

Violence, Life, and Hope in Christ

20 Conversation Starters. These conversations can happen gradually, not all at once. These conversations should be had by everyone in our community. If you are a parent, you might pick a few points to emphasize based on the child's age and maturity, always circling back to: *"God made life, God loves us, and God calls us to bring His peace into a hurting world."*

1. Every person is made in God's image

Scripture: [Genesis 1:27](#) "27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

Question: "How do you think it changes the way we treat others if we remember they carry God's image?"

2. Life is sacred

Scripture: [Psalm 139:13-14](#) "13 For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well."

Question: "What are some ways we can show God that we value the lives He has created?"

3. Evil is real

Scripture: [Romans 3:23](#) "23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"

Question: "Why do you think people sometimes choose to do harmful things?"

4. God is near in fearful times

Scripture: [Psalm 46:1](#) "1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Question: "When you feel afraid, what helps you remember that God is close?"

5. Anger at injustice can be right

Scripture: [Ephesians 4:26](#) "26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,"

Question: "What's the difference between being angry at evil and being angry at people?"

6. Vengeance belongs to God

Scripture: [Romans 12:19](#) "19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'"

Question: "Why is it better to let God handle justice instead of us trying to get back at others?"

7. Jesus is our peace

Scripture: [Ephesians 2:14](#) "14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility"

Question: "What do you think it means that Jesus is our peace?"

8. Pray for victims and communities

Scripture: [Philippians 4:6](#) "6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Question: "Who do you think we should pray for when we hear about violence?"

9. Learning to Forgive - even our enemies

Scripture: [Matthew 5:44](#) "44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,"

Question: "Why do you think Jesus asks us to forgive people who hurt us?"

10. Show empathy

Scripture: [Romans 12:15](#) "15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep."

Question: "How would you feel if you were in the shoes of those who are hurting right now?"

11. Courage and fear can exist together

Scripture: [Joshua 1:9](#) “9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Question: “Can you think of a time you felt scared but still did something brave?”

12. Violence doesn’t have the last word

Scripture: [1 Corinthians 15:54–55](#) “54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ 55 ‘O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’”

Question: “How does knowing Jesus defeated death give us hope when scary things happen?”

13. Choosing kindness as your witness

Scripture: [Matthew 5:9](#) “9 ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.’”

Question: “What’s one kind thing you could do at school/work this week to be a peacemaker?”

14. Shine light in darkness

Scripture: [John 1:5](#) “5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

Question: “What are some ways we can bring God’s light into a dark situation?”

15. Speak wisely about violence

Scripture: [Proverbs 15:1](#) “1 A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Question: “If someone at school joked about shootings, what could you say that shows life matters?”

16. Seek help when needed

Scripture: [Proverbs 11:14](#) “14 Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.”

Question: For kids: “Why do you think it’s important to tell an adult if we hear someone talking about hurting people?”

For adults: “How would you respond to someone who is joking/venting and makes a comment about hurting another person?”

17. Your voice matters

Scripture: [Proverbs 31:8–9](#) “8 Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. 9 Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

Question: “When have you seen someone speak up for what’s right? How did that make a difference?”

18. The hope of heaven

Scripture: [Romans 8:38–39](#) “38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Question: “What does it mean to you that nothing can separate us from God’s love?”

19. Trust God’s justice

Scripture: [Revelation 21:4](#) “4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

Question: “How does it make you feel knowing God will wipe away every tear one day?”

20. You are called to love others

Scripture: [John 13:34–35](#) “34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Question: “How do people know we follow Jesus by the way we love others?”