

The work of Christian Peacemaking

Lesson 3: Should Christians fight in wars?

Lesson Objectives

- What:** To explore whether it is ever acceptable for Christians to fight in wars.
- How:** Students will research the thinking of Christians through the ages and critically apply their learning to the contemporary situation.

You will need

- Slideshow: Should Christians fight in wars?
Lesson 3: Teacher's pack

Starter

Who am I?

Students are invited to guess the identities of the six people pictured. [Slides 2 - 8]

[Some of these are very difficult. Students should be encouraged to look for clues in the pictures to help them identify the people in them - See Teacher's pack].

After all the people have been identified students are then asked to work out what links these six individuals. [Slide 9]

All of them can help us answer the question, *Should Christians fight in wars?* [Slide 10 - 13]



Main Activities

Should Christians fight in wars?

[You will need the **Profiles** from the Teacher's pack]

Using the profiles of the six individuals identified above, the teachings of Jesus, and the example of other Christians they may know about, students are asked to answer the following question. [Slide 14]

Do you think Christians should ever fight in wars?

[Lessons 1 and 2 from this course are worth considering in reference to this question.]

Students are encouraged to share their answers with the class.

Plenary

Christian work for peace today

Students should answer the following question: [Slide 15]



During the two world wars, when conscription was a reality and young men were compelled to join the military, Christian resistance to war was realised by conscientious objection, taking on non-combatant roles, and campaigning for peace*.

How in the UK today – where we have a volunteer military - might Christians continue to resist war?

*During the Second World War women as well as men were conscripted into the armed forces, but this lesson is sharply focussed on the specific moral choice facing those expected to take part in killing. That has usually been men, so the stories here are about men. The role of women as peacemakers will be the focus of a future lesson plan being prepared by Pax Christi.