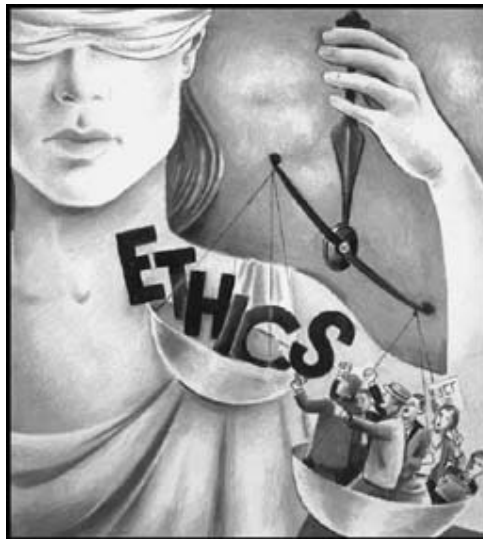


Philosophy and Ethics

GCSE Revision Guide



Useful Websites

rsrevision.com

request.org.uk

Christianity and Human Relationships

You may be asked questions on the following;

- 1.) Roles of **men and women** in a Christian family
Roles of men and women in the Church Family
 - 2.) **Marriage** Ceremonies
The ways in which the ceremonies reflect and emphasise Christian teaching about marriage
Responses to civil partnerships
 - 3.) Christians beliefs about the ethics of **divorce**
Christian beliefs about the ethics of re-marriage
 - 4.) Christian beliefs about **sexual relationships**
Christian beliefs about contraception
-

1 Roles of men and women within a Christian family

The traditional viewpoint on the roles of men and women within the Christian family

Women

To bring up the children.
To run a Christian home.
To obey their husbands.



Men

To provide for the physical needs of the family.
To bring in a regular wage.
To lead home worship.
To love their wives.



Why?

Genesis - Adam was created by God first and Eve to be his '**helpmate**'.

Paul – Husbands should treat their wives with respect as the '**weaker partner**'.

No female disciples

Bible written in a time where men had authority over women

The modern viewpoint on the roles of men and women within the Christian family

Women and men are equal!



Why?

- Jesus treated men and women as equal
 - Jesus treated a Samaritan as his equal
 - Jesus preached in the Court of the Temple of Women
 - Jesus had women followers
 - Jesus first appeared to women after his resurrection
 - Jesus was loving and caring
-
-

Roles of men and women in the Church

The Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches do not ordain women as Priests or Ministers. However, they do allow women to fulfil other roles within the Church. For example, women are allowed to lead prayers, lead singing, help to explain the service, act as stewards and collect money. Such Christians may argue that it is unacceptable for women to become Priests as the Bible states that women 'must keep quiet' in Church and not have 'authority over men.' The Bible also states that 'Adam was created first, and then Eve. And it was Adam who was deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and broke God's law.' (1 Timothy 2.8-14) Here, Timothy is referring the incident in Genesis when Adam and Eve were asked by God not to eat fruit from a certain tree in the Garden of Eden but Eve sinned by eating fruit from the tree and she also encouraged Adam to do the same. Therefore, it can be argued that women are more vulnerable to temptation and sin and so unsuitable for the role of a Priest.

Many Protestant Churches, including the Church of England, do allow women to become Priests. These Christians argue that this is acceptable due to the fact that Jesus had a positive attitude towards women and there are many quote and passages within the Bible that promotes and encourages equality between people.

2 The Christian Marriage Ceremony

Common features of a Christian Wedding



- **Beginning the service:** the priest welcomes the congregation and then reads out what Christians believe about marriage, that marriage is a life long commitment between two people in the presence of God and that it should not be gone into lightly.
- **Declarations:** the couple make their promises in front of God that they will love, comfort, honour and protect their partner as long as they both shall live.
- **Vows:** The couple then make their vows to one another.

”To have and to hold, from this day forward;
For better, for worse,
For richer, for poorer,
In sickness and in health,
To love and to cherish, till death do us part”

- **Rings:** The couple exchange rings
- **Proclamation:** the priest tells the couple that they are now husband and wife.
- **Prayers:** prayers are said for the couple. They may include a prayer for the gift of children, but this is optional.
- **Readings and sermon:** there will be some readings from the Bible and the minister gives a sermon.
- **Signing of the register:** the bride and groom, along with two witnesses, sign the register, which is a legal requirement.

Please note – The most important part of a Christian marriage is the promise to God.

The three purposes of a Christian Marriage;

- ❖ To provide each other with mutual help and support in both the good and bad times together.

- ❖ To have sexual intercourse in a secure environment where both man and woman can feel equally loved.
- ❖ To have children and bring them up in a Christian home.

Think about – What do Christians believe about marriage? How can you tell this by what is included in the marriage ceremony? How does the ceremony reflect Christian beliefs about marriage?

Responses to Civil Partnerships

A civil partnership is a legal recognition of a same-sex relationship with a registry office ceremony.

Christianity teaches that sexual relationships only belong within marriage so many Christians do not accept civil partnerships.

The Roman Catholic Church does NOT accept civil partnerships because it rejects Same-Sex Relationships. The Pope (head of the Catholic Church) told Catholics that homosexuality was a bigger problem for the future of the world than climate change. However, there are many Catholic people who do not share the Pope's view on this issue.

Some Christians accept civil partnerships as a loving relationship and allow same-sex couples to have a blessing ceremony after their civil partnership registration if they wish. Quakers think that same-sex unions are acceptable and should be welcomed. "We affirm the love of God for all people, whatever their sexual orientation, and our conviction that sexuality is an important part of human beings as created by God, so that to reject people

3 Christian beliefs about divorce and remarriage – Three different views

1.) The **Roman Catholics** do not accept divorce. Marriage is a sacrament (a way to gain forgiveness from God) and therefore holy. In the eyes of this denomination, the couple is married for life, and therefore to remarry would be adultery. Occasionally an **annulment** is allowed if, for example, one of the couple had no intention of keeping the vows, one of the couple were not baptised or if the couple had not had sex.

2.) The **Church of England** does not, in principle, accept divorce. The church teaches that marriage is for life, and their general policy is not to remarry divorcees in a church ceremony. Some vicars, however, will allow the remarriage of divorced people in their church as they believe when a marriage has broken down divorce is the lesser of two evils (the effect of the couple not divorcing would be a greater evil than the evil of divorce). Such people would also be expected to show remorse for the break down of their marriage and be willing to learn from their mistakes in their next. An increasing number of vicars are offering a **blessing** after the remarriage of divorced people in a civil (registry office) ceremony, for example, Prince Charles and Camilla.

3.) Many **Free Churches** (Baptist, Methodists) accept divorce and allow remarriage in a church ceremony. These denominations believe that it is not the physical death of one of the partners which ends the marriage. Rather, the marriage ends with the death of the love between the couple. These denominations believe that it is better for the couple to begin their new relationship with the blessing of the church.

4 Christian beliefs about sexual relationships and contraception

Many Christians believe that sex outside marriage is wrong. This includes pre-marital sex (sex before marriage) and extra-marital sex (sex that takes place between two people, one or both of whom are married – but to someone else). Christians believe that sex outside marriage goes against God's intention for sex – to cement a marriage relationship and to bless people with the gift of children. Jesus frequently spoke out against pre-marital sex and adultery (affairs). Christians believe that sex is a God-given way for two people to express their love within marriage.

7th Commandment - Do not commit adultery.



The Roman Catholic Church is the only Christian denomination (group) that is strongly opposed to contraception (birth control). It teaches that the love between a husband and wife leads naturally to children and to prevent this natural occurrence would be a sin. This is the why the Catholic Church teaches that, 'each and every marriage (sexual) act must remain open to the transmission of life.' Natural methods of birth control, for example the rhythm method, are accepted. Otherwise, the couple must abstain from sex if they do not want a baby. However, recently (2010) the Catholic Church has come under pressure to alter its teachings about contraception and the Pope has said that perhaps the issue of contraception could be considered on a case by case basis he concluded, for example, that it may be acceptable for a prostitute to use contraception to minimise the risk of infection. This is a massive shift in thinking for the Catholic Church and its followers.

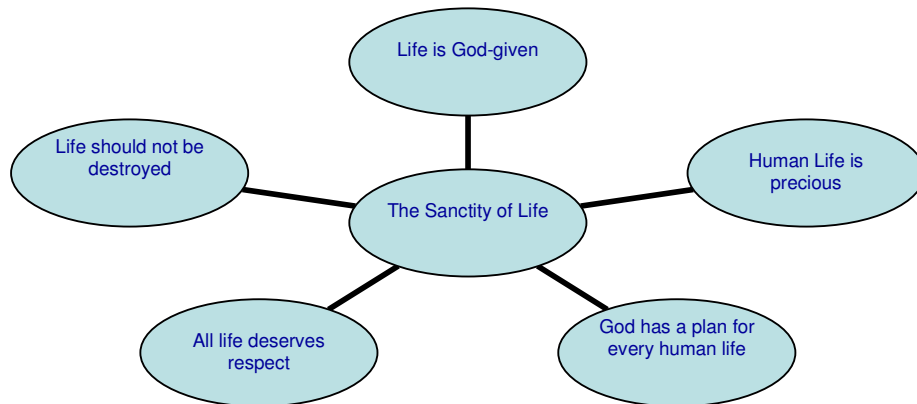
Most other Christians regard sex as one of the greatest gifts to them and so one to be enjoyed. Sex is for creating life but it is also to express the depth of love that two people have for each other. Contraception, in removing the fear of an unwanted pregnancy, is to be welcomed. The Protestant Churches, including the Church of England, believe that all forms of contraception are right as long as they are acceptable to both partners. This allows a couple to decide when they would like to have a baby.

Christianity and Medical Ethics

You may be asked questions on the following;

- 1.) Christian attitudes to abortion
- 2.) Christian attitudes to fertility treatment and cloning
- 3.) Christian attitudes to euthanasia and suicide
- 4.) Christian beliefs about the use of animals in medical research

Christians believe in the sanctity of life and this affects their views on all of the subjects above;



1 Christian attitudes to abortion

Roman Catholic View

The Roman Catholic Church expresses the strongest objection of any Christian Church to abortion. It argues that abortion denies a baby the most fundamental human right – the right to life. This life, the Church teaches, begins the moment that a baby is conceived. The destruction of the foetus in the womb is considered to be the same as murder. So important is the life of the unborn baby that, if there is a choice, the life of a baby should be saved ahead of that of the mother.

Supporting quotes;

- ‘I chose you before I gave you life and before you were born I selected you to be a prophet to the nations.’ (Jeremiah 1:5)
- ‘If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s’ (Romans 14:8)

The Protestant Church on Abortion

The Church of England, like other Protestant Churches, believes that abortion is an evil that should be avoided if at all possible. However, it can be allowed in the circumstances below. In these circumstances, the Church believes that allowing an abortion would be the most compassionate (loving) thing to do. Remember, that Christianity considers itself to be a loving religion.

- 1.) There is a risk to the physical health of the mother.
- 2.) There is a risk to the mental health of the mother.
- 3.) A disabled baby is going to be born.
- 4.) The pregnancy is the result of the woman being raped.

2

Christian attitudes to fertility treatment and cloning

Fertility Treatment

Fertility Treatment	Description	Would the Catholic Church agree? Decide and explain.	Would other Christian groups agree? Decide and Explain.
IVF	IVF is an abbreviation of In Vitro fertilisation. People often refer to this method of conception as having a test tube baby. This fertility treatment was developed to help women with blocked fallopian tubes conceive. The woman is given drugs to produce eggs which are then collected, fertilised with the man’s sperm outside her body and then placed back inside the womb. The man’s sperm and the woman’s egg are both used to conceive the baby. The extra embryos that are created are usually destroyed.	No as they are against masturbation and wasted embryos.	Yes but only if the man and woman were married. They would not think of embryos as lives.
AID	AID is an abbreviation of Artificial Insemination by Donor. This fertility treatment is helpful when the man is infertile. Sperm is provided by an anonymous donor and then placed in the neck of the womb. A law in 2004 stated that any child resulting from this treatment has a right to know the identity of their biological Father.	No because of masturbation again but also because the man and woman creating the baby are not married and they don’t believe that children should	No as they do think that children should only be born inside a marriage.

		be born out of wedlock	
AIH	AIH is an abbreviation of Artificial Insemination by Husband. This treatment is used when there is a medical reason why the couple can not conceive – although there is nothing wrong with the eggs or sperm. The husband’s sperm is collected and placed in his wife’s body.	No because masturbation would be necessary and this is a sin.	Yes, perfectly fine.
Egg or sperm storing	This is when a woman’s eggs or a man’s sperm are stored in case they are needed sometime in the future. In case the person dies early or becomes infertile.	No because of masturbation being a sin.	Some will think this fine but others would not want a child brought in to the world with a parent already dead.
<u>The views of the Catholic Church</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Masturbation (obtaining sperm by not having sex) is a sin. ❖ It is a sin to create embryos that are not given the chance to form in to foetuses. ❖ Children should only be created after sexual intercourse between married couples. ❖ Childless couples should satisfy their need to become parents by adopting or fostering. ❖ The ‘Sanctity of life’ belief means that all life is precious as soon as it has becomes an embryo and it is only God that can take that life away. ❖ Couples do not have a right to have children. 		<u>The views of other Christian groups</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Fertility treatments are fine as long as the eggs and sperm used belong to a married couple. ❖ Embryos are not foetuses and so it is fine to destroy them. ❖ It loves to provide childless couples with the opportunity to become parents. Jesus said, ‘Love thy neighbour.’ ❖ Jesus healed people so why not heal people of their fertility problems. ❖ Couples have the right to become parents. 	

Genetic Engineering

Genetic engineering means many different things. However, it is basically about changing or destroying parts of a human’s genetic make up in the embryonic (0 -8 weeks of pregnancy) stages of life.

Screening is one of the main reasons for embryos to be tampered with. This is when embryos are tested for genetically inherited diseases, so they don’t get passed on.

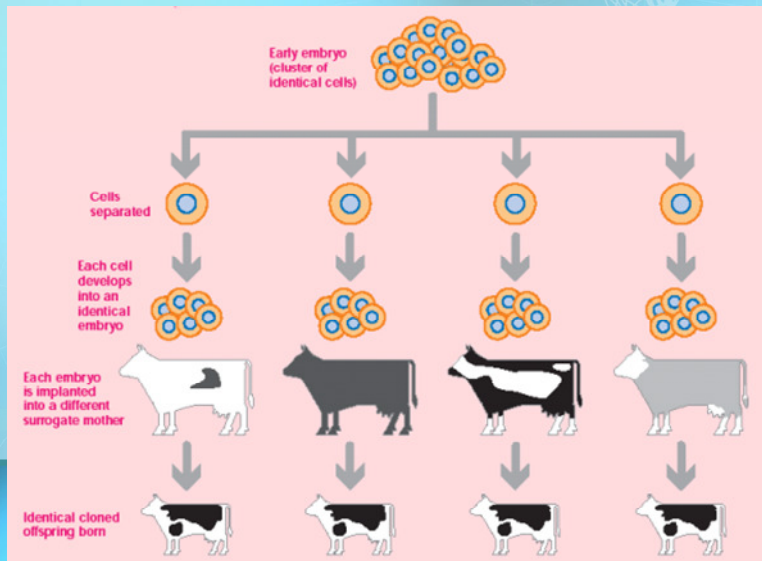
For example, if a woman had a genetically inherited disease, she could have a number of her embryos tested for the disease with the aim of only carrying a disease free embryo through to birth. However, the diseased embryos would be destroyed and many Christians would consider such an act as murder.

Cloning

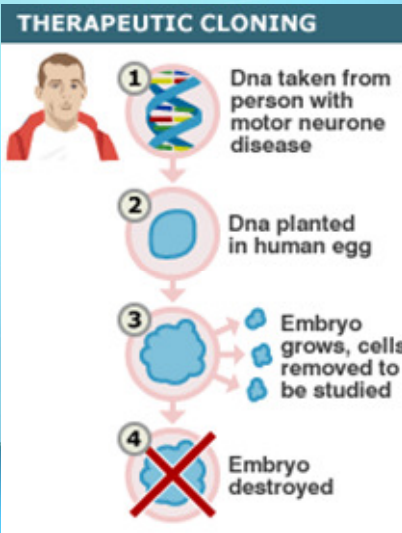
Christians who believe that life begins at conception are also against the practice of cloning as the procedure requires the destruction and waste of embryos. Embryos are fertilised eggs and many Christians believe that life starts at the moment of conception (when the sperm fertilises the egg) and they believe the destruction of embryos is akin to murder.

There are two types of cloning; reproductive cloning and therapeutic cloning. Reproductive cloning has been used to clone animals and although a human has never been cloned, scientists do have the ability. Therapeutic cloning is still being developed.

Reproductive Cloning



Therapeutic Cloning



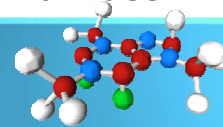
- Sometimes known as stem cell cloning
- Involves taking the DNA out of the embryo and replacing it with the DNA from another individual. The embryo is killed in the process, but the stem cells may then be grown into a replacement heart, liver, or skin etc.



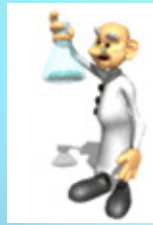
Most of the moral and religious arguments are around **HUMAN** cloning

Firstly – the arguments FOR

- It helps with research which could help sick or infertile people
- It is compassionate & improves people's **QUALITY OF LIFE**
- People have a right to choose – God gave **FREE WILL**
- God inspires the scientists to benefit us all
- Cloning could improve the human race – speeding up evolution



Arguments **AGAINST**



- It is against nature & the way God created us
- Leftover embryos are destroyed. Some see these as human beings or potential humans. So this is murder.
- Scientists may take more & more steps which are unacceptable
- Does a cloned person have a soul?
- Reproductive cloning affects identity & individuality
- The first 276 attempts to produce Dolly failed, producing many malformed animals. The same would happen with humans.

3 Christian attitudes to euthanasia and suicide

Euthanasia – Assisted suicide - usually required because of serious ill health.

All of the Christian Churches are officially against euthanasia. The strongest argument used against euthanasia is that only God has the right to end life and many Christians consider euthanasia as akin to murder which is against the 10 commandments. However, there are a few Christians who think that in some serious circumstances euthanasia is the most loving and compassionate thing to do for a person who is in unbearable pain and suffering from an incurable disease.

In the past, the Christian Church took a very strong line against suicide. It believed that suicide was self-murder and murder was against the 10 commandments. As all life, especially human life, was a gift of God, so suicide was a serious sin.

Today, the Christian Church knows that many people live, and die, under great pressure. If they commit suicide it is because they are deeply unhappy – not because they are wicked. They are simply unable to cope with the pressures of life. Many Christians are among those who volunteer to help with the Samaritans – in the hope that they can persuade suicidal people that life is worth living after all.

4 **Christian beliefs about the use of animals in medical research**

Most Christians would be in favour of vivisection (animal testing) for essential medical research such as, testing for a cure for Cancer. However, they would most likely be against animal testing for cosmetics or cleaning products.

Christians generally believe that humans are more important than animals but they also believe that humans have a responsibility to treat animals respectfully, sensibly and humanely.

Why are humans more important than animals?

- God asked Adam to name the animals so this could prove that God meant animals to be owned by humans.

Why should humans treat animals with respect?

- Jesus said in the New Testament that even the death of a sparrow does not go unnoticed by God.
- The Bible says that ideally all animals and humans will live together in peace.
- Jesus said that the meek (helpless) were blessed. This could include animals.

Christianity and Poverty and Wealth

You may be asked questions on the following;

- 1.) Christian views on wealth and the causes of hunger, poverty and disease
- 2.) Christian teachings about the uses of money
- 3.) Christian teachings about charity and concern for others
- 4.) Moral and immoral occupations

1.) Christian views on wealth and the causes of hunger, poverty and disease

General causes of poverty – Over use of resources, over population, lack of education, lack of raw materials, climate, natural disasters, exploitation of the poor by the rich, debt and unfair trade.

Roman Catholic Church

The Catholic Church regularly criticises those who value wealth above people. The Catechism says:

“True happiness is not found in riches or well-being, in human fame or power, or in any human achievement... God blesses those who come to the aid of the poor and rebukes those who turn away from them. Rich nations have a grave moral responsibility towards those which are unable to ensure the means of their development by themselves.”

Roman Catholic Catechism

The Church teaches that unfair laws and inequality has led to greater levels of poverty. The Church supported the Jubilee campaign to end the Developing World's debt. Pope John Paul II said:

The Jubilee year (2000) was meant to restore equality among all of the children of Israel, offering new possibilities to families which had lost their property and even their personal freedom. On the other hand, the jubilee year was a reminder to the rich that a time would come when their Israelite slaves would once again become their equals and would be able to reclaim their rights. At the times prescribed by law, a jubilee year had to be proclaimed to assist those in need

As the Third Millennium Draws Near

Thus, in the spirit of the Book of Leviticus (25:8-12), Christians will have to raise their voice on behalf of all the poor of the world, proposing the jubilee as an appropriate time to give thought, among other things, to reducing substantially, if not cancelling outright, the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations.

Pope John Paul II

Church of England

“The Synod [believes] that, as a matter of common humanity and of our mutual interest in survival, the world requires a new and more equitable system of economic relationships between nations.”

General Synod of the Church of England, 1981

The Bible and causes of poverty

Two major causes of poverty, unrepayable debt and unfair trade, are dealt with clearly in the Bible:

Debt

The Prophet Amos was quite clear: God was not impressed with religious rituals, because outside the Temple they were cheating the poor. What God wants is justice!

They sell into slavery honest men who cannot pay their debts... they trampled the poor, weak and helpless, and push the sick out of the way.” Amos 2:6-7

God wants people not to be greedy, and cancel debts when someone cannot pay. These quotes can apply to the international debt situation today...

“At the end of every seven years..... every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbour...” (i.e. cancel any debts). Deuteronomy 15:7-8

Jesus' first public statement echoed the words of the prophets when he claimed that he had come to 'preach good news to the poor' and 'release the oppressed'. This may include debt cancellation:

“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, he has sent me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed...”

Luke 4:18-19

Trade

"The fields of the poor may produce abundant food, but injustice sweeps it away." Proverbs 13:23

We often see developing countries as victims - of war, of the weather etc. However, the truth is that many developing countries produce 'abundant food' but unjust trade laws mean that they cannot sell their produce for a decent price. The Bible warned that it was wrong to cheat the poor out of money:

‘Don't cheat when measuring length, weight, or quantity. Use honest scales and weights and measures.’ Leviticus 19:35-36

2 Christian teaching about the uses of money



We live in a materialistic society, sometimes it seems that everyone is planning their next purchase and working long hours just so that they can surround themselves with the latest fashions and gadgets. Christians understand that money is important, money enables people to buy, food, clothes and shelter. However, they think it is wrong to over exaggerate the importance of money. Instead, Christians believe that it is more important to be a kind and good person than to have a big bank balance. A generous poor person would be closer to God than a stingy millionaire.

Jesus said, ‘sell everything you have and give to the poor.’ Monks and Nuns take what Jesus said literally and many choose to live in poverty their whole lives. Christians are not expected to sell all of their belongings but they are expected to be careful and wise with their money. Christians believe that all wealth belongs to God and so people have a responsibility to manage their money sensibly. A Christian who has more money than they need should give their money to those less fortunate. To many Christians, it is not fair that some people have lots of money in the bank whilst others can barely feed themselves.

In Biblical times, people paid a tithe (tax) to God. This was 10% of their income each year. Many Christians still pay this amount to their Church or chosen charity. Other Christians pay this more informally and give a variable amount of money to the collection box when they attend Church, the Church then usually distributes this money to charities they consider to be important. In the Bible it says, ‘God loves a cheerful giver.’



The Bible tells Christians to be generous and not to reject a person who wants to borrow from them. However, borrowing should only be acceptable to Christians if it is interest free as it is not very Christian to benefit from helping somebody out. Yet, this Christian teaching is ignored by the majority of the Christian world.

Helping others is not just about giving money to charities. Charities can be helped out in many other ways. For example, giving old clothes to a charity shop, running a cake stall at a Church fete or completing a sponsored run.

3 Christian teaching about charity and concern for others

Jesus told lots of stories to encourage his listeners to give to the poor. Here are two examples;

The Parable of the Bigger Barns

One year, the ground of a farmer was very fertile and yielded a bumper crop. This overwhelmed the farmer, who realised that he had nowhere to store the extra grain. He decided to build new barns so

that the grain could be his security for the future. Jesus was angry with the farmer and pointed out that God demands more from people who have more than their fair share of the world's resources.

Sheep and Goats

God will separate men like a shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. He will invite those on his right to heaven and say to them, 'When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat; when I was thirsty you gave me something to drink.' They will be shocked and confused and say, 'When did we see you? When did we help you or clothe you?' God will then say, 'Whenever you helped anyone, you helped me.'

Christians believe that all money and wealth belongs to God and it is up to humans to make sure it is distributed fairly. Therefore, Christians believe that they should give any extra money they have to those less fortunate than themselves.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus teaches Christians about what will happen to them if they are not generous to those less fortunate than themselves - There was a man who dressed in purple and fine linen and lived a life of great luxury. A poor beggar, Lazarus, was covered in sores and lay outside the rich man's gate. The beggar would have been thankful for any of the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table but he received nothing. The beggar eventually died and was carried up into heaven. The rich man died and was carried into the underworld (hell). From there, he envied the poor man's place in heaven but it was too late.

Christians would rather give to charities that agree with their beliefs. For example, a Christian probably wouldn't give to a charity that promoted violence or discrimination in any way and some Roman Catholics might not like to support a charity that promoted the use of contraception or abortion. However, some Christians might support a charity that helped ex-prisoners reform and start a new life as this would match with their belief that everyone deserves forgiveness and a second chance.

4 Moral and immoral occupations

People usually acquire money and wealth from their occupation (job). There are no set rules about the jobs that Christians should do. But generally, Christians would rather have a job that gives them a chance to practice the teachings of their religion. For example, in a job that helps others or works against racism or violence.

Moral Occupations – A job which upholds general moral or religious teachings. To Christians, moral jobs are those that support or encourage Christian teachings or principles. For example, the job of a doctor might be considered moral because it respects the human body which was created by God.

Immoral Occupations – Jobs that go against general moral or religious teachings. To Christians, immoral jobs are those that go against the teachings of Christianity. For example, the job of a prostitute might be considered as immoral because it breaks the commandment 'do not commit adultery.'

Christianity and Peace and Justice

You may be asked questions on the following;

- 1.) Christian attitudes to war and the just war theory
- 2.) Christian attitudes to violence and pacifism.
- 3.) Christian beliefs about crime and punishment.
- 4.) Christian responses to social injustice

1.) Christian attitudes to war and the just war theory

Some Christians support war, others are against it completely and many believe that war is only acceptable if it is a 'just' war.

In support of war – there are many passages in the Old Testament of the Bible that seem to support violence and war. For example, 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' and 'I pursue and overtake

my enemies; until I have made an end of them I do not turn back. I strike them down and they can rise no more...I wipe out those that hate me.'

Against war – Christians who are against war are known as pacifists. Many Christians are pacifists and they follow the role of Jesus in this decision. Jesus preached, 'If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic let him have your cloak as well.' Therefore, Jesus taught Christians to walk away from violence and war.

Just war – other Christians believe that war is acceptable if it is a 'just' war. There are five things that are necessary if a war is to be declared 'just';

- 1.) It must be a war waged by the government of a country, not by private individuals.
- 2.) There must be a good reason for going to war, for example, self-defence.
- 3.) The intention of the war must be good, for example, to restore a just peace.
- 4.) Civilians should be protected and not be used as targets.
- 5.) The methods used during the war should cause no unnecessary harm to achieve the objective of the war.

2.) Christian attitudes to violence and pacifism

The same arguments to war apply to violence also. Many Christians are pacifists because the Commandments declare 'You shall not kill', Jesus taught Christians to turn the other cheek, Jesus acted as a pacifist himself and many pacifists believe that an evil action can never justify another one in retaliation.

Pacifists can still express anger or disagreement about something but they must do this in a peaceful way. For example, pacifists can go on a protest march or write letters of complaint to a government.

3.) Christian beliefs about crime and punishment

Aims of Punishment – reform, vindication, retribution, deterrence and protection.

Christians believe that God will judge everyone for the way that they have lived. God is the final judge. They also believe that judgement has to be passed on earth and that people must pay the right penalty for their actions. Some people need to be put in prison. Christians believe that the conditions in prisons should be humane and that prisoners should be able to keep their dignity while they are there.

For most Christians the purpose of punishment is to allow for the criminal to ask God for forgiveness and change his ways. Therefore, many Christians are against capital punishment (the death sentence) because this closes the door to forgiveness. However, there are Christians who support the death sentence because they believe in the principle of an 'eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.'

4.) Christian responses to social injustice

Social injustice is when people in a society do not have equal access to the facilities, services or systems in that society. This situation can occur due to two main reasons:

1. **Poverty** can mean that people are marginalised (relegated to the lower or outer edge of society) and therefore have less chance to influence decisions which form or shape their lives. Many Christians work for or give to charities that help to remove people from poverty. Christians can also make sure that they vote for politicians who plan to tackle poverty.
2. **Political systems** within a society may mean that some people are less fairly treated than others, for example due to their ethnicity, gender or religion.

Christians believe that people should be treated equally and also that they have a duty to spread social justice throughout the world. Therefore, Christians will often campaign for changes in countries where people are being treated unfairly. Throughout history there have been many Christians who have fought to challenge the social injustice taking place due to the political systems of the countries they were in.

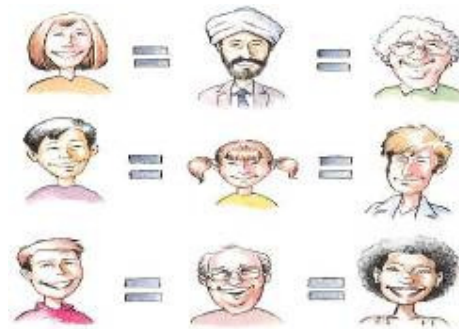
Trevor Huddleston fought for equal rights for black people in South Africa and against the policy of apartheid. Dietrich Bonhoeffer preached against the treatment of Jewish people by the Nazis in Germany and Oscar Romero spoke out against the brutal government of El Salvador who were responsible for torturing and mistreating certain groups of people within the country.

Christianity and Equality

You may be asked questions on the following;

- 1.) The teaching of the Bible about equality
- 2.) Christian attitudes to racism
- 3.) The role of women in Christian society
- 4.) Christian attitudes to other religions
- 5.) Christian beliefs about forgiveness and reconciliation

1.) The teaching of the Bible about equality



The Bible teaches that all people are equal before God. For example;

- ‘Love one another.’ (John 13.34)
- ‘Whatever you want people to do to you; you must do to them also.’ (Matthew 7.12)
- ‘God made one from every nation of the world, to live on the face of the earth.’ (Acts 17.23)
- ‘God created man in his own image. He created them male and female.’ (Genesis 1.27)
- ‘There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; you are all one in Jesus Christ.’ (Galatians 3.28)

To most Christians it does not matter if a person is Jew or Greek, a slave or a free person, male or female, black or white, straight or gay, young or old, rich or poor. However, there are Christians who have used certain Bible passages to support arguments against equality particularly to argue against homosexuality and in support of racist actions such as slavery.

2.) Christian attitudes to racism

Christians believe in one God who is the Creator and Father of everyone. All people are made in God’s image and so are born equal. Jesus demonstrated this truth throughout his life and teaching. Here are three examples, from the Bible;

1. When asked ‘Who is my neighbour?’ Jesus replied to the question by telling the story of the Good Samaritan. There had been no contact between the Jews (Jesus was Jewish) and Samaritans for centuries. Yet, in the story told by Jesus, it was a Jew who helped a Samaritan when he was in great need. He did this because he recognised the desperate plight of a man and this overcame all of their hostility towards each other. The message of the parable is that all people are neighbours – to be loved and respected for what they are.
2. Jesus healed the servant of a Roman centurion, even though the Romans were an occupying power in Palestine (the country where Jesus lived) and hated by the Jews.

3. He befriended Zacchaeus, a tax collector, although tax collectors were hated by Jews because they worked for the Romans.

All differences between human beings – whether race or colour – are totally unimportant to God.

Martin Luther King (USA) and Trevor Huddleston (South Africa) are famous examples of Christians who have thought racism in a peaceful way.

3.) The role of women in Christian society

Most Christians would argue that men and women should be treated equally in society and there are many incidences in the Bible to support this view. Jesus had many close friends and supporters who were women. It was some of these women who remained more faithful to him than his male disciples when death approached. Jesus also preached at a temple for women which, was unusual at the time.

However, there are Christians who do treat the sexes differently. For example, the Roman Catholic Church will not allow women to become Priests. There are many passages in the Bible that seem to indicate that women should be treated differently. For example, "Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.", "Wives, be subject to (obey) your husbands as you are to the Lord. Husbands love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself." And "But I would have you know, that the head (i.e. authority) of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man and the head of Christ is God"

4.) Christian attitudes to other religions

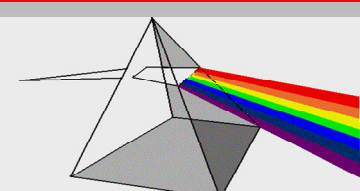
Is Christianity the only Truth? Or are other religions true, too? Christians give 3 different answers.

pluralism

All religions are equally or nearly equally valid

- Like **different paths** up a **mountain** – all reach the same **summit**.
- Or like a **prism** – same **light** goes in, different **colours** come out.
- Religions have the **same aims** and the **same ideas** of **God** and **right and wrong**

Jesus helps Samaritans



Pluralism is also known as Ecumenicism and an Ecumenical Christian Church would welcome all Christians; Roman Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Methodists, Baptists etc. The Christian Ecumenical movement seeks to promote understanding between different Christian denominations.

inclusivism

Anyone included in God's kingdom if they follow their conscience and do good

- Some people **don't know** about Jesus.
- People may **reject** Jesus.
- How people **respond** to what they **know** about **God** (any theistic religion) **counts**.
- So do **efforts** to follow your **conscience**.
- People **unknowingly included** in Christ's **salvation**.
- Like a **gift** from an **unknown** giver.



EXCLUSIVISM

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except by me" (Jesus, in John's gospel 14:6).

- **If you don't believe in Jesus as the Lord Saviour of the earth then you cannot get to God or Heaven.**
- There is **only one saving** truth, namely the **good news** of **Jesus Christ**.
- Like a **one-way route** to heaven.



Christians who believe in exclusivism can become missionaries. A missionary is a person who tries to spread Christianity to people who are not Christian or who have never heard of Christianity. For example, many of the original people of New Zealand, the Maori people, became Christians when missionaries from Europe travelled to the island. However, there are missionaries who work for good without trying to convert people to Christianity. Christians who believe in the importance of spreading their beliefs are also known as Evangelical Christians and many of these Christians believe in exclusivism.

5.) Christian beliefs about forgiveness and reconciliation

Jesus had more to say about forgiveness than almost anything else. He reminded his listeners that God was always ready to forgive anyone who repented of his sins and asked to be forgiven. Christians believe that all sins can be forgiven if the sinner is genuinely sorry. Here are three examples from the Bible to prove this;

1.) The parable of the lost son. In this parable of the son who leaves home to seek his fortune elsewhere, Jesus wanted his listeners to see God as the Father in the story and each human being as the son. The Father watches for a long time hoping that his son, who has fallen on hard times, will return. When he does, the father is so pleased to see him that he does not question him at all. He simply welcomes him home. In a similar way, God is waiting to offer his forgiveness to all of those who return to him.

2.) In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus included the phrase: 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.'

3.) Jesus always showed God's forgiveness in his life but at no time was this more apparent than at the end of his life. Luke tells us that when one of the criminals being crucified with him turned to Jesus for forgiveness, Jesus forgave him.

A person is reconciled (brought back together) with God once their sins have been forgiven by him. Jesus died on the cross so that humanity could be forgiven and reconciled with God.

Christianity and the Media

- 1.) Relationship with the media.
- 2.) Use of Media
- 3.) Censorship and freedom of speech.

1. Relationship with the media

Media – any form of communication with the public of a country.

Types of media – Radio, television, Internet, film, newspapers, magazines, mobile phones etc.

The media influences people to varying degrees. Your clothes, hairstyle and the type of music you listen to might be influenced by what you see or hear on the television. Young children are more easily influenced. For example, children are more likely to play fight if they have been watching violence on the television.

Christianity can be portrayed both positively and negatively in the media although many people consider it be portrayed in a mainly negative way.

Often Christian characters in soaps and TV programmes are portrayed as fanatical and boring or they are used for comical purposes such as in *Father Ted*. It can also be argued that Christianity only gets press for negative reasons like if the Archbishop of Canterbury says something controversial or when Christians have been offended by a film or comedy sketch. Other people think Christianity is largely ignored by the media. However, Christianity can be portrayed in a positive or balanced way. ITV ran a 10 week Alpha course in 2001, late on a Sunday evening, as an introduction to the religion. It gave a positive view of the religion and it addressed many of the beliefs of Christianity. The main problem with the programme was that it was hardly primetime coverage and it could be said that it was telling that the programme was aired so late. Sometimes Christianity is represented in debate programmes on television such as *The Big Questions* which is aired on a Sunday morning. This programme gives Christianity a fair opportunity to share its values and views alongside other religions.

Christians can be particularly sensitive to the portrayal of important religious figures in the media. Any disrespectful portrayal of religious figures is considered as blasphemy. Christians can accept the accurate portrayal of religious figures in the media such as in the musical *Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat* but they may not accept inaccurate or disrespectful portrayals of religious figures such as in *the Jerry Springer – The Opera* musical when Jesus' character was referred to as a 'little bit gay'.

In the same way, Christians may be offended by films, books and comics that appear to offend Christianity or reject Christian truth claims. For example, *The Da Vinci Code* suggested that Jesus was married and had a child and many Christians around the world protested outside cinemas to get this film banned as it went against the truth according to the Bible. There have also been many books that have made similar claims to *The Da Vinci Code*.

2. Use of Media

Christians use media in a variety of ways and for the following purposes; to spread the word of God and Jesus, to educate non-Christians in an informative way, to convert people to Christianity, to offer support and education for Christians and to remind non-practising Christians of their faith.

3. Censorship and Freedom of Speech

Censorship is the deliberate covering up of material which is thought to be unsuitable for a particular audience.

Some Christians may want to censor material that is blasphemous, rejects Christian truth claims or fails to uphold Christian morals. For example, there are Christians who would like to censor the amount of sex and violence on TV. They believe that constantly showing sex scenes between people who are not married encourages people to be promiscuous or adulterous in their real lives. They also believe that showing extreme violence normalises it and therefore influences people to accept or participate in violence which is against the peaceful teachings of Jesus.

However, many Christians support the concept of freedom of speech which means that people can express their opinions and beliefs regardless of what they are. Although, in the UK it is illegal to say something about someone that is untrue (slander) or to incite (encourage) hatred. Freedom of speech might be particularly important to Christians as without it, the original Christians would not have been able to spread the news of Jesus as some Christians are still doing today.

Example Exam Questions

Christianity and Human Relationships

Question 1

- a.) What does contraception mean? (1)
- b.) Name two forms of contraception that might be acceptable to some Christians. (2)
- c.) Describe the attitudes of some Christians towards sex before marriage. (3)
- d.) Explain the beliefs of Christians about the value of sexual relationships. (6)
- e.) 'It is the duty of religious people to encourage contraception to avoid the world becoming overpopulated.'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Question 2

- a.) What does adultery mean? (1)
- b.) Give two reasons why a Priest might refuse to marry a divorced person. (2)
- c.) Describe the attitude of some Christians towards women within the family. (3)
- d.) Explain the attitude of some Christians towards women within the Church. (6)
- e.) 'Couples should live together before they marry.'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Christianity and Medical Ethics

Question 1

- a.) What does euthanasia mean? (1)
- b.) Give two reasons which might lead a person to commit suicide. (2)
- c.) Describe the attitude of some Christians towards suicide. (3)
- d.) Explain the attitudes of some Christians towards helping a terminally ill person to die. (6)
- e.) 'Only God has the right to take life.'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Question 2

- a.) What is meant by cloning? (1)
- b.) State two reasons why some Christians might oppose human cloning. (2)
- c.) Describe the attitudes of some Christians towards childless couples seeking fertility treatments. (3)
- d.) Explain some Christian attitudes to animal testing. (6)
- e.) 'Pregnant women should not be offered an abortion if their unborn baby is disabled.'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Christianity and Poverty and Wealth

Question 1

- a.) State one cause of world hunger. (1)
- b.) State two reasons why Christians might help the poor. (2)
- c.) Describe Christian teaching about caring for others. (3)
- d.) Explain Christian attitudes towards wealth (6)
- e.) 'Money is the root cause of evil in the world.'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Question 2

- a.) What is meant by poverty? (1)
- b.) Give two occupations that Christians might find immoral. (2)
- c.) How might a Christian respond to the needs of poor people? (3)
- d.) Explain what Christianity teaches about the causes of poverty. (6)
- e.) 'People have a duty to help the world's poor.'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Christianity and Peace and Justice

Question 1

- a.) What is capital punishment? (1)
- b.) Give two aims of punishment. (2)
- c.) Describe what the attitude of Christians might be towards capital punishment. (3)
- d.) Explain what Christians might believe about the treatment of criminals (6)
- e.) 'Putting people into prison is a waste of money.'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Question 2

- a.) What is reform? (1)
- b.) Give two examples of rehabilitation. (2)
- c.) Why might a Christian campaign for reform? (3)
- d.) What are Christian attitudes towards war? (6)
- e.) 'The justice system in Britain is one of the best in the world.'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Christianity and Equality

Question 1

- a.) What does the word 'racism' mean? (1)
- b.) Give two examples of prejudice. (2)
- c.) Suggest how Christians might work to stop racism. (3)
- d.) Explain Christian teachings about equality. (6)
- e.) 'Forgiveness is the easy way out'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Question 2

- a.) What is discrimination? (1)
- b.) What do Christians believe about racism? (2)
- c.) Describe Christian teachings on sexism (3)
- d.) What are Christian attitudes towards other religions? (6)
- e.) 'Women should have never been allowed to become Priests'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Christianity and the Media

Question 1

- a.) What is censorship? (1)
- b.) Give two ways in which Christianity might be portrayed in the media. (2)
- c.) Suggest why Christians might want the media to be censored. (3)
- d.) Explain Christian attitudes towards the portrayal of religious figures in the media. (6)
- e.) 'The media does not treat Christianity with respect'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

Total (24)

Question 2

- a.) What is meant by the media? (1)
- b.) What does freedom of speech entail? (2)
- c.) How does Christianity use the media? (3)
- d.) Explain Christian attitudes to the portrayal of sex on television. (6)
- e.) 'Making fun of religion should not be allowed in the media'

Discuss this statement. You should include different, supported points of view and a personal viewpoint. You must refer to Christianity in your answer. (12)

