



Children & Young People's Talk 2024

Sowing Peace, Reaping Righteousness

Please feel free to adapt the materials depending on the age and stage of children you are teaching.

Material more directed towards **Younger Kids**

Material more directed towards **Older Kids/Youth**

Main Passages

- **Matthew 5v9** - “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”
- **James 3v18** - “Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”

Main Objectives

- To understand that Jesus wants us to be peacemakers not peacebreakers.
- To understand what peacemaking looks like.
- To understand that when we are peacemakers it brings joy to our hearts and to God’s.
- To understand that there are countries in the world where people do not live in peace today and our actions can help these people.

Warm-up Activity

- **Worship song** - If you normally start with a song here are some ideas which you can find actions, music and lyrics for on Youtube:
 - **Peace Like a River (Kids Worship)**
 - **The Beatitudes (Saddleback Kids)**
 - **Build Your Kingdom (Rend Collective)**
- **Activities** - you could start with a game to get the kids warmed up and interested:



- **Seed relay race** - divide a group up into two teams and give each team a ladle. Place a large container full of birdseed at the other end of the room and a pair of smaller containers at the starting line. One player from each team must run to the container, scoop up as much seed as possible into the ladle and race back to the small container. The next player then takes the ladle and continues the relay. The winning team is the team that fills up its container the fastest.
- **Bee-attitudes** - make a bee out of a toilet roll tube - see instructions at end.
- Plant **cress seeds** in egg cups.
- Colouring in/memorising **key bible verses**.

Teaching

Read **Matthew 5:1-10:**

‘Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. He said:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

You could start by outlining that this passage is part of what’s called the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is teaching people about what the Kingdom of Heaven looks like. What’s that? The Kingdom of Heaven is the way that Jesus wants his followers to live. It’s what it will be like in heaven, but we can start living that way now! That way, we can live out the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth.



Questions to ask about the passage:

- What does blessed mean? (another way to say blessed in this passage would be happy/satisfied/fulfilled - try reading it again saying happy are the poor in spirit etc.)
- What does poor in spirit means? (Those who know they need Jesus to be saved and can't save themselves)
- What does it mean to mourn? Does that make sense? Happy are those who mourn? How can people who are sad also be happy? That sounds a bit upside-down. But Jesus gives us joy and comfort even in the hard times.
- Meek = humble i.e. not proud
- How can you hunger and thirst for righteousness? What does that look like?
- What does it mean to show mercy? Why might we need to be shown mercy? (because we sin and do a lot of wrong, we need forgiven)
- What does it mean to be pure in heart?
- Who are peacemakers? What does a peacemaker do? What does a peacebreaker do? What does Jesus say that peacemakers will be called?
 - **For younger children or if lacking time you could just focus on the peacemakers. What does it mean to make peace? Make a list of things a peacemaker would do and things a peacebreaker would do.**
- What does it mean to be persecuted? Are there people in the world today who are persecuted? How can people being persecuted be “happy”?
- Does this Kingdom of Heaven look like the world we live in today? Sometimes Jesus' Kingdom seems a bit back to front - but that's the way it's supposed to be! We are called to make a difference in the world we live in. When people show hate, we are called to show love. When people hurt us, we are called to give comfort. When people have nothing, we are called to share what we have.

Peacemaking

Take this time to focus a little more on the part that refers to peacemakers. You could go back and read this section again.

- Is the world at peace just now? What are examples of a lack of peace in the world?



Comfort International in Rwanda

Comfort International is a charity that works in many countries where people do or did not live in peace including a country called Rwanda. It is a tiny country about the same size as Wales, found right in the centre of Africa. 13 million people live in Rwanda. 30 years ago (before you were born!) there was a lot of fighting in Rwanda. Many many people died. There was a lot of hate/peace-breaking. A lady called Beata is one of the people who lived through the fighting in Rwanda. During that time, she lost her parents, her husband and five of her children. She was deeply sad and angry at the people who had done such bad things. But after the fighting, she met some people who told her that Jesus loves her, and he wants to give her a new life. Jesus brought peace into her life and she was able to forgive the people who did this to her. Today she helps other people who struggle with the same pain that she did and God uses her to bring peace to their broken hearts.

Comfort International in Rwanda

Comfort International is a charity that works in many countries that have suffered or are suffering violence and conflict, including a country called Rwanda. Rwanda is a tiny country about the same size as Wales, found right in the centre of Africa. 13 million people live in Rwanda. In 1994 Rwanda suffered a genocide - one of the worst tragedies the world has ever seen. One million people were killed in a period of 90 days and many thousands more lost their homes, families and livelihoods. A lady called Beata is one of the people who lived through the fighting in Rwanda. During that time, she lost her parents, her husband and five of her children and was badly abused and traumatised. Following the genocide she struggled with hate and anger at what had happened. She met a man called John who ran an organisation called Solace ministries, that Comfort International works with. He told her that Jesus loves her and wants to give her a new life. Through counselling with Solace Ministries, Beata was able to share her story and with time, Jesus brought that peace into her life.

Years later, one of the men who killed her mother and some of her children wrote to her requesting forgiveness. Beata struggled with the memories of all she had suffered, the loss of her children and the anger that threatened to rise up within her again. After months of prayer God broke through and gave her the grace to forgive. She said, "Forgiveness is a process that is based on what Jesus did on the cross. I could not bear even to see his (the killer's) face but now I can greet him because I forgave him."



Today Beata helps many other survivors of the genocide who have suffered the same trauma as she did and God uses her to bring peace into the storm of their broken hearts.

Sowing in peace today

There are still lots of places in the world that are not in peace like the Democratic of Congo, South Sudan and Burundi. People in these countries live very difficult lives. Comfort International works in these countries to bring peace and hope to the people that live there.

Read James 5:4

“Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”

- What do the words sow and reap mean? Use this opportunity to mention Harvest, and the fact that right now people are reaping crops across the country and this is part of what we celebrate at Harvest. You could talk about how the seeds we plant determine what will grow.
- What might it look like to sow in peace where you live? What about in the other countries we’ve talked about?
- What does righteousness mean?
 - Innocent/holy/just - the idea of good standing with God
- Why does peace lead to righteousness?

Comfort International is trying to bring peace to many of the areas in Africa where they work. Where kids are living on the street because their families don’t have money to take care of them, Comfort is providing sponsorship so that they can be reunited with their families. Where young mums are rejected by society, Comfort works with local partners to provide medical insurance, food, accommodation and to help mums build their own businesses so they can look after their kids. Where conflict has destroyed lives, Comfort supports healing and reconciliation projects bringing peace to survivors and perpetrators in areas of conflict. Where victims of war are wounded and hurt, Comfort runs a hospital bringing healing and life in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In 5 different countries, Comfort is working to sow seeds of peace and build God’s Kingdom by speaking up for those whose voice is not being heard and by taking care of the poor, just as Jesus told us to.

In your own life, Jesus is calling you to be a peacemaker. You can do this in many ways. Think about the things a peacemaker does that you spoke about at



the start of the lesson. Think about your family, community or school and where you can bring peace to those areas. If your church is supporting charities or missions that help bring peace to your community or communities throughout the world, then think about how you can get involved, volunteering or raising funds!

Prayer

Take time to pray together about the passage. Ask that God would raise up peacemakers in your community and across the world. Maybe pray the Lord's prayer, remembering that the Kingdom of Heaven is a Kingdom of peace.

Quiz - if you have time or are looking for another fun activity then try out this fun quiz on Rwanda (accompanying Powerpoint available!):

Slide 1 - Cover Slide

Slide 2 - Reminder of Main Verses

Slide 3 - Rwanda Quiz

Slide 4- Question 1

How many people live in Rwanda?

- A. 3 million
- B. 13 million
- C. 30 million
- D. 100 million

Slide 5 - Answer

B - 13 million people, making it one of the most densely populated countries in Africa due to the country being about a third of the size of Scotland.

Slide 6 - Question 2

What is the official language of Rwanda?

- A. English
- B. French
- C. Swahili
- D. Kinyarwanda



Slide 7 - Answer

D - Kinyarwanda is the official language of Rwanda but many people also speak English, French and Swahili.

Slide 8 - Question 3

What is the capital of Rwanda?

- A. Kampala
- B. Kigali
- C. Bujumbura
- D. Kinshasa

Slide 9 - Answer

B - Kigali. See if you can name the other countries whose capitals are named here! (Kampala = Uganda, Bujumbura = Burundi, Kinshasa = the Democratic Republic of Congo.) Comfort International works in all of these countries as well as South Sudan whose capital is Juba.

Slide 10 - Question 4

Which of these is banned in Rwanda?

- A. Plastic bags
- B. Alcohol
- C. Diesel cars
- D. Football

Slide 11 - Answer

A - Plastic bags have been banned in Rwanda since 2008 to reduce single-use plastics in the country.

Slide 12 - Question 5

What animals can you find in Rwanda?

- A. Alpacas
- B. Mountain Gorillas
- C. Tigers
- D. Brown bears



Slide 13 - Answer

B - Mountain Gorillas. Rwanda is home to the last remaining mountain gorillas in the world. You can also find elephants, giraffes, antelope, lions, rhino, hippos and many more animals!

Slide 14 - Question 6

What is Rwanda's biggest export?

- A. Coffee
- B. Salmon
- C. Rice
- D. Fabric

Slide 15 - Answer

A - Coffee.

Slide 16 - Question 7

What is the currency in Rwanda?

- A. Rwandan Francs
- B. US Dollars
- C. Pound Sterling
- D. Rwandan Pesos

Slide 17 - Answer

A - Rwandan francs

Slide 18 - Question 8

Rwanda is known as the ...

- A. Land of a thousand elephants
- B. Land of a thousand people
- C. Land of a thousand hills
- D. Land of a thousand years

Slide 19 - Answer

C - Land of a thousand hills



Slide 20 - Question 9

Which flag belongs to Rwanda?

Slide 21 - Answer

- D = Rwanda!
- A = South Sudan
- B = South Africa
- C = Scotland

Slide 22 - Thank you!

Murakoze cyane means thank you in Kinyarwanda.

If you still have time, check out our **Take The Challenge** page. It's full of fun activities that can help people in Rwanda and other countries live a better life!

For more information and to donate

 enquiry@comfortinternational.org

 comfortinternational.org

   [comfortinternational](https://www.comfortinternational.org)

*If you've used our resources,
please let us know what you
thought of them, we'd love to
improve them for next year!*



Instructions for Bee-Attitudes Activity

Supplies Needed To Make Toilet Paper Roll Bees

- Kitchen roll or toilet roll tubes
- Black marker
- Card – white, black and yellow
- Small googly eyes
- Black pipe cleaner
- Small black pom poms (optional)
- Glue



Instructions:

1. Cut a rectangular piece of yellow card to fit around the tube. Overlap the edges of the paper slightly and glue or tape along the seam.
2. Cut 2 narrow strips of black cardstock. Glue around the paper roll to make stripes, leaving a space on top for the bee's face. (You could also use black string and wind it around the tube or draw on the stripes with black marker.)
3. Add 2 googly eyes to the front of the paper roll.
4. Draw the mouth on with a black sharpie or marker.
5. Bend a black pipe cleaner into a "V" shape and glue it into the inside of the top of the tube. Add pom-poms if desired. You could also just use black card strips for this step.
6. Cut out two wings from white card. Glue or tape to the back of the paper.
7. If you want, print out a copy of the Beatitudes passage, roll it up and keep it inside the toilet roll tube to remind us about the *Bee-attitudes!*

The Bee-Attitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3-10