sometimes he would get to the point that he would even talk about his looks, saying, "You don't want a tall, lanky, ignorant man like this as the president of the United States." He went on and on and on and went around with that type of attitude and wrote about it.

Finally, one day Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States. And if you read the great biography of Lincoln, if you read the great works about him, you will discover that as every president comes to the point, he came to the point of having to choose a Cabinet. And then came the time for him to choose a Secretary of War. He looked across the nation, and decided to choose a man by the name of Mr. Stanton.

<sup>10</sup> King, Martin Luther Jr. "Loving Your Enemies", Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. Montgomery, AL, Nov. 1957.

And when Abraham Lincoln stood around his advisors and mentioned this fact, they said to him: “Mr. Lincoln, are you a fool? Do you know what Mr. Stanton has been saying about you? Do you know what he has done, tried to do to you? Do you know that he has tried to defeat you on every hand? Do you know that, Mr. Lincoln? Did you read all of those derogatory statements that he made about you?”

Abraham Lincoln stood before the advisors around him and said: “Oh yes, I know about it; I read about it; I’ve heard him myself. But after looking over the country, I find that he is the best man for the job.”

Mr. Stanton did become Secretary of War, and a few months later, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. And if you go to Washington, you will discover that one of the greatest words or statements ever made by, about Abraham Lincoln was made about this man Stanton. And as Abraham Lincoln came to the end of his life, Stanton stood up and said: “Now he belongs to the ages.” And he made a beautiful statement concerning the character and the stature of this man. ‘

If Abraham Lincoln had hated Stanton, if Abraham Lincoln had answered everything Stanton said, Abraham Lincoln would have not transformed and redeemed Stanton.

Stanton would have gone to his grave hating Lincoln, and Lincoln would have gone to his grave hating Stanton. But through the power of love Abraham Lincoln was able to redeem Stanton.

That’s it. There is a power in love that our world has not discovered yet. Jesus discovered it centuries ago. Mahatma Gandhi of India discovered it a few years ago, but most men and most women never discover it. For they believe in hitting for hitting; they believe in an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; they believe in hating for hating; but Jesus comes to us and says, “This isn’t the way.”

And oh this morning, as I think of the fact that our world is in transition now. Our whole world is facing a revolution. Our nation is facing a revolution, our nation. One of the things that concerns me most is that in the midst of the revolution of the world and the midst of the revolution of this nation, that we will discover the meaning of Jesus' words.

## Digging Deeper

Galatians 3:26-29 • Acts 2:42-47

John 3:14-17 • Matthew 28:18-20

## Prayer

*“God Help Us”*

Dear God,

Help us to see

that we are all created in your image and likeness.

Help us to realize

that the differences between us make us the special individuals

that we are.

Help us to see past one's

different clothing, customs and languages.

Help us to seek

universal peace here and in heaven. Amen

By: Natalie Svajlenka

St. Alexander School 6th Grade<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Svajlenka, Natalie. "Prayers for Elementary School Children." *Racebridges.net*. Web, 8 Mar. 2012.



# DESENSITIZING VIOLENCE

## IV. Desensitizing Violence

*The Hunger Games* are filled with violence. The goal of the game is to kill your fellow tributes. The Capitol watches on and enjoys the show. The scenes are reminiscent of the Roman gladiator games. During the gladiator games, thousands of people would pour into stadiums. They would watch men fight vicious animals or each other to the death. This occurred in real life. This does not only happen in the movies and in books.

Violence is a part of our world. Rather studying Biblical or modern history, there are many violent wars and battles. Simply turning on the news, you are able to find a steady stream of images depicting death around the world. We see it on television. Hear it on the radio. Read it on the internet. **War is coming. War is here. War will come again.**

Violence is a part of our culture. *The Hunger Games* books and movies are only one example of the violence within the media. There are no shortage of video games that allow the player to simulate shooting and killing others. There has been much controversy surrounding the issue of whether video games are too violent. Should they be banned from being sold to children? There is no foreseeable resolution to the amount of violence in our culture.

One term that is often brought up when discussing violence and teenagers, is desensitize.

de·sen·si·tize verb /dē sensi tīz/

To make (someone) less likely to feel shock or distress at scenes of cruelty, violence, or suffering by overexposure to such images.

Katniss experiences this herself. She questions whether her ability to kill another human is easier, because she has killed so many animals. She says her sister Prim could never handle it. Prim would rather stay home and help care for her cat, Buttercup. The desensitization of Katniss helped her in the games. However, how many teenagers today would benefit from being desensitized?

It is hard to determine how and if someone becomes desensitized when being exposed to violent forms of media. Often, the argument revolves around the issue of nature versus nurture.

Those that hold a nature type of view believe it is within one's personal identity. They think they have chemical and brain disorders that cause them to be drawn towards violence. This would mean that someone who does a violent act is just as likely to commit it whether or not they viewed violent media. However, a person holding a nurture viewpoint would say that viewing violent media makes someone more likely to become desensitized.

It is undecided how much of an impact violent media has on desensitization. Yet, we should be aware, as Katniss and Peeta were, on their personal experiences and the impact their pasts had on their current actions.

Katniss knew she had what it took to kill. Katniss was also aware of her extraordinary archery skills. Peeta knew he had little experience hunting, and his greatest talent was in decorating cakes. Katniss and Peeta used their past experiences to great success in the Hunger Games. We should similarly be aware of what we have done in the past. We should realize that it impacts how we interpret and live in the present.

## Thought-provoking Questions

How many must die to save a thousand? Is it allowable to sacrifice children in order to save a nation? How much death is justified if it gives others life?

Are you desensitized to violence? What else could you become desensitized to? Do you think video games desensitize you? What about movies, television, and books? Do you know anyone who has become desensitized?

How do you think people's pasts affect their futures? What events in your past do you think will impact your future? Is there anything that you wish you could take back?

## Active Learning

For the next 24 hours, count how many people or characters you see or read about dying on the television, computer, and other forms of media. If you are playing Halo, make sure to catalogue each death at the end of the match. Try to provide an accurate count and descriptions of how they died. After recording for 24 hours, add all the deaths up. Does this number surprise you? Do you think this has an effect on your day-to-day life? Are you desensitized in any way?

## Countercultural Wisdom

*One of the most famous martyrs of the last century was a German theologian named Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He spoke out against the Nazis. They imprisoned him, and he was eventually executed at their hand days before their empire fell. The following is taken from his book "Ethics":<sup>12</sup>*

The Sermon on the Mount as the proclamation of the incarnate love of God calls people to love one another, and thus to reject everything that hinders fulfilling this task—in short, it calls them to self-denial. In renouncing one's own happiness, one's own rights, one's own righteousness, one's own dignity, in renouncing violence and success, in renouncing one's own life, a person is prepared to love the neighbor. God's love liberates human perception, which has been clouded and led astray by love of self, for the clear recognition of reality, the neighbor, and the world; thus, and only thus, is one readied to perceive and undertake genuine responsibility.

<sup>12</sup> Bonhoeffer, D. and Green, C.J. and Krauss, R. and West, C.C. and Stott, D.W. *Ethics*, p 241



Thus, the Sermon on the Mount itself confronts a person with the necessity of responsible historical action. It addresses the individual, not to give status to individuals as such, but so they may be what they already are before God, namely, persons faced with historical responsibility.

## Digging Deeper

Isaiah 43:18-19 • Galatians 6:7-8 • Psalm 44:6-8

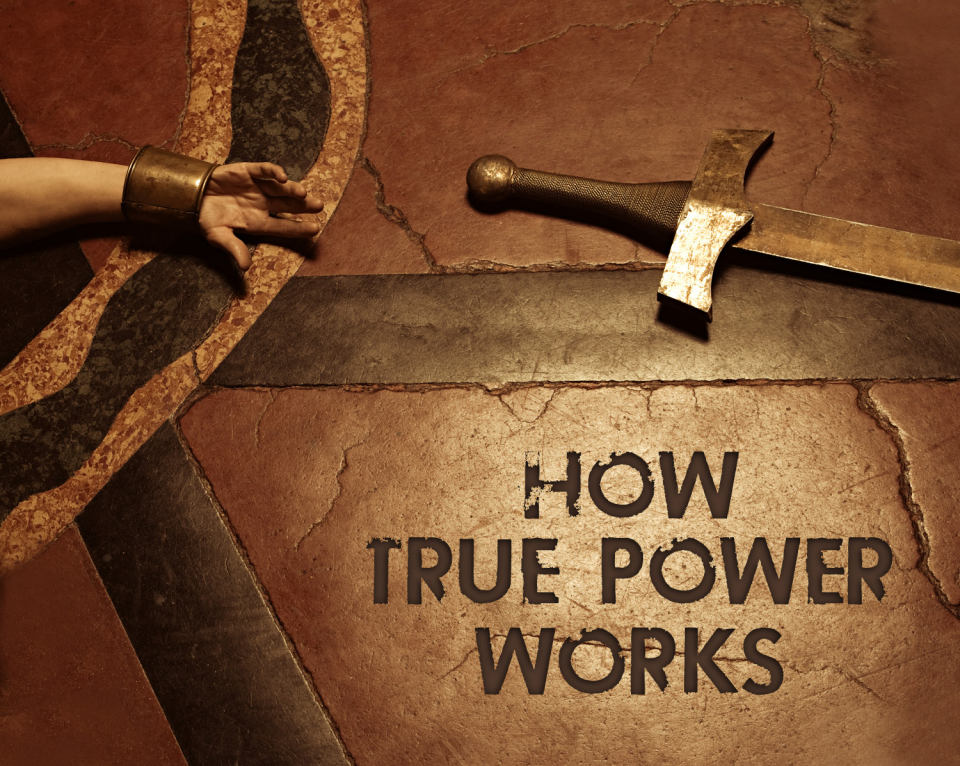
### Prayer

*“Grant Us Your Peace”*

O Lord God, give peace unto us:  
(for Thou hast given us all things;)  
the peace of rest, the peace of the Sabbath,  
which hath no evening. For all this most goodly array  
of things very good, having finished their courses,  
is to pass away, for in them there  
was morning and evening.

—St. Augustine<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Saint Augustine. “Confessions of Saint Augustine.” *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*. Web. 08 Mar. 2012.

A hand wearing a metal cuff reaches out from the left side of the frame. In the background, a sword with a dark hilt and a metallic blade lies on a cracked, reddish-brown stone surface. The overall scene is dimly lit, creating a somber and dramatic atmosphere.

# HOW TRUE POWER WORKS

## V. How True Power Works

Katniss journeys from powerless to powerful in *The Hunger Games*. She begins the story with very little power. At the end, she has more power than the Gamemakers and President Snow.

The interesting thing about her journey to power is she does it by surrendering herself to the powerful. Throughout the book, there are many examples of the Capitol's power. They control...

travel between the districts • food supplies  
military forces • rules and laws of Panem  
events within the Games

At the end of the 74th Hunger Games, when the final tributes remain, Katniss and Peeta choose death rather than kill each other. As a result of this surrender, they gain power over the Capitol.

In this shift of power, we see an upheaval of the status quo. For generations, the Capitol has held the power. They were the rulers of Panem. No one dared to challenge them; else, they suffer the fate of District 13.

The Capitol destroyed District 13 by the use of powerful toxic bombs. The Hunger Games were established as a reminder for the remaining districts of what happens when someone attempts to take away the Capitol's power. Katniss and Peeta overthrew the power of the Capitol, not through force, but through surrender. Katniss and Peeta would rather die than obey the rules of the Capitol. One word describes this act:

hu·mil·i·ty noun /ˌ(h)yoʊ̯ militē/

A modest or low view of one's own importance; humbleness

We can learn from this example of humility from Katniss and Peeta. We may not suffer from the great injustices of a repressive regime such as the Capitol. However, we are in dire need to practice humility and surrender on a continual basis. Whenever we encounter conflict, our immediate reaction is to evaluate possibilities to win. Katniss realized her only choice was an act of humility. She had to give up winning, and surrender herself.

## Thought-provoking Questions

Think back to when you had a disagreement with someone. Maybe a parent, maybe a brother or sister, maybe a friend. As you think about this point of conflict, ask yourself what this argument was about. How did it start? Why did it arise? What would have happened if you practiced humility? Not just compromise, but complete surrender as Katniss and Peeta did? Would the outcome of your disagreement have turned out differently? Would you feel differently about the resolution of the conflict?

Do you regularly practice humility? Would someone describe you as a humble person? Who do you know in your own life that demonstrates humility?

In the end, Katniss and Peeta gain power over the Capitol through their act of humility? Do you think this only happens in books? Do those who surrender really gain power?

## Active Learning

Think about the definition of humility found on the previous pages. What are some ways that you can practice humility today? Before getting up, choose one that you will commit to doing. Set a course of action to practice this act of humility today.

## Countercultural Wisdom

*Those in theological and philosophical study throughout the world still use the works of Thomas Aquinas. He was an Italian Dominican Priest, serving the Catholic Church. He lived from 1225 to 1274. Below is an abridged excerpt from “Summa Theologiae.”<sup>14</sup>*

Humility has to do with overcoming a strong desire. It is an attempt to overcome our own impulses. We should not believe ourselves to be above what we are. In addition, the principle and origin of both these things is the reverence we bear to God. Humility leads to certain outward signs in words, actions, and gestures.

**The root of humility:** that a person fear God and bear all God's commandments in mind.

Humility is shown in three ways:

1. By not following your own desires.
2. By regulating your desires according to your superior judgment.
3. By not being deterred from this on account of the difficulties and hardships that come in your way.

Humility can be grown in three ways:

1. By acknowledging and admitting your own shortcomings.
2. By deeming yourself incapable of great things.
3. By putting others before yourself.

<sup>14</sup> *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, Q 161, 6

## Digging Deeper

Matthew 5 • James 4:6-10 • 1 Peter 2:21-25

### Prayer

*“Litany of Humility”*

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart, **Hear me.**

From the desire of being esteemed, **Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being loved...

From the desire of being extolled...

From the desire of being honored...

From the desire of being praised...

From the desire of being preferred to others...

From the desire of being consulted...

From the desire of being approved...

From the fear of being humiliated...

From the fear of being despised...

From the fear of suffering rebukes...

From the fear of being calumniated...

From the fear of being forgotten...  
From the fear of being ridiculed...  
From the fear of being wronged...  
From the fear of being suspected...  
That others may be loved more than I,  
**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**  
That others may be esteemed more than I...  
That, in the opinion of the world,  
others may increase and I may decrease...  
That others may be chosen and I set aside...  
That others may be praised and I unnoticed...  
That others may be preferred to me in everything...  
That others may become holier than I,  
provided that I may become as holy as I should...<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> "The Litany of Humility is a Catholic prayer for Humility. This prayer was composed by Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val (1865-1930), Cardinal Secretary of State of the Holy See under Pope Saint Pius X.



# FINAL THOUGHTS

## Final Thoughts


Though the story of *The Hunger Games* is fiction, many events and struggles faced within Panem are similar to the real world problems of today. When we engage the epic story of Katniss, Gale, and Peeta we need to be aware there are many within our communities struggling daily in broken homes, malnourishment, and dealing with violence.

It is my hope, by engaging with this resource, you are better aware of your beliefs and emotions when you participate in daily life. *The Hunger Games* is thrilling and exciting, and I hope you can use it to energize your daily routine to make a change. The world of Panem is set in the distant future, but you can make a difference today. Be a leader. Make a change. Be more than a piece in the game of life.

*“Only I keep wishing I could think of a way to... to show the Capitol they don't own me. That I'm more than just a piece in their Games.”*

—Peeta Mellark, *The Hunger Games*, page 172





# GLOSSARY

**Compassion:** deep awareness of the suffering of another, coupled with the wish to relieve it

**Dehydration:** as the excessive loss of body fluid; lacking water, causing death

**Desensitize:** make (someone) less likely to feel shock or distress at scenes of cruelty, violence, or suffering by overexposure to such images.

**Fasting:** to abstain from or eat very little food

**Generosity:** the trait of being more than adequate

**Humility:** a modest or low view of one's own importance; humbleness

**Injustice:** unfairness; the state of not being fair or just

**Malnourishment:** a lack of adequate nourishment

**Nourishment:** the state of being fed something that causes to grow

**Overexposure:** excessive attention, publicity

**Unconditional:** absolute, and without conditions, limitations, reservations, or qualifications

## A Word from the Author

This is a how-to book. It is not about how to physically survive the Hunger Games. It is about how to engage the questions that develop out of reading the books and watching the movies.

As I set out to write this, I wanted something that could be used by a diverse range of youth. I hoped it would begin conversations and discussions that are difficult to get started. I attempted to aim these questions and activities at the greatest audience possible.

This is not a study of the movie, or a study of the Bible, but a series of questions and activities designed to challenge students to think more theologically and philosophically about some of the issues of our time.

Please visit [seedbed.com](http://seedbed.com) for more resources.

## About the Author



Tim Shangle is the Interactive Media Developer at Asbury Theological Seminary. He also works on the Seedbed team. When not working he is a student in the Master of Arts (Theological Studies Specialization)

program at the Seminary, as well as husband to Jesi and dad to Michael. Tim dedicates this work to his son Michael, with the wish... *“May you never become a tribute of the Capitol.”*

## About Seedbed

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