

Sessions –Saviour of the World – myfishbites.com

Use this as an assembly

You could actually use this as an assembly if you tell the story, show the video and then make the point, ignoring the rest of the session.

Question

Do you know who the Saviour of the world is? The person who saved the world? Any guesses?

No, it's not James Bond... It's not Bilbo Baggins... It's not even your headteacher... (I know that's hard to believe!)

Link

This session relates to a story on the BBC News Website (links checked April 2019). Of Stanislav Petrov. Links checked April 2019.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24280831> (story and video)

Direct video link from BBC of Stanislav Petrov – [click here for the link](#)

So the Saviour of the world is...

Yep, you're right, it's Stanislav Petrov....

Ever heard of him? You haven't?

Well, back in the 1970s and 1980s there was something called the 'Cold War'. No, it wasn't set in the Arctic, it was a kind of 'phantom' war fought between the USA and Western Europe on one side – and the Soviet Union (sort of Russia, but with lots of other now independent countries like Ukraine, Lithuania etc) and Eastern Europe on the other side.

However, the Cold War was pretty serious and did see some 'action' (eg Afghanistan.... again...) More serious was the fact that both sides had nuclear weapons and had their 'finger on the trigger' ready to fire them at a moment's notice.

So where did Stanislav come in? Well, his job was to register any missile strikes (from America) and to report them to the Soviet military and political leadership. One day some of the alerts went off but he didn't report the alerts to the leadership. If he had, they would have launched nuclear missiles. But Stanislav felt something was wrong with the alert system and this turned out to be right. He was the only civilian working at the alert agency and he was at work in the moment the alarms went off. But his civilian training and ability to think independently helped him. If it had been a trained soldier at work, they would likely have reported the (false) alerts and a nuclear war could have started.

So in a way, Stanislav was someone who did save the world.

Point (for use in assembly)

Stanislav Petrov helped save the world by something he didn't do. He held back when he could have acted and his actions saved a possible meltdown of the whole world.

Christians believe that Jesus saved the world by something that he did do. Just as we see firemen go into a burning building to save people; just as we like to see the hero of a movie go and rescue the girl of his dreams; just as we a goal keeper in football is there to stop the ball by going in the net by saving it... These are pictures of what Christians believe Jesus did.

If you've ever been to a Carol Service or seen a 'Nativity Play' then you may have heard a verse in Luke where the angels shout out this – *"Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."*

Christians believe this Bible verse is talking about the birth of Jesus and that Jesus is the real Saviour, sorry Stanislav Petrov!

These are some other words written in the book of John in the Bible – *"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

Sometimes Christians can be a bit judgemental (but hey, who isn't?!) although they don't mean to be. But the truth Christians believe about Jesus is that he came to rescue us all from death. He wasn't forced to do this, he did it willingly. He doesn't make us agree with him or believe in him. But Jesus isn't about pointing at you and shouting 'sinner' but pointing to the way that you can be made right with God as Christians believe a life without God is one where there is always something missing inside you that only God can fill.

(For assemblies, you can scroll down for the points from 'The Posiedon Adventure' and clip)

Song

Ben Cantelon, "Saviour Of The World" – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfA4cxmOgTU>

Words of the song (c) 2010 Ben Cantelon / Thankyou

Music

Want the words and song – worshiptogether.com is your friend... (link accessed April 2019).

God so loved that he gave his son
To lay down his life for the sake of us
He bore the weight of our sin and shame
With a cry he said 'It is finished'

Christ the Lord, overcame the darkness
He's alive, death has been defeated

For He made us a way, by which we have been saved
He's the Saviour of the world
So we lift up a shout for his fame and renown

Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord
Jesus, Saviour of the world

We must spread the word of his soon return
To reclaim the world, for his glory
Let the church now sing, of this coming king
Crowned with majesty, our Redeemer

And He reigns, ruler of the heavens
And His name, is Jesus the Messiah

For He made us a way, by which we have been saved
He's the Saviour of the world
So we lift up a shout for his fame and renown
Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord
Jesus, Saviour of the world

Read John 3.13-18

(Jesus said): "No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.' For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

Another verse

Having read John 3, could you write another verse of the Ben Cantelon song? Think of other Bible verses or phrases you know as well. Or write it as a poem or write a rap verse... Here's an example:

The Son of Man came down from heaven above
To be lifted up as our Saviour
God sent his Son, he poured out his love
He's alive, he's our God, he is Jesus

Taking things a bit deeper

John 3 is one of many places in the Bible where it's made clear that Jesus is the only way to be made right with God. It's not Jesus that does the rejecting – Jesus was the one who made a way for man and woman to be made right with God. He didn't come into the world to send people to hell but to restore them to God and to give them life in this world and life forever in heaven. It's like you're on a ferry and it's sinking. Jesus kicks down a door then holds it open against the rushing waters shouting, 'this is the way to get out of the sinking ship and live.'

Sometimes people make it sound as if somehow God is cruel but it's the opposite way – Jesus came and sacrificed his own life in order to pay the penalty so that if we say yes to

Jesus he brings us back into right relationship with God. Other times people teach a crazy theory that goes under the name of 'universalism' that basically says Jesus paid the price for everyone so now everyone will be 'saved'. But as in our example of the sinking ship, it's only those who respond to Jesus and 'run through the open door' that Jesus is holding open that will live. Those who refuse to go through the 'ship's door' will die.

John 3.36 – Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

John 14.6 – Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

Acts 13.38-39 – 'Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.'

Romans 3.22 – This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

Romans 3.26 – ...he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

The Poseidon Adventure

YouTube clip – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dd03qev59Jo> (checked April 2019)

In the 1972 movie 'The Poseidon Adventure' about a sinking ship, Gene Hackman plays a character called 'Reverend Scott' who finds a way off one deck of the ship by climbing up a Christmas tree. Most people refuse to climb up despite his shouts and best attempts at reason. Someone even shouts 'don't listen to him' as Scott tries to persuade people to climb up to be saved. Those like Scott who climb up climb safely to a balcony above the deck. Suddenly the water pours in and drowns everyone who didn't climb up the Christmas tree.

This is a clear picture that everyone who hears the voice of Jesus and obeys him will be saved. It also shows us that we have an enemy trying to stop people from being saved. But those who refuse to hear his voice or to follow will be allowed to choose to do their own thing. But ultimately it leads to destruction and death. This is something God hates to see. He is desperate that no-one is lost, that nobody rejects him. But he gives us complete freedom.

Response

Today is the day to choose to follow Jesus, the Saviour of the World. If you don't believe in him, today is the day to say yes to Jesus and yes to life.

If you do believe in Jesus, today is the day to give yourself to God totally – to say to God, "I want your will to be done in my life and to see your Kingdom come on earth in my life and out to other people's lives too."