



# Revision Summaries for AS / A Level Year 1 Edexcel

## Paper 2: Religion and Ethics

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# Teacher's Introduction

The revision summaries in this series are designed to support your students as they study the AS / A Level Year 1 Edexcel Religious Studies specification, and have been designed to cover the major themes and concepts of each topic point accordingly. This revision summary supports the AS / A Level Year One Paper 2: Religion and Ethics part of the specification.

All students, whether they are academically strong, average or weak, can benefit from a concise and clearly explained set of notes to revise from, both as they work through the Edexcel course and when preparing for their end-of-course exams. It is recommended, therefore, that students be given each relevant summary after learning a topic so that they can clearly understand the summaries and refer back to them when needed. However, the summaries can also function well as a pack given to students in the run-up to their exams.

## Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

Each topic follows a set structure detailed below:

- ✓ **Glossary:** A clear list of important terminology students need to know when studying the topic.
- ✓ **Overview:** A look at the major themes of the topic, with a brief introduction to the major points of discussion and disagreement.
- ✓ **Key Points:** The main body of the summaries for each topic, providing a clear and concise set of notes that help students support their own knowledge and understanding of the topic.
- ✓ **Key Figures:** An important overview of any major philosophical or theological figures students are required to know.
- ✓ **Key Texts:** A set of notes around any important theological or biblical texts students may require background information about and understanding of.
- ✓ **Student Checklist:** A helpful guide to what students need to know by the end of the revision summary and a way to check their understanding and progress through a particular topic.
  - ! **Note:** The checklist is presented in question format and these questions would be ideal to set for homework or revision so that students can build the skills they need in order to progress to longer exam-style questions.
- ✓ **Exam-style Question:** A practice essay question with helpful assessment objectives, complete with levelled mark schemes and indicative content at the end of the resource. These are useful for students approaching their end-of-year exams or wishing to improve their essay technique on a particular topic.
- ✓ **Year Two Considerations:** These have been added where appropriate to support the transition from A Level Year 1 to A Level Year 2 as well as giving further information to those who wish to stretch and challenge.

*NB Depending on the figures studied and the required reading, not all topics will have a Key Figures or Key Texts section.*

This structure clearly ensures students have not only a grasp of the key themes of each topic, but also a way to understand their place within the specification as a whole. Students who may have missed lessons or not made detailed notes may benefit greatly from these revision summaries, especially in helping their recollection of key topics closer to their end-of-course exams.

September 2019

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# Topic One: Significant Concepts in Iss

## Religion and Ethics

G<sub>2</sub> L<sub>1</sub> O<sub>1</sub>

<b>Environment</b>	The world in which we live, and the various elements that function well.
<b>Stewardship</b>	The specific concept in Christianity regarding the role of humans as caretakers for the Earth.
<b>Conservation</b>	The attempt to look after the environment.
<b>Animal Welfare</b>	The concern regarding the ethical treatment of non-human animals.
<b>Protection</b>	Ensuring the good treatment of and care for something.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Avoidance of the depletion of resources.
<b>Waste Management</b>	The attempt to control and decrease the way in which unnecessary waste products are produced as it is harmful to the environment.
<b>Climate Change</b>	The gradual and long-term alteration of the weather and environmental damage from human activity.
<b>Shallow Ecology</b>	The belief that humans should look after the environment out of interest to do so.
<b>Conservation Ethics</b>	Another term for Shallow Ecology.
<b>Deep Ecology</b>	The belief that human beings should look after the world for its intrinsic value.
<b>Intrinsic Value</b>	The belief that something should be cared for because it has value in itself.
<b>Equality</b>	The same rights, treatment and access to opportunities for all.
<b>Gender Equality</b>	Equality of social and economic equality of the sexes.
<b>Racial Equality</b>	Legal, social and economic equality of people regardless of race.
<b>Martin Luther King</b>	Famous American civil rights activist during the twentieth century.
<b>Joni Eareckson Tada</b>	Christian disability activist.

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# 1.1 Environmental Issue

## Overview

The environment is changing at a rapid rate – the vast majority of people believe that rapid climate change is a real and concerning phenomenon. Therefore, many have developed differing ethical approaches to the environment and conservation.

Important aspects of this issue include animal welfare, sustainability, waste management and approaches of both religious and secular groups to these issues.

## Key Points

### General Points

- Environmental issues have become central to public discussion, and resultant changes in public opinion.
- Even within the UK increased awareness regarding environmental issues (and attitudes towards these issues) has seen great change in recent years. This can be seen in the increasing number of people practising a vegan or vegetarian lifestyle, as this is considered to be more sustainable due to the lower consumption of animal products.
- This change can also be observed globally. For example, 2015 saw approximately 195 countries agree to the Paris Agreement at the UN (United Nations) Conference on Climate Change. This agreement focuses on climate change actions, including the commitment to keep global temperature rise below 2°C.
- It also committed to attempt to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases by 50% by 2050.
- One key theme that occurs throughout discussion of environmental issues is the religious idea that the world is a gift from God and that people should look after it for the benefit of the next generation in a better or the same condition in which they received it.

### Animal Welfare and Protection

- There are various different considerations regarding animal welfare and protection. For example, the ethical considerations regarding whether or not eating meat is ethical to the testing of products on animals.
- For example, the production of meat requires animals to be bred and raised and then killed. Whether or not this is ethical (or, furthermore, environmentally sustainable) is a matter of debate.
- There is a debate regarding whether or not it is ethical to test medical or cosmetic products on animals. In general it is seen as more acceptable to test on animals for medical purposes than for cosmetic purposes, whereas cosmetic reasons are viewed as being superfluous.

### Sustainability

- Sustainability is the proper use of the Earth's resources by human beings in such a way that they are not depleted, ensuring the durability of said resources.
- Many parts of modern living involve a heavy use of elements such as fossil fuels which emit gases which harm the environment. Because we burn quite a lot of these, the environment is being damaged which is not sustainable. This is something which is attempted to be curbed by the use of renewable energy (i.e. things such as wind and solar power).
- There has also been intentional development of green spaces as these can help reduce the amount of emissions being made and also trees can play a key role in removing harmful pollutants from the atmosphere.

### Waste Management

- It is estimated that the average UK household produces approximately 592 kg of waste per year. This adds up to a whopping 330 million tonnes of waste per annum, which is a huge amount of waste which damages the environment at a rate which is not sustainable.
- While initiatives such as focusing on recycling and composting what waste we can help solve this problem, the amount of waste generated remains a big issue for the future.

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## Climate Change

- The UK Met Office defines climate change as the 'large-scale, long-term shift or average temperatures'.
- Climate change can be seen in a number of phenomena within nature. The ice in the Antarctic are melting, leading to a rise in sea levels. The weather is also indicative of an increase of rainfall (and a decrease in some areas) and the increase of frequency of blizzards and storms.
- These changes have had negative impacts on both human and non-human beings can lose their lives in freak weather conditions.

## Christian Stewardship Approach

- In reaction to these issues, there are two largely divergent Christian approaches.
- Both are rooted in the ideas of dominion and stewardship.
- Christians believe that they have been given a special responsibility from God, according to verses in the Bible such as Genesis 1:28–29.
- Christians believe that God created the world and that it was good, and he gave humans the responsibility to care and rule over that creation. They believe that human beings have been given the power to rule over creation. Therefore, we have the responsibility to do so responsibly.
- This is a central point regarding the Christian attitude towards environmental issues.
- From these two ideas come two divergent approaches:
  - Firstly, the vast majority interpret this as humans needing to intentionally care for the world.
  - Secondly, a minority interprets this as being able to do what they wish with the world.

*'Rule over the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, and every creature that moves on the ground.'*  
**Genesis 1:28**

## Secular Approaches to These Issues

- Many non-religious people largely agree that there is no difference between the rights of a human and that of an animal.
- For example, a secular argument for animal welfare is speciesism, as posited that it is unjust for one species to be given biased treatment over another.
- Therefore, arguments for human beings having priority over, say, pigs, is immoral.

## Deep Ecology

- Deep ecology is a viewpoint developed by Arne Næss. It is an ecological movement viewed as having intrinsic value.
- This is juxtaposed with views such as shallow ecology, which posits that the value of nature is only in terms of its utility to humans.
- Næss set eight principles for environmental ethics and policy according to deep ecology.
- In this viewpoint he argues that there is no situation in which human beings should exploit the environment – even if it is in service of their 'vital needs'.
- Instead, he argues that changes should be made to the way in which humans live (e.g. simpler lives, using less technology).
- He also said the population of the world would have to decrease.

## Secular Shallow Ecology

- The direct opposite to deep ecology is secular shallow ecology. It argues that the environment is only valuable in terms of its utility to humans.
- It is also known as conservation ethics.
- It is probably the most common secular form of discourse about climate change, as it argues that the efforts for the betterment of the planet should happen because it is in the interest of human beings.
- For example, our health, our well-being and the future of our species and development on the planet giving us a home which we are able to live in.
- Protecting the environment is in the interest of human beings and it is only for their benefit that we look after the planet.

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## The Gaia Hypothesis

- The Gaia hypothesis was developed by James Lovelock. It is a theory based on the idea that the Earth is a self-regulating system. It can be seen to be an environment which has provided the perfect conditions for life. The elements are complementary and work in such a way as to facilitate life. This is evidence of a self-regulating system. The way in which so many elements (ecological) interact and evolve together is considered evidence of this.
- Lovelock uses the moniker 'Gaia' (Greek deity personifying the Earth).
- Despite being a secular environmentalist theory, it regards the world as being a living organism.
- Interestingly, it opposes Darwinist evolutionary theory because it believes the environment is the developer of organisms on earth.
- However, Lovelock has been criticised in his latest book *The Revenge of Gaia* in which he suggests that climate change is contracting his self-regulating world.

## Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses of Christian Stewardship

- Christianity is one of the biggest religions in the world, meaning that it is fairly easy to find environmental charities to raise a lot of money and utilise many volunteers to carry out work and raising awareness.
- The concern within Christianity for the 'least of these' (those living in poverty) means that missions are focused on these groups. Such groups are often disproportionately affected by environmental issues.

### Weaknesses:

- Some secular ecologists argue that because Christians view the world as having intrinsic value they miss the deeper value of the world.
- The Christian ideas about the consequences of poor environmental management focus on the impact that bad management will have on humans rather than on other creatures, which means that it is anthropocentric.
- Some secular thinkers, such as Lynn White, have argued that the historical roots of environmental destruction lie with Christianity and this is a major cause of environmental destruction.

## Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses of Secular Shallow Ecology

- Shallow ecology is very practical and it appeals to both human experience and common sense.
- It does not rely on the presumption of God's existence.
- It has been proven that taking action now to stop climate change from getting worse is in the financial gain for future generations, e.g. the building of the Thames Barrier.

### Weaknesses:

- This approach gives no intrinsic value to the Earth so is subject to the same criticism as the Gaia hypothesis.

## Key Figures

### J Lovelock

- James Lovelock is a scientist and an environmentalist.
- He is responsible for positing the theory of the Gaia hypothesis.

### A Næss

- Arne Næss was a Norwegian philosopher.
- He is best known for being responsible for positing the idea of deep ecology.

## Key Texts

### *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth*

- Published in 1979, this was the text in which James Lovelock put forward his theory of the Gaia hypothesis and the self-sustaining nature of the earth.

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## Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea 😞	Some Idea 😊	Good Idea 😄	
What is climate change?				
What is animal welfare?				
What is sustainability?				
What is waste management?				
What is stewardship?				
What is deep ecology?				
What is shallow ecology?				
What is the deep ecology hypothesis?				
What is the viewpoint of J Lovelock?				
What is the viewpoint of A Næss?				
What are the strengths of the Christian approach?				
What are the weaknesses of the Christian approach?				
What are the strengths of the secular approach?				
What are the weaknesses of the secular approach?				

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## 1.2 Equality

### Overview

Equality is the state of all groups and demographics being the same opportunities. Historically, there are some specific groups which have been disadvantaged.

Examples of groups which have struggled with achieving equal treatment in society are minorities, and people with disabilities. It is also important to examine the response of communities to these people, as well as looking at individuals who have made significant change.

### Key Points



#### General Points

- Equality is the notion that individuals, regardless of their demographic, should have the same opportunities and status within society.
- Equal opportunities is an important part of law in the UK, including such legislation as the Equality Act 2010.
- Some inequalities have historically and religiously been considered to be justified, but over time these issues have changed throughout time.

#### Christian Concepts of Gender Equality

- Within Christianity, the issue of gender equality surrounding gender roles in the church (e.g. ordination) has been controversial, especially within the last 100 years, with some denominations enabling women to become ordained.
- The Bible has specific teachings on the roles of men and women. For example, in the New Testament, men and women are both considered to be equal in the eyes of God. Galatians 3:28, which teaches that all people (regardless of gender) are equal.
- However, there are some verses within the Bible that suggest specific roles for men and women. Genesis 2:18 teaches that Eve (the first woman) was created in order to be Adam's helper, with a woman in the role of being an aid, rather than an equal, to men.
- There are many groups which take these roles and apply them to their lives in the present day. For example, the Quiverfull Movement within Christianity (largely within the southern United States) promotes traditional gender roles within their homes, families and societies.
- However, this is not the case among all Christian communities.
- Many put forward the idea that women played a huge role in the New Testament. Jesus was accompanied by women (despite no women becoming apostles) and important figures like Mary Magdalene played large parts in his story. Women discovered the resurrection of Jesus, giving a group whose importance is considered secondary.

#### Christian Concepts of Racial Equality

- There are multiple verses within the Bible which emphasise the idea that all people are created in the image of God under God.
- One of the more famous examples is the parable of the Good Samaritan. This story is often used to challenge racist attitudes as it would likely have challenged any prejudices in the context of the time.
- It is no surprise then that the teachings of Jesus Christ were foundational to Martin Luther King Jr to his fight against racial inequality within the United States.
- However, there are some more challenging passages within the Old Testament which show how slaves should be treated. Surely showing how slaves should be supported and treated is a key part of Christianity.
- Conversion and there are important Church figures who have been instrumental in the fight for racial equality. For example, William Wilberforce.

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## Christian Concepts of Disability Equality

- There is considerable time given in the Bible, specifically the New Testament, specifically the healing of disabilities (e.g. blindness/deafness).
- A large chunk of the miracles of Jesus involve healing of the deaf, blind or lame as the healing at Bethesda.
- This clearly established Jesus as being a healer.
- However, while considered largely to be a good thing by many Christians, this is the modern view of disability. Many people with disabilities do not want pity as something which needs to be fixed, but rather want to be respected the same as everyone else.
- The demand is for autonomy and equal rights, not a miraculous cure.
- However, many Christians have championed not only the rights but the aid of people with disabilities, spearheading charities which have made big impacts.

## Secular Concepts of Equality

- Secular concepts of equality are harder to gauge as there is not necessarily a single standard.
- Generally speaking, there are various different approaches towards equality which are as follows:
  1. Strict (or simple) equality: Everyone has the same amount of goods/money/resources.
  2. Equality of need: Rooted in the ideas of Karl Marx, this is the view that goods should be allocated according to abilities and needs. It is believed that equality is based on the needs of individuals. Those who have the greater need of resources (e.g. extra/specialised care) should be provided these resources.
  3. Equality of desert: This is a meritocratic allocation of goods, i.e. goods/money/resources based on how much an individual deserves them, so those who put in the most effort get the most goods/money/resources.

## Key Figures

### Martin Luther King Jr

- Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr was a famed leader of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. Specifically, he was known for his pacifist approach to achieving equality.
- He was a Baptist minister and an outspoken Christian. It is believed that his strategy of non-violent resistance to the discrimination and prejudice which existed in society at the time.
- He was known for peaceful protests such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-56 and won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts, but was assassinated in 1968.

### Joni Eareckson Tada

- Joni Eareckson Tada is a Christian and disability activist who was paralysed from the neck down at the age of 17; she has since devoted her life to charity and disability activism.
- In her books and lectures, Tada confronts suffering and posits her theodicy.
- Tada argues that God permits suffering because it draws us closer to God. By suffering, we realise our need for Christ in our lives.
- She states that disabled people demonstrate to the rest of the congregation that faith is not just a feeling but a way of life. Hence, it is vital for disabled people to be an integral part of the Church.

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## Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹	Some Idea ☺	Good Idea 😊	
What is equality?				
What is gender equality?				
What is the Christian approach to gender equality?				
What is racial equality?				
What is the Christian approach to racial equality?				
What is disability equality?				
What is the Christian approach to disability equality?				
What is the secular approach to disability equality?				
What is the importance of Rev Martin Luther King Jr?				
What is the importance of Joni Eareckson Tada?				

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## Practice Exam-style Question

If you are sitting the AS assessment for this course, please answer question 1.  
If you are sitting the A Level exam, please answer question 2.

1. Explore religious perspectives on environmental issues.

### HINTS

In your answer you should:

- exhibit awareness and comprehension of differing beliefs, including
  - key ideas of which environmental issues are pressing to the modern world
  - key ideas of stewardship and dominion
  - key responses as a result of these views

2. Clarify the thoughts put forward by Joni Eareckson Tada in the below excerpt in your answer.

*Many people in the throes of suffering, disappointment, and despair, feel utter hopelessness in their circumstances. They see no hope beyond their day-to-day drudgery of disability. But when families place themselves under the shower of God's mercy, suddenly the clouds part, and hope, life, and even joy beyond their suffering.*

### HINTS

In your answer you should:

- exhibit awareness and comprehension of differing beliefs, including
  - key ideas of which Joni Eareckson Tada is known for
  - key ideas of the traditional view of disability within the Church, including the role of Jesus
  - key ideas about Tada's approach to disability and the Church

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## Topic Two: A Study of Three Ethics

G<sub>2</sub> L<sub>1</sub> O<sub>1</sub>

<b>Utilitarianism</b>	Ethical system based on the premise that the most moral action is the one that produces the greatest happiness for the greatest number.
<b>Utility Principle</b>	The principle that the greatest happiness for the greatest number is the end of all moral action.
<b>Pleasure</b>	The enjoyment of something good or joyful.
<b>Hedonism</b>	An ethical system which focuses on the wants and happiness of the individual.
<b>Social Influence</b>	The effect of change within society on a group or school of thought.
<b>Jeremy Bentham</b>	Philosopher and founder of utilitarian thinking.
<b>John Stuart Mill</b>	Philosopher who developed classical utilitarianism, or act utilitarianism.
<b>Act Utilitarianism</b>	The form of utilitarianism which is purely about creating the greatest happiness for the greatest number.
<b>Rule Utilitarianism</b>	The form of utilitarianism which posits that not only should we create the greatest happiness for the greatest number, but also that we should follow rules that will lead to this end.
<b>Relativism</b>	An approach towards ethical navigation where the moral rightness or wrongness of an action is determined by the context or situation.
<b>New Morality</b>	The social shift in the twentieth century away from traditional values to more liberal progressive values.
<b>Situation Ethics</b>	A form of Christian ethical thinking which is governed by the love of God and the love of neighbour, with the greatest happiness for the greatest number as a guiding principle.
<b>Agape</b>	The Christian concept of self-sacrificing selfless love.
<b>Jesus</b>	Central figure of Christianity whom Christians believe to be the Son of God.
<b>Joseph Fletcher</b>	The individual who first posited situation ethics.
<b>J A Robin</b>	The individual whose work heavily influenced Joseph Fletcher's situation ethics.
<b>Natural Moral Law</b>	A Christian system of ethical thinking developed by St Thomas Aquinas.
<b>Thomas Aquinas</b>	Thirteenth-century monk who developed natural law theory.
<b>Absolutism</b>	The type of morality system which has maxims which are absolute and unchanging, regardless of the situation.
<b>Legalism</b>	A form of ethics which adheres stringently to the rules of a system.
<b>Telos</b>	The Greek term for an end or purpose.
<b>Proportionalism</b>	A form of natural law theory which stipulates that you should do what is proportionally right to achieve the telos.
<b>Applications</b>	The way in which ethical theories can be seen to work in practice.
<b>Primary Precepts</b>	The first set of governing principles within natural law.
<b>Secondary Precepts</b>	Smaller principles which can be derived for specific situations.
<b>Bernard Hoose</b>	Individual who developed proportionalism.

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## 2.1 Utilitarianism

### Overview

Utilitarianism is an ethical theory developed by Jeremy Bentham, a form of ethics. While Bentham was the first to develop the theory, it has since been developed by others. Generally speaking, there are two forms of utilitarianism – act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism. Act utilitarianism is commonly associated with Bentham, whereas rule utilitarianism was developed by John Stuart Mill.

### Key Points

#### General

- Utilitarianism is a modern form of secular ethics, although it is not totally exclusive to the modern world. It is centred on the key ideas of happiness/pleasure and pain. It was developed by Bentham, but further developed by John Stuart Mill and others.
- Utilitarianism is also a form of teleological ethics as this is a form of ethics where the rightness or wrongness of an action is determined by the consequence of an action.
- Classical utilitarianism was born as a result of, and influenced by, the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was a cultural and intellectual movement in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which saw a shift from understanding morality as being from solely the source of religious authority to one of open dialogue surrounding ethical conduct. Other cultural factors included the rise of the scientific revolution and the rise of the novel.
- It is based firmly in the idea of the greatest happiness for the greatest number.
- One useful way to explain and engage with the ideas of utilitarianism is by using the trolley problem. This is a hypothetical dilemma which asks whether it is better to allow a trolley (traveling down a track) to kill five people, or to use the lever to switch the tracks and only kill one person. No action would result in a better outcome than taking action to save those five would involve intentionally causing the death of one person.
- It is a situationalist and consequentialist method of thinking which means applying the theory to the situation and it lays emphasis on the outcome of the situation. It can also be used to evaluate different courses of action and is considered equally valid in relation to the same situation.

#### Key Concepts of Jeremy Bentham's Act Utilitarianism

- Bentham developed utilitarianism in his 1789 work *The Principles of Morals and Legislation*. In this work he put forward many key concepts of his ethical theory.
- At the very foundation of utilitarian ethics is the concept of pain and pleasure (Bentham considered a synonym for pleasure).
- Bentham is arguing that being ruled by pain and pleasure is just the way human nature is; the matter; we must seek pleasure, and we must avoid pain.
- The utility principle is the means by which this is communicated within Bentham's theory.
- Having made this claim about human nature (such claims are sometimes called descriptive claims), Bentham goes on to make his normative claim (he says we ought to be). This is the principle of utility which states: 'When faced with an ethical decision, we should choose the course of action which will produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, or which minimises pain for the greatest number of people.'
- This is considered to be a hedonistic theory as it focuses on pleasure, which Bentham calls 'happiness'. The calculation for how an act will best serve the utility principle is called the 'felicific calculus'.

	Measure of Happiness	Definition
1	Intensity	How intense or weak the happiness is
2	Duration	How long the happiness will last for
3	Certainty	How likely or unlikely the happiness is to occur
4	Propinquity/Remoteness	How near or remote in time the happiness is
5	Fecundity/Richness	How likely or unlikely the happiness is to reoccur
6	Purity	How free from pain the happiness is
7	Extent	How far the happiness will reach

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## Social, Political, and Cultural Influences

- Utilitarianism was founded by Bentham in the late 1700s; however, the idea has been around since Aristotle's eudemonia.
- At this point in time there was a huge cultural shift happening post-Enlightenment. The printing press had been invented, revolutionising the way in which people communicated ideas. Distributing ideas were for the masses, no longer just the educated elite.
- Enlightenment thinking also heavily influenced the development of utilitarian theories outside of the bounds of religion were being discussed and accepted. Expansion is arguably one of the biggest influences on the development of utilitarianism.

## John Stuart Mill and Refined Utilitarianism

- Mill was a student of Bentham, and was highly influenced by classical utilitarianism. He developed his own version of the theory on the basis that he considered classical utilitarianism had flaws which his version of the argument fixed.
- For Bentham, all pleasures were in a sense equal; it was simply a case of **quantity** of pleasure.
- Mill, on the other hand, is much more concerned with the **quality** of pleasure.
- One way to describe the difference between the two theories is the old adage: 'It's not what you eat, it's what you eat with'.
- Mill differentiates between different kinds of pleasures as result, positing the following:
  - **Higher pleasures:** Pleasures which help people to reach their full intellectual potential.
  - **Lower pleasures:** Pleasures which fulfil the base, instinctual wants of humans.
- Examples of higher pleasures include philosophy and academics, while lower pleasures include food and sex.
- Mill argued that happiness was 'much too complex and indefinite' to be calculated.
- Therefore, he thought rules should be developed which guide moral agents as to what is right.
- These rules would be developed through trial and error, rather than through divine revelation. For example, lying or hitting others nearly always causes unhappiness; therefore, 'do not lie' and 'do not hit'.
- Followed en masse by everyone in society, these rules will generate, on the whole, the least pain for the greatest number of people.
- Note the emphasis made here to the utility principle – the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. This is known as the 'harm principle'.
- This solves the issue of utilitarianism being able to be used to justify atrocities. Here is that of the actions of the Nazis in Second World War Germany – under utilitarianism, if it benefited the majority this could theoretically be justified. The 'harm principle' states that this cannot be.

## Other Forms: Preference, Negative and Ideal Utilitarianism

- There are a few other (although less popular) forms of utilitarianism. These include:
  - **Preference utilitarianism** – this is a form of utilitarianism put forward by G.D. Workman. It forward the idea that a better end would be the fulfilment of preference rather than pain or pleasure.
  - **Negative utilitarianism** – This form of utilitarianism lays emphasis on the reduction of suffering. The course of action would be to create the minimal amount of suffering. This is a form of rule utilitarianism; however, it differs in that happiness is not considered a goal. The goal is the minimisation of suffering. It was posited by Minerva S. Sussangkarn.
  - **Ideal utilitarianism** – This was first put forward by Hastings Rashdall in 1887. It is a form of utilitarianism, which states that it does not view happiness as an end in itself. The goal is the fulfilment of the moral ideals here is considered to be the end.

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## Application of the Theory in Historical and Contemporary Ethics

- The introduction of vaccinations for various diseases can be considered an example of utilitarianism.
- It provided the general public with a health service, preventing children from previously have killed or paralysed them (e.g. polio).
- Some individuals in Britain opposed these introductions on the basis of differing values. In true utilitarian fashion these parents were given an option, meaning that the majority, creating happiness for those involved, and children were no longer dying.

## Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses of Act Utilitarianism

### Strengths:

- Appeals to our innate sense within human beings that what is good can be equated with what is right.
- The hedonic calculus gives a guide on how to apply the utility principle further, in real-world application.
- The hedonic calculus is fairly thorough, making this ethical theory fairly user-friendly.
- It appeals to our sense of fair considerations – the 'majority rules' method is perceived as the best way to run groups (e.g. politics).

### Weaknesses:

- The hedonic calculus, while useful, is an attempt to quantify happiness. This calculation of happiness does not constitute a quantification.
- Some situations might result in conflicting happiness; how then should this be resolved? A 50/50 split?
- It could, as pointed out, be used to justify hugely immoral acts as long as it serves the greatest number. e.g. the actions of the Nazis in the Second World War.

## Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses of Rule Utilitarianism

### Strengths:

- It removes the issue of justification of actions in the name of the benefit of the greatest number.
- It has a slightly longer, more complicated method of working out what is right and wrong than simply a one-rule approach, as ethical dilemmas are never usually simple – there are always conflicting values.
- The idea of higher and lower pleasures removes potential for the animalistic nature of happiness served by act utilitarianism.
- It maintains many of the strengths of act utilitarianism – including the recognition of the importance of the happiness of the greatest number towards which people should work.
- However, it also recognises that we have a strong internal conviction that an act is right or wrong because it produces happiness – other principles are also important and need to be considered.

### Weaknesses:

- People have questioned the fact that there is no guidance about how moral agents distinguish between higher and lower pleasures. Mill does not provide a way to do this, although any such categorisation would presumably be subjective.
- The introduction of more regulated utilitarianism (e.g. the 'harm principle' and 'the greatest happiness principle') has some of the benefits of situationalism and consequentialism. Situationalism is that the right action varies depending on the context, and consequentialism is the idea that what is right is the action that produces the best outcome of the choice.
- There is the difficulty of knowing when rules can be broken in order to achieve the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. This introduces the need for lengthy analysis about when rules can be broken – simply shifted.

## Analysis: Strengths and Weaknesses of Preference, Negative

- While preference utilitarianism has a strength in its situationalist approach, its weakness is that it is largely regarded as being too hard to actually make a choice, as preference utilitarianism requires that the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people and, therefore, a majority happiness is too difficult to achieve.

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## Key Figures

### Jeremy Bentham

- Bentham was a British philosopher, juror and writer who posited the theory of utilitarianism, the belief that the most ethical action is the one which posits the principle of utility. The most ethical thing achieves the highest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people.
- Bentham was an atheist and developed an ethical theory which was removed from religious belief in God.
- Bentham developed what is known as the hedonic calculus. This is a method of calculating the goodness which will be derived from an action.
- He also developed the principle of utility, discussed below, which is the basis for utilitarianism.

### John Stuart Mill

Godson of Bentham, John Stuart Mill was the founder of act utilitarianism.

- He was raised on utilitarian ideals but published his own version of utilitarianism, which considered to solve some of the issues left by Bentham's formulation of the ethical theory.
- To the theory, he contributed the development of the principle of utility to 'the greatest happiness principle' as well as adding in the idea that pleasures should be measured by the quantity which they create.

## Key Texts

### *The Principles of Morals and Legislation*, J Bentham, 1789

- In this text Jeremy Bentham put forward his ethical theory of utilitarianism.
- It was considered to be, and still is considered to be, an important work reflecting the moral values of the time in which he lived.

### *Utilitarianism*, J S Mill, 1863

- This work was heavily influenced by the work of Bentham; however, in this work Mill developed his own version of utilitarianism, which is now termed rule utilitarianism.

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## Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹	Some Idea ☺	Good Idea 😊	
What is act utilitarianism?				
What is the importance of pleasure in act utilitarianism?				
What is the utility principle?				
What is the hedonic calculus?				
What is rule utilitarianism?				
Who posited this theory?				
What is the difference between higher and lower pleasures?				
What is an example of a higher pleasure?				
What is an example of a lower pleasure?				
What is the 'harm principle'?				
How does rule utilitarianism attempt to improve on act utilitarianism?				
What are the strengths of utilitarianism?				
What are the weaknesses of utilitarianism?				

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## 2.2 Situation Ethics

### Overview

Situation ethics is a Christian ethical system which began its life in the 1930s but in its most well-known form it was developed by Joseph Fletcher. Situation ethics

The word 'teleological' comes from the Greek root 'telos' which means 'end' or 'purpose'. Teleological models which are considered to be teleological are ethical models which are focused on the moral choice. They are a form of consequentialist ethics, suggesting that an action is good if it leads towards the end goal of something which is considered to be good.

Within situation ethics the end goal is agape. This is a Christian idea about love – the love of God and love for others. It is this love which Fletcher argues moral actions should be taken. If an action is based on love, then it is said to be moral.

### Key Points

#### General Points

- Joseph Fletcher wrote about situation ethics after J A T Robinson, whose ideas about agape and Christian situationalism preceded those of Fletcher.
- Situationalism is a form of ethics that posits that the correct ethical action can be determined depending on the situation. Situation ethics is, therefore, a form of situationism.
- Fletcher wrote about this theory in his book *Situation Ethics* (1966).
- Unlike some more conservative elements of the Church, Fletcher believed that the social change occurring at the time of his writing of his text (and ethical theory) meant that the Church needed to reconsider how it addressed moral issues.
- Equally, however, he did not think a life uncontrolled by any moral norms was needed; instead, a marriage of the old with the new, a re-evaluation of the old to make it fit for a world very different from the one Aquinas or the gospel writers needed was a situationist approach.
- In the final analysis, situationism, as long as the interests of agape, unconditional love, are said to be moral. From agape, maxims are derived.
- Situation ethics is a moral relativist form of ethical thought as it posits that the right action differs depending on the situation; morality in this case is not fixed, when compared to traditionally Christian viewpoints of ethical practice, such as the Ten Commandments.
- It is a consequentialist theory of ethical practice as it is dependent on the consequences of actions rather than adhering to principles which govern actions regardless of the outcome. The aim is to achieve the most loving outcome; the emphasis on the outcome being loving is what makes it a form of consequentialism.

#### The New Morality of the Twentieth Century: Social, Political and Cultural

- At the time of the development of situation ethics, there was an increasing move away from traditional legalistic Christian morality and leaning more towards a new morality.
- The backdrop of two consecutive wars (the First and Second World War) had changed attitudes and behaviour as a result of the huge human casualties experienced. The shift saw a rejection of traditional absolutist moral systems. However, in the Second World War, society felt there was a need for moral rules and guidance.
- To a generation whose moral compass was shifting, Fletcher's situationalism offered a way between two equally unattractive moral extremes.
- One is a moral system completely lacking in any guiding moral principles, a position which would lead to doing whatever they see fit in any given situation.
- Fletcher termed this approach antinomianism, which literally translates from the Greek as 'against the law'.
- At the opposite end of the spectrum are those moral philosophies which hold that actions should always be made in accordance with a set of strict rules or commands. Fletcher called this 'legalism' because, like the legal system, it is concerned with obedience to rules.
- It stems from a changing social move away from traditional, legalistic Christian morality.

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## The Concept of Agape

- The basis, or ruling, principle of situation ethics is the principle of serving agape.
- Agape is a particular kind of love – selfless love.
- This is the kind of love which is referred to in the Bible in Matthew 22:39 where the second Commandment is given – to ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’.

**Agape:** One of the Greek words for love. It is a attitude of generosity towards others that expects nothing in return. It is the love Jesus showed humanity.



*You shall love your neighbour as yourself*  
Matthew 22:39 NRSV

- Fletcher argues that there is only one thing that is intrinsically good: agape.
- This is important as it defines two important points about situation ethics.
- The first is that love is the end of all actions. It is an intrinsic, not an instrumental, value. It is not used in the pursuit of another idea or concept.
- It simply is the sole guiding purpose behind all actions a person makes.
- The second point is that identifying this form of love as an end in itself allows people to love people who stand against their own ethical principles or sensibilities.
- Therefore, while someone might intensely dislike and disagree with another person, they can still have agape love for them when considering their choices in any ethically difficult situation.

## Biblical Examples of Situationist Thinking

- Throughout the Bible, numerous references are made to the importance of love. It persists as a central theme and guiding force behind moral action, opposed to the strict legalism of the Jewish elders and Pharisees, as depicted in the gospels.
- Matthew 12:1–4 states: ‘At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. His disciples began to pick heads of grain and eat them. When the Pharisees said, “Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath.” He answered them, “David did what was unlawful when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. So also the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”’
- The above example includes an account of Jesus encouraging a more relaxed interpretation of the Sabbath law.

## Application of the Theory

- In his own work *Situation Ethics*, Fletcher used various examples in order to illustrate how the theory is that of abortion.
- This is the medical termination of a pregnancy.
- This was illegal until 1967 in the UK, and remains a controversial topic and problem for Christians.
- Traditionally Christian teaching had held that, because Christians considered human life to be sacred, therefore, in possession of sanctity of life, abortion was immoral.
- Fletcher, however, used the principle of agape to argue that in certain situations, where the greatest love for oneself is in the case of a young victim of rape who had fallen pregnant by her rapist, the most loving thing to do would be to allow a termination.
- Within the realm of medical ethics this can be extended to other issues, e.g. euthanasia, it can be argued that the most loving thing to do in a situation where a person is suffering from a terminal illness and would be to allow them to die. This would give them a peaceful end, as well as allowing family members to say goodbye. This is a loving end, and could be seen as a way to support this.



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## Strengths and Weaknesses

### Strengths:

- It responded to social and moral change of the time, which has continued to as time has gone on. This means that situation ethics has been, and will continue to be, a system for Christians seeking a more flexible form of ethical conduct.
- It is in keeping with Jesus' biblical rejection of legalism, as seen in the Bible (e.g. 12:1–4). Jesus' teachings are, to some Christians, the most important part of Christianity and deserve more attention to.
- It provides flexibility and responsibility, meaning that individual moral agents make their own choices rather than simply doing as they are told to.
- Agape is widely considered to be desirable, even by those who are not Christians. Love is a common theme and it is, therefore, easy to understand why people would embrace it.

### Weaknesses:

- Situation ethics has received a fair amount of criticism from those within the Church.
- For example, Pope Pius XII criticised it as he considered it to be encouraging a relativism which he emphasised natural moral law (discussed in section 2.2) as the better method of ethical reasoning.
- Jesus condemned some actions as always wrong, meaning that while he did provide a flexible approach, he also very clearly stated that on some moral issues there is a black and white right and wrong.
- Peter Vardy argues that situation ethics confuses agape and gives a lack of clarity. With the extra help given by Fletcher, it is not wholly useful as a form of ethical reasoning. As misconstrued, he argues, as sometimes it could be seen that the most loving action is to do what others want. Agape is not simply serving the wants of others, which situation ethics can do.
- It could also be argued to be easily abused to get what individuals want rather than what is right. The flexibility of the system leaving too much leeway for misuse.
- Barclay argues that it creates dangers of moral mistakes and harm. This is because it is too vague.
- Therefore, Barclay argues it could leave the individual vulnerable to manipulation by those with their own interests under the guise of agape – merely positing that love should be the guiding principle. The way of laying out a more manageable ethical theory for adherents to follow is the opposite of what situation ethics is intended to achieve.
- For this reason, Fletcher developed two sets of principles and propositions designed to guide people in practical moral situations and enable people to live out this form of ethical reasoning. However, even with these principles it is still quite difficult to find one general principle.

## Year 2 Considerations

### Application of situation ethics to modern issues: Medical ethics

- Situation ethics allowed Christians to have a more liberal, situational approach to medical ethics.
- While it has traditionally been held by the Church that euthanasia is wrong (and is forbidden within the Bible in Exodus 20:15), situation ethicists would be able to justify it on a case-by-case basis.
- If in the instance of one individual, it could be considered to be the most loving action to end their suffering, then this would best serve agape and is, therefore, considered permissible.

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## Key Figures

### Joseph Fletcher

- Joseph Fletcher developed Robinson's ideas as he too felt that Christian ethics needed a flexible approach.
- In his works, he developed the idea of agape which was first discussed by J A T Robinson.
- Fletcher's approach towards Christian situation ethics was posed as a midway point between legalistic ethics and antinomianism.

### J A T Robinson

- Robinson's work in 'The Christian's Guide to Ethics' proceeded Fletcher's work and introduced the importance of agape and the need for a more flexible approach to ethics.
- He introduced the idea of applying the idea of agape in order to enable Christian ethics to be more flexible.
- His ideas centred around the Bible verse Matthew 22:39, which is where Jesus gave the Greatest Commandment to love your neighbour as yourself.

## Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹	Some Idea ☺	Good Idea 😊	
What is situation ethics?				
What is agape?				
What is antinomianism?				
What is situationalism?				
What is legalism?				
What is the significance of Matthew 18:21-22?				

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## 2.3 Natural Moral Law

### Overview

First posited by St Thomas Aquinas, natural law is a theory based on reason. When formulating natural law, Aquinas relied on the twin pillars of reason and revelation. He accepted that the Bible did not give specific rulings regarding certain situations, so he used reason. In the Middle Ages (thirteenth century) people were encountering problems which were not dealt with in the Bible. Therefore, someone needed to develop a way to apply scripture to modern issues. Enter, Aquinas and his natural law.

### Key Points

#### General Points

- Natural law is a form of deontological ethics, which means it is an ethical theory that focuses on the rightness or wrongness of actions in themselves, rather than the consequences of those actions.
- Deontological ethics can be religious if it is believed that the rules originate from revelation from God.
- He reasoned that all humans have a natural purpose towards which God wants them to strive, or **telos**, will bring humans into unity and fellowship with God and enable them to realise their human potential.
- Strands of Aquinas's theory can be seen in early development of ethical thought, such as Aristotle and St Augustine's idea that the natural state of humans is that of before the Fall.
- The first formal formulation of natural moral theory is put forward by St Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica*.
- Aquinas divided his ideas into precepts, of which there are three kinds – the primary precepts (to avoid what is evil), the primary precepts and the secondary precepts.
- The primary precepts are set rules derived from Scripture, and from them, secondary precepts are derived.
- Importantly, this is both a legalistic form and an absolutist form of ethical theory.
- It is legalistic in that it contains a set of prescriptive laws, and is absolutist in that it is true at all times according to the theory.

#### Biblical and Classical Foundations

- There were two sources Aquinas believed that humans could use to understand the natural law: **the Bible and the world** and **reason**.
- The laws of the Bible have influenced Aquinas's thinking as he believed it to be the source of the primary pillars of morality. As a Christian thinker, he believed that the Bible (God's Word) was the source of teaching and, therefore, it is on this basis that he developed his ethical theory.
- He was also influenced by classical thinkers such as Aristotle, whose idea of the natural state of humans influenced Aquinas's formulation of his theory of purpose.

#### Key Precept

- At the heart of natural law theory is a single, uncontroversial moral principle: **that we should aim to do good and to avoid doing evil**.

#### Primary Precepts

- Aquinas believed that through reason, the Bible and the world, it became clear that there were 'primary precepts' that formed the basis of natural moral law. Although Aquinas did not list them himself, it is clear that he thought the following five rules were the most significant:
  - to preserve life
  - to reproduce
  - to educate children
  - to worship God
  - to create an orderly, harmonious society
- These rules are **absolute**, and to disobey them is always to do wrong.
- This shows that this is an absolutist form of ethics.

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## Secondary Precepts

- From these primary precepts, Aquinas argued that moral rules could be deduced for decision-making so that humans can fulfil their natural purpose.
- Vardy describes these secondary precepts as 'unpacking' the primary precepts to show what they involve and mean for daily decision-making.
- The secondary precepts also show us the legalistic character of Aquinas's ethics. The case of deciding which rule to apply to a given situation.
- For example, from the primary precept of 'live', the Catholic Church, whose moral law, has argued for the immorality of abortion based on the view that it is a violation of the command in the Ten Commandments 'Do not murder'.
- Similarly, the Catholic Church argues that homosexual sexual acts are immoral as they are a violation of the primary precept of 'reproduce'.

## Contemporary Adaptations

- As time has moved on, there has been a noted effort from those who ascribe to natural law theory to attempt to adjust natural law theory somewhat.
- Bernard Hoose, one such scholar, argued that we should generally follow natural law but that there is a significant reason that would mean it was fair to temporarily set aside these principles.
- Therefore, acts are not inherently or always evil, assuming there is significant reason to set them aside.
- This is known as **proportionalism**.
- Proportionalists would hold that in a given situation it becomes clear what is the right action.
- Another such scholar is John Finnis, who put forward his amendments to natural law. He identified what he termed the Seven Basic Goods which should always be upheld. These are: life, knowledge, relationship, recreation, aesthetics, pragmatism (reason), religion.

## Strengths and Weaknesses

### Strengths

- Natural law is firmly rooted in a tradition which appeals to common sense, and in a tradition which has been passed down for centuries.
- It gives objective moral principles which is not ambiguous. This makes it fairly clear what is right and what is not considered to be moral.
- The principle of proportionality and other modern amendments make the theory more flexible.
- It appeals across-culturally, as many of the precepts are found across different cultures. For example, the precept of the upholding of the preservation of life is found in most cultures.

### Weaknesses:

- This theory requires belief in God as it is based on the rules of the Bible, a religion that not everyone believes in. It may not work for all people – an ethical system based on a God they do not believe in.
- Modern science has proven that there is a great deal of chaos in the world and this is an issue with Aquinas's assumption of purpose and order.
- It can be viewed as being too strict on moral principles in ways which other ethical systems, such as situation ethics, allows far more flexibility.

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## Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹	Some Idea ☺	Good Idea 😊	
What is the basis of natural law?				
Who first put forward natural law?				
On which two foundations is natural law based?				
What is the key precept?				
What are the primary precepts?				
What are the secondary precepts?				
What is proportionalism?				
What is another contemporary adaptation of natural moral law?				
What are the strengths of natural moral law?				
What are the weaknesses of natural moral law?				

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## Practice Exam-style Question

If you are sitting the AS assessment for this course, please answer question 3.  
If you are sitting the A Level exam, please answer question 4.

3. Analyse the strengths of situation ethics in approaching differing different ethical issues.

### HINTS

In your answer you should:

- exhibit awareness and comprehension of differing beliefs, including
  - key ideas of situation ethics and Joseph Fletcher
  - key ideas of the principle of agape
  - key strengths of situation ethics
  - key weaknesses of situation ethics
  - key strengths of other ethical forms, such as utilitarianism or naturalism
- evaluate and assess facets of religious approaches and differing ideas, and impact

4. Assess the idea that rule utilitarianism is more successful than act utilitarianism in approaching ethical issues.

### HINTS

In your answer you should:

- exhibit awareness and comprehension of differing beliefs, including
  - key ideas of rule utilitarianism
  - key ideas of act utilitarianism
  - key strengths of rule utilitarianism, in relation to act utilitarianism
  - key strengths of act utilitarianism in relation to rule utilitarianism
- evaluate and assess facets of religious approaches and differing ideas, and impact

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## Topic Three: Application of Ethical Theology of Importance

		G <sub>2</sub>	L <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>
War		A violent large-scale conflict between two or more parties.		
Peace		The absence of war and a state of harmony where people co-exist.		
Just War Theory		A criterion for Christianity for evaluation of whether or not a war can be considered to be morally right.		
Jus ad Bellum		The criteria for when going to, or starting, a war can be considered to be morally right.		
Jus in Bellum		The conduct required during war in order for the war to be considered to be morally right.		
Jus post Bellum		The conditions for ensuring justice after the war is over.		
Pacifism		The belief that violence can never be justified under any circumstances.		
Absolute Pacifism		The belief that there is no flexibility in the belief that war is never justified.		
Augustine		Philosopher whose thoughts are highly influential on the development of Just War Theory.		
Aquinas		Thirteenth-century monk who developed the just war theory.		
Sex		The physical act of intercourse.		
Sexual Ethics		Ethical conduct concerning sexual intercourse and practice.		
Marriage		A legal and sometimes religious union between two people.		
Premarital Sex		The act of having sex before the point of marriage.		
Adultery		The act of having extramarital sex or sex with someone who is not your partner.		
Promiscuity		The state of having lots of sexual partners.		
Same-sex Relationships		Sexual relationships between people of the same gender.		
Civil Partnership		Legal union between two people which is similar to but different from marriage.		
Contraception		Medication and methods intended to stop pregnancy.		
Childlessness		The state of having no children.		
Peter Vardy		Theologian who considers modern sexual ethics to be troubling concerning.		
J. Dominian		Catholic theologian who believes that the Church needed a new approach towards sexual ethics traditionally taken.		

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## 3.1 War and Peace

### Overview

War is the act of conflict between two countries or groups, usually involving military or physical action. Usually, it will result in a great deal of suffering and loss of life. Most people will want to avoid war where possible. Peace is the absence of war – a state where individuals are able to live freely.

### Key Points

#### General

- War is a state of ongoing violence and conflict considered to be something we want to avoid.
- This is because it causes a huge amount of suffering and pain. War often causes a large number of human casualties, and those who are left behind feel the emotion of loss for those who gave their lives in the conflict.
- The vast majority of people accept that war is an unfortunate reality of human existence and believe that it is not the ideal and should only be used as a last resort.
- Religions and ethical systems have different ways of approaching the issue of war, however, almost all agree that war is not the ideal. Many see it as a necessary evil and set out limited criteria which justify war, including the just war theory within Christianity. Just war theory was developed in Christian thinking due to the need to develop an approach to human conflict which could be considered to be more ethical.
- Just war, the most popular religious contribution in the West towards navigating the issue of war, is influential and relevant, as it is practiced by many individuals who do not hold religious beliefs.
- It has also been influential in the development of international war legislation, such as the Geneva Conventions.

#### The Teaching of Sacred Texts

- In most religious traditions, war is considered to be less than ideal. Many religions speak of the ideal which God wants people to live in; however, they also acknowledge that violence is an unfortunate part of human existence.
- There are exceptions to this – for example, within the Bible in some instances it is as though the narrative suggests God is on one side of the fight (e.g. in the Book of Joshua).
- Some religious texts contain instructions for how to undertake a just war. For example, within Islam, there are the criteria given in the Qur'an for the undertaking of a lesser jihad.
- While not included within the Bible, Christian just war theory is based on biblical principles. Biblical laws were highly influential in the development of just war theory. The teachings of the Bible are influential to those who practice just war theory.
- It is also influenced by the thoughts and writings of St Augustine, a Christian philosopher and theologian, who is important in Christian tradition.

#### Just War Theory



- Just war theory is a Christian system of ethics surrounding the idea of justified war. It states that there are situations in which waging war could be considered the right thing to do.
- It is a theory which is supported by the vast majority of Catholic and Protestant Christians, although it is supported by some Protestant groups who practise pacifism, such as the Religious Society of Friends.
- Just war theory was developed because Christians acknowledge that while peace is the ideal, war can sometimes be a necessary evil in a fallen world (as Christians believe that Genesis 3 means that humans allowed sin and suffering to enter the world).
- Just war theory was developed by St Thomas Aquinas; however, the theory has been influenced by other Christian thinkers, such as Augustine.
- Throughout just war theory there are clear Christian principles displayed, including the sanctity of life and justice.

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- The principles of just war theory can be broken down as follows:

Principle	Meaning	Criteria
Jus ad bellum 	The criteria for when going to, or starting, war is considered just.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Just cause – war should be waged for a just cause.</li> <li>2. Declared by a just authority – war should be declared by a just kind of authority.</li> <li>3. Just intention – war should be waged for a just intention.</li> <li>4. Proportionality – war, as a response to an injustice, should be proportional to the original injustice.</li> <li>5. Last resort – war should be only be waged if all other ways to solve the crisis have failed.</li> <li>6. Likelihood of success – there has to be a reasonable chance the intended outcomes will be achieved.</li> <li>7. Comparative justice – both sides of the conflict should be considered.</li> </ol>
Jus in bello	The conduct required during war in order for the war to be considered just.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Principle of proportionality</b> – the use of force must be proportionate to the threat posed.</li> <li>2. <b>Principle of discrimination</b> – those who are not combatants (between civilians and non-civilians) must not be targeted. Civilians are harmed. There should be no indiscriminate attacks that put civilians at risk.</li> </ol>
Jus post bellum 	The conditions for ensuring justice after the war is over.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Punishment – at the end of a war, if a nation's military has committed crimes or rights (e.g. rape) then those responsible should be duly punished.</li> <li>2. Proportionality – any peace settlement should be proportionate to the damage done.</li> <li>3. Discrimination – the people must not be punished for the actions of their rulers.</li> <li>4. Compensation – a defeated nation must compensate the victors for the losses of war (in both humanitarian and economic terms).</li> <li>5. Rights vindication – the victors of a war must ensure that the rights which were not respected by the defeated are restored, such as freedom of religion or freedom of speech.</li> </ol>

### Contemporary Conflict and Just War Theory: The Iraq War

- The Iraq War was an armed and prolonged conflict between America and Iraq in 2003.
- It is a largely controversial war, causing a huge amount of debate and criticism. Many people consider the reason for war to be unjustified and the scale of war to have spiralled out of control.
- The Chilcot Report (published in 2016) examined the Iraq War – and took severe criticism of the UK's role. It stated that 'the UK chose to join the invasion of Iraq before it had exhausted all peaceful options for disarmament'. Military action at that time was not a last resort.
- The Chilcot Report also states that 'by the time UK forces left Iraq in 2009, the stated objectives'.
- Furthermore, the report estimated that at least 150,000 Iraqi civilians died during the war.
- Therefore, many people consider the Iraq War to be an unjustified war which does not fit the criteria of just war theory. It did not appear to have just cause, it did not appear to have just intention, it was certainly found by the Chilcot Report to not be a last resort. It also did not appear to be fulfilling its end.
- Many Christians were opposed to the Iraq War and many protested their government during the time.

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## Analysis of the Success of Just War Theory

- There are issues within just war theory – in theory and in practice. For example, just war theory is that one cannot guarantee one's enemy is also following a just war theory.
- This might lead to a disadvantage and the potential for an unjust side to win. This would be considered bad for humanity.
- War is an incredibly complicated issue, with many different facets all coming together. Politics, strategy, negotiation, weapons development etc. It could be argued that all is too simple to manage such a complex issue.
- Scholars such as Peter Vardy have argued that just war theory is far too open to interpretation, making the theory impractical.
- Furthermore, he believes that it asks too much of those in war, as it is an extreme situation to be in.
- Further, on a practical level the very name raises a question – can a war ever be considered 'just'?
- However, there are strengths to the theory. It appeals to human ideas of reason and a form of structure to an ethical approach to wars.
- It is fairly practical and realistic, dealing with the realities of what one faces in war.
- It goes some way to solving ethical issues within war – and just because it does not mean that we should simply abandon it. War is difficult – therefore it also has to be so.
- It appeals to many people outside the Christian community also, so it is applicable to a wide range of people.

## Special Issues Arising from Nuclear War

- Nuclear weaponry is a form of weapon of mass destruction which harnesses the power of atomic energy to cause a devastating amount of destruction.
- The possession of nuclear weapons by a state is intended to stop the occurrence of war.
- The idea here is that possession of nuclear weapons threatens mutually assured destruction, which ideally result in the high likelihood that a nuclear war will never break out.
- Many religious groups oppose nuclear weapons for a variety of reasons. First, the theory of just war stipulates proportionality. It is incredibly difficult to pinpoint the exact number of innocent civilians who are inevitable victims of nuclear war.
- Therefore, they argue that nations who possess these weapons should dispose of them, as the potential for destruction caused is too great a risk to humanity.
- However, this argument is relatively impractical in the realm of politics. There are states who claim to give up their nuclear weapons have actually done so, so a country without nuclear weapons could make a country more vulnerable and pose a national security risk.

## Peace and Pacifism

- Peace is widely considered to be the ideal – it is the state of harmony without conflict.
- Pacifism is a belief system based on the value of peace. It is the idea that violence is wrong and can be taken as an umbrella term for different kinds of pacifism.
- There are various different kinds of pacifism. These include absolute pacifism, which is the belief that violence is never, ever justified, and active pacifism, which is the belief that violence is never, ever justified.
- Absolute pacifism is the belief that violence and war can never, ever be justified. Relative (or selective) pacifism is that war should be avoided at almost all costs, but there are some set of instances where it is justified.
- There are some groups of religious people who believe in pacifism, and others who do not. For example, there is a branch of Christianity known as the Quakers, who adhere to a strict pacifist approach.
- In instances of civil war within countries, such individuals have been known to be targeted. These are individuals who refuse the call to military service on moral grounds.
- This is a practical problem which pacifists may run into – being called to arms in a time of war. However, there are allowances for such beliefs, resulting in conscientious objectors.
- Many pacifists are known to campaign against wars which they are engaged in, or (or join) lobby groups or stage protests against a government should they decide to go to war.

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- Many pacifists argue that while war has some advantages (such as technological advances and the strides taken in the two world wars of the early twentieth century), the human cost that occurs during war.
- Nuclear pacifists are those who hold the belief that all countries should get rid of nuclear weapons, resulting in a removal of the threat of nuclear war.
- Active pacifism is where someone evangelises their pacifist beliefs to others and attempts to convince people in their lives that their pacifist beliefs are the best. Practically, this will include campaigning for racist stances and refusing to take part in war.

## Key Figures

### Thomas Aquinas

- St Thomas Aquinas was a thirteenth-century monk whose teaching on the interpretation of the Bible in order to be able to use it to navigate unprecedented moral decisions was to be highly influential.
- He developed, among many other theories, the idea of just war theory in his *Theologiae*.

### St Augustine

A fourteenth/fifteenth-century Christian thinker and considered a saint within the Catholic Church, St Augustine of Hippo is responsible for the development of the doctrine of just war theory.

- His ideas about justice and the navigation of conflict were influential on Thomas Aquinas in his development of just war theory.
- This is a pervasive idea which continues to be used in Christian belief and discourse to this day.

## Key Texts

### *Summa Theologica*

- This is the text in which St Thomas Aquinas put forward the just war theory and outlined the order of things, what is and what is not considered a just cause and conduct.

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## Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹️	Some Idea 😐	Good Idea 😊	
What is war?				
What is peace?				
What is just war theory?				
Who put forward just war theory?				
What is jus ad bellum?				
What is jus in bello?				
What is jus post bellum?				
What are the strengths of just war theory?				
What are the weaknesses of just war theory?				
How does the Iraq War measure up to just war theory?				
What is pacifism?				
What is the difference between absolute pacifism and relative pacifism?				
What is an example of a group which practises absolute pacifism?				

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## 3.2 Sexual Ethics

### Overview

Sexual ethics are concerned with different kinds of sexual relations which are considered to be acceptable. The main issues relevant to the content of this course are premarital and marital sex, contraception and same-sex marriage. There are diverse views on these issues as those with specific religious or secular viewpoints, and people with divergent views within those groups.

### Key Points

#### General

- Sex is the giving and/or receiving of intimate pleasure between consenting people.
- There are laws within the UK regarding the age at which an individual is considered to be able to give consent to have sex. This is 16 years old at the time of writing.
- Premarital sex is sex which occurs before a couple have entered into a marriage. It was once considered condemned; however, it is now widely accepted within the UK.
- Extramarital sex is sexual relationships outside a marriage. This is commonly known as adultery.
- Heterosexuality is sexual and romantic attraction between people of the opposite sex. Homosexuality is a sexual and romantic attraction between people of the same sex, either a man and a woman or a man and a man. There are many other forms of sexual identity, but they are beyond the scope of this resource – but it is important to be aware of this fact.
- Contraception is the use of methods or techniques to attempt to reduce the chance of the conception of children as the result of sex. Other uses for contraceptive methods include protection from STIs or STDs.

#### Premarital Sex and Promiscuity

- In the modern day, premarital sex is widely accepted within British society and is generally considered a societal norm.
- Those who wait until marriage to have sex usually do so due to personal or religious beliefs, such as religious beliefs; this is known as abstinence or celibacy.
- Traditionally, within some ethical and religious systems, such as Christianity, sex was considered to be restricted to the context of a marriage between one man and one woman.
- This essentially condemned sexual practices such as premarital sex, extramarital sex and promiscuity.
- This was because of biblical teachings, such as 1 Thessalonians 4:3–4.
- Many Christians view sex as being an intimate and sacred bond which is designed to be fulfilled in marriage, as this is the context by which this kind of expression of love can be best achieved.
- Genesis 2:24 teaches that in marriage, via sex, husband and wife become 'one flesh'.
- Therefore, the purpose of sex can only be fulfilled in marriage. In this context, sex is seen as a very good thing – something to be celebrated and encouraged. This should be the case when sex results in the birth of children, considered to be a blessing from God.
- Jesus does not speak a great deal about sex, and it should be noted that the teaching on sex from the New Testament comes from the writings of Paul.
- In his letters he emphasises celibacy as being the better way to live, offering no alternative if one could not contain their sexual desires.
- Today many churches, such as the Catholic Church, emphasise the teaching that sex should only be fulfilled within marriage. Others take a more relaxed view, accepting that sex can be fulfilled where people are perhaps choosing to live together rather than being married, as is one such Christian group.
- For the Church of England, among other liberal Protestants, sex within a loving relationship is considered to be acceptable.

*'It is the sacred sexual bond which should be protected and encouraged.'*

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- Premarital sex outside of a loving, monogamous relationship such as promise to be a good sexual practice within religious thought. This is when an individual has sex with a number of others which society might define as being a high number of partners.
- This is largely condemned by most religious groups as they would argue this is not the designed sex. However, some religious people might emphasise a non-judgemental approach who practise promiscuity.
- Some secular groups would consider this to be fine; however, others may not due to their cultural and social background.

## Arguments For and Against Premarital Sex

Arguments for premarital sex	Arguments against premarital sex
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ It is a personal choice when they have sex and it only affects the individuals involved.</li> <li>◆ Marriage has become less important in today's society, with more people choosing to cohabit.</li> <li>◆ There can be loving, committed and stable relationships outside of marriage.</li> <li>◆ It is not illegal and is a common occurrence.</li> <li>◆ Religious teaching is not relevant to atheists or agnostics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ It increases the risk of sexually transmitted diseases.</li> <li>◆ Judaeo-Christian and other religions consider it as immoral for sex within marriage society, for child rearing and the union of a married couple.</li> <li>◆ There can be psychological problems from having a committed relationship.</li> <li>◆ It risks pregnancy and a stable family unit.</li> </ul>

## Extramarital Sex

- This is specifically condemned within some religions, such as Christianity. The Ten Commandments that adultery is condemned. Christians consider sex to be a sacred thing; therefore, to cheat on one's spouse is considered a violation as well as a breaking of divine law.
- The vast majority of people would disagree with extramarital sex (commonly known as a sexual liaison outside of the marriage is known and accepted). Cheating in a marriage can cause a huge amount of emotional pain to the partner. Trust and loyalty, commonly held to be important values.

## Same-sex Relationships and Marriage

- Same-sex relationships, also known as homosexual relationships, are sexual relationships between two people who are of the same gender.
- The vast majority of people in the UK consider these relationships to be acceptable.
- Homosexuality was decriminalised in 1967, and gay marriage was legalised in 2014. Homosexuals are now able to legally marry their partners within the United Kingdom.
- Some people consider homosexuality to be wrong, such as some groups of Christians based on biblical teachings.
- Jesus did not specifically speak about homosexuality; however, there are many verses in the New Testament which take a condemnatory stance towards homosexuality.
- Verses such as Leviticus 20:13 and 18:22 are often cited as being specifically condemning homosexuality.
- One group of Christians who specifically condemn homosexuality is the Catholic Church. Catholic teaching, as well as the teachings of Thomas Aquinas's natural law, the Catholic Church teaches that the primary purpose of the precepts of natural law is reproduction, something which is not possible within homosexual relationships. Therefore, this would be considered one of the reasons why homosexuality is considered a sinful practice.
- However, the Church does emphasise the dignity of homosexuals and that they should be treated with compassion. Instead they should be treated like everyone else, with the compassion shown to them by being a human being.
- They would argue, however, that engaging in homosexual acts is still considered a sin.

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- They would also consider marriage to be a union between a man and a woman and would not accept homosexual marriage.
- However, not all Catholic Christians believe this.
- Jack Dominian, psychiatrist and Catholic theologian, believes that sex is a gift from God and the Church should be more open and accepting of different sexual practices.
- He argues that sex is a person-to-person experience, and that this, instead of being emphasised in navigating sexual ethics.
- He also believes that too much emphasis has been placed on the connection between sex and procreation, emphasising that sex has many other purposes beyond creating life (fostering closeness, etc.).
- Some church groups disagree about homosexual relationships – for example, the Roman Catholic Church, that while it believes that heterosexuality to be the ideal, homosexuals should nevertheless be accepted. They encourage abstinence would be the ideal for such people but condemn any form of homosexual activity. Some are convinced that a faithful, sexually active relationship with one's partner (or partners), then [this is] the way of life God wills for them'.
- Some churches within the UK will happily marry homosexual couples; however, others will not and refuse based on religious beliefs.
- Largely, the secular community has no issue with homosexuality. It is widely accepted in modern society as it is considered a right to love (and marry) whom you choose, assuming the relationship is consensual.
- In terms of law, civil partnerships had been the main option in terms of legal recognition for same-sex couples. This was created in 2004 as an alternative to marriage, giving same-sex couples the same rights under the law to same-sex couples. 2014 saw the legalisation of same-sex marriage in the UK. Legal rulings intended to broaden the ability of all people (including opposite-sex couples) to enter a civil partnership should they not wish to marry.

### Contraception and Childlessness

- There are a variety of different kinds of contraception, including barrier methods (condoms), hormonal methods (such as the pill), intrauterine devices (IUDs), etc.
- In some ethical thought, contraception is considered to be immoral. For example, the Catholic Church's teaching of contraception is considered to be condemned. This is because it breaches the natural law, the system of ethics based on both the Bible and reason which was developed by St Thomas Aquinas.
- This system of ethical conduct is one of the main influencers of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, a central document in church teaching.
- Contraception breaches the precept of reproduction within natural law and is therefore considered immoral and impermissible.
- There is no explicit rule within the Bible which prohibits the use of contraception. Contraception were largely not available in biblical times (e.g. the pill was developed in 1960s). Some church groups consider the teaching of Genesis 1:28 which states 'be fruitful and increase' as a basis for teaching against the use of contraception.
- The Church of England has no issue with the use of contraception. It believes in personal freedom and those choices for themselves.
- It may even consider it to be a form of good stewardship via responsible parenthood, ensuring that you only have as many children as you can handle, you can ensure the best care and support possible to your existing children. This may also be considered stewardship of the environment.
- Largely, those within the secular community have no issue with the use of contraception.
- There are ethical contributors who have linked to wider concerns regarding the commodification of sex and contraception.
- For example, Peter Singer considers the aftermath of the development of the IVF as a problem in the modern view of sex.
- He argues that it has led to a view of sex which is largely transactional – that people do it to get what they want from their partner, rather than an expression of love. This, he argues, is causing huge fractures in modern romantic relationships as the nature of sex is central to the importance of human development.
- Furthermore, contraception is intended to avoid the natural result of unprotected sex, which is the creation of human life.

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- Childlessness is the state of not having biological children. This could be by choice or due to infertility issues.
- Some religious people, such as Catholics, might consider childlessness (in the context of choosing to not procreate) to be wrong, as one of the important precepts of the Bible in Genesis commands humans to reproduce and, therefore, this is an important purpose of marriage. Such Christians might encourage adoption should a couple have infertility issues.
- Other Christians, such as liberal Protestants, might view the choice to remain childless as responsible parenting should an individual not wish to have children. This is seen as a matter of stewardship and, therefore, they would consider this to be fine.
- Secular responses vary. Many secular people would accept an individual who chooses to be childless; however, it is not considered a societal expectation and in these cases there is no pressure to have children.



## Key Figures

### Peter Vardy

- British theologian and the author of 18 books, including his thoughts on sexual ethics.
- Vardy believed that the development of the pill has led to a negative impact on the relationship between consenting adults, such as the development of transactional sex.

### Jack Dominian

- Psychiatrist and Catholic theologian who believed that sex is a gift from God.
- In his lifetime, he lectured widely on the nature of sex and marriage, promoting a shift away from purely traditional approaches.

## Key Texts

### *The Puzzle of Sex*

- Published in 1997, *The Puzzle of Sex* is the text in which Vardy put forward his views on the perceived issues within modern approaches following the sexual revolution.

### *Let's Make Love*

- *Let's Make Love* was published in 2001, and in this text Catholic theologian Jack Dominian discusses his ideas about the changes necessary in order to address the issue he perceived within the Catholic Church.



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## Student Checklist

What Do I Know?	No Idea ☹	Some Idea ☺	Good Idea ☺	
What is sex?				
What is marital sex?				
How is this viewed by Christians?				
What is premarital sex?				
How is premarital sex viewed by different groups of Christians?				
How is premarital sex viewed by secular people?				
What is promiscuity?				
How might this be viewed by different groups of Christians?				
How might this be viewed by secular people?				
What is extramarital sex?				
How is extramarital sex viewed by Christians?				
How is extramarital sex viewed by secular people?				
What is homosexuality?				
How does the Catholic Church view homosexuality?				
How does the Church of England view homosexuality?				
What is contraception?				
What is the view of the Catholic Church towards contraception?				
What is the view of the Church of England towards contraception?				
What is childlessness?				
What is the view of the Catholic Church towards childlessness?				
How might a liberal Protestant respond?				
How might this be viewed by secular people?				
What is the view of Jack Dominian on sexual ethics?				
What is the view of Peter Vardy on sexual ethics?				

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## Practice Exam-style Question

If you are sitting the AS assessment for this course, please answer question 5.  
If you are sitting the A Level exam, please answer question 6.

### 5. Assess the strengths of religious approaches to war.

#### HINTS

In your answer you should:

- exhibit understanding and comprehension of differing beliefs, including:
  - key ideas of war
  - key ideas of just war theory, including *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello* and *jus post bellum*
  - key strengths and weaknesses
  - examples of just war theory evaluating a war
  - analyse and evaluate the facets of religious approaches and differing implications and impact

(AO2)

### 6. Explore the approach of religious ideas to sexual ethics.

#### HINTS

In your answer you should:

- explore the facets of religious approaches and differing ideas, including:
  - key ideas of sexual ethics
  - key ideas of Christian approaches to marriage, forms of sexual practice, premarital sex, extramarital sex and homosexuality
  - reference to views on contraception

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# Mark Schemes

## 8-mark Questions (AS and A Level)

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No content within the answer which is relevant or able to demonstrate knowledge.</li> </ul>
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant language used with their correct meaning / in their correct context.</li> <li>Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some mistakes. Answer only gives a shallow understanding of relevant concepts.</li> </ul>
2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, making use of specific terms and words, with some mistakes.</li> <li>Generally good examples of religious ideas/beliefs, possibly with some incorrect statements.</li> <li>Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate understanding.</li> </ul>
3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with correct terminology and continuity throughout answer.</li> <li>A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some mistakes.</li> <li>Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate understanding.</li> </ul>

## 9-mark Questions (AS only)

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No content within the answer which is relevant or able to demonstrate knowledge.</li> </ul>
1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant language used with their correct meaning / in their correct context.</li> <li>Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some mistakes. Answer only gives a shallow understanding of relevant concepts.</li> <li>Answer only gives a shallow demonstration of the links between concepts.</li> <li>Specialist language is used in a limited way.</li> </ul>
2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, making use of specific terms and words, with some mistakes.</li> <li>Generally good examples of religious ideas/beliefs, possibly with some incorrect statements.</li> <li>Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate understanding.</li> <li>Answer gives a good demonstration of the links between concepts.</li> <li>Specialist language is correctly used throughout the answer.</li> </ul>
3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with correct terminology and continuity throughout answer.</li> <li>A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some mistakes.</li> <li>Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate understanding.</li> <li>Specialist language is used correctly throughout.</li> </ul>

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# 10-mark Questions (A Level only)

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No content within the answer which is relevant or able to demonstrate knowledge of the topic.</li> </ul>
1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant language used with their correct meaning / in their correct context.</li> <li>Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some links made.</li> <li>Answer only gives a shallow understanding of relevant concepts.</li> <li>Answer only gives a shallow demonstration of the links between concepts.</li> <li>Specialist language is used in a limited way.</li> <li>Answer only gives a shallow demonstration of the links between concepts and arguments.</li> </ul>
2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, making use of specific terms and words, with some mistakes.</li> <li>Generally good examples of religious ideas/beliefs, potential incorrect statements.</li> <li>Develops knowledge of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate understanding.</li> <li>Answer gives a good demonstration of the links between concepts.</li> <li>Specialist language is correctly used throughout the answer.</li> <li>Answer gives a good demonstration of the links between concepts and arguments.</li> </ul>
3	7–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with the correct use of specialist language used with continuity throughout answer.</li> <li>A wide range of examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with links made.</li> <li>Deep development of religious ideas and beliefs to demonstrate understanding.</li> <li>Specialist language is used correctly throughout.</li> <li>Answer gives a very good demonstration of the links between concepts and arguments.</li> </ul>

# 12-mark Questions (A Level only)

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No content within the answer which is relevant or able to demonstrate knowledge of the topic.</li> </ul>
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A demonstration of limited knowledge. Relevant language used with their correct meaning/context.</li> <li>Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, potential incorrect statements, with few or no links made.</li> <li>Limited ability to use examples of viewpoints and judge examples to support answers; concluding with a judgement on scope.</li> </ul>
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A good demonstration of knowledge on the topic, making use of specific terms and words, with some mistakes.</li> <li>Some examples of religious ideas/beliefs, containing links made.</li> <li>Some ability to use examples of viewpoints and judge examples to support answers; concluding with a judgement on scope.</li> </ul>
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Far-reaching knowledge demonstrated with the correct use of specialist language used with continuity throughout answer.</li> <li>Many examples of religious ideas/beliefs, containing many links accurately made.</li> <li>Good ability to use examples of viewpoints and judge examples to support answers; concluding with a judgement and justified.</li> </ul>

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## 20-mark Questions (AS and A Level)

Level	Marks Awarded	Answer Description
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No content within the answer which is relevant or</li> </ul>
1	1–5 (AS) 1–4 (A Level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small range of demonstrated knowledge. Relevant terms and words used not within their correct meaning/context.</li> <li>Limited examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with basic logical link.</li> <li>Very few judgements made and these are unsupported by evidence.</li> </ul>
2	6–10 (AS) 5–8 (A Level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A demonstration of limited knowledge on the topic with some effective use of specific terms and words, with some mistakes.</li> <li>Some examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some logical link.</li> <li>Some judgements made but these are not fully supported by evidence.</li> </ul>
3	11–15 (AS) 9–12 (A Level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good demonstration of knowledge demonstrated and language used with continuity throughout answer.</li> <li>Examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with some logical link but not all.</li> <li>Some judgements made, mostly supported by evidence.</li> </ul>
4	16–20 (AS) 13–16 (A Level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A demonstration of strong knowledge on the topic with effective use of specific terms and words in their correct meaning/context.</li> <li>Examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with a wide range of logical link.</li> <li>Logical judgements made on most parts of the question supported by evidence.</li> </ul>
5 (A Level only)	17–20 (A Level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A demonstration of strong knowledge on the topic with effective use of specific terms and words in their correct meaning/context.</li> <li>Examples of religious ideas/beliefs, with logical link throughout.</li> <li>Logical judgements made on all parts of the question comprehensively supported by evidence.</li> </ul>

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# Answers

## Topic One

### 1. Explore religious perspectives on environmental issues.

Indicative Content (AO1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are many issues facing the world today as a result of the environment. People are noticing within the world. Issues included in this are animal welfare, waste management, and climate change.</li> <li>People have felt that they should respond to these issues, including through religious groups.</li> <li>Generally speaking, there are two largely divergent Christian approaches rooted in the key ideas of dominion and stewardship.</li> <li>Christians believe that they have been given a special responsibility for creation.</li> <li>This is rooted in verses in the Bible such as Genesis 1:28–29, which states <i>in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground</i>.</li> <li>They believe that human beings have <b>dominion</b>, which is the power to rule over the earth.</li> <li>Therefore, we have the responsibility to do so well, which is known as stewardship.</li> <li>From these two ideas come the divergent approaches to environmental issues.</li> <li>Firstly, the vast majority interpret this as humans needing to intentionally care for the environment. This might manifest in churches making efforts to improve the environment, such as helping with recycling or getting involved in Christian charities with an environmental focus, such as Operation Noah.</li> <li>Secondly, a minority interpret this as being able to do what they wish with the earth's natural resources, which means they will pay little attention to the issues facing society today.</li> </ul>

### 2. Clarify the thoughts put forward by Joni Eareckson Tada in the above excerpt in your answer.

Indicative Content (AO1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joni Eareckson Tada is a Christian disability activist who advocates for the rights of Christians within the Church.</li> <li>She was paralysed from the neck down at the age of 17.</li> <li>She has since devoted her life to charity and disability activism specifically within the Church.</li> <li>In her books and lectures, Tada confronts suffering and posits her theology of suffering.</li> <li>A theodicy is an attempt to explain the existence of evil and suffering in the world. Tada's theodicy explains the suffering she has experienced due to her disability – while also maintaining belief in an all-powerful, all-loving God.</li> <li>Tada argues that God permits suffering because it draws us closer to God.</li> <li>By facing hardship, people can become closer to Christ in their lives.</li> <li>This is shown in the quote, where Tada states that God lifts people up from their suffering and gives them meaning and their experience.</li> <li>She states that disabled people demonstrate to the rest of the congregation how to overcome by faith.</li> <li>In their suffering, they can exemplify the joy to be found in God beyond the world.</li> <li>Hence, it is vital for disabled people to be an integral part of the Church.</li> </ul>

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## Topic Two

### 3. Analyse the strengths of situation ethics in approaching different ethical issues

#### Indicative Content (AO1 + AO2)

##### AO1:

- Situation ethics is a form of Christian ethics.
- It was first put forward by the work of J. I. Robinson and Joseph Fletcher.
- It is based on the Christian ethic of agape.
- Agape is the Christian term for the principle of selfless, unconditional love. It is based on the belief that God has loved humanity and that, therefore, we are called to love others.
- The driving force behind the idea of situation ethics is that the most ethical action will serve the interests of agape.
- This is a relative and consequentialist form of ethics.

##### AO2:

- One of the main strengths of situation ethics is the fact that it was born out of a cultural change. As a result, it appealed well to the modern audience.
- The new morality of the twentieth century was moving away from traditional conservative ethics, and situation ethics offered people a way to navigate a more flexible way with reference to their religion.
- However, some critique this on the basis that this seems to present an ethical system that should take its morality from the changing world rather than be a source of moral guidance.
- Agape is a very attractive principle to Christians and non-Christians alike. It is a relatively vague idea – merely positing that love should always be the guiding way of laying out a clear and manageable ethical theory for adherents.
- For this reason, Fletcher developed two sets of principles and propositions for situation ethics to help people live out their moral choices and enable people to live out their principles in the real world. However, those such as Peter Vardy have argued that these principles do not go far enough to give a clear ethical path of how to navigate moral choices.
- It is in keeping with Jesus' biblical rejection of legalism, as seen in Matthew 23. Jesus' teachings are, to some Christians, the most important part of the Bible, and he paid more attention to.
- However, Jesus condemned some actions as always wrong, meaning that he did preach against legalism, he was also very clear that on some moral issues, there is a clear right and wrong.
- One big strength of situation ethics is that it provides flexibility and respect for the fact that individual moral agents are engaged with their moral choices rather than as they are told to.
- However, this flexibility means that it could easily be open to be abused. People could want what they want rather than what is moral – the flexibility of the system allows for leeway for misuse.
- Barclay argues that it creates dangers of error, mistakes and harm.
- Furthermore, while popular, situation ethics has received a fair amount of criticism from those within the religious community.
- For example, some Christians criticised it and emphasised moral law.

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4. Assess the idea that rule utilitarianism is more successful than act utilitarianism in dealing with ethical issues.

#### Indicative Content (AO1 + AO2)

##### AO1:

- Act utilitarianism is posited by Jeremy Bentham and is the classical form of utilitarianism. It is wholly built around the utility principle. It posits that the best ethical action is the one that will achieve the greatest happiness for the greatest number.
- Rule utilitarianism is posited by John Stuart Mill, and posits a similar idea to act utilitarianism but has added criteria of the no-harm principle and a distinction between higher and lower pleasures.

##### AO2:

Answers in favour of rule utilitarianism being more successful than act utilitarianism:

- Rule utilitarianism was developed in reaction to issues it perceived in act utilitarianism. In many ways it will be more successful at solving ethical issues.
- For example, one main issue within act utilitarianism is that pure act utilitarianism can be used to justify things which are considered to be moral evils – for example, lying or killing – simply because they are the wish of the majority.
- Rule utilitarianism solves this with the no-harm principle.
- This is the principle that states that an action can only be moral if it creates the greatest happiness for the greatest number and also minimises pain.
- In such a situation, this would stop utilitarianism being used to justify pain or suffering for a minority, in the name of the majority, which is considered to be the main aim of the ethical system.
- Rule utilitarianism also solves the issue that act utilitarianism can be seen as being too selfish. The base urges in humanity.
- Act utilitarianism is hedonistic and can be argued to be selfish in many ways.
- While rule utilitarianism is still fairly hedonistic, the introduction of the no-harm principle and higher and lower pleasures could in theory mean that the higher pleasures of a person could be considered to be more moral than simply serving their own interests.
- Rule utilitarianism is easier to apply in ethical decision-making than act utilitarianism because there are clear rules to follow.
- It removes the need to work out how best to apply the principle of utility in each situation, which could be difficult and time-consuming.
- It still allows some flexibility with the notion of strong and weak utilitarianism.

Answers against rule utilitarianism being more successful than act utilitarianism:

- The hedonic calculus posited within act utilitarianism could be argued to be more straightforward than the idea of higher and lower pleasures.
- Mill does not provide a way to categorise pleasures in this way, although some have suggested that categorisation would presumably be subjective.
- There is the difficulty of knowing when rules can be broken in order to achieve the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people.
- This means the need for lengthy analysis about how to behave has not simply shifted.

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## Topic Three

### 5. Assess the strengths of religious approaches to war.

#### Indicative Content (AO1 + AO2)

- The religious approach to war can generally be considered to be just war theory, developed by St Thomas Aquinas as a way to navigate war in an ethical way.
- It posits a series of things which must be considered, including jus ad bellum (reason to go to war), jus in bello (justified conduct within war) and jus post bellum (conduct following war).
- Just war theory, while not perfect, does have many advantages.
- It appeals to human ideas of reason and justice, and gives some form of ethical approach to wars.
- However, this strength can be countered with the argument of whether, given the human cost, can ever be considered to be reasonable.
- It is fairly practical and realistic, dealing with the realities of what one faces in a war.
- However, it does have one flaw regarding the reality of war – a practical war theory is that one cannot guarantee one's enemy is also following it. This can lead to a huge disadvantage.
- It goes some way to solving ethical issues within war – and just because it solves the issue does not mean that we should simply abandon it. War is therefore, ethical approaches to it must also be so.
- War is an incredibly complicated issue, with many different facets all coming at the same time – politics, strategy, negotiation, weapons development, etc.
- It could be argued that one rule to govern war is too simple to manage such a complex issue.
- Scholars such as Peter Singer have argued that just war theory is far too idealistic to consider to make it a very impractical.
- Furthermore, it believes that it asks too much of those in war, as it is asking them to be in a situation to be in.
- It appeals to many people outside the Christian community also, so it is not only for different groups of people, meaning that in a war situation it is not only one group that might find this ethical theory useful.

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6. Explore the approach of religious ideas to sexual ethics.

Indicative Content (AO1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sex within many religions, such as Christianity, is considered to be a gift from God.</li><li>• Traditionally, many Christians have held that sex should take place within marriage. Within marriage, husband and wife are considered to become one flesh (according to biblical teaching). Therefore, this is a sacred bond which cannot be broken.</li><li>• Within the context of marriage, sex is celebrated and considered to be a good thing by all Christian communities.</li><li>• Within the Catholic Church, sex outside the context of marriage is considered sinful.</li><li>• This is because traditionally things such as homosexuality, premarital sex and artificial sex were condemned.</li><li>• However, some Christian groups, such as the Church of England, have more liberal approaches – they might accept sex outside of marriage in a monogamous relationship where a couple are cohabiting, for example.</li><li>• Within the Catholic Church, the practice of homosexual acts is considered sinful. However, it is emphasised that gay people are to be respected and free to live their lives. It cites biblical bases such as Leviticus 20:13 and 18:22 as being a biblical basis for condemning homosexuality.</li><li>• Other Christian groups, such as the Church of England, posit that while marriage is the ideal, if someone feels highly convicted that a gay, committed and loving relationship is God's calling for them, then this is to be respected.</li><li>• The Catholic Church also teaches that the use of contraception is wrong. Contraception is seen as interfering with procreation, which is a precept in natural law theory (an important concept in Catholic teaching). The only form of contraception which might be acceptable is natural family planning, a natural form of contraception.</li><li>• The Church of England, however, does not see any issue with the use of contraception as a method to help couples plan their families as there is no biblical teaching which condemns it.</li></ul>

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