

Our Christian value for the summer term is HOPE.



At St Mary Abbot's Church of England Primary School, we have adopted 3 key values, one for each term of the school year. Our key values for this year, are peace, forgiveness and hope. These values provide an important framework for helping to define and validate the work of the school 'beyond the curriculum.' Each value is used as the theme for collective worship, the focus for classroom reflection and the subject matter for the main hall or quiet corner displays.

The Bible has so much to offer in this area of positive personal, relational and community values, and its timeless wisdom can help us as staff here at St Mary Abbot's School, pass on to the next generation the qualities of life that are most valuable and which, as Christians, we believe are not only God-given but also can be God-energised in our lives.

When talking, discussing and reflecting on the Christian value, **HOPE**, the following key ideas and themes are explored with the children –

Key themes to explore:

- The Christian understanding of hope
- Hope is a universal phenomenon – we hope for peace in time of war; food in time of famine. When hope is lost, there is despair.
- Hope can generate energy and sustains people through difficult times – examples to share with pupils.
- Christian hope being grounded in the character of God
- True hope is more than a general idea that things will get better
- Hope is more than a belief in progress
- Hope is not wishful thinking but a firm assurance that God can be relied upon.

2. Key Bible verses

The experience of hope is at the heart of the Christian gospel. Often, in the Psalms, the writer says to God: 'My hope is in you.' It is a hope rooted in the love and faithfulness of God. Hope is not wishful thinking but a firm assurance that God can be relied upon. It does not remove the need for 'waiting upon the Lord' but there is underlying confidence that God is a 'strong rock' and one whose promises can be trusted. The writer to the Hebrews describes the Christian hope as 'an anchor for the soul, firm and secure'. Even when experiencing exile, persecution, doubt or darkness, the Biblical writers trust in God's 'unfailing love' and know that he will be true to his covenant promises. That is the basis of their hope.

Hope is not always spontaneous or easy. There is work to be done. As well as trusting God, we have to develop qualities of steadfastness in our own character.

Paul says: 'We know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.' (Romans 5:3-4).

Hope is coupled with faith and love as one of the three most enduring gifts of the spirit (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Theological background

Christian hope for the future has its guarantee in the resurrection of Jesus. The prophets always spoke of a time to come when the whole world would be restored to God. For Christians, Jesus' death and resurrection has set this in motion.

Christian hope means trusting in the loving purposes of God: trusting that the foundations of the world are good because they spring from God. It means believing that, ultimately, we are destined to share in that goodness because of what Jesus has done. He had to pass through the 'valley of the shadow of death' but the victory has been won and our share in that victory is assured.

Biblical References

Psalm 62: 5-8

Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.

Psalm 130: 5-6

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning.

Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

1 Peter 1:3-4

In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you.

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