



GO DEEPER

SESSION 3: WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD?



Aim

To explore reasons why the world is not perfect and to consider the Christian worldview which teaches that the human heart is the reason for the world's problems.



Starter

There are many answers to the question 'What is wrong with the world?' This quiz is about some of the most popular answers. Pupils can do the quiz in their seats or you could label corners of the room a, b and c and ask pupils to stand next to their chosen answer. The correct answers are in bold.

War: What percentage of children were living in a country affected by conflict in 2019?

- a) 27% b) 53% **c) 69%**

Lack of Education: How many children worldwide are not in school?

- a) 1 in 5** b) 1 in 10 c) 1 in 25

Environment: In 2021, how many years were left until there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans?

- a) 29** b) 46 c) 79

Politics: What excuse did Dominic Cummings (when he was the Prime Minister's chief adviser) give for breaking COVID-19 lockdown regulations by driving out of his local area to Barnard Castle in 2020?

- a) A dying relative **b) A need to test his eyes by driving** c) Ran out of milk



Video

Watch the video **What is Wrong with the World?** (Running time 4:43)



Questions

Encourage pupils to write any questions on sticky notes as they occur to them.

Answer questions of understanding about the video straight away unless these will be answered later in the session. If there is not time for a question, confirm you will answer it another time. Consider using the 'car park' so pupils know you will not forget.



Exploring the Bible

In the video Andy Banister shared the Christian worldview on what is wrong with the world – humans! The Old Testament history of God’s people highlighted this repeatedly. God was enacting his plan to bring salvation to the nations and yet his people were continually off message.

Discuss

Can you think of any Old Testament examples where God’s people did not live as they should? [As pupils may have different levels of Bible knowledge you may wish to divide into pairs or small groups to make a list for 3-4 minutes and then feedback.]

Genesis: Abraham does not wait for the promised son but sleeps with Hagar

Exodus: The Israelites grumble about God leading them through the desert

Judges: The people are stuck in a cycle of idolatry, enslavement, calling out to God, rescue and falling back into idolatry

2 Samuel: David’s adulterous relationship with Bathsheba; David facilitating the death of Bathsheba’s husband Uriah

1 Kings: Solomon being distracted from God by his many wives

Isaiah and Jeremiah: The unfaithfulness of Israel and Judah that led to exile

There was hope for God’s people (and for us too). Read Ezekiel 36:24-27.

Discuss

What does this passage tell us about the human heart without God’s intervention?

Without God, we have a heart of stone (cold and unmoved), and we do not naturally want to keep God’s laws.

What hope do we have as flawed humans if we trust God?

God promises to cleanse us from all our sin; God will remove our idols from our grip; God will give us a new heart of flesh (warm and flexible) and a new spirit; God will give us his Spirit to enable us to live his way.

Our Great Commission is to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). How would you respond if someone said, ‘The Great Commission means Christians must promote evangelism over social action’?

On the one hand, sin and facing the anger of a righteous God is the greatest human problem and we should therefore make telling people about Jesus our priority. On the other hand, we are to work for the prosperity of the world and people around us, just as God’s people were to do when exiled in Babylon (Jeremiah 29:7).



Reflection

When we consider all the problems in our opening quiz – war, environmental damage, politics, lack of education – these are all issues caused by people. In the thousands of years that humans have existed we have not found any solutions to these problems – many have got worse.

Allow a time of reflection that is most appropriate to your group.

You may wish to spend some time in prayer for the world, for family members and friends who do not know Jesus, and for any ways in which you could take action to benefit the world around you. Give thanks that because of Jesus there is future hope for us.



Further resource

The Hard Question: God and the Problem of Evil, a lecture by John Lennox available here <https://youtu.be/Ssb47DEmn9U>

Starter Activity References

69% of children, or 1.6 billion children lived in a country affected by conflict in 2019. Approximately 1 in 6 or 17% of children lived less than 50km from where fighting took place. Children Affected By Armed Conflict, 1990-2019 at <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/children-affected-armed-conflict-1990-2019> [accessed 23.06.21]

1 in 5 children are not in school and around 617 million children are unable to meet minimum proficiency levels in language and numeracy. Unicef at <https://www.unicef.org/education> [accessed 23.06.21]

By 2050 it is expected that there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans. Ellen McArthur 'The New Plastics Economy' find out more here <https://www.newplasticseconomy.org/> [accessed 23.06.21]

Advisor Dominic Cummings claimed he broke lockdown regulations in order to test his eyesight. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/52828076> [accessed 23.06.21]