

## Talks – War – myfishbites.com

This is more like a complete discussion session on war – rather than simply a talk. You'll see that at times this is a bit like a weblog rather than a constantly updated session, to give a flava of what has happened..

### We used 3 video clips in this section.

1. The opening to 'Chicken Run' when they are hatching plans to escape
2. The bit from the Vietnam War in Forrest Gump
3. A clip from 'The World At War' series (BBC) or anything similar

We also played that classic game, Battleships – the board game – lads against girls etc.

Some of this is adapted from the book 'The Puzzle of Ethics' by Peter Vardy and Paul Grosch ISBN 0006281443

Much of these are questions, sometimes playing devil's advocate. I realise there are many opinions. It's important not to push your point of view but correct if you know the facts!

There is an assembly on war – go to our Assemblies > War.

### The 'Christian' West and true Christianity

How do we differentiate between people who are Christians (disciples of Jesus) and the Western governments, perceived as 'christian'. Partly because of this perception, Iraqi Christians are being abused, tortured and killed like never before (the fundamentalist Muslims linking them with the US forces who they see as being 'christian') despite them giving blood to help Muslims in Fallujah. How do we support our brothers and sisters in this?

### WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND

1. Is it morally justifiable to go to war in the Middle East?
2. There are many peace protests. Why did these people not speak out against other atrocities in the world? Where are their voices when thousands of Christians are killed for their faith in Muslim countries?
3. Do you think that we can justify pre-emptive strikes (war on the basis that a country or someone might do something)? Why didn't we do more to protect the Muslims in Bosnia? The white farmers in Zimbabwe? The murdered million in Rwanda?
4. How can we be a voice for the vulnerable, the oppressed and the innocent?
5. How can we pray generally?
6. What can we do and think about militant Islam?
7. Pray that attacks on coalition troops would be ended
8. Are we living in a safer or more dangerous world?

9. By being in the Middle East, does it make Britain more liable to terrorist attack?

(I think all countries are terrorist targets, we've seen many attacks on non-coalition countries including one of the war's most vociferous opponents, France)

10. How can you help protect the UK and world from terrorism?

(In my view, love your neighbour, love those international students studying in the UK, give them positive experience of Christians so they get to know Jesus personally, be aware, be aware in prayer)

## WHATEVER YOU BELIEVE

1. Should we support British and American troops, and their families? How can we do this?

2. We can pray for the truth to be revealed, for there to be little innocent suffering, against the evil schemes of man, for evil to be broken by the power of God. We need to pray for the peace of God, not the peace of man. Pray that the will and purposes of God would be done, that many people would be saved, for Christians in the military.

## Principles of the Just War (St Thomas Aquinas, 1400s)

A just war can only be waged as a last resort, after reasonable attempts to bring justice have been exhausted.

A just war can only be waged by a legitimate authority. People, vigilantes, terrorists do not wage just wars; only a legitimate government is permitted to wage a war that can be considered justified.

A just war can only be fought to redress wrongs that have been committed. A first strike attack on a nation that has committed no atrocities cannot be considered justice; that's aggression.

A just war can only be fought with "right" intentions. War is not justified to gain control of another nation, its assets or its people. If the right intention for going to war is not present, justice is not present.

A just war can only be fought if there is a reasonable chance of success. Deaths and injury incurred in a hopeless cause are not morally justifiable.

A just war can only be fought if the ultimate goal is to re-establish peace. More specifically, war is not justified if the situation in a country cannot be reasonably expected to be better after the war than before.

A just war must never allow the force used to be disproportional to the need. Nations must be prohibited from using force not necessary to attain the limited objective of addressing the wrongs that have been committed.

A just war must employ weapons and tactics that discriminate between combatants and non-combatants. Innocent civilians are never permissible targets of war, and war can only be just if every effort is made to avoid civilian casualties.

– Then – a look at ways we can pray and looking to God for our hope, not world situations.

## SEPTEMBER 11 and similar terrorist attacks

1. How do we respond to the terrorist attacks in the US and around the West as Christians?
2. Should we have gone to war in Afghanistan? What about Iraq? Should we go to war over the atrocities in Syria or in the Yemen, or in Nigeria?
3. There are great things happening in Pakistan, Afghanistan and in the refugee camps where God is at work. Many people have come to know Jesus. How can we support this?
4. What questions does September 11 and terrorist attacks across the West bring up about where and what our security is in? A lady I know lived in Reading (UK) during the September 11 attacks and thousands of people came for prayer. God was working in the middle of all the evil.
5. Many people have related September 11 to Luke 13.1-5 talking about the fall of the tower of Siloam. Others may have also talked about Genesis 11.1-9 and the Tower of Babel. Others have likened the Trade Center to Revelation 17 and 18 and the city of Babylon. Look up all these verses and see what you think..

## OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES OF WAR

1. Israel was called to fight its enemies (remember that almost every Muslim and Arab nation today wants to destroy Israel and all Jews – either publicly or privately).
2. Married men didn't have to fight (Deuteronomy 24.5)
3. if one of the tribes didn't fight they felt left out (Judges 8.1)
4. There were 'standing armies' under King Saul (1 Samuel 14.52)
5. There were wars in the time of King David (1 and 2 Samuel)
6. Often war was very brutal (Deuteronomy 2.34)
7. God commanded no-one be spared (Joshua 10.40)

## WAR IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Read Joshua 10.25-28 and Joshua 10.40

1. Why was Joshua fighting the war? (Joshua 1.1-9)
2. Why did Joshua consider war important? (Joshua 10.25-28)
3. Why did God order Joshua to destroy everything?
4. What happened when they disobeyed God? (Joshua 7.1-9)
5. What can we learn from this in our lives? (Joshua 7.10-13)

## JUST WAR? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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?

Is war justifiable if it mean stopping a lesser evil? For example if country A wants to take over country B is NATO justified in going to war against country A if it will stop country A being an aggressor?

Is it right for you to go to the aid of a vulnerable person (or a friend) and help physically stop that person being attacked by another? Can this same principle be applied to a war?

Would Jesus have been for or against war? Give reasons

Who do you think are the innocent in war? Give reasons for your choices

Is there such a thing as a 'just war'?

What conditions would make it right to go to war?

What kinds of terms and conditions do we need if we have a war? Why?