

Lesson 4: How can Christians decide if it is right to go to war?

Saint Augustine, who lived over 1,500 years ago, argued that Christians should have a way of working out if a war is the right thing to do.

He put forward the **Just War theory**.

Just means fair or correct and comes from the word *justice*.



Just War Theory

In order for a war to be **just** it must meet these criteria.

Last Resort

- War must only be an option once everything else has been tried

Just Cause

- There must be a good reason like opposing evil or threats.

Likely Success

- There must be a good chance of success so people don't die needlessly

Proportional

- It must be a 'proportional' response – that means not using more force than is necessary compared to the threat.

Exit Strategy

- There must be a way to bring it to an end as quickly as possible.



Choose either the Second World War or the Falklands War and explain whether or not you think it meets the Just War criteria.

(You can find copies of the information about these wars on the next page)

World War Two

In **1939** Britain had been trying to negotiate with Nazi Germany and had said that if they didn't invade Poland there would be no need for war.

Germany had made clear that it intended to spread its power across Europe and had already invaded a number of countries before it did eventually invade Poland.

Britain had a fairly big army and navy and could work with other 'allied' powers in Europe and abroad to fight Germany.

Germany had shown it was happy to use military force to invade other countries and they had been mistreating the Jewish population of Germany.

The war lasted for 6 years.



Discuss with your group / pair – does it meet the Just War standards?



The Falklands War

In **1982** a country in South America called Argentina invaded the British territory of the Falkland Islands. They are around 8,000 miles from Britain and home to 3,000 British residents.

Margaret Thatcher sent war ships, submarines, helicopters and aircraft carriers to the area to fight the Argentinians and take back control of the islands.

In the fight 255 British soldiers, 649 Argentine soldiers and 3 Falkland Islanders lost their lives. The British sank a warship called the *Belgrano* when it was sailing away from the islands.

The war lasted for 10 weeks.



Discuss with your group / pair – does it meet the Just War standards?

