

Ben's story study guide

Killing Haunts You

Opening exercise

Invite students to a time of silent reflection as you ask these questions. Have you ever done something to someone that you have regretted...or felt guilty about afterwards? Did you ever apologize or find release from the feeling of guilt? How?

View the video clip, "Killing Haunts You" (2:17)

Questions for reflection

- Invite students to respond to the video clip. What do they wonder about? What do they want to remember?
- Invite students to consider: What do you think you would do if you were in Ben Peters' situation, certain that you had harmed and killed, but not knowing whom?
- In what ways do military commanders, politicians and the U.S. public share responsibility for the acts of violence that soldiers commit in war? If we too share responsibility, what should we do?

Biblical reflection

Briefly tell the story of David, Bathsheba and her husband Uriah (2 Samuel 11). Note that after David was confronted by the Prophet Nathan for his sin, he repented. Uriah, of course remained dead and Bathsheba, knowingly or not, was forced to live with the man who had violated her and ordered her husband killed. We cannot undo the consequences of our sins on others. Yet by acknowledging our sins we can begin a path toward healing and finding a way to be accountable.

Other resources

"Moral Injury," by Logan Mehl-Laituri. See: civilianpublicservice.org/storycontinues/hotline#clip4

"Iraq vet seeks atonement for early war tragedy." See: npr.org/2012/10/23/163472609/iraq-vet-seeks-atonement-for-early-war-tragedy

"Understanding Moral Injury," by Rev. Dr. Rita Brock. See: brite.edu/academics/programs/soul-repair/resources/#audio

STAR: Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience. See: emu.edu/cjp/star/toolkit

Camilo Mejia. See: americanswhotellthetruth.org/portraits/camilo-mejia

Through All the Plain, by Benjamin John Peters, Cascade Books, 2014

Ben's story

Iraq War veteran Benjamin Peters reflects on war, peace and the call to follow Jesus.

Taped at Mennonite Church USA Convention, July 2015.