

Session 3 (After Lunch)

Aim

- To consider why there were (and are) such a range of responses to Jesus.
- To create a piece of art where pupils can explore their own response to Jesus and the Easter narrative.

1. **Class discussion: Look again at the mind map from before lunch – why might there have been such huge variety in how Jesus was viewed?**

Some people wanted to kill him, whilst at the same time he drew enormous crowds from a huge area, many of whom wanted to crown him as king...

Look at this paraphrased quotation from C.S. Lewis (a Christian and author of the Narnia series) from his book Mere Christianity:

‘People often say a foolish thing about Jesus: ‘He was a good teacher, but I don’t think he was God’... A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher...’

Jesus claimed to be God. His claim hugely irritated the religious leaders. A good person does not claim to be God. C.S. Lewis goes on...

‘...Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronising nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.’

Can anyone summarise C.S. Lewis’ argument? It is often summarized as: ‘Jesus cannot be just a good man. He is either mad, bad or God.’

2. Mad, Bad or God.

Let's think about the scales from this morning to weigh up each of these options. For each, have two buckets (one for each side of the scales, six buckets total) and give the pupils space to weigh the ideas for themselves.

Mad	
Bucket 1: 'What would a mad person do?'	Bucket 2: 'What did Jesus do?'
Speak rubbish, frighten people, pretend to be someone else, not listen to others...	Spoke powerfully and with authority, calmed people and helped them not to frighten others, let others say who they thought he was, listened to people, healed people, asked more questions than he answered, made a storm be still, fed 5,000 people...
Bad	
Bucket 1: 'What would a bad person do?'	Bucket 2: 'What did Jesus do?'
Tell lies about others, tell lies about themselves, steal, put themselves first, get others into trouble, be angry with other people...	Told the truth, told stories that helped people to lead better lives, put others first, put himself into trouble, was angry with people who treated others badly, made people better, gave people food, had compassion...
God	
Bucket 1: 'How might you expect God to behave?'	Bucket 2: 'What did Jesus do?'
Answers may encompass ideas around power, miracles, judgement or mercy - will largely depend upon how the pupils view God.	Answers may be drawn from details already known about Jesus' life, but the circumstances of his death and the empty tomb are worth pausing on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Supernatural darkness at the crucifixion. Temple curtain tearing. Jesus knowing what was coming - prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane shows this. Empty Tomb. Jesus appearing physically to the disciples.

3. Show the class some examples of artwork of the various stages of the Easter story.

Choose your selection to include some mixed-media artwork. To encourage the pupils to look carefully at the artwork, consider initially only revealing a small portion of it and examining that first. Repeat with other interesting sections before allowing sight of the full artwork. Ask questions of the artwork, for example:

- Why do you think the artist selected those colours?
- What details have been chosen for the background — is it a suggestive background or realistic one? Why might the artist have painted it this way?
- (Mixed-media): Why did the artist choose those specific materials to create their piece? What impressions do the different textures leave you with? Is the artist trying to emphasise something in their work?
- What other details are there in the artwork (aside from the main subject)? Why have these been chosen? Which other characters feature and why might they have been selected?
- How has the main subject been portrayed?
- Does anyone have any other questions to ask of the artwork?

4. Pupils to create a piece of artwork depicting their scene from the morning.– it should incorporate bystanders, including someone to represent themselves.

They will be writing a gallery display paragraph to sit with their artwork and so should consider the following questions as they set about their creation:

- How are you going to portray Jesus? (Mad man/bad man/God man? Face on/side on/rear on? What was he feeling or thinking?)
- How will you create the background to your work? Are there details or pieces of scenery you want to include? Does the scene feel hopeful/fearful/confusing/sad/energetic/other... How could you show this through your choice of colours or materials for the background?
- Which other characters will be in your work? Are they conflicted? How can you indicate their response to the scene that they are participating in?
- Which figure is representative of you? Why?

Finish preparing them for this activity by examining the array of art materials available to them and the opportunities and ideas that this might spark.

5. To maintain a calm environment, put on some gentle, reflective music whilst the pupils create their artwork.

6. Once finished, ask the pupils to write an accompanying paragraph to explain their piece.

Often, in art galleries, there is a short paragraph on the wall near pictures explaining some of the symbolism or significance of the piece that is being viewed. Pupils might want to use the questions above (4) as a guide for their writing.

7. Reflection: To close the day, draw the class together and provide an opportunity for those who want to share their work to do so. Others may prefer to keep their reflections to themselves.

- Sit round in a circle together again.
- Remind the children that the day began with an activity of walking across that circle if they identified with any of the experiences or emotions mentioned.
- Perhaps today has raised new emotions or reflections.
- Christians believe that God spent 33 years on earth in human form (in the person of Jesus) and so is familiar with human emotions — he's felt them too. He knew the joy of close friendships

and the pain of betrayal. He knew despair and anguish. He knew what it was like to be loved and to be hated. He knew what it was to be misunderstood or unheard. He knew unbelievable suffering and sacrifice. He knew what it was to love. In fact, the Bible says, he gave his life for his friends. Christians believe he invites each one of us to be his friend. Imagine being a friend with God!

- Light a candle in the centre of the circle and read these words from the Bible...
- The Bible records in John 15:12-15 that Jesus said these words to his disciples at his final meal with them before his arrest and crucifixion:

'Now I tell you to love each other, as I have loved you. The greatest way to show love for friends is to die for them. And you are my friends, if you obey me. Servants don't know what their master is doing, and so I don't speak to you as my servants. I speak to you as my friends, and I have told you everything that my Father has told me.' (CEV)

- Put some music on and give the pupils space. The Bible claims that Jesus understands our deepest reflections and feelings. If we want, we can talk to him — this is prayer. We can pray by thinking our conversation inside our head to God, or we can whisper or speak our words aloud. Some people write letters to him as a way of praying. As we listen to the music, you have space to pray. Equally you may prefer to simply sit quietly and think through the day — what you have enjoyed and what you have found challenging or difficult.