



Assemblies for Spring Term



Introduction:

In the Sermon on the mount, Jesus speaks about many things, including a set of phrases that have become known as ‘The Beatitudes’. They are about the ‘attitudes’ that Jesus would like us to ‘be’ or have. Each one talks about ways that we can be blessed or happy, so we are calling them ‘The Happiness Ideas’.

What was Jesus trying to teach us from the Beatitudes? When did he demonstrate these things? How can we show these things today?

We are also keen to address the fundamental British values where appropriate because an assembly from Spinnaker should always be useful to the school, as well as speaking into the hearts of children and staff.

Contributors: David Jones, Martin Sweet, Caroline Rous, Steve Palmer

Series Outline:

	Title/Beatitude (Matthew 5:1-12)	Story (Bible reference)	Value/Theme/Ideas and notes
1	Happiness	The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)	Happiness. What does it mean to be happy... truly happy? Jesus talked about happiness, and demonstrated it too.
2	Happiness is... being poor!	The widow’s coins /Blessed are the poor in Spirit (5:3)	Generosity. What can I give, even if I have nothing physical to give? Being generous even if we have very little, and being humble about the way we give.
3	Happiness is... being sad!	Lazarus’ death (John 11:1-44) /Blessed are those who mourn (5:4)	Sadness and tears are an important part of life. Comforting people who are sad is part of being a good friend. Christians believe God comforts those who are sad. (British Values – mutual respect)
4	Happiness is... being meek!	Zacchaeus /Blessed are the meek (5:5)	Being meek is being strong and standing up for what is right (British Values – the rule of law)
5	Happiness is... being hungry!	Feeding of 5000 /Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:6)	Striving for what is important.
6	Happiness is... showing mercy!	The woman caught doing a bad thing (John 8:1-11) /Blessed are the merciful (5:7)	God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. (British Values – individual liberty, mutual respect)



7	Happiness is... having a pure heart!	Jesus visits Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42) /Blessed are the pure in heart (5:8)	Who we are, is much more important than what we do.
8	Happiness is... working for peace!	Jesus is arrested (Matt 26:47-56) /Blessed are the peacemakers (5:9)	Jesus demonstrated being peaceful, despite good reason to become violent. (British Values - tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs)
9	Happiness is... forgiving!	Jesus on the Cross (Luke 23:26-43) /Blessed when you forgive all who treat you badly (Matt 5:10-12)	Total forgiveness – what we can do about removing the hurt or pain within?



Assembly 1. Happiness

Value/Theme: Happiness. What does it mean to be happy... truly happy? Jesus talked about happiness and demonstrated it too.

Story (Bible Reference): The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)

Key Stage Relevance: KS1 & KS2

Resources:

- Flip chart and pens/interactive board
- Pharrell Williams' video of 'Happy' song (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbZSe6N BXs>)

Introduction:

Show video of 'Happy' song.

If you are happy, give me a big smile!

According to a UNICEF report in 2016 (Inequalities in Adolescent Health and Life Satisfaction), the children and teenagers of Britain are not very happy compared to children in other countries. I wonder why that is?

I also wonder what it is that makes us happy. Let's make a list of all the things that make us happy. (Get suggestions from the children and add to a flipchart.)

This is great. Lots of things that make us happy. Jesus talked about being happy, and actually, from some of the things the Bible shows Jesus saying and doing, suggest that he really was happy. He wasn't happy all the time. Sometimes he was sad, or angry, but he had a deep, inner happiness, or joy that you can see in the words he says and his actions.

Main Content:

Jesus also taught people about how to be truly happy. He has a bit of an unusual way of looking at things though! Here is some of the what Jesus said about happiness. It is part of a big sermon/talk that Jesus gave to a huge crowd of people. It's known as the Sermon on the Mount.

The Beatitudes Matthew 5:1-12 (New Living Translation)

One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him,² and he began to teach them.

*"God makes people happy when they are poor and realize their need for him,^[a]
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.*

God makes people happy when they mourn or are sad,



for they will be comforted.

God makes people happy when they are humble,

for they will inherit the whole earth.

God makes people happy when they hunger and thirst for justice,^[b]

for they will be satisfied.

God makes people happy when they are merciful,

for they will be shown mercy.

God makes people happy when their hearts are pure,

for they will see God.

God makes people happy when they work for peace,

for they will be called the children of God.

God makes people happy when they are persecuted for doing right,

for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

God makes you happy when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven.”

These are Jesus’ ideas about what makes people really happy, deep inside. There are other versions of the Bible that use a different word for this happiness... blessed. Feeling blessed is like feeling happy, although it is probably less about the smiles, and more about the inner feeling. These ideas that Jesus said are often known as ‘The Beatitudes’, but we’ll call them ‘The Happiness Ideas’.

Probably none of the things Jesus talked about were on our list of what makes us happy. I think one of the key things is that (in this version at least) he says, ‘God makes people happy’. So, perhaps God can use things that can seem bad to us, or like hard work, to make us happy. Perhaps God’s type of happiness is deeper and longer lasting than the happiness we get from playing computer games or hugging dogs.

Reflection:

Let’s take a moment to be thankful for happiness. Let’s be thankful for the things that make us happy. You may like to thank God for the things that make you happy. You may also like to ask God to give you some of the happiness Jesus had.



Assembly 2. Happiness is... being poor!

Value/Theme: Generosity. What can I give, even if I have nothing physical to give? Being generous even if we have very little and being humble about the way we give.

Story (Bible reference):

The Widow's offering (Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4)

Happy are those who know they are humble – real joy belongs to them. (Matthew 5:3)

Key Stage Relevance: KS1 & KS2

Resources:

- Birthday list – Mock up a list that could be your birthday list.
- A large wrapped box.
- Home-made card or a letter.

Introduction:

I wonder if anyone you know has a birthday coming up soon? Do you know what they would like for their birthday? (Show birthday list) Sometimes a gift list is full of big expensive gifts that no one can afford to give. Other times it might be made up of smaller, more modest items.

Let's imagine someone goes to the shop to buy a birthday present with loads of money (This could be acted out by a couple of children, or by the assembly leaders). They see the most expensive toy in the shop and buy it for their mum. It's amazing, and they're really proud of the gift they're about to give.

Let's imagine their brother/sister goes to the shop. They've only got 2 pennies. It's not enough to buy anything, but they ask the shop keeper if they can have a piece of paper for 2p. They go home and spend hours writing and drawing a lovely card for their mum. They put it in an empty shoe box and wrap it up.

Now we can imagine our two friends giving their presents to their mum. One child bounces in, with a huge box and says. "Look everybody at this huge present I got for my mum! Isn't it great!"

Finally, the second child comes in and quietly goes up to the mum with the shoe box. The mum looks a bit confused as she opens the empty box, until she finds the home-made card at the bottom. She reads it to herself and as she does, a huge smile comes over her face.

Which child put the most effort into the present they gave?
Which present did the mum enjoy the most?



Main Content:

Jesus once saw people giving gifts in a very similar way. But, this time they were giving their gifts to God.

The Widow's offering (Adapted from Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4)

This short story can be put into a drama:

Rich Man: I tell you I have put in five hundred pounds

Rich Lady: I put in more than that last week

Rich Man: I can double whatever you put in – I'm loaded

Rich Lady: I can treble whatever you put in – I'm loaded too

Disciple: Have you seen how much money people have?

Poor Lady: I only have two coins and that's all I have?

Jesus: My friends. Who gave the most?

Disciple: The ones how put in lots of money?

Jesus: No, my friends. They give out of their vast amounts, the poor lady who gave all that she had, she gave more than any of them.

Alternatively use a couple of pictures showing before and after the offerings, or there are a couple of YouTube clips that can be used (e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhcqURSyxPs> You might want to skip the first few seconds)

Do you remember those happiness ideas Jesus said from the last assembly? The first thing Jesus said was "God makes people happy when they are humble – real joy belongs to them." (Matthew 5:3)

Humble is a word that talks about how we give, and how we talk about ourselves. It is the opposite of being proud. The widow in the story was humble.

Reflection:

Have some coins to illustrate the following:

True happiness is not about how much you need or want – (I only have 10p and I need 50p)

True joy in giving is not about giving everything away (I have no coins left)

Being humble about giving is not telling the whole world (I gave 20p today)

I wonder, how do we give gifts to the people we care for?

I wonder, how generous we are with everything we have?

I wonder if giving things to people makes us feel happy?



Assembly 3. Happiness is... being sad!

Value/Theme: Sadness and tears are an important part of life. Comforting people who are sad is part of being a good friend. Christians believe God comforts those who are sad.
(British Values – mutual respect)

Story (Bible reference): Lazarus' death (John 11:1-44), Blessed are those who mourn (5:4)

Key Stage Relevance: KS1 & KS2

Resources:

- Images of people crying on PowerPoint/large cards.

Introduction:

Jesus said some amazing things. Once, when talking to a whole bunch of people, he explored the very basics of human nature. One of those statements was this: "God will make you happy when you cry – because when you cry then you will be comforted."

So, what makes us cry?

Ask for 3 very bold volunteers! Ask them what makes them cry?

What is 'crying' after all?

Short Answer: Research suggests we don't weep because we are upset (like we might run because we are afraid); we cry tears to get over being upset.

Long Answer: First, there's nothing uniquely human about emotional crying. If you pick up a very young kitten, it will set to the same sort of noisy unhappiness a human baby will exhibit. Other animals can whimper, howl or wail and do so for the same sorts of emotions that cause us to cry. The difference is they do it dry eyed... they don't shed tears.

The first crying that babies do is exactly like the crying of other animals - which is to say it's an instinctual way to signal separation and distress. In fact, babies born with anencephaly (without most of the human brain - the cerebral hemispheres) still can and do cry at birth.

Strange Fact 1: before the age of three months, human infants don't shed emotional tears when they cry.

As it turns out there are 3 types of tears we are going to think about:

1. Normal tears: Continuous tears: these are produced constantly for protecting our eyes and keeping them healthy.
2. Reflex tears: Caused by cold, or a speck in your eye.
3. Induced tears: Caused by chemicals, like crying when you are cutting an onion.
4. Tears of emotion: Humans are the only creature that cries when we get emotional – no other animal does that!



Main Content:

Many children's stories start with the phrase: 'Once upon a time...' which means what?
Many children's stories end with the phrase: 'They lived happily ever after.'

Our lives are real stories. Here is a story of a time when Jesus was sad:

Lazarus' death ***(John 11:1-44 New Living Translation -edited)***

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. This is the Mary who later poured the expensive perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair. Her brother, Lazarus, was sick. So, the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."

Although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."

Then he said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."

The disciples said, "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will soon get better!" They thought Jesus meant Lazarus was simply sleeping, but Jesus meant Lazarus had died.

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again."

(Martha) called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, "The Teacher is here and wants to see you." So, Mary immediately went to him.

When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. "Where have you put him?" he asked them.

They told him, "Lord, come and see." Then Jesus wept. ³⁶ The people who were standing nearby said, "See how much he loved him!"

That story ends with Jesus bringing Lazarus back to life, but today we want to focus on the part where Jesus is sad, and even angry at his friend's death. It shows he was just like us in his emotions.

And although we might gasp and are gripped by film stories... real life is sometimes... well ... worse. We might see a film where the hero gets out of a car that has been in 14 accidents – but in real life – even a small crunch in a car is distressing for everyone.



Jesus said this, “Don’t comment on someone else when you might feel worse sometime.”

He also said this, “*Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye' when there is the log in your own eye! You hypocrite. First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.*” Matthew 7:3-5 (ESV)

If you are like me... crying like a dam that breaks – you can’t stop it. Do you have to? Maybe we should see our emotions more like a waterfall – natural, normal... maybe wonderful?

So, what’s worse – someone who always cries? Or someone who never cries?

In his happiness ideas, Jesus said, “Blessed are the mourning (ones), for they shall be comforted.”

Or in a modern version: “*You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.*” (Matthew 5:4 The Message version)

The great news is that it is OK to cry! And it’s good to comfort those who are sad, whether or not they are crying. Christians believe that God also wants to comfort people who are sad.

Reflection:

As we are quiet, let’s think about this think about this:

When we cry... what helps us sort it out.

When we see someone else cry... what can we do?



Assembly 4. Happiness is... being meek!

Value/Theme: Being meek is being strong and standing up for what is right.
(British Values – the rule of law)

Story (Bible reference): Jesus and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

Key Stage Relevance: KS1 & KS2

Resources:

- Pictures of UN Goodwill ambassadors
- Card with words 'weak' and 'meek'

Introduction:

Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek", or 'people who are meek are happy'. Most people today don't really understand what Jesus meant by "meek." A lot of people think meek means weak, being a push-over, but it doesn't at all! Someone who is meek is actually a very strong person. A meek person is gentle and humble, (that means not thinking that they are better than others). They don't get back at others for doing wrong things to them, but they do what is right and say what is right, which can often be very hard to do. Jesus is called 'meek' in the Bible. Many Christians believe that Jesus shows us good ways to act and good ways to behave towards other people.

Ask for volunteer to help decide whether the people in the following situations are being weak or meek. You could have a piece of A4 card with the words on either side. Ask everyone to do thumbs up if they think 'meek' and thumbs down if they think 'weak'.

1. Bob is being unkind to Bill and calling him names. Bill ignores Bob and walks away but tells a grown-up later.
2. Jane and Jill's mum has left out a plate of biscuits. She has said leave them alone as they are for later. Jane takes one as she says they smell nice and Mum won't miss it. Jill doesn't even though Jane teases her and calls her a 'goody-goody'.
3. Simeon is left out of the game in the playground. Lots of the children say they won't play with him. Samella says they are not being kind, leaves the game and goes to play with Simeon.

Some people might think these children are being weak but, in fact they are all being meek.

Main Content:

Being meek is doing the right thing, being meek is being strong. Jesus met someone who wasn't meek to begin with; instead he was weak and not doing the right thing. His name was Zacchaeus.

Tell the story of Zacchaeus. There are good versions in The Lion Storyteller Bible, and the Fount Children's Bible (copies of both in the Spinnaker office). Alternatively, act it out, but think about safety. i.e. Don't get children climbing on chairs!



Jesus helped Zacchaeus to see that his behavior had been weak. Zacchaeus became meek when he realized what the right thing to do was, and then he did it.

(Show pictures of David Beckham, Lionel Messi, Andy Murray, Serena Williams, Katy Perry, Emma Bunton) These people are famous for being actors, singers and sports stars. But they are also UNICEF (the United Nations' Children's Fund) supporters. They have used their fame to make people aware of the problems facing many children in troubled places around the world. They visit these children and tell everyone about it as well as helping to raise money to help them. They show meekness by standing up for children's rights.

Reflection:

I wonder, are you meek? I wonder if you have had to stand up for what is right? What did you do? I wonder, if you think you do the right thing and say the right thing?

Prayer: Dear God, help us to have the strength and courage to always do the right thing and say the right thing, even when it is hard for us to do. Amen



Assembly 5. Happiness is... being hungry!

Value/Theme: Striving for what is important.

Story (Bible reference): Jesus feeds 5000 people (Mark 6:30-44 and Luke 9:10-17)
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (5:6)

Key Stage Relevance: KS1 & KS2

Resources:

- 5 bread rolls and pictures of 2 fish on a table.
- 5000 Faces images on PowerPoint/large print outs

Introduction:

5000 Faces **(Adapted from Mark 6 and Luke 9)**

Their stomachs were rumbling. They were tired, and they were grumpy! (Can you show me your grumpy face?) For the twelve disciples, it had been a long day. They'd started the day in such a good mood, telling Jesus of all they'd been up to since he had last seen them. But did he just listen to them, no! All day, people had been coming and going, and Jesus kept turning his attention to these strangers. Not only had they been taking up Jesus' time, the people had made Jesus so busy that he and the disciples had not had time to eat.

Finally, Jesus turned back to them, smiled (Everyone show me a nice smile) and said, "Come friends, let's get out of here and find somewhere quiet to rest." The disciples didn't need to be told more than once. They jumped in a boat, and sailed across the lake, far away from the crowd, or so they thought!

But it's not that easy to get away from people on a lake. Everyone wanted to see Jesus so much that they ran along the shore, right around to the other side of the lake! The disciples' hearts sank (Show me your disappointed face) when they saw the crowds of people when they landed... thousands of them. But Jesus had a different approach. He chuckled to himself. "They're like sheep without a shepherd!" he said and began to teach them.

As time went by, the disciples got hungrier and hungrier. They looked at each other. They looked at the sun dropping low over the hills. They sidled up to Jesus. "Come on Jesus," they said. "It's getting late, and we are a long way from the nearest town. Send the people away now, so they can get some food."

Then Jesus, with a twinkle in his eye gave a response that made the disciples almost explode with rage. "You feed them!" he said.

"Us!" said the disciples. "We reckon there is about 5000 thousand people here. All we have is 5 small loaves and 2 fish. That's not going to get very far!"

We'll pause the story here.



Main Content:

Up until this point it's easy to picture what happened. Most of us would be grumpy if we'd been working all day without any food. And when someone gives us what seems like a silly answer to a question... I'm sure we would all react in a similar way.

The disciples were hungry for food. What's fascinating is that the crowd were probably hungry too, but they didn't seem to care. Jesus had something they wanted, and it wasn't food. The crowd just couldn't get enough of the stories Jesus told, and the things he taught them. He was like the best teacher you can imagine, and they were soaking up everything he said.

Do you remember the beatitudes (or happiness ideas) we have been talking about this term? One of them sums this up really well: *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."* (Matthew 5:6 NIV) Or, as another version puts it, *"Those who are hungry and thirsty to be right with God are happy, because they will be filled."* (NLV)

Because the crowd were hungry and thirsty for the righteousness Jesus was talking about, they didn't think about food. But Jesus decided to feed their stomachs as well as their minds and souls. Let's go back to the story.

As Jesus beckoned the disciples forward with the bread and the fish, he couldn't help smiling at the faces the disciples were pulling. They had expressions that said, "Come on, Jesus, stop messing about, let's go home... and stop smiling at us you're making me cross!!!" (Can you make that face?)

But Jesus kept on smiling. He took the loaves of bread, and he took the fish. He lifted them up in his hands and said thankyou to God. Then Jesus began to tear and share the bread like he was in a pizza restaurant.

All that was fairly normal, and the disciples didn't think much of it. But after a couple of minutes the disciples' grumpy faces began to change to astonished ones. (Show me your best astonished face). Then they began to take big intakes of breath as they began to take on board what was happening.

As Jesus passed the food out to the people, somehow the food seemed to be multiplying. Each person was tearing some off and passing it to the next, and yet there never seemed to be any less.

And it continued like that for what seemed like hours. As the sun went down and the shadows grew longer, the tummies of every man, woman and child on that hillside got bigger. They all ate until they were satisfied.

When the crowd had gone, the disciples walked around with baskets filling them with the abundant scraps that were left over, trying to work out what had just happened. That phrase Jesus had said previously had a new meaning for them now... "Those who are hungry and thirsty to be right with God are happy, because they will be filled." They reminded each other.

Their faces were not grumpy any more, and they weren't tired. They had discovered a new energy within themselves from the food they had eaten, and from the miracle they had just witnessed. They felt a little guilty for thinking about their stomachs more than the people who wanted to see Jesus, but they knew that Jesus would forgive them... he always did!



Reflection:

I wonder, what are you hungry for? Some of us are hungry to learn. Some of us are hungry to do the right thing. Some of us are hungry for other things. Lets' sit for a moment and reflect about what we can take away from this story.



Assembly 6. Happiness is... showing mercy!

Value/Theme: God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
(British Values – individual liberty, mutual respect)

Story (Bible reference):

Blessed are the merciful (Matthew 5:7)
The woman caught doing a bad thing (John 8:1-11)

Key Stage Relevance: KS1 & KS2

Resources:

- A large stone – sitting on a table. Can be looked at or picked up at appropriate times during the story. Also, a good focus for reflection.

Introduction:

The woman caught doing a bad thing *Adapted from John 8:1-11*

*Feet were shuffling uneasily in the sand.
Beetles and spiders were scurrying, diving for cover as rocks were being picked up.
It was a hot day and tempers were fraying.
"How dare she do such a thing!" said one person.
"That is so wrong... it shouldn't be allowed!" said another.*

*The people all knew it was wrong, it was against the Law.
And they knew what the punishment was in the Law.
Stones! Lots of them. Thrown at the woman until she died.
It was bad, but what she had done was even worse.*

*The Lawyers dragged the woman through the streets to where Jesus was.
The crowd moved and followed, caught up in the frenzy of what was happening.
The Lawyers spoke to Jesus.*

"Come on then Jesus! Tell us what to do. This woman has been caught doing something wrong, and you know what the Law says. What do you think we should do?"

Jesus didn't answer. He sat down on the ground. He started writing in the sand with his finger. That made the people cross... especially the Lawyers. "Don't ignore us Jesus... Tell us what to do!!"

*Eventually Jesus got up and looked at the crowd. Then he looked at the lady.
"OK." he said,
"Any of you who have done nothing wrong... you can throw the first stone at her."*

The crowd looked at Jesus. Then they looked at the lady. Then they looked at the stones in their hands and thought about all the things that they had done wrong. They saw the fear in the lady's eyes, and thought that really, it could have been them in her place.



Slowly but surely soft thuds could be heard as rocks were subtly dropped by people. Then the people started to quietly retreat away from the scene, and before long the crowd had simply dissolved into streets.

Jesus turned to the woman. "Where are the people who wanted to throw stones at you? Has no one said you are guilty?"

She said, "No one, Sir."

Jesus said to her, "Neither do I say you are guilty. Go on your way and don't do it again."

Jesus smiled the warmest smile you can ever imagine.

The lady smiled the biggest smile she had ever smiled.

Main Content:

Mercy is letting someone off, when you know they are guilty. Jesus showed that lady mercy. It's another time when he showed that he practiced what he preached.

During the sermon on the mount, Jesus said, "God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy."

I wonder if anyone here has been shown mercy?

(You could tell a short anecdote about a time when you have been shown mercy. Perhaps let off a parking fine, homework or forgiven for taking a biscuit from the cupboard? This is an opportunity to let the children a little insight that shows them we are all human. However, don't turn it into a full confessional, and don't ask the children for examples.)

Jesus told a story about a worker who owed his boss loads of money. The boss let him off... showed him mercy. Then the worker saw someone who owed him a little bit of money, grabbed him and demanded he pay it back. When the boss heard about this, he was extremely upset with the worker. He threw him into prison until he could repay all that he owed.

Jesus told people to forgive others and show them mercy. He told stories about it, and he showed people how to do it.

Let's look for when it's appropriate for us to show mercy to others.

Reflection:

You might like to focus on the stone or close your eyes and consider a time when someone has let you off when you did something wrong or owed something to someone.

You might like to consider what you will do the next time someone does something to you, and how you will react. Perhaps we can follow the example Jesus set.



Assembly 7. Happiness is... having a pure heart!

Value/Theme: Who we are, is much more important than what we do.

Story (Bible reference): Blessed are the pure in heart (5:8)
Jesus visits Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42)

Key Stage Relevance: KS1 & KS2

Resources:

- Outline of person on flipchart or board
- Cards with words/pictures on (see below)

Introduction:

A wise man keeps telling me, “Who you are is much more important than what you do.”

I wonder what that means?

Have board/flipchart with a large outline of a person that says, “This is who I am”. Then have another board that says, “This is what I do.”

Then, get two/three children to stick the following to the appropriate boards. You can have a bit of discussion with them as it happens, but don't slow it down as it could take a while if discussed one at a time:

- Work hard
- Generous
- Loving
- Cook
- Play sport
- Tidy up
- Gentle
- Peaceful
- Walk sensibly in the corridor
- Kind
- Eat healthy food
- Sensible



Main Content:

Here is a story from the Bible about two sisters. Both were Jesus' friends. But one, seemed to forget that Jesus was more interested in her, than what she was doing:

Jesus visits Martha and Mary *Luke 10:38-42 (New Living Translation)*

As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me."

But the Lord said to her, "My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her."

Not only was Mary more interested in who she was, she was also more interested in discovering who Jesus was. He was only staying with them a short while, and Mary wanted to spend as much time as possible with Jesus.

Martha on the other hand, really wanted to please Jesus, but she was getting so stressed by the cooking and tidying that she was missing out on time with Jesus. I often wonder what would have happened next. I wonder if Martha sat down and listened to Jesus too?

Jesus was again demonstrating what he was talking about in what we call the beatitudes. He said, "God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God."

There's nothing to suggest that Martha was doing anything wrong, but she was distracted by all the things she was doing.

We have busy lives, and it is right that we work hard and try to develop our skills. But it is also right that we should reflect on who we really are when we take away all the busyness. When the football, or the dancing, or the maths is not there, have we developed our character? Have we considered what/who we are on the inside?

Reflection:

Play some music and encourage the children to look at the outline of the person and think about what words would sum them up. What words say who they are?



Assembly 8. Happiness is... working for peace!

Value/Theme: Jesus demonstrated being peaceful, despite good reason to become violent.
(British Values - tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs)

Story (Bible reference): Blessed are the peacemakers (5:9)
Jesus is arrested (Matthew 26:47-56)

Key Stage Relevance: KS1 & KS2

Introduction:

I wonder, have you ever had someone do something mean to you? Maybe someone tripped you up, or hit you, or ruined some of your work. I wonder what did you do? It is easy sometimes to think that hurting someone back is a good idea, or that we are justified in doing it. Jesus demonstrated being peaceful, despite good reason to become violent.

Here is part of the story of Easter. It's the night before Jesus died. He was in a public garden on a hill, just outside the city. We join the action just after Jesus has been praying, and one of the people who used to be his friend arrives.

Jesus is arrested ***(Matthew 26:47-56 New Living Translation)***

Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a crowd of men armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent by the leading priests and elders of the people. The traitor, Judas, had given them a prearranged signal: "You will know which one to arrest when I greet him with a kiss." So Judas came straight to Jesus. "Greetings, Rabbi!" he exclaimed and gave him the kiss.

Jesus said, "My friend, go ahead and do what you have come for."

Then the others grabbed Jesus and arrested him. But one of the men with Jesus pulled out his sword and struck the high priest's slave, slashing off his ear.

"Put away your sword," Jesus told him. "Those who use the sword will die by the sword. Don't you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly? But if I did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that describe what must happen now?"

Then Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I some dangerous revolutionary, that you come with swords and clubs to arrest me? Why didn't you arrest me in the Temple? I was there teaching every day. But this is all happening to fulfil the words of the prophets as recorded in the Scriptures." At that point, all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Main Content:

One of these happiness ideas that Jesus taught was, "God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God." (Mark 5:9)



One again, Jesus was demonstrating that with his actions. People were being very violent towards him, he'd been let down by one of his close friends, and still he didn't turn to violence. He did not hit back or say anything nasty.

Christians see Jesus is a good example of good ways to respond to the bad things that happen to each one of us. He did stand up for what was right, like when he the crowd wanted to stone the woman who had been caught doing something wrong. But he always did things in a peaceful way.

I wonder if we can follow that example?

If you watch the news, you will hear about violent things happening in the world. Wars around the world, people hurting other people and terrible acts of terrorism. There are times when people say, "I'm doing this to get revenge." I wonder, how would Jesus respond?

Reflection:

I wonder what you would do today if someone bumped into you by accident, or hit you on purpose?

I wonder what you would say today if someone said something nasty to you, or accidentally said something that made you upset?

I wonder how good you are at helping other people to calm down when they have been hurt or upset?

I wonder, can we work together for peace?



Assembly 9. Happiness is... forgiving!

Value/Theme: Total forgiveness – what we can do about removing the hurt or pain within?

Story (Bible reference): Jesus on the Cross (Luke 23:26-43)

You are happy when you forgive all who treat you badly when they say or do nasty things. (Matthew 5:10-12)

Key Stage Relevance: KS2 Only, due to abstract concepts.

Resources:

- Two strong bags – One with an outline of person on the outside, the other saying 'Jesus'.
- Stones/bricks (or card cut-outs) with space to write things that can be said and done to others that are not kind (this is all to show how heavy unkind things can be or use lots of screwed up paper to show a volume).

Introduction:

With the bag as an example of a person ask the children for ideas of things that can cause hurt and pain to someone else i.e. nasty things said and done. Add these to the rock/bricks and into the bag.

Show how heavy or large the bag becomes with all these horrible things inside. Explain that anyone carrying around all this pain inside isn't good for them.

Sometimes people try to get rid of these things by seeking revenge – hitting back etc. It might feel like we've got rid of some of the stones (pain) in the short term, however, in the long term this tends to add more weight to the pain, rather than making it better.

How can we get rid of some of this pain we feel when we are angry at people for what they have done to us? Perhaps we can forgive people. That is like taking out some of the stones from our bag. The problem is that we are not very good at fully letting go... we still like to hold on to some of the hurt. We often don't fully forgive people.

Main Content:

For the pain to fully go (the bag fully emptied), it takes total forgiveness.

To truly forgive the bag must be emptied and everything inside dealt with and Jesus is big enough to take all that pain and heartache into himself.

Jesus on the Cross (Luke 23:26-43)

There is the Barnabas Read aloud bible version on page 34.

There is a lot that was unsaid on that cross. It is a little like the thief was saying something like this:

(The thief to Jesus)

I wasn't always this bad would you please forgive me?



*I didn't mean to do what I did – would you please forgive me?
I do know the difference between right and wrong – would you please forgive me?
I know that I have let others and myself down – would you forgive me?
I really do want to put things right – forgive me*

(Jesus)

*I will forgive you for all that you have said and done – you are forgiven
I will forgive you when you meant to do things differently – you are forgiven
I will forgive you even when you did the wrong things instead of the right things – you are forgiven
I will forgive when you let others and yourself down – you are forgiven
You are now truly forgiven as you have said sorry to me – be at peace*

That robber had a lot of hurt inside him. People had probably said and done many bad things to him. He had done many things to other people. I suspect his bag of stones would be very heavy.

But what Christians believe was incredible is that on that cross Jesus took away all the hurt, the pain, the wrong things he had done.

It is as if Jesus took it all from the thief's bag and put it in his bag. Not just one or two things, but all of it. And not just for the thief, but for everyone in the world, back then, and today. Christians believe Jesus is still ready to take all the hurt, pain and wrong from anyone who asks him to. And the best part of it, is that Jesus then left the bag at the cross, so it doesn't come back.

The thief was left with an empty bag. And Christians believe that Jesus wants to leave everyone with an empty bag.

Reflection:

Have a minute's quiet, with some music in the background to think about what has been shared in the assembly.