

Assemblies - War – myfishbites.com

With the Iraq and Afghan wars having caused a lot of conflict and tension within the UK, this looks at the theme of war. You can also point to other conflicts that are going on around the world. This assembly is not about pointing the finger at anyone, any point of view or any belief system.

1. Vote

Ask for hands up who agrees with sending British soldiers to other countries to fight a war. Who thinks that it would be OK to send RAF pilots on missions - or what about drones? Should we go and help countries fight people like Islamic State or terrorist organisations by not getting involved directly but by training other soldiers from that country.

Who disagrees, hands up. To be more interactive, with smaller groups get people to stand against one wall or the other etc. Depends on the group and behaviour!

2. Vote

Who agrees that sometimes we need to go to war to defend, protect and take action? Who thinks we should never go to war? Who thinks that we should stand up to bullies? How should we do that?

3. Video Clip

If you can, find a news report from when Britain was at war in Iraq or Afghanistan (or Bosnia). Try to get footage of UK, US soldiers, of war scenes, of civilians, and of good stories. This is all to make it balanced so you can't be accused of bias! Not longer than 2-5 mins so editing may be necessary

4. Get Volunteers Up and 'act out' these scenarios

- Scenario 1:

If people in country A are starving to death and those in country B have loads of food and refuse to give any to country A, is country A justified in going to war with country B when all other diplomatic efforts have failed? What if country A has no other source of food?

- Scenario 2:

If country X wants to take over country Y, is war justified against country X if it will stop them being an aggressor and possibly stop a wider conflict?

- Scenario 3:

Country 1 has been attacked by extremist terrorists. However, Country 2 is well known to welcome and give home to many extremist terrorists. Is Country 1 justified in going to war with Country 2 to stop further terrorist incidents?

Get the volunteers to sit down, round of applause and maybe some chocolate rewards - being careful with allergies and school rules.

5. Biblical Point

As Christians, we believe the Bible has a lot to say about what happens today. Why? Because things haven't really changed. From Cain killing Abel, to Israel fighting wars against its enemies, there have been many battles through history.

As Christians we believe that God has a solution. That one day, there will be a world without suffering and pain. Sounds a bit stupid but if you look around the world, you'll find Christians working to bring hope. There are Christians in the military, even the Iraqi military. There are Christians giving out aid in Iraq, Afghanistan and all over the world. There are Christians in many aid agencies or many Christian aid agencies, many who don't believe in directly fighting a war.

The Christian message is a message of hope and Christians try to live out this message of hope in different ways.

In times when we're worried about the world and can feel helpless and fearful, the Bible is there to provide hope and answers. The word 'Gospel' which means the stories about Jesus, really means the Good News. Christians believe that God is always with us and for us - whatever we face and whatever is going on.

Jesus was very real and spoke some hard stuff, like the fact that his message would alienate some people. He even predicted that in the last days nations would rise against others and there would be many troubles. Jesus also said that there are times where we need to choose not to respond when people abuse us and attack us. But equally, there are times where we need to stand up against injustice, without causing more injustice.

However, Jesus also had a name which meant 'Prince of Peace ' which was like him saying one day there will be peace. Not like the United Nations or United States try to get, but something deeper that will last for all time. This is a message for all people.

6. The Bible Says...

'I know the plans I've got for you says God.. good plans not bad plans. I will give you a hope and a future. But you have to call out to me, to look for me. If you really look for me with everything you've got, you will find me - I promise you.'

Jeremiah 29.11-13, The Bible

7. The Cross

You may have seen Christians with a cross. The cross means a lot of things but it has two connected lines at right angles to each other. The one top to bottom reflects man to God and the one left to right reflects people's relationship with other people. Although it hasn't always been lived out by all Christians, the meaning of the cross is that Jesus came to bring peace between people and God - and from person to person.