

Course Companion for A Level Year 2 Eduqas

Component 1: Christianity

zigzageducation.co.uk

POD 10656

Publish your own work... Write to a brief... Register at **publishmenow.co.uk**

↑ Follow us on Twitter **@ZigZagRS**

Contents

Product Support from ZigZag Education	ii
Terms and Conditions of Use	iii
Teacher's Introduction	1
Key Terminology	2
Theme 1: Religious Figures and Sacred Texts	2
Theme 3: Significant Social and Historical Developments in Christian Thought	3
Theme 4: Religious Practices That Shape Religious Identity	5
Theme 1: Religious Figures and Sacred Texts (Parts D/E/F)	6
D: The Bible as a Source of Wisdom and Authority	7
E: The Early Church	16
F: Two Views of Jesus	23
Theme 3: Significant Social and Historical Developments in Christian Thought (Parts A/B/C)	32
A: Attitudes towards Wealth	33
B: Migration and Christianity in the UK	39
C: Religion, Equality and Discrimination	43
Theme 3: Significant Social and Historical Developments in Christian Thought (Parts D/E/F)	50
D: The Challenges from Secularisation	51
E: The Challenges from Science	57
F: The Challenges from Pluralism and Diversity	65
Theme 4: Religious Practices That Shape Religious Identity (Parts D/E/F)	77
D: Religious Identity through Unification	78
E: Religious Identity through Religious Experience	84
F: Religious Identity through Responses to Poverty and Injustice	90
Answers to Activities	100
Answers to Quick Quizzes	101

Teacher's Introduction

This course companion is written for the A Level Eduqas (A120) Year 2 Component 1: Christianity specification and is designed to offer students a comprehensive introduction to the material within that academic course. The sections and topics therefore mirror the Eduqas specification headings, and every care has been taken to not only help students to understand the key concepts and ideas within the course, but also sharpen their critical thinking skills.

Alongside the main bulk of the writing, there are also a number of other features to help students with their learning and revision. Self-guided and group activities are included throughout the writing to better engage students with the material, and I have also provided glossaries, textual references and information on key thinkers where appropriate.

I hope that you enjoy working through this resource and that it benefits both you and your students throughout the academic year.

Please note: This course companion works alongside the A Level Eduqas Year 1 Course Companion for Christianity, which can be purchased here: **zzed.uk/10513**

Across the AS and A Level courses, some of the themes have been structured/named a little differently by the Eduqas specification. The table below demonstrates which themes are covered in each resource and how they differ, highlighted in grey.

AS/A Level Edugas Year 1 Component 1A: Christianity	A Level Eduqas Year 2 Component 1A: Christianity
Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts A: Jesus — his birth B: Jesus — his resurrection C: The Bible as a source of wisdom and authority in daily life	Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts D: The Bible as a source of wisdom and authority E: The early Church F: Two views of Jesus
Theme 2: Religious concepts A: Nature of God B: Trinity C: Atonement	Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought A: Wealth B: Migration C: Equality and discrimination
Theme 3* *AS Level / Theme 2* *A Level: Religious life A* *AS Level / D* *A Level; Faith and works B* *AS Level / E* *A Level: Community of believers C* *AS Level / F* *A Level: Key moral principles	Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought D: Secularisation E: Science F: Pluralism and diversity
Theme 4: Religious practices A: Baptism B: Eucharist C: Festivals	Theme 4: Religious practices D: Unification E: Experience F: Poverty and injustice

November 2020



THEME 1: RELIGIOUS FIGURE AND SACRED TEXTS

Acts of the Apostles	The fifth book of the New Territory, which records the Church and the actions of Journal earliest followers.
Apocrypha	Terting it have unknown, doubtful or dubious origin an
Biblical . Legity	The idea the Bible has power or command over human l
Canon	A collection of books, Scriptures and texts that is regard
Critical Realism	N T Wright's methodological approach to Scripture which between objectivity and subjectivity.
Demythologisation	The process by which myths are separated from biblica order to be relatable to modern audiences.
Dictation Theories	Views of biblical inspiration which hold that God directle. Christian Scripture to the authors.
Divine Inspiration	The process by which God causes individuals to creative will.
Doctrine of Accommodation	The view that God communicat ്രോ human beings in a nature such that they ca ്രം e sand his will.
Historical Jesus	The 'real' Icasawi selests behind the biblical authors' is and the highest through the biblical authors.
Jos. 4	A famous Jewish historian who wrote detailed historical
Kerygmata	A Greek word meaning proclamation (plural) that refers preaching in the early Church.
Plenary Theories	The view that the whole of the Bible is divinely authorit dictate its words to human beings.
Realised Eschatology	The view that Jesus during his ministry held that the Kir initiated or inaugurated by his arrival.
Social Revolutionary	The view that Jesus prioritised political and social teach during his ministry.
Word of God	A term used to describe how Christian Scripture is inspi





THEME 3: SIGNIFICANT SOCIA HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CHRIS

The view that there are separate natural or God-given re and women. Glabal Theology God Hypothesis A therm of the Hypothesis Hypot		
Charismatical Transport of Worship which are typically more energetic araditional practices. This may include singing, dancing the belief that in any society Church and state as a provided that in any society Church and state should having no influence over the latter. Exclusivism Extra Ecclesium Mulla Salus Freedom of Religious Expression Gender Roles Global Theology God Hypothesis Foliabal Theology God Hypothesis God Hypothesis God Hypothesis Freedom of Religious Existence of God. God Hypothesis God Hypothesis God Hypothesis Freedom of Religious Expression God Hypothesis God Hypothesis God Hypothesis God Hypothesis Freedom of Religious Expression Freedom of Religious Expression God Hypothesis God Hypothesis God Hypothesis God Hypothesis Freedom of Religious Expression Freedom of Religi	Anonymous Christians	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,
Church and State Church and State The belief that in any society Church and state should having no influence over the latter. The belief that only one religion is authoritative in tea salvation. Extra Ecclesium Nulla Salus A phrase meaning 'outside the Church there is no salv importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie Expression Gender Roles The belief that human beings have the right to practis without undue constraint. The view that there are separate natural or God-given reand women. Global Theology Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias to a crit way rely on the ignorance of God. God of The term Dawking the sale of God. God In the term Dawking the sale of God. God In the term Dawking the sale of God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruethe Christian Scripture underneath its various culturally control fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven false, or vice versa. Inclusivism Inclusivism The belief that while one religion is authoritative or treating that working about salvation. The process by which local cultures and customs are in practice around the world. A Christian movement that developed primarily in 1950s that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the proper of the content of of the c	Anthropic Principle	
Exclusivism Extra Ecclesium Nulla Salus Freedom of Religious Expression Gender Roles Global Theology Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias to existence of God. God of Salus Freedom of Religious God of Salus Freedom of Religious Expression Global Theology Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias to salve hristianity or other and women. Global Theology God Hypothesis The term Dawkin Salus hristianity or other existence of God. God of Salus have the right to practise without an inherent bias to salve hristianity or other without an inherent bias to salve hristianity or other existence of God. God of Salus have the right to practise without an inherent bias to salve hristianity or other without an inherent bias to salve have he views as a existence of God. God of Salus have the views as a existence of God. God and Salus have the right to practise without an inherent bias to salve have he views as a existence of God. God of Salus have the views as a existence of God. God of Salus have the views as a existence of God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruethe Christian Scripture underneath its various culturally cond the ignorance fallacy to prove God. A form of fallacy in which a statement is asserted as to prove false, or vice versa. Inclusivism Inclusivism Inclusivism A christian movement that developed primarily in 1950s that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the Salus have the right to practice around the world. A Christian movement that developed primarily in 1950s that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the Salus have the right to practice around the world. An apostolic letter by Pope John Paul II, published in 1980 Church's views on the roles and dignity of women agains the nature of gender within society.	Charismati Car. ()	L-338-33
Extra Ecclesium Nulla Salus A phrase meaning 'outside the Church there is no salv importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of God-given roand women. Bigod of the Church in allowing humans to achie importance of God-given roand women. Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias town hristianity or other without an inherent bias town hristianity or other in and women. Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias town hristianity or other in and women. Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias town hristianity or other in and women. Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias town hristianity or other in and women. A therm Dawkin the employed primarily in the process by which a statement is asserted as to proven false, or vice versa. The belief that while one religion is authoritative or translated in the process by which local cultures and customs are in practice around the world. A Christian movement that developed primarily in 1950s that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the continuous present to accompany mechanisms. Misogyny Mulieris Libratem Mulieris Libratem An apostolic letter by Pope John Paul II, published in 1980 Church's views on the roles and dignity of women agains the nature of gender within society. Non-overlapping Stephen Gould's term which	Church and State	
Freedom of Religious Expression Gender Roles Glabal Theology God Hypothesis God of Control of Christian Scripture underneath its various culturally concompanied in partial knowledge about salvation. God of Control of Christian Theology Inclusivism Inculturation Liberation Theology Mulieris Against Action Man-overlapping Municulturion Inculturation Misogyny Mulieris Against Action Mon-overlapping Inclusivism Inchart In	Exclusivism	
### Company of the process by which local cultures and customs are in practice around the world. Continuation Continuatio		
Global Theology Global Theology Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias town hristianity or other The term Dawkin the views as a existence of God. God of the process of God. However, it is typically used as a crisual relation of the ignorance fallacy to prove God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruethe Christian Scripture underneath its various culturally cone and fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven false, or vice versa. Inclusivism Inculturation The belief that while one religion is authoritative or trepartial knowledge about salvation. The process by which local cultures and customs are inpractice around the world. A Christian movement that developed primarily in 1950s that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the process of the process		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
### Continued Service of God. The term Dawking Reconstruction of God.	Gender Roles	•
God of Sod A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Scripture underneath its various culturally concerned fallacy Inclusivism Inculturation Inculturation Inculturation Inculturation A Christian movement that developed primarily in 1950s that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the person to a person the roles and dignity of women agains the nature of gender within society. Non-overlapping A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Scripture underneath its various culturally concerned as a crit way rely on the ignorance fallacy to prove God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Scripture underneath its various culturally concerned as the proven fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven fallacy in which a statement is asserted as the proven fallacy to prove God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruether Christian Proven God. A theme or teaching of pro	Global Theology	Hick's vision of a theology that fairly discusses and we without an inherent bias town hristianity or other
Golden Thread Golden Thread A theme or teaching of prophetic liberation that Ruethe Christian Scripture underneath its various culturally cone and fallacy in which a statement is asserted as to proven false, or vice versa. Inclusivism Inculturation Inculturation The process by which local cultures and customs are in practice around the world. A Christian movement that developed primarily in 1950s that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the local culture (memes) can person to a real person	God Hypothesis	
Inclusivism	God of Tage	widence of God. However, it is typically used as a cri
Inclusivism Inculturation Incu	Golden Thread	** '
Inculturation Inculturation The process by which local cultures and customs are in practice around the world. A Christian movement that developed primarily in 1950s that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the part of culture (memes) can person to provide avolutionary mechanisms. Misogyny Misogyny An apostolic letter by Pope John Paul II, published in 1980 Church's views on the roles and dignity of women against the nature of gender within society. Non-overlapping Stephen Gould's term which he employs to show how	Ignorance Fallacy	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Church's views on the roles and dignity of women against the nature of gender within society. Inculturation Practice around the world.	Inclusivism	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop the and a preferential option for the large. A theory describing he virth or culture (memes) can person to a roll a evolutionary mechanisms. Misogvov An apostolic letter by Pope John Paul II, published in 198 Church's views on the roles and dignity of women against the nature of gender within society. Non-overlapping Stephen Gould's term which he employs to show how	Inculturation	
Misagyny Misagyny Misagyny An apostolic letter by Pope John Paul II, published in 198 Church's views on the roles and dignity of women against the nature of gender within society. Non-overlapping Stephen Gould's term which he employs to show how	Liberation Theology	that used Marx and other political thinkers to develop th
An apostolic letter by Pope John Paul II, published in 198 Church's views on the roles and dignity of women against the nature of gender within society. Non-overlapping Stephen Gould's term which he employs to show how	Memetics	
Mulieris Church's views on the roles and dignity of women against the nature of gender within society. Non-overlapping Stephen Gould's term which he employs to show how	Misogyny	<i>"</i>
	Mulieris	Church's views on the roles and dignity of women agains
magisteria dinerent questions, concepts and ideas.	Non-overlapping Magisteria	Stephen Gould's term which he employs to show how different questions, concepts and ideas.



An area of theology that focuses on the right kinds of be should focus on in their lives.
An area of theology that focuses on the right kinds of actheir lives.
A system or systems within a state/society in which me
A form of Christianity and having session the presence and emphasize in partance of experiencing God
The rm issy uses to describe how she takes back or religious distorted by the patriarchal elements of Christian
The belief that no one religion has a claim to absolute may have equally valid claims to knowledge about sa
A modern Christian belief that acquired wealth is a b reward for faithfulness.
A Christian concept that details how in the coming or page be a shift in wealth and fortune from the rich to the poo
The process by which societies and cultures gradually less religious.
A term used to describe the various ways the influen a particular society.
The belief that religion should be separated from pol all are equal under law, with no special preferences g
A Protestant belief, mean achieve salvation.
The godd of the point, often worshipped within esote the godd of the point, often worshipped within esote the conditional state of the second point identifying her as synonymous with the second point identifying her as synonymous with the second point identifying her as synonymous with the second point identified in the wisdom literature of the Old Testame Ecclesiastes, as well as apocryphal works such as the W
Arguments for God that infer his existence based upon the universe.
A title given to Mary within some Christian denomination
Rape, war and genocide; the three practices that Daly a throughout history as a result of its patriarchal influence
The view that all human beings will eventually achievacts during their earthly life.
A modern Pentecostal movement which emphasises God for material, physical cr (a) ial reward.







THEME 4: RELIGIOUS PRACT THAT SHAPE RELIGIOUS IDE

Alienation	A Marxist concept that described how people are pers from their work and the free training train labours.
Catholic Social Teaching	Catholic doctring at ser issues of social justice subeings at a substribution and poverty.
Cesse	ો e ુાર્ણિ that spiritual gifts were available only durin are no longer available in the present day.
Charismata	A term meaning 'spiritual gifts', which are the basis of Charismatic Movement.
Continuationism	The belief that spiritual gifts are still available to huma did not end after the death of the apostles.
Diakonia	A Greek term meaning 'service' that is used to refer to helping those who are poor and oppressed.
Ecclesial Base Communities	Semi-autonomous congregations or groups of Christia addition to meeting for Bible study, work to improve local communities.
Ecumenical Formation	The different kinds of ecumenical education fostered Council of Churches.
Ecumenism	A term used to describe the various efforts different C movements undertake in a growevelop better rela
Exploitation	The unfair ເຂົ້າປະຕິດ someone so that one can ben
Glor	Sem that refers to how individuals 'speak in tongue' spiritual gifts received by people during charismatic w
Latifundia	The traditional semi-feudal system of agriculture that the modern age.
Liberation Theology	A Christian movement that developed primarily in 19 which use Marx and other political thinkers to developed in the poor.
Lima Liturgy	An ecumenical liturgy created by the World Council of various events.
Orthodoxy	An area of theology that focuses on the right kinds of Christians should focus on in their lives.
Orthopraxis	An area of theology that focuses on the right kinds of perform in their lives.
Preferential Option	A Catholic social do trile share mphasises the impo
for the Poor	focusing 🦿 🖰 Ss y 🖒 are marginalised and/or in pov
Public Witness	್ರು ಸ್ಟ್ರಾಪ efforts undertaken by Christian groups and ಎತಿues of social justice.
World Land of Churches	A world Christian ecumenical council containing mem denomination except the Roman Catholic Church.
World Missionary Conference	One of the first major Protestant ecumenical gathering taking place in Edinburgh in 1910.
	<u> </u>



THEME 1: RELIGIOUS FIGURES AND S (PARTS D/E/F)

What you will learn in this section

- D. Theological and historical views surrounding the Surroundin
 - how the Bible canon was establish than wergent denominational view
 - the different interpretation ເຂົ້າຂອງ bible as the Word of God and of div
 - Calvin's doctrin ും പ്രത്യാന് നർമ്ation and its influence on theological bel
- E. The the arly Church (in Acts of the Apostle
 - the position, message and format of Acts of the Apostles and the recommendation thought
 - the challenges of identifying and interpreting the kerygmata, with reference and Rudolf Bultmann
- F. The theology and historical study behind two different views of Jesus, include
 - the work of John Dominic Crossan and the view that the historical Jesu including questions about the role of apocryphal Gospels
 - The work N T Wright and his methodology of critical realism, including can be considered the true Messiah

Starter Activity:

Review your Year 1 studies into the historical Jesus through the birth narrative role do you think Jesus occupied during his life? Write down a few reasons for them as you work through the rest of Theme 1 (in particular Section F).

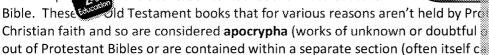
Key Thinker	
Name	John Domini Cressin "
Born	195
Died	
Key text	Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography (1994)
Why are they	Crossan is a New Testament scholar whose work has extens
important?	controversial yet dynamic portrait of the historical Jesus, empolitical and social revolutionary and his non-eschatological
Did you know?	Crossan was a key figure in the Jesus Seminar, a now defunc
Dia you know:	scholars that worked collaboratively to rank or rate the histo

Key Thinker	
Name	N T Wright
Born	1948
Died	N/A
Key text	The Resurrection of the Son of God (২০১১
Why are they	N T Wright is a deeply import at 20 % mporary theologian v
important?	historical matters sujabiling in Bible as well as on many l
	Wright is مَانْ کَدَّ اللَّهُ अ many figures in liberal theology and
Did you know?	and ್ಷ ಸ್ವಾಲ್ಕ್ pasis literal beliefs in ideas such as the Secon
79	്യ്യ് in Christian thought.



Introduction – The Development of the Bible

It is easy from a non-Christian perspective to view the Bible as a single, unvarying entity. Beyond questions about how to interpret its content, it is a book which contains the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith, compiled by its relevant religious authorities, yet this depiction could not be further from the tath. Even within Christian communities today, there are significant disagreements not only on the degree to which the first plane is authoritative, but also on which partial to the Christian faith and the book and be included in the Bible in the first plane is conflict you may well be aware of, for example or the deuterocanonical books in the Catholic



The dispute over these Old Testament books is important to highlight as, even the discussion about the various works Christians should consider authoritative. If the held to be suspect, why not question the authority of the Old Testament altoget challenged many of its teachings? Similarly, going down this route, we might ask from St Paul are necessary to include in the Bible, when they often diverge, expateachings Jesus himself presents in the Gospels. Why are books such as Revelationic circumspect eschatological ideas, essential for the Christian faith?

Such questions are important to consider, for although Christian orthodoxy has pertain form in the modern age, the task of theology is now as simply to follow critically analyse biblical texts themselves and wo we it is most consistent and their teachings. Moreover, such critical is not limited to ethics. As we we see that asking questions about a more figure of Jesus himself. Before we arrive at first take a way it is not limited to ethics. As we we see that asking questions about a more figure of Jesus himself. Before we arrive at first take a way it is not limited to ethics.

D: The Bible as a Source of Wisdom and Au

In Section C of Theme 1 (studied during your first year), we looked at how the Bill authority in daily Christian life. In that section, it was noted how the Bible was reguide to living and for teachings on the meaning of life itself. However, undernequestions about how we should think about the Bible as an overall document. Is of Jesus Christ, or is its remit broader, as a simple collection of religious texts that to learn about the life of Jesus? If the latter, should we prioritise certain texts also

What is important to note is that such questions aren't wholly answerable through themselves. Even if the Bible is the **Word of God** or **divinely inspired** (two impossection), it is human beings ultimately who have ordered its rarts into the single it is human beings who wrote these parts, and for the value or majority of these parts knowledge or understanding about their autions. This creates an interesting ter Bible as authoritative and the task of a conclars attempting to dissect and attheological and personal influence of the creation of it as a single book, for once Bible, it is less that a single book begiven and whether this status is just knowledge the single being the

However, working through each book of the Bible and examining its formation a the scope of any individual (let alone an A Level syllabus). Rather, we can take a problems by examining a much smaller but considerable question about how the itself. This will be the first major focus of this section.



How was the Biblical Canon Established?

A **canon** is a collection, set or list of works that is accepted as genuine or authent is important to note that there aren't any universal principles for judging what mits members. With any interest or belief system, different ideas might be preser preserve and what is not. For example, it is likely that you have heard the term when talking about pop-culture phenomena. One key universe we can use as a time that Disney announced that it was rebooting the formula and making three of the original trilogy, there was intense discussion by forms. Would Disney use the and games as reference points for the way, or would they go along a difference of the control of

In the end, Disney (cos in meaning only the original films and a few other works to be calculute a few in the entire process in many ways mirrors the kind of disculptooks of the Bible were first being collected together. Should any piece of writing theologically diverse, be included, or should there be some guiding principles for meaningful biblical work? The first century or two after Jesus' death saw a wide form, each with its own ideas about his life and work. Reconciling all these would impossible task, and so many early Church theologians stoked various controver endorsed and which they did not. Covering all these would be difficult, but we canon of both the Old Testament and the New Testament came together.

The Development of the Old Testament Canon

Out of the two parts of the Bible, there was much less disagreement about the confistion communities (at least at the beginning), for the Old Testament is primathe Hebrew Bible, or the Tanakh. This the primary religious text for Jewish peop Scripture for Jesus, both as inspiration for his own teaching which were rooted reference for the largely Jewish crowds who hear and recording his ministry. There Old Testament (or Hebrew Bible). The financial perintateuch, the first five books Judaism. The second is a set of york a second grain consisted of a single work written sometime Judges, Sar and the second with later writings probably composed at vand second less BCE. The third is the Wisdom books, which deal with a wide Finally, the fourth is the prophetic writings, which contain a number of sermons back on God.

We touched on the dates of composition for the historical works primarily becaus the majority of the Old Testament was written. A good chunk of it was probably the birth of Jesus, with all the present books probably being finished by the first century BCE. Naturally, this does not mean that the canon itself was fixed around this time. Among Jewish scholars there is still considerable debate around whether the Hebrew Bible canon was established around the time of the Hasmonean dynasty (140–40 BCE), or whether a much later date, around the second century CE mark, is more realistic. Either way, by 250 CE, there was a nearly universal consensus around what should be considered canonical in Jewish and Christian circles. Discussions about the and of a diready been conducted extensively by Jewish scholars to take shape, and the high degree of similar was intermingling between the two religions in the first few consultations and that there was no significant disagreemer disagreemer, except for those books terocanonical or apocrypha. we can lab€

These apocryphal books were a wide variety of Hebrew writings not contained in Hebrew Bible. While these were held to be important by many Jewish scholars, texts that defined the faith. This, therefore, raised an issue for early Christians: texts have for those who weren't strictly Jewish? There was significant debate a



Church theologians, but by the Councils of Carthage in 397 and 419 there began Old Testament should include apocryphal works such as the Wisdom of Solomor These eventually became accepted within the Catholic Church as of secondary carried while they were never explicitly quoted in the New Testament by Jesus or figure that there was a broad correspondence of thought.

Of course, as we briefly explored in the introduction, that is ged in the sixteen when the status of various deuterocanonical bool and get to be questioned by R Martin Luther. As he conducted his German instance of the Bible, he perceive Testament to go against doctrine and the perceive perceive perceive. The moreover, since the second were not explicitly referenced in the New Test whether the product of the product of the second on the life and teac cut out many and eduterocanonical books as part of his translation, labelling the influenced the development of the overall Protestant Bible, which accepted only Hebrew Bible, though dividing them differently into the 39 books we know today.

Arguably, although its development had been in motion for over a century by the Faith in 1647, it was this Reformed piece of writing that set in stone the divisions Catholic Bibles. Just over a century earlier, the Catholic Church at the Council of the deuterocanonical books were of equal importance to the primary canon, but theologians to agree exactly which books should be cut out and which should be Luther argued that Revelation (an NT book) should not be included as canon, for vastly different from the rest of the New Testament. Furthermore, Orthodox the Catholic Church throughout history and now accept an even wider Old Testamers see, these disputes are equally present in the development of the New Testamer part of this section.

The Development of the New Testament Canca

We explored how there was not recommend about the central texts of the apocryphal writings. The contents, is not true of the New Testament. Although the widespread on the second of the books recognised as canonical now.

To start, it is important to note that there were a huge number of Christian writing of the third century CE. Some were clearly important, but others were very questinge groups such as Gnostic Christians had their own Gospels and texts they conften deviated wildly from the four canonical Gospels at the heart of the New Tean cursory search reveals an array of non-canonical Gospels (such as Thomas, Petenuthenticity is difficult to identify. This means that early Christian councils had a principles or ideas that should govern the acceptance of a text as Christian canonical control of the control of the

For a start, there were early hints as to what might be included. St Paul, for example authoritative, seemingly quoting Luke 10:7 in 1 Timothy 5:18. This also make widely believed theory that the author of Luke was also the author of Acts. Similar to regard St Paul's writings as important Scripture. The last indications the New Testament canon were being circulated and a sumy Christian churches in C1 Thessalonians 5:27. This highlighter was also the author ways, the core texts of the New Testament canon were being circulated and a sumy Christian churches in C1 Thessalonians 5:27. This highlighter was a sum of the part of the New Testament canon were being circulated and a sum of the New Testament canon were canon were canon were canon wer

'So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given hall his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorm destruction, as they do the other scriptures.' (2 Peter 3:



One other important consideration is that questions about the canon were likely not pressing for early Christians getting to terms with the growth and shape of their religion. The first mention of a suggested core of Christian texts comes from Clement in 95 CE, who mentions a variety of New Testament texts including some letters of Paul (although he does not refer to them as strictly Scripture). Similarly, Ignatius of Antioch (115 CE) and Polycarp (108 CE) also recombed to varying degrees a significant number of Christian and or sexts, though they did not order them into any in the did not. In fact, it was primarily the controversies surrounding will be views of Marcion that probably kick-started the ideal werest in defining a specific Christian ca

Marcion of Shope was a bishop of Asia Minor who presented a rather radical theology that rejected the validity of the Old Testament and many early Christian texts that drew upon it, including Matthew, Mark and John, which he claimed were forgeries. In its place, he claimed the Gospel of Marcion (or Gospel of the Lord) as authentic – a text that closely resembles Luke with a much reduced Jewish influence. Within his proposed canon, he also included 10 of Paul's letters, believing that Paul was the only true apostle of Jesus Christ. Naturally, Marcion's canon was thoroughly rejected as heretical by the early Church, but his views spread widely and led to a growth in Marcionism. The major effect of this was renewed efforts to combat dissenting views by more orthodox early theologians, but it also led to increased discussion about which Christian texts should be held up as authentic.

The first main indication of this discussion. ... Muratorian canon, taken from a fragment of parties ent that is commonly dated to the second century (arouse 2016) Ep. It contains a list of books presented as the New 19 ne Four of these are Gospels, although only Luke and Jo readable (Matthew and Mark are probably the first two). Acts is also included, as well as 13 of the letters of Paul and some other general epistles, such as Jude. However, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter and 2 Peter are not included. These texts are particularly notable as they formed a set of books which many early theologians were unsure about. 2 Peter, for example, is now widely believed not to have been written by Peter himself, and even early theologians such as Origen and Eusebius had their doubts about its authenticity. However, the key takeaway is that even by 170 CE, most of the New Testament canon was in circulation and accepted by Christian comm

Discussions around these problematic texts continued, but by the mid fourth cer to accept their authenticity or at least their importance to allogy, for many su (150–210 CE) were not overly concerned with historical with inspiration and importance of texts such as 2 Peter by 5 % r acceptance within orthodox Ch potential moral and spiritual warm. As Juan, by the Council of Laodicea in 363 C books of the New Testa and which executed to be canonical, with Revelation final of Hippo (3 an amage (393 cE). Thus, the modern New Testament cancel no major Classification denomination has questioned the status of the core 27 books

Gospel Gosp® Gosp® Gosp Acts of 🖠 R 1 Co 2 Co Ga Ep Phi Co 1 The 2 The 1 T 2 T Ph He J 1 2 1 2 3

COPYRIGHT **PROTECTED**



Apocal

Apocaly

Wisdom

The Bible as the Word of God

The discussions about biblical canon lead to a number of interesting questions. section, it was not just the historicity or closeness of texts to Jesus and the apost theologians but also their theological teachings and potential for inspiring Christ with all these subjective human decisions influencing the creation of the Bible, hwork as the **Word of God?** Moreover, what does this term maan exactly for Chriand how does it influence the development of doctring the are the question the section.

First, taking a step back to The 10 you might find it useful to recall a number forward there. The first while lief in sola scriptura, the idea that the Bible alon matters of the lief (or inerrant), meaning it possesses no errors, while a smaller forward a stronger belief that the Bible is self-authenticating. This means that neerrors but it is wholly clear in meaning to the rational reader and does not requirement of interpretation. Sola scriptura was traditionally a Protestant doctrine, Reformation. However, many now simply subscribe to prima scriptura, the belief undamental source of authority.

Nevertheless, Protestants differ here from Catholics, who also regard the Church important sources of authority to the Bible. In this case, although the Bible is deschristians, teaching is also regularly received from the Pope and high-ranking menthe Magisterium, the body which declares new religious laws and truths for those this important to note? Well, primarily because the Catholic Church believes the just in the Bible but in the living Church at the centre of its denomination. In this the Word of the God this does not mean it does not require a julysis and interpret who have been granted the authority by God to discare the suances of its many

Why are these differences important to Call. Well, because looking at the land thought, it becomes easier warious ways that the Bible can be understood God'. For any a cutrine of sola scriptura easily connects with the view understood by as the Word of God. Its words are ultimately divine in origin messengers wod's various commands within the Bible. In the most extreme can be said that the Bible is identical to God and simply an extension of his being

This literal interpretation does have its appeal. If it is true, then interpretation of straightforward. One simply has to follow what God commands as the Bible is the infallible. Similarly, there is perhaps no question about what should be the ultime Christians. It simply is the Bible as the Bible is God. Nonetheless, viewing the Bible often associated with **fundamentalism**, in which the strict literal interpretation of This naturally runs into issues, for the Bible has its own internal conflicts, particularly the New and Old Testaments. Thus, it is not always easy to glean clear moral guestintermore, it is increasingly difficult to uphold literally biblical teaching that counderstanding of the world, or with new cultural and moral values. To resolve the deny knowledge that it would appear sensible to agree the finally, there is the question of the confliction of the confliction in the USA for example, analyse passages in Palestinian Christian, especially with the Bible ences in language?

The difficulty in answer to the questions means that most theologians do not surinterpretat. The shall as the Word of God. A more common suggestion is the God. This make the writers of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit durbooks but their work does not necessarily directly reflect God's will or commands necessarily enmeshed in human concepts, ideas and language and so requires so interpretation to understand. This is perhaps more intuitive than a literal view in and biblical scholars will commonly draw upon historical and literary critical meth



insight into biblical teaching and narrative. Similarly, it allows different societies in history to connect their own experiences to parts of the Bible that reflect their

Naturally, the belief in the Bible as revealing the Word of God is a much more subjective view of Scripture. It raises questions as to how we know what is the Word of God in its passages and what are the various human or cultural influences. This problem is especially pertinent when one siders various modern ethical dilemmas in the Christian Church we fire sues such as homosexuality, abortion and euthanasia in tunnents can easily be made that biblical texts referring to the writers' were the product of the writers' own misguided views. Mai and modern audiences this allows for a more program lo ministian Scripture, more conservative Christians worry that e essentially becomes meaningless as one can simply apply and draw out matever ethical teaching one wants from its pages. The possibility of irresolvable, inconsistent and contradictory conclusions is always present so long as this subjective element exists within biblical interpretation. Moreover, these difficulties also threaten the idea of **biblical authority**. If its passages can't naturally be trusted to offer trusted moral guidance, then how can it occupy an important position in Christians' lives?

Considering these questions makes sense of the Catholic position. If the Bible do having sacred tradition and the Church to guide interpretation means that this recall though many of course disagree the Catholic Church has the right interpretation few further positions that have been proposed by theologians. One, for example Word of God. This perhaps grants a more solid foundation to biblical study, for it and parts that do directly reflect God's will and so require minimal interpretation discussion to be had about what these passages may have an he other hand, the direction, such as Karl Barth, and commit to the Eoler and a fundamentally hund a witness to the Word of God. For Parthell was not mean the Bible is not an but that we should not preter that a fundament can somehow capture to powerful and transcent the Bible. Rather, it can only detail the subjective expertitis being.

In all these interpretations, there is still the question about what **divine inspiration reveals** or **contains** the Word of God, how does this reality affect the way God in commands upon human beings? Answering this question is key to understanding in the Bible, and in the next part of this section we will look at two different approximations.

What is Divine Inspiration?

It is commonly said that the biblical authors were **inspired** by God or the Holy Spibut what does inspiration here mean exactly, and should all books be thought of its core, it necessarily refers to the way that God transmits truth, knowledge and process is in fact the basis of what is often termed **special revelation** – the truths human beings – which may be separate from **general revelation** – the truths discreasoning about the natural world. However, as we expected effore, there is a dedetermine which writings are the product of disin in product on and which are mer

One important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined, and the important passage we grade is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined is 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Here, the bas outlined

'All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for congistering righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equal (2 Timothy 3:16–17 NRSV)



At the same time, the exact process by which human beings are inspired is not clean get a bit murkier. For one, the correct translation of 2 Timothy 3:16–17 is not NIV Bible, for example, swaps 'inspired by God' for 'God-breathed', implying a mathe process of inspiration. The King James Version, on the other hand, states the of God'. So there are questions about both the extent of inspiration and the way biblical writers.

Here, theologians are split into roughly two camp is one hand, there are termed **objective inspiration**. The best value ing the various views within minimum some degree of supernation, alvement or intervention by God duri Simply put, God was proper in a region of thoughts of the biblical writers as the presence error the scale accurately reflects God's message to humanity, understand appropriation there are still numerous competing interpretations, are **dictation meories** of inspiration, which state that God literally

used the biblical writers as a way of recording his words.

However, this idea seems unintuitive when we consider the various inconsistencies, contradictions and differences in style easily observable throughout the Bible. If God truly was dictating to the biblical writers, surely the end product would be a bit more coherent?

Most Christians, even often those who are fundamentalist, support plenary theories of inspiration. 'Plenary' here broadly refers to the 'entirety' of Scripture, if not its exact words, and can be contrasted with theories of partial inspiration, which typically hold only certain parts of Scripture are inspired. Plenary theories

traditionally hold that God or the Holy Spirit moved human in ers to produce the the author's personal influence over the character fanding and style of their write attributed to evangelical Christians and it is by proponents to preserve the in while acknowledging the human influences of the writers upon its passages. Howe criticised for being rounded it arsions of dictation theories, for there ultimately the writers upon its passages is still on a supernatural influence controlling the belonging to ather than the biblical authors.

Most Catholic and Protestant Christians therefore don't subscribe to such a who inspiration (although there have been Protestant thinkers who advocate plenary rejection of these forms of 'mechanical' views of inspiration in favour of theories organic approach to the writing of the Bible. For example, although a simplificat is that God should be viewed as the primary author of Scripture, with the human The influence of God and influence of human thought are not opposed but rather therefore, not seeking to override human will but work with it in a way such that effectively transmitted to the human world. There is thus a move away from ide in some way the text of Scripture, and instead inspiration is said to be a joint moauthor to produce a document that is unique in both its content and style.

Even these more moderate theories, however stimed a least a fairly objective Moreover, it would not even be amiss to a see the Catholic view as plenary in nature. However, in opposition to sufficient is sufficient to the liberal Christians, but the theologians as a sufficient who have supported such an interpretation of insheld that the sis in effect a witness to the Word of God. The apostles and wexperiences with Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, capture the words and thuman beings. However, these words and teachings are necessarily spoken through the biblical writers, and so the Bible isn't truly the Word of God. Thus, the Bible but for proponents of subjective views this doesn't matter. What is ultimately in experiential encounters with God granted the biblical writers.



This view is difficult to stomach for many Christians, but Barth was keen to avoid (worship of the Bible). He argued that although the Bible was a deeply important important to recognise that it is Christ himself that should be the focus of Christiwork of the writers. The Bible is authoritative only because it details the life and should not be confused with the human activity that accompanies it. This kind o typically held by liberal Christians also, who are typically at pains to state that Gobiblical writers nor was their experience of God wholly uring a linstead, they we with supernatural forces beyond their understanding are their work may be subknowledge and perspective than we post

Subjective accounts raises in the section on then how described in the section on the same time, ive accounts also make much more intuitive sense of the errowhen compared to our modern scientific knowledge of the world. These errors problematic for denominations such as the Catholic Church which still hold up the Scripture. Although objective accounts can potentially accommodate errors if he always be asked of plenary theories why errors would exist if God had a direct he may be that a theory of partial inspiration is necessary to account for the various contradictions we can find in Scripture. Nonetheless, there is a potential answer Reformed theologian John Calvin, whose ideas we shall explore in the next part

Discussion Activity:

What do you think is the best interpretation of divine inspiration? Discuss in page 1

John Calvin and the Doctrine of Accommodation

In the last section, we arrived a bit of a dead end. More the tive theories of inswith explaining how God could play a direct role in the last section of Scripture are potentially riddled with contradictions and possessencies. Well, there is one identification of Scripture are potentially riddled with contradictions and possessencies. Well, there is one identification of Scripture are potentially riddled with contradictions and possessencies. Well, there is one identification of Scripture are potentially with this issue: accommodation principle that holds that the possessencies accommodation principle that holds the possessencies accommodation principle that the possessencies accommodation principle that the possessencies accommodation principle that the posse

The idea has a long history beyond Calvin, but he was responsible for developing the emerging Reformed churches. Calvin in particular stressed the unbridgeable finite. Human beings cannot hope to really comprehend God through their own God comes through the ways he chooses to reveal himself, and these ways are a One metaphor he employed was that creation was like a mirror: we see only the himself.

'For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part: 'hen the complete end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like child, I reasoned like put an end to childish ways. For now we a martor, dimly, but then we will in part; then I will known' \(\) an as I have been fully known.' (1 Cori

Naturally, a transfer commodation presupposes this gap, but it is an intunature of G monly given by orthodox Christianity. Moreover, the idea that is exemplified or Calvin in the figure of Christ, in whom God literally became hur effectively with human beings. Christ, in a sense, is the supreme form of accommodation. Most importantly, however, the doctrine of understand how the Bible can appear to contain error despite being directly influencessarily has to condescend to humanity, then the words of the Bible will be contained.



for the audience at the time and place it was written. However, at the same time for accommodation means that underlying biblical writing is the complete and suimpart to humanity. Moreover, it suggests that translations of the Bible may furthis message through different cultures (although this does not legitimise any particular for Calvin, the doctrine of accommodation also supported belief in the Bible as the Although it might appear to contain error or nuance in need of tradition or the Coreflect God making himself known in the best way possible ough the limitation analogy, it is similar to an adult trying to talk to a 'accommodated with the case, the adult wound with the commodated and the commodated reverse of this fact. Thus, the revelation we learn equated with the commodated reverse of this fact.

We can easily see how the doctrine of accommodation can help understand division towards human beings is not a dictation, nor is it a direct movement of human with translation, which the human authors of the Bible seek to write down to the best perspective is naturally enmeshed in the Bible because God has to detail his mest capacities, but this does not undermine the completeness and sufficiency of the idea, though, should we still hold onto the idea that the Bible is inerrant? Schola whether Calvin upheld this doctrine. Indeed, there are times when he seems to accommodate false views or opinions held by humanity. However, on the whole not mean that God in effect allows errors to propagate throughout the Bible or levelation. Rather, it explains how God may develop within the biblical writers with the process of divine inspiration.

However, it can just as easily be argued that any doctrice accommodation should be in not inerrant. If God was seeking to accommodation makes that certain ideas common to find the accommodation were employ. The completeness and sufficient of under simple weren't a reflection of the daying divine revelation detailed by the biblical autof error matter any in accommodated revelation because there is no poin could appread the full extent of his message by itself. It is important to thus reaccommodation means for the process of divine inspiration but on the effect this themselves. Although appreciating the gap between the infinite and the finite is immediately answer why God chose to reveal himself in the way he did, at the till greater appreciation of not only Scripture but the context of Jesus' life and the electric. It is this latter topic we turn to in the next section.





E: The Early Church

In Theme 1 we have looked at various scriptural issues that in one way or another have often involved the search for the **historical Jesus**. However, the Bible is a wide and varied text. The history of the Christian faith does not end at Jesus' death but continues into the beginnings of the Christian Church and, in a similar fashion, we can commit to the search for the historical early Church. Simply put, what did early for the historical early Church. Simply put, what did early for the believe, and what did they preach to their continues in order to persuade them of the importance of the historical early?

Such questions are 'a manswer than one might initially believe. For a start Jesus attraction ge wowds at times, they also state that many rejected his mess authorities time. Furthermore, they name very few of Jesus' followers in 12 apostles and then a variety of characters who pop up in different fashions threatonical Gospels. This suggests that, at least at the beginning, there were only number of Christians who, through extensive evangelising, managed to achieve to their cause. In Acts 1 the author numbers Jesus' followers at about 120, but it numbers might have been. Rodney Stark in his 1996 work *The Rise of Christianit* techniques to estimate that by around 150 CE there would have been around 40, by 180 CE. These are impressive figures, but by equal measures they suggest the 10,000 Christians by the end of the first century (and perhaps even fewer).

So how do we recover the history and life of the early Church? Well, there are the historical, archaeological and sociological analysis. Although there are few extern Christian Church (which is unsurprising given its size), there is a wealth of eviden been like in first-century Middle Eastern territories. This allows scholars to develow Jewish and Hellenistic audiences would have looked like. The beliefs they would have responded to the preaching of early Christia and Archiver, we know from the Jesus preached, and recent scholarly effective in Eucused more and more on reconstruction of these regional communications.

The second to the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the William Arithmetic lister itself, particularly a book called Acts of the Willia

The Acts of the Apostles

We mentioned in the previous part that Acts is widely believed to have been wrise We won't go into this debate fully, but there are a few key things to note. Both Theophilus, and they form a coherent narrative when ordered together. The end the beginning of Acts, and the two books demonstrate a coherency in style and for competing views surrounding **who** the author was of but has be texts. The tradic composed by Luke the physician, a companior of and the accompanied him the view commonly held by early Church the acts, and it certain lends credibility author was at least a direct with as to the key figures described in Acts (even if joint acts).

On the other of the Luke-Acts authorship which an anonymister who compiled various sources. Much of the debate between what are sometimes called the 'we' passages in acts: brief moments in the narrathethird person to the first person. For traditionalists, these are clear evidence connected to Paul (especially since they appear only in the latter Paul-oriented showever, these 'we' passages are easily explained by different sources being drawdevice designed to lend legitimacy and credibility to the Acts narrative.



Such a suggestion is not beyond the realms of possibility, especially since the data between 80 and 90 CE, around 50 years after the death of Jesus. Capturing what preached would have naturally been a difficult task considering this degree of seraised in particular about the accuracy of the first half, which deals with the action followers of Jesus, whereas in the case of Paul it is possible at least to verify cert letters to early Christian communities. In particular, it is important to ask question thought of primarily as a historical work which attempt accurately retell the Christian Church. Competing hypotheses should accurately retell the Christian Church. Competing hypotheses should accurately despite being rooted in ends up significantly Gentile in complete in this sense, it has to be questioned applopetic, designed to the complete issues faced by early Christian communities.

However, eque, this proposition does not obscure the value Luke has in potential to the aims of early Christians. Even with the later dating and potentially dubious a into what the followers of Jesus preached and what they took to be the central redeeply important, for, in an important sense, there is a distinction to be made be Jesus and the Church he founded. Moreover, the nature of this distinction is an great theological debate over the last century, and some have even questioned teachings are relevant at all to the work of the early Church and its proclamation

The Apostle Peter

To start, nonetheless, it is important to get a sense of what Acts presents as the early Church. In Acts 2 and 3, Peter gives two speeches that present a unified vision meant as a fulfilment of Jewish prophecy. He references both Joel and David, de Messiah prophesised by David whom they allowed to be crucified. The setting of understand here. The date is described as the day of Pentersit, the Greek name of Harvest, and the location Jerusalem, where a large and died devout Jews from gathered. However, at the same time, the transport Acts 2 sees each of these their own native language, implying a large and by a significant with the scene is primarily Jewish, equally been heard by a significant without the scene is primarily Jewish, equally been heard by a significant without the scene is primarily Jewish, equally been heard by a significant without the scene is primarily Jewish, equally been heard by a significant without the scene is primarily Jewish.

"You that greates, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man a of power, weeks, and signs that God did through him among you, as you you over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucific outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it in its power.' (Acts 2:22–24 NRSV)

Moreover, the key theme behind Peter's speech is repentance. The blame for the the feet of the Jewish people, yet the call to repentance seems to extend beyond declare that 'the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away God calls to him' (NRSV). Such details are important to note, for they foreshado which are focused on Paul's proclamations to the Gentiles.

In fact, we can go a little further here in examining the context of these speeches early Christians in the time after Jesus' death would record een themselves as would have been a Jesus-inflected form of Jesus is a context we can call Jewish Christians, this naturally developed into the specific form of Jesus is a context which the separate emerge. In fact, many schools are at that it was the inclusion of Gentiles in Jesus purred on the split of the last Peter is depicted as wishing converts to adopt Jewish contical of the last and argues that Christians should abandon these customs.

Why are these considerations important? Well, as we've noted, Acts was most provided was underway and is in part seemingly dedicated to explaining why the split hap rejection of Jewish Christianity is also reflective of other important historical every Jewish Temple by the Romans in 70 CE. For early Christians, this destruction reflective of the result of the resu



crucifixion of Jesus, an idea directly given by Peter in Acts 2. Therefore, we have through a number of lenses. One is its potential reflection of the historical preactime after Jesus' death and the other is the way it may reflect Christian ideas or author of Acts was writing.

Similar themes to Acts 2 emerge in the next chapter, where Peter, having perfor crippled beggar, once again delivers a call to repentance from the crowd, reference is this act which ultimately sees Peter arrested by its Sall uccess and brought be

Repent therefore, and turn to Gc with a wire sins may be wiped out, so that the presence of the Lord with a may send the Messiah appointed for you, the heaven will the may send the storation that God announced long age (Acts 3:19–21 NRSV)

Here, once again, we can see how Peter's proclamation was focused on a Jewish the broader Gentile audience of later passages. The time of 'universal restoration Jesus' message while also highlighting the potential early eschatological beliefs conce again, it is important to ask about the historicity of Peter's speeches. It is unrecorded, and so at best Acts provides a summary of what Peter would have said this lack of specificity potentially presents a challenge for Christians referring to in question be taken as authoritative of what the early apostles took from Jesus authors' own wishes in light of other early Christian issues? For a clue to how to look to the theologian C H Dodd and his notion of kerygma (plural: kerygmata).

C H Dodd and Kerygmata

The word 'kerygma' means 'proclamation' in Greek and among theologians has confidence of the early Church's preaching and traditions about Jerran, the first half of the debate about how this concept should be unders' and relicularly in the context literary genre of the Gospels themselves are en we consider the style, content Testament writings, we can early air for an dead end when we reach Matthew, transparently aren't just the style are matter observations of the life of Jesus, no category of the process of the life, teaching and death of Jesus, and the narratives are convince those who are ignorant or non-committal about the emerging Christian down a conventional genre, what are the Gospels exactly? This is where C H Doc

Dodd was an early twentieth-century theologian who was primarily concerned wearly Christian message. Within the New Testament writings, he drew the fundakerygma and ethical instruction (didaskein), arguing the former consisted of the early Christians, whereas the latter is the moral or living guidance offered by the audiences, this division might seem a little strange. In fact, Dodd himself notes to modern Christian church services is primarily ethical instruction; there is little the proclamations of early followers. Yet Dodd also argues that understanding what functioned in the early Church is essential for understanding the Gospels themse

So what are the **kerygmata** of early Christianity, and to be find them? Well studied key examples! Peter's speeches in And 2 and seemingly reflect the comby early Christians, the emphasis here an all importance in the previous part, there are linger historicity or credibility in the accounts. Could this not simply be a reflection of imbued into one all narrative about the early Church? Such questions are perfrom one so one, especially when we do not know much about the author slightly different approach in attempting to reconstruct early Christian kerygma. his methodological process involved the deconstruction and comparison of sepa order to arrive at a clearer picture of what was proclaimed by the apostles and enext part, we shall take a look at the details of this process and the conclusions to



The Kerygma of Peter's Speeches

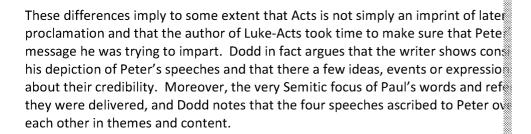
Dodd thus begins by analysing the letters of Paul. As we know already, the life as in Acts, so Dodd ultimately seeks to use Paul both as a comparison with Acts as we kerygma that arose out of the preaching of the earlier apostles. Through this defirst finds a number of aspects of the Pauline kerygma not present in

Peter's speeches in Jerusalem.

- 2. Peter does not assert that Jesus and the people's sins, only that his life, ministry and does a law the forgiveness of sins.

 Atonemes the people and the development of the people and the development of the people and the development of the people and the pe
- 3. Peter denot assert that the exalted Christ (the ascended Jesus) intercedes in the lives of human beings in order to save them.

 This is primarily a later theme of Paul's.



Cutting away the later Pauline theology, Dodd thus argues that there are six major kerygma, preached by Peter and early Christian follows:

- 1. The age of fulfilment, or the Messianic ago, las aned. This is the age for
- 2. This has taken place through the list is a greath and resurrection of Christ.
- 3. By virtue of the resurro in Tegas has been exalted at the right hand of Go the new level.
- 4. The Holling it is the Church is the continued sign of Christ's present power
- 5. The Me Age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Chris
- 6. There is an end appeal for repentance, with the offer of forgiveness, the Ho

Dodd's observations here certainly mesh well with Peter's speeches in Acts 2 and noting how each part appears in their verses. There is one curious aspect missin important part of later Pauline theology. Peter's speeches never actually referengesus, only that his ministry itself held great importance. Instead, the focus is on prophecy, followed by his death and resurrection. Naturally, we can once again Christian sermons and note the huge difference in content and tone. While we revangelistic activities of modern missionaries, the **kerygma** of the early Christian many ways unique in the time after Jesus' death.

However, Dodd goes further with his analysis of keeping inguing that the Gospe a later development of Christian preaching the above a more literary form. So intuitive when we consider the control of the serious of th



Realised Eschatology

A final important element of Dodd's thought to note is his concept of **realised esc** early followers of Jesus did not believe in a future rapture or end times. Instead, God had fundamentally been inaugurated by the life and death of Jesus. In this set the earliest Christian kerygma can be contrasted with the **futurist eschatology** that and was expanded on by early Church theologians. The references we get, therefore New Testament as a whole should be treated as references.

We can see this trend in the six main its Lo Dodd notes form the ancient Chepeter. The age of fulfilment is Logo and by Jesus and is continued in the active seem radical, but through nuch of Christian history Jesus has in effect been to preacher. The bear is a prodd identifies realised eschatology in the earliest kerygo be wholehed wrong. Jesus' life, ministry and death constitute an eschatolog not require some future act to justify their importance. In essence, it changes the 'the Kingdom of God is near' to 'the Kingdom of God is here'. However, as we should be an importance of kerygmata can be questioned, in the context of both the Christians today.

Bultmann and Kerygma

We originally studied Rudolf Bultmann in the context of Jesus' resurrection. There, we noted how Bultmann held the quest for the historical Jesus to be a somewhat futile effort, contending the most important aspect of the Gospels was the kerygma: how the life, death and resurrection of Jesus were proclaimed by the apostles and followers after his death. We also noted how Bultmann argued for a thorough demythologisation of this kerygma, arguing that it was fundamentally incompatible with our non-my gical world view. By performing this process, we can hope to ait to the essential meaning of the New Testament Scripture. The way the New Testament addresses fundamental question and a scripture when we have the New Testament addresses fundamental question and a scripture.

So far so go combined with Dodd's. the concept regime to the concept regime and both hold that it is the best way to understand the However, this perhaps is the only point they agree on. Bultmann, in contrast to historical circumstances surrounding the proclamation of kerygma can be recons audiences. The kerygma is wholly rooted in the mythological world view of the tunderlying historically rooted set of truths to be discovered underneath the processes, the kerygma of the early Christian Church would only alienate those of the not looking for a leader in a new Messianic age or a Jewish prophetic line. For us necessary to strip them of mythology and find those important underlying existence to them. The fundamental question for Bultmann is thus whether the Newsuch truths that can survive independently of any mythological attachments. The is to test these waters and see what can be found.

There are a few important provisos one should bear in minutere. When Bultma does not mean the elimination of myth from the Council in mis eyes, this would content of the New Testament entirely. The literated on a fundamentally means is translating the cultural council form of the New Testament keryg audiences can appreciate the literate stand. Even we have our myths now in this Bultmann as the literate will contextualise any demythologisation of the limportant, mann holds that myths say something about the basis or naturely are a warner us to extend beyond our normal patterns of thought and appworld beneath us and our own personal existence. So the process of demythological character of the New Testament, only the way that it relates to modern audience



So, overall, the message of the New Testament isn't being jettisoned by the proclinstead, Bultmann can just be said to be searching for its real meaning and finding our current sensibilities. Moreover, whatever this meaning is, it has no relation specific Christology. Nor does the process of demythologisation make faith easier call to Christian belief is still as much a difficult leap as it was for the earliest apoconvey the necessity of a decision about one's personal existence in the same may preaching of the earliest apostles. These nuances are important to note, as it is Bultmann's thought and the aims of demythological in a lith that in mind, we calculate the same of the same

Bultmann and Eschatolc

We've note for Limmann the historical Jesus and kerygmata do not matter. and unrelate modern audiences. However, such a stance is in stark contrast fundamentally did believe a case could be made for the reconstruction of New Test Dodd held that the kerygma of the apostles did hold clues for how we should internotably by recognising that he preached a realised eschatology rather than a future Testament kerygma is not relevant to us, what meaning does Bultmann find once

Well, the eschatology Bultmann presents is not too far from Dodd's once everythely distinction he makes is between what Jesus' message was about the Kingdor represented in the kerygma of the early Church, for Bultmann notes that when veschatological teaching we are met with a curious problem. Much of the New Teeschatological teaching to specific moments in history. In other words, it anticipes that would coincide with Jesus' return. However, for modern audiences, who cee happen, this locating of eschatology in history seems a bit obsolete. So eschatology becomes another part which has to be demythologised in a selection to be meaningful.

So how does Bultmann approach the New Town of without locating eschatolo context? Well, he didn't go in the second and insist on the removal of escargued that the New Testal was were significant for modern audiences pre eschatological parameters was important was only separating the essential ancient wood of the cosmos that governed the kerygma of the apostles. Kee the distinction with transcendent divine forces. If we view the latter as emblematic of Jesus' me forward. Talk of the end of the world in the New Testament no longer refers to judgement of God upon humankind.

This is a difficult idea to comprehend, but the core of it is that Bultmann, like Dounderstanding of eschatology. When the end times are referred to, it is not talk but the possibility of real judgement by a higher power. Similarly, when Jesus desimminent, it is a reference to this divine judgement, which for Bultmann calls hus obedience to the will of God. In this sense, eschatology and ethics are united for separate topics but two sides of the same coin. Moreover, eschatology still carrial apostles. This call to repentance under divine judgement is still as scary and differentiating and immediately after his death.

So, overall, we can see how Dodd articular are similar, but it is important to Bultmann does not describe in the bound of God as being inaugurated nor does interpretation of residual hardlogy. Rather, he simply seeks to make the ancimodern Children bounding the essential, independent elements of the New Teask here where the kerygma has for Christians today if the views of the apost Once the essential message has been uncovered, should we even continue to stuwith these issues in the last part of this section.



Does the Kerygma Have Any Value for Christians Today?

This question demands that we properly compare our studies of Dodd and Bultmhave taken different positions on this issue based on your reception of these schoodd and Bultmann are well aware of the shortcomings of the kerygma, yet bott different ways.

On the most positive end of the spectrum, we might reconstruct that the kerygma urgency that modern Christians should seek to er ula this a real call to faith a significance is part of what Bultmann is a second during the demythologisation components. Similarly, we can sint us that Dodd, through his historical approximation in Acts is a council second to realised eschatology, and simply taking New value does to realise to realised eschatology, and simply taking New value does to realise to

However, from our work on Dodd and Bultmann, it is equally all too easy to quest Taking Bultmann's ideas first, we can note how the apostles' preaching reflects at odds with our own. Whatever ideas they proposed are inherently so strange at that by themselves they are not meaningful to Christians today. Bultmann's prostudy of texts such as Acts is a process of recovery rather than appreciation. The allude to are absurd considering our modern scientific knowledge, and Christians more pressing theological concerns.

Similarly, although Dodd's approach seeks to historically recover the core of the the value of this process. Concerns about the return of istare no longer as pose even advocating a realised eschatology is accommission that the concerns not reflect the concerns of present of historically composed that the concerns about first place! We noted how the form of Acts probably composed the text over hand was potentially accommended to the main characters in the account. If agree with the paint is probable Acts is historically accurate at heart, there are inconsistent and claims that Peter managed to convert thousands of people a obviously outlandish.

However, to finish, we should also note that such difficulties exist throughout all Moreover, the good literary structure of Acts is just as much evidence that the a a good historian. Even if the narratives are wrapped up in myth, legend and spu separated to a good historical degree from the core of Peter's speech, as Dodd's be claimed that so long as Acts contains historical truths, it is valuable for Christia about the earliest apostles' beliefs, ideas and teachings about Jesus Christ.

Discussion Activity:

Do you believe the kerygma has any value for Christians to say, or does it contains the say, or does it contains the say along the say of the s





F: Two Views of Jesus

Throughout Theme 1, we've looked at various ways biblical scholars have drawn upon historical views of Jesus to influence theology about a number of important issues, yet in this section, we shall look at two key scholars who have attempted to reconstruct the person using quite different critical historical methods. On the one hand, we have the work of the Dominic Crossan, a prominent New Testament scholar and the policy of the Jesus Seminar who draws greatly upon the culture and policy of the first-century Middle East to develop on the different picture of Jesus from that of most other reach On the other hand, we shall analyse the writings of the Jesus Anglican bishop who, employing a method he terms critic for the Jesus Anglican bishop who, employing a method he terms critic for the Jesus Anglican bishop who, employing a method he terms critic for the Jesus Seminar was a fife, death and ministry. Through comparison of the two school you will be able to develop a broader understanding not only of the different was the historical Jesus but also of the various methodologies that can be embraced

What is important to note initially is that although this section will transparently between scholarly views, there is significant broad agreement between many Ne events in Jesus' life and the various literary, theological and historical methods them. Jesus commonly is recognised as a historical figure who was baptised by Journal of years and then was crucified. Moreover, most appreciate that there sayings and parables in the Gospels that can reliably attributed to this person. In Seminar that we mentioned before was originally directed towards establishing historically credible through collective analysis and decision-making. Although the criticised by liberal and conservative theologians, these critics still largely agree to of Jesus' life, death and ministry that should be considered at the time.

At the same time, it is important to also the leage that the Gospels are very review and perspective that are deprivatives with our own. Moreover, with a latter life of Jesus (not or the least und kerygma), reconstructing his historical persendeavour the least can be drawn from piecing together different ideas undeniable that, over the last century in particular, scholars have come to have a understanding of both the textual evidence available and the cultural milieu of Jesus (not or the last century in particular).

John Dominic Crossan

In our introduction, we noted how textual sources surrounding the life of Jesus ar impartial. So where should we start when attempting to reconstruct his life? We of orientation is not the words or actions of Jesus but the cultural and social contereading the Gospels, it is tempting to take Jesus' sayings or parables as having a finall too easy to analyse the circumstances of his life on a theological basis, taking his justifications of the Christian faith. However, all these aspects of Jesus' person we nor are they potential reflections of what they **meant** for audiences during his min Gospel is traditionally thought to be Mark (around 65–62), with Matthew and Laround 10–80 CE), and John arriving even later! This makes if the between the time of Jesus literary works there was probably a notice of contents of what Jesus' life meant for humanits.

We've spol that its process before in this theme, so why raise it again? We have tended do this theological appreciation of Jesus' life doesn't mean that wholly concerned with theological issues. In fact, the primary contention of Cross more of a social and political revolutionary than Christian tradition has supposed. allusions and passages that theologians have long appreciated as representative political authorities, but Crossan holds that when one analyses the New Testamer a wholly non-eschatological figure. The view that Jesus was an apocalyptic preaction.



theological corruption of his message, and ideas such as the Second Coming were teaching. Suddenly, Crossan's ideas seem a lot more radical. Didn't Jesus talk extended in the second context of the afterlife and punishment for sin? How can these be undecontext? Well, to first answer that, we need to take a look at the political turmoil.

Jesus as Social Revolutionary

So, casting our theological ideas about Jesus aside, where a series are the Gospel narratives transpared to we part of the religious or political elite during his life and circular a working-class trade (carpentry). So if we want to find the series was a product of his time. By looking at what life would have meant and how they would have been received.

More precisely, Crossan argues there are three **vectors** that can in effect be triangulated to develop this image. The first is **cross-cultural** anthropology. We must ask what scholars hold is distinctive about ancient Mediterranean culture, who Jesus would have mixed with during his ministry and what would have been common beliefs for both the elite and peasa **Roman** and **Jewish history**. The first quarter of the first century CE was marked believes people and the occupying Roman authorities, and looking to outside sour turmoil would have been the backdrop for Jesus' words and actions. In particula historians such as Josephus and Roman historians such as Tacitus, both of whom references for the events surrounding Jesus life. The third part or is literary or teacknowledges this is by far the most difficult to decay part of the acknowledges, yet, as a Crossan has some unusual and distinctive here is a backthis vector.

Turning to the first vector we note? Well, Crossan argues that reliably quite strict and the first vector. It raditions. Culturally, the ancient Mediterranean discriminate herarchical. If not outwardly, wealth was viewed as a blessin or marginalist vere often viewed as deserving of their suffering. These ideas a Gospels within the characters of the Pharisees and Sadducees. In fact, all the Gomany of these traditional beliefs and even miracles such as his healings were emdimensions. The distinctions and divisions that marked Judaic culture in the first teachings, and his ministry was marked by his acceptance of those typically marg of the time, whether they be women, the poor or the sick. So Crossan argues the to be a social revolutionary at heart. Similarly to John the Baptist, it was predict beliefs, especially since the Gospels seem to suggest that, in the end, his views or religious power.

However, when we turn to the second vector, a more curious picture emerges, f surrounding Jesus' death is very much theological fiction, and the idea that there Jesus was an addition to the Gospels forged by Jewish at it, n conflicts at the t Crossan suggest this? Well, first he notes that he first entury CE in Judea and be peasant unrest against the occupying an authorities. It was not uncommon and similarly i

Josephus, a famous Jewish historian and important source for Crossan, documers the unrest that precipitated it. He notes that at the Siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE to of those rebelling, and he notes that thousands of people were killed this way. Calthough crucifixion was common for all kinds of criminals, it was particularly presented.



punishing enemies of the state, so that their death would serve as both a warning Jesus, a man who fits the profile of a social agitator, it is transparently clear why by Pilate, especially in times of unrest. However, Crossan also notes that the Go particularly Mark, on which the others are based, don't fit the picture of what we evidence suggests that Pilate was a brutal and ruthless leader, ultimately losing brutal forms of execution (quite remarkable considering the overall bloodthirst of Crossan holds that, despite the Gospel's insistence, Jesus most likely a none authorities at the time of his death. His execution was not pictured an important of the records of his death.

So what do all these details at Crossan holds that Jesus' death was far from Rather, his wave simply caught the attention of a brutal ruler who demanded h. At this point, Jesus would have been crucified and his body Jesus simply was a 'peasant nuisance' and the drama concerning his burial and esto come to terms with these unceremonious facts. Crossan himself states:

'With regard to the body of Jesus by Easter Sunday morning, those who cared those who knew did not care. Why should even the soldiers themselves reme a nobody?' (Crossan, The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Je

However, if the most important part of the Gospel narrative is likely to be a fiction rest? Crossan holds that it is unlikely that Jesus followed in the footsteps of John to preacher. Instead, he holds that much of his talk of the Kingdom of God was metaltalked extensively in parables, and these teachings highlight that his ministry as a veschatological focus. Rather than talk of end times, it is more probable that Jesus' to present healing. Such a vision aligns much more with Jesus' social program and

This view is certainly appealing, but you may viel! have backed there is little referred by the explain those parts of the Go contradict this picture? We company to the third vector here and note Cresiterary and textual issues.

Textual Evid Apocryphal Gospels

Before we explore Crossan's unique views, it is worth giving a quick overview of Testament. We've previously mentioned that the Gospel of Mark, although secon thought by scholars to be the first Gospel written, with its date of composition of 68 CE. This is because both Matthew and Luke transparently use Mark as a source and key passages from its text. Furthermore, Mark does not contain any direct a destruction of Jerusalem, and many scholars take this absence to indicate that No considering its deep impact upon Jewish and Christian communities. On the oth passages which suggest that Jesus predicted this event, and theories about the jetypically mean a date in the last quarter of the first century CE is suggested for the there aren't alternative theories; conclusive evidence is very slim indeed, but it is scholarly opinion often displays a rough consensus around this dating.

However, there is still the question of Mark's soute, sopecially considering the parables and teachings within it. Mark as a coners have thus hypothesised that called 'Q', on which the Synch as are based. Now, Q is not necessarily woral traditions passed to hipugh communities and this is why there is no text scholars be the must have been some form of early writings, however spateachings of the properties of historical research now into the Gospels is trying to figure out what was containfrom such inferences, what the author of Mark may have added to his Gospel due



Now, Crossan takes a line of thought that is quite unconventional in light of this explored already, much of his thinking relies on the idea that the Gospel authors their writing that did not necessarily reflect what actually went on during the mithere is the question of why, which we shall explore later, but on the other there response to this latter issue, Crossan uses what are often known as **apocryphal G** suggests, are alternative Gospels that have been discovered as part of historical centuries, and Crossan argues these are critical for under the ling the composition Gospels. In particular, he focuses on two as of prime mattance: the **Gospel of**

Before we press ahead, it is vital and the most scholars disagree with Crossal apocryphal Gospels, typically when much later dates of composition than the Gospel and a wide range of dates have been given, between 60 a judging this are is that, unlike the canonical Gospels, it does not consist of a reconsists of start sayings and does not mention the death, crucifixion or resurrect different from that of the canonical Gospels, lacking the apocalyptic flavour that While it still contains many sayings and teachings similar to these, it remains unce this is evidence that it precedes Gospels such as Luke and Matthew, or whether teachings from these Gospels.

However, Crossan takes a different line. He holds that a significant portion (or the first 'layer') of the Gospel of Thomas can be dated to the 50s CE, alongside the Q document. He also dates Mark much later, holding it was probably written sometime in the 70s CE. Evidence for these suggestions comes from the structure and content of Thomas itself. Crossan argues that the fact it is only sayings suggests it is from an earlier tradition than the canonical Gospels, as well as the independence of the ordering of these sayings, since they do not follow a narrative form. Moreover, the lack of eschato an ocus makes sense in light of Crossan's suggestions about these became later emphasis of Gospel writers'. The argument from the structure and content of the saying structure and content of the ordering of these sayings, since they do not follow a narrative form. Moreover, the lack of eschato an ocus makes sense in light of Crossan's suggestions about the saying structure and content of the ordering of these sayings, since they do not follow a narrative form. Moreover, the lack of eschato an ocus makes sense in light of Crossan's suggestions about the sayings at later emphasis of Gospel writers'. The argument from the sayings are all the first sayings are sayings and sayings are sayings.

Crossan also s that the Gospel of Peter precedes the Synoptics, despite massecond century CE. He calls it the 'cross gospel', arguing it is a significant basis of Gospels. This is certainly plausible considering that the passion is a major focus material with all of the Synoptics. However, there are some major differences. death of Jesus, with his execution instead being ordered by Herod Antipas. Furth accounts of the empty tomb, and the chronology of the resurrection is very difference executed on Good Friday. Perhaps most interestingly, there are no resurrection are suggested to be greatly sorrowful after his death. This corresponds in part to Mark, and Crossan (due to his dating) suggests that these resurrection appearant later addition.

Overall, there is a deeper question surrounding Crossan's views on Q, Thomas armore traditional stances typically date them as much later in the Synoptics, he Gospels rather than inspiring them, but Crossan rain cathat this is perhaps a natural authority given to the canonical ameans that alternative views are entrenched view of Jesus as an a ocal y in prophet means that much later dates regardless of whether the car convincing. Rather, if these apocryphal Gospels more interestical developed. We gain a greater sense of the cultural contheological and the developed across the decades after his death and a more rain revolutionary. Rejecting apocryphal Gospels simply because they were thought Church Fathers isn't a good reason, especially since even these figures were judgmere written! Moreover, the canonical Gospels themselves are ridden with inco doubt the importance of John even though it is markedly different from the Synonymetric contents.



At the same time, it is important to consider the weaknesses of Crossan's views. the Synoptics, are very consistent in the details of Jesus' life, death and ministry. there is good historical evidence to suggest otherwise, this consistency gives good Regardless of what Crossan argues, there is no direct evidence other than the structural procedes the Synoptics. The lack of supernatural and eschatological elen with a later dating. Moreover, these inconsistencies may well simply be evidence by divergent Christian communities that had splintered are some those based as Before we can evaluate which view is correct, how see in a few final questions.

Activity:

Look up the Gospel and a shrough the link below and read verses 1–10. We between the smootic Gospels? Write down three reasons why you believe it might not be.

Link: http://gnosis.org/naghamm/gosthom.html

Crossan and the Synoptic Gospels

We've noted already how Crossan gives a later dating for the Synoptics than other it is explained how their content contradicts his apocryphal Gospels, but we can important final topic to note when considering Crossan's views, for Crossan presser New Testament scholars: if it is known that Jesus taught in parables, allegories as that the Gospel writers and others also did not draw upon these techniques whe While most scholars do appreciate these elements of the Gospels, they often still as the incarnation, the resurrection and Jesus' various miracles should be taken the Synoptics employ these techniques to convey spiritual ideas rather than liter interpreted in the latter fashion by subsequent theologians?

These are important questions to ask. Crossan himseff as that the passion nademonstrably fiction considering the wirk and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this and exonerate Pilate, a ruthless, blood Crossan's answer to this answer to the this

Similarly to what Dodd suggests, Crossan also hypothesises about how the apocamay have developed in the early Church as metaphorical and parabolic tradition interpreted by audiences further removed from Jesus' ministry. This, combined meant the portrayal of Jesus' ministry shifted the teaching from a wisdom traditional later theologians even began to distort the teachings of Paul, who Crossan a and revolutionary opinions than traditionally thought. Even if one disagrees with interesting and important point that eschatology should not necessarily be interpand the traditional Church ideas about the New Testament should be probed and Gospel writers' intentions, if they were committed to ever a slightest artistic reministry of Jesus, care needs to be taken when talling and all the meaning of the shall see, there is another interpretation in the same scriptural evidence that are conclusion. Thus, in the next particle the views of N T Wright.

N T Wright

In the last so we noted how Crossan poses the question of why we take the the person they refer to spoke primarily in metaphor, image and allegory. However see him ask a very different question, closer to 'why don't we take the claims. To some extent, we've seen this perspective come to fruition in our prior study comakes the case that once one examines the events historically, a clear argument



something similarly significant) having occurred, for there were plenty of import around this time teaching similarly to Jesus; why was he singled out?

However, we can take a step back here and examine Wright's methodology a bit resurrection is that a historical case can be made for it, but why is this so? Should and treat Jesus primarily as a product of ancient Mediterranean culture first and Gospels? Well, Wright certainly doesn't disagree with email ing historical, antheresearch, but his way of encompassing these disciplated in the should approach the Gospels from the product of critical realism. This is an borrows from philosophy of science, which is key to understanding his interpreta-

Critical reality be a simed by first talking about two contrasting methodolowhat Wright bes as **positivism**. This is the naive view that there is a real was imply through proper observation and testing. In the context of the Gospels, the that there is simply a historical Jesus who existed and the only obstacle to know of evidence or faulty interpretation of the evidence. Naturally, we can be sceptical ready that the Gospels, the primary sources of evidence, probably reflect the a ideas as much as they do Jesus. Although it is undeniably true Jesus existed, it was true identity, nature and beliefs could be discovered in such a fashion.

On the other hand, Wright also talks of **phenomenalism**. This is the view that all necessarily comes through the knower, or another knower's world view. In essen o 'historical Jesus' as we know it. Instead, there is only a variety of different pewhat he represented. In an important sense we can only know what our sense pworld, meaning there is no acceptable way to recover what the real world is or vitime at all! However, despite the potential philosophical appeal of this position, some degree, it is more probable that we do have some as confirmed by our routine testing of it.

So Wright instead holds that the orrespaperoach accommodates elements of be critical realism holds the condiscover an independent reality through our staperspective of the organization of the world is possible but only to a limited degree, and open to accepting criticism and analysis of their world view in order that these limited degrees are open to accepting criticism.

In an important fashion, Wright wishes to apply these ideas to modern biblical statement is the historical reality of Jesus' life, yet it is limited in a variety of ways by no also those of the biblical writers, who saw Jesus life and teachings through their consists is not only attempting to find out what he did, spoke and saw during his life but a world views that obscure this study. Any analysis of the historical Jesus for Wright individuals must be open to other viewpoints and accept that biblical study is a preparation involved learns from the critical reflections of others. Before we judge Withowever, it is worth examining a little bit more what critical realism means for bill

Scripture and Worldviews

In the last section we saw how Wright's methods for critical realism puts forwlimited by the world views we hold the last go a little further here in applying Wright here is not just making the last applying a little further here in applying Wright here is not just making the last applying about the way we see the world go the last an articulation of world views. They represe at the time the last of the world and what they believed reality looked like. Gospels or contributions of the world and what they believed reality looked like. Gospels or contributions access gain an understanding of who Jesus was both in the eyes of this sense, it is easy to see how Wright rejects either complete objectivity or constudy. We are concerned with recreating the subjective world views of the Gospobjective realities behind them.



So when we look at the various ideas, traditions and beliefs in the Gospels, Wrigh direct path to identifying why they exist in the way they do. There is not a singular world views of the writers and the historical Jesus behind them. Rather, what we best explanation for the various traditions found in the Gospels. This explanation emerges or a better understanding of the world views behind them is developed. Still have gaps or holes which need analysing further, but ultimately there will often Christian Scripture was written in the way that it was and the Gospel authors above all other figures at the time. With that in minimal world and pegin turning to W

Jesus as the True Messiah

We can see already by Sear's and Wright's approaches are different. Naturally, ('s Seas can easily form part of Wright's approach, but Crossan gen Seeks a historical reconstruction of an archetypal Jesus first, using the three different vectors we analysed previously to draw a sociological, anthropological and historical picture of Jesus outside Gospel tradition. Wright is not opposed to such an approach but ultimately does put more emphasis on analysing the Gospel traditions as they stand. The world views they embody do not explain away certain elements of the traditional picture of Jesus but require explanations in and of themselves. The difference is subtle but important to realise when looking at how Wright and Crossan arrive at different views of Jesus' life and ministry.

The end result, nonetheless, is that Wright is ultimately not as sceptical about Gospel traditions as Crossan is. He is much more willing to acknowledge the existence of apocalyptic eschatological elements in Jesus' teaching without compartmentalising them as later is leading additions by the Gospel writers. Similarly, Wright is a sknowledge the suministry against Jewish religious authority has been parates him from many of the movements within the first-century and leads. In many ways he defends a mowe saw already when we are already work on the resurrection.

However, the parameter to Wright's depiction of Jesus is his 'Jewishness'. have made a take when associating Jewish apocalyptic beliefs with an end-of when one looks towards typical beliefs in Second Temple Judaism, apocalyptic thinvest theological significance in major historical events. It is a way of affirming Israel and the belief that he will continue to intervene in major ways to end their of peace and justice. This framing of eschatology allows Wright to analyse the redifferently. There is no longer a need to explain the clash between realised and distinction implies that Jesus was somehow predicting the end times of the worl is talk of a kind of 'subversive wisdom' about the continued reign of God among

From this, Wright argues there are two major elements of Jesus' ministry that er traditions. The first is that Jesus was through and through a **prophet**. His mover John the Baptist and both clearly made eschatological predictions. These served climactic point of Israel's history was approaching and prophet is should be ready. aspect of that announcement: that the Kingdon of Cours at hand. This idea Wright parables and teachings throughout the arrival of God naturally and power of all the earthly legious authorities. The authority and power of all the earthly legious authorities.

However, Je essage was also inclusive. It invited people to be part of this rethical teaching was dedicated to what this renewed Israel would look like. Jesu Jewish in any sense of the term. He presented himself as part of the tradition of and the judgement he presented against figures such as the Pharisees was not a there was a long history of major prophets calling the Jewish people to repentant



because of his Jewishness, are naturally wrapped in the context of the covenant people, and the history of that covenant so far. These are the central themes most the Gospel authors and the consistent ideas that can be drawn out of each of

But what of Jesus' views himself? Aren't we searching for who the historical Jesus context of his teaching? Well, Wright holds that with this grasp of the world view world view, it is possible to more towards his specific aim. Beliefs, while being the person. In contrast to many liberal theologian, I first puts forward that Jesus Messiah and the person capable of restorming to hold when one examination of the person world with a simple search of the culmination of Jewish prophecy is because Jesus view here is the simple search best explanation of the traditions around Jesus as the Messiah

Wright further argues that Jesus' subversive status arose out of this identification teaching emerged out of his awareness of the life he had chosen to lead and the the entrenched religious and political powers of his time. In other words, Jesus to oppose authority but knew that, due to the political and social climate of first would lead to some kind of martyrdom. Similarly, Jesus' understanding of himse speaking as such. He taught as if he were a one-man movement and employed show his life would define the history of the Jewish people as the Kingdom of God

It is important to note here that Wright isn't supporting a view of Jesus that was we saw in our study of Acts, the time at which the Gospels were written marked were separating from Jewish communities. In fact, Wright's portrayal of Jesus in different picture from that which emerged later, yet have his picture of Jesus considers his Jewish context and the continue is a start run throughout Moreover, it traces an easy path from the start and the continue is a elements of Jesus' ministry to the emerged out of it. Overall, the start and this Jewishness was erased over time as no preaching context and the start and this Jewishness was erased over time as no preaching context.

Evaluating Wright's Methods

There are clearly a number of strengths to Wright's critical realism, and it is easy way to draw conclusions about the historical Jesus while recognising how differe and inform these conclusions. Moreover, it acknowledges the importance of grostudy, noting how no one viewpoint can be fully comprehensive. However, there criticise Wright's arguments. The first is by questioning the validity of critical reauseful? Second, we can ask whether Wright's conclusions about the identity and best explanation of the evidence available.

Taking up the first issue, one problem that emerges for Wright is identifying whe and objective lies. The amount of textual evidence for the existence of Jesus is consistency in the existence of Jesus is consistency of the existence of the existence of Jesus is consistency of the existence of the ex

Alternativel might well argue that Wright puts too much emphasis on looking modern historical, sociological and anthropological methods, we might be able to the context of Jesus' life than the Gospels themselves can provide. Wright may Gospel traditions being accurate reflections of Jesus' core teachings and beliefs. sceptical, historically focused methods of Crossan, contending that Wright puts to



theological dimensions of Jesus' character and fails to analyse his actions and de social turmoil of the first-century Middle East. Moreover, we can question to what accurately accommodate other sources such as apocryphal Gospels, which seem of who Jesus was.

This leads on to the second problem. Is Wright really correct in analysing Jesus is context? Naturally, Jesus' teachings are enmeshed in Jevin radition, but does in character? As Crossan highlights, they might have are used a very radically depresented in Christian tradition, which we are used after his death. More Jesus truly did see himself as the language whether this was a later interpretate who sought to establish the language among divided religious communities. Wright's critical and language religious we question with these tools actually support Wright's conclusions.

Altogether, we have two competing interpretations of the New Testament source among biblical scholars about what is the correct view of Jesus' person. Perhaps debate is avoiding scholarly bias; is one explanation truly the best or merely a rest of see in the sources? In the case of Crossan, he tends towards arguing that hist person Jesus are likely to be the most unbiased way of arriving at who he probably Wright still holds out that, by careful consideration of the Gospel writers' world Scripture can equally inform interpretation alongside historical evidence. While things, this subtle shift in methodologies can result in the very different interpretation analysed throughout this section.

Quick Quiz

- What do Protestants call the Catholic deuterocanonical books in the Bible
- 2. What is the first known recorded instance of a 'callonical Christian So
- 3. What is the difference between subjective include extine inspiration?
- 4. What key Christian figure wrotal tell welly on the doctrine of accommod
- 5. What is the Greek term anity proclamation?
- 6. What is the difference between a realised eschatology and a futurist eschala
- 7. Whice Program Gospels does Crossan draw on as historical evidence?
- 8. What Wright call his methodological approach to New Testament tex





THEME 3: SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENTS IN CHRISTIAN 1 (PARTS A/B/C)

What you will learn in this section

- A. The theological debate ar and the parigers or blessings of wealth, including
 - the extent to lower taught that wealth was an obstacle to salvation
 - q 19 s. und whether Jesus embodied the ascetic ideal or encourant much ment of wealth
 - the Prosperity Gospel and its role in the modern Word-Faith movemen
- B. The study of the phenomenon of Christian migration to the UK, including:
 - the challenges Christian migrants face, including assimilation, provision
 - the way Christian migration to the UK has changed the practice of the f
 - the reverse mission movement and the debate around its existence an
- C. Modern figures and ideas in feminist theology and their effect upon content
 - the views of Mary Daly and Rosemary Radford Ruether on misogyny, th
 - how these views have affected key social issues such as female ordinat
 - the impact of feminist theology upon the lives of everyday Christians

Starter Activity:

Do you believe that the Christian Church today embodies the ideals Jesus laid a ways that it not adhere to Jesus' teachings in the Gosas and compare them to and C of this theme.

Key Thinker	
Name	್ಷಿತ್ರ Radford Ruether
Born	£936
Died	N/A
Key text	Sexism and God-Talk (1983)
Why are they	Ruether is one of the most important feminist theologians o
important?	contributing extensively to reconstructionist thought but als
iiiiportant:	different social issues as part of the Catholic Church.
	Ruether has been a longstanding board member of the pro-
Did you know?	for Choice and has been an outspoken supporter for gender
	throughout her life.

Key Thinker	
Name	Mary Daly
Born	1928
Died	2010
Key text	Beyond God the 🗇 🎏 (🚅 3)
Why are they important	Daly is நூல் நிதி உளிரிய most radical and uncompromising ம் நெலி g wine of the most pointed critiques of sexism and w academic life.
Did you know?	Daly was forced to retire from academic life 1999 for refusing advanced Women's Studies classes.



Introduction - Christianity in the Twenty-first Century

In Themes 1 and 2, we studied a myriad theological issues. To some extent, these encompassed modern criticism but they were primarily concerned with age-old questions about the nature of the Christian faith. In Theme 3 we will take a slightly different approach, looking at modern societal issues and how the christians living around the world today.

To start, it is worth considering a pental and scape of Christianity across the value of the last 100 years, Christianity has not necessary considering the last 100 years, but it certainly has

diversified. people in the Western World no longer see themselves as activatendance on the whole has declined even if individuals still uphold some kind dimension. Furthermore, it would not be uncommon to find people, who despit would classify a country such as the UK as Christian. So in an important sense, the crossroads in the Western World. There are more people than ever who might commitment to the Christian faith in its traditional form is declining.

In the first part of this section, we will see how this background affects discussion history of the world, the Christian Church has always been a wealthy and powerf teaching extensively throughout his ministry about the dangers of investing too However, in recent years, there has also been a growth in what is often termed to Christians have begun to view wealth as a deserved result of their faith and not a Whether this view is scripturally supported is a deep and divisive issue among metheir critics, and there is an increasing sense, especially considering wealth inequiviewing wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth inequiviewing wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth inequiviewing wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth inequiviewing wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth as a divine blessing is an untenable not a second considering wealth as a second

In the second part, we will take a loci. Chickian migration to the UK, a rather phenomenon in the modern of its easy to forget when gazing across Churc Christianity is a vorice ligion, and as migration to the UK has increased in the culturally dominimities have begun to have an influence on modern Christian order with in boundary and religious feminism has led to criticism of Christian order many, the traditional gender roles put forward in Christian tradition deny would achieve a fulfilling spiritual life, and the growing egalitarian consensus within man pressure on denominations such as the Catholic Church to change their position ordination. Although some ground has been given, there is significant debate and Christian religion as a whole can ever be saved from its patriarchal foundations.

A: Attitudes towards Wealth

We noted in the introduction that Jesus did not preach a materialistic world view emphasise the dangers of wealth but among his followers were typically those wisck. In fact, this quite radical emphasis on achieving spiritual prosperity over making into conflict with the religious authorities of his time. The expiral expically portray Gospels. Although the authorities on the wholevere mission concerned with Jesus of Jewish traditions at the time, his empiral developing right moral attitudes religious discipline ties in with hove a lanti-materialist world view, for preoccuprevents human beings for the using on achieving the right kind of relationship.

At the same t might be wrong to characterise Jesus as encouraging the asc give up as many possessions as possible in order to focus on their spiritual lives. that money or wealth is **intrinsically** evil (evil in itself) but that those who seek to about the welfare of their neighbours face significant hurdles if attempting to als explore these ideas in more depth in the next part of this section, but first it is we Christian attitudes reflect Jesus' example and teachings in the Gospels.



To start, we can look at the Catholic Church as a key example of the tension betw Gospels and the practice of Christianity today. Thomas Aquinas, perhaps the moinfluentially remarked 'Greed is a sin against God, just as all mortal sins, in as mueternal for the sake of temporal things.' This, theoretically, is the position of the Catechism similarly states:

'The Church's love for the poor... is a part of her constant adition.' This love Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his constant to mose in need.' It extends not to the mose of cultural and religious poverty.

The history C. Connuch is also marked by the large amount of charital perform. We it be the overseas development work of CAFOD or the importance is often a nealthy respect given to the use of wealth as a tool for helping the sense, the Catholic Church adheres to Jesus' basic teachings about wealth, even structured in a way that directly mirrors Jesus' somewhat ascetic example.

At the same time, it cannot be denied that the history of the Catholic Church is marred by its intense accumulation of wealth and power. On the surface, it may be argued that this accumulation is to support its evangelising work, but there as scores of events, individuals and moments through history that would cast doub on that argument. Furthermore, **Catholic social teaching**, the various doctrines developed around matters of poverty, wealth and social justice, has often been criticised for its lack of consistent engagement with modern political theories. More often than not, Catholic clergy and popes have roundly criticised most ideologies throughout history, whether it be capitalism, socialism or liberalism.

While this might appear sensible, it also mean that it is the Church is often view as being a static part of the structurer that a port wealth inequality across the world, rather than an organism of deflucted to helping those who are poor and liberation theology and in all movement in the twentieth century, used a M the Gospel than thought to criticise Catholic tradition for being far too thought) rather an orthopraxis (right action). This meant that the Church, while Jesus' teachings on wealth, failed to implement them in a consistent and meaning

As we shall see later, however, there are Christian movements that potentially dexample in the Gospels, presenting the view that wealth is a gift from God for or many have viewed as increasingly dangerous, especially when accepted by those However, before we move onto such views, it is worth taking a deeper look at Je

Reversal and Wealth in the Gospels

Jesus' teachings on the dangers of wealth are a prominent theme in the Synoptic emphasised in Luke, where they are intertwined with a greater focus on social just Nonetheless, taking a look at the other Gospels first reveals a key focus on the word to both spiritual fulfilment and the achievement of spiritual fulfilment and the

Then Jesus Josked The Said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those kingdom The All the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus sa hard it is to the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." (Mark 10:23–2).

This saying has parallels in Matthew and Luke also and is much quoted when diswealth in Christian thought. There are a number of interpretations, however, the



First, it is important to note that Jesus is not overtly critical of the rich man, who Commandments since his youth. Instead, his focus is arguably on the difficulties spiritual life. As such, there is much to ruminate on about what Jesus asks for in lead in service to God, for as Jesus states, the path to the Kingdom of God is much attached to material things.

However, there is an ambiguity here. On the one hand, the powd is shocked at naturally seem radical at first. On the face of it, here he is a required that it is a none's possessions if one is trying to achie at a required that it is a none's possessions if one is trying to achie at a receiver that the same time, it is not this activity should be. Jesus does not extract that poverty is a virtue. Retaking more than one read a requirement one has excess riches, one should donate Jesus' teach the requirement of the commonplace idea in gift from Grant he emphasises this point by separating the material and the sematerial concerns are, they should not be one's spiritual concerns also.

This idea is also found in Matthew, where Jesus teaches about the nature of the followers should have when thinking about their present lives.

Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows to strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these thing (Matthew 6:31–33 NRSV)

Here, once again, Jesus does not appear to be presenting wealth or material good he notes that God in his wisdom is aware of the physical needs human beings had that righteousness comes before one's physical necessities. The person who is used they have and don't have on Earth is not focusing the companion on their future. Overall, there is a clear message about the errors of the proccupied with the wrongfulness of hoarding wealth.

However, if we look to so so of Luke, there is a much more radical anti-weak wider scop precise, at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus offers a very clean outlines the company of his teachings:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captive
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.
(Luke 4:18–19 NRSV)

In comparison to the other Gospels, Jesus' declaration here marks him as fundamentation who are poor and marginalised and, accordingly, against those who are wealthy a present in Luke is that of **reversal**; this is the belief that the periodic will see a swill beings. Those who have been downtrodden shall economic who while those who punished. It is important to note that the purpose of the extent of way to interpret it, but for a kendamentation who ignored a poor, ill man named Lazar die, but the parallel of his actions applied to the periodic properties of the rich man hades, repentant of his actions.

The central message of this parable is not just that hoarding wealth is bad but the for listeners. Jesus claims here that 'Moses and the prophets' have already spok marginalised should be taken care of. Anyone who is rich cannot simply enjoy the obligation to give it to those in need.



Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wheaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasulule (Luke 12:33–34 NRSV)

This sentiment is echoed in Luke 12:33–34, where Jesus explicitly tells the crowd give to charity. Whoever does so secures their place in heaven, simple as that. It that such sentiments are not simply contained to Luke. If wook to 1 Timothy 6 famous phrase that agrees with the ideas behind wealth enables but also the corruption of the light one ignores the needs of ot pleasures.

For the Ir The Trong Took of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. (1 Times

The Prosperity Gospel

Bearing all this evidence in mind, how could a Christian support any individual amassing wealth? Well, as I'm sure is no surprise to you, there are many Christians who hold views that are almost the exact opposite of those expressed by Jesus in the Gospels. Most notably, the last century has seen the growth in a host of Christian movements which present a set of beliefs that has come to be known as the **Prosperity Gospel**. The central idea behind these beliefs is that wealth and prosperity are the direct result of faith in God, who provides both a physical and spiritual salvation. Accordingly, the Prosperity Gospel rejects the notion that poverty is a valuable or virtuous trait. Wealth is of an individual for their dutiful service to the faith.

Beliefs about the Prosperity Gospel are most commonly and in Pentecostal for Pentecostalism, in contrast to more traditional Crain and denominations, greatly importance of the Holy Spirit in words and a veryday life. While the Bible and the Pentecostal Christians are the arranged to develop their faith through expensed worship of a limit of the percent of the greater spiritual freedom by adherents to Pentecostal mown worship in the limit of the percent of the greater spiritual freedom by adherents to Pentecostal mown worship in the limit of the percent of

At the same time, critics have pointed out that the emphasis on personal experience in worship among Pentecostal movements means that controversial beliefs or idenstance, the Prosperity Gospel is a central doctrine of the **Word-Faith movement** that those who manage their relationship with God well shall receive not only specification and physical prosperity also. In particular, they draw attention to Ma

Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. Truly I tell you, if you say to this mount the sea,' and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will you. So I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have rec (Mark 11:22–24 NRSV)

This passage is believed to support one of the entry actices of the Word-Faith are urged to speak and pray to God for this play desire and so long as it is in agriculture. Bible, God shall grant what the sixty who property, was naturally rich enough to teach requiring not was able to feed so many people, and so on. Thus, rather than teachings at ealth we have studied so far, ministers and other clergy in the build an entirely different picture of Jesus, one that contradicts the poor, travelli interpret from the Gospel narratives.



All this might seem quite strange, but if you have ever caught Christian religious to United States (but also the rest of the world), you might already have a sense of the Faith movement embodies. In comparison to many traditional Christian denominactivities and community outreach within their evangelism, the Word-Faith move communities, can be classified as **charismatic**, and is well known for broadcasting and television. Through such means, it often reaches people who are, for various going. These include, in particular, poor people, people line in remote areas and

There is one more important aspect to pure any of these Christian move Prosperity Gospel. Many of there are a giving importance on the act of giving one's blessing from God and a grantere, these donations are most commonly give preaching to a god and a grantere, these donations are most commonly give preaching to a god and a grantere, these donations are most commonly give preaching to god and less towards charitable endeavours. Critics have ultimately a granter of the beliefs of movements such as Word-Fa aimed at those who are poor and marginalised and who, wishing for financial secretigious organisations in the hope that God will bless them. Similarly, those who are often targeted by preachers who claim that they can be healed by the power enough faith.

It is wrong to wholly tar Pentecostal movements with such criticisms. Many do wand help those in their local communities. However, it can be argued there is poof adherents to the Prosperity Gospel, and it cannot be denied there are promin movements such as Word-Faith and who have grown exceedingly wealthy. For eUS preacher whose televised sermons have been watched by over 10 million Amestimated net worth of 60 million dollars as of 2017 and lives in a 17,000 square 10.5 million dollars. A similar example is the recent 2015 fundraising campaign ladvocate Creflo Dollar to replace his 65 million dollar private jet, in which he large Christians. It is easy from a secular perspective to criticism up han amassing of was Jesus' ministry, but such criticism is often four to the Christian faith itself.

In fact, the most common argus infusion it gosented against the Prosperity Gospel is subiblical. Proponents of the common argus infusion in the proponents of the compact of the security Gospel often quote verses such as Philippi Matthew 2 (1) facility of the talents) without providing sufficient context of the Nor do they argument passages which seem to contradict the belief that security. As such, the Prosperity Gospel is usually cautiously dismissed as heretical times, the activities of mainstream denominations have mirrored the practice adhering to its beliefs. However, considering the arguments for and against weal ask whether there is a middle ground to be found in Christian teaching. This discipant of this section.

Activity:

Research three modern figures in the Prosperity Gospel and note down the bib support their views. How would you go about criticising or challenging their pescriptural knowledge?

Is There a Middle Ground?

We have looked at what are, to a certain to a very contrasting views of the has been an analysis of Jesus' teacher to the adistrust of the material whole. Although there is a just and generous it can also he irish a tacle, and for the person who is dedicating their life to the ascellar giving away one's possessions and living as frugally as possible also looked and teachings of the Prosperity Gospel, which presents wealth as a who amass material possessions are, therefore, not contradicting biblical teaching their faith to God and been rewarded.



However, is there a middle ground between these two belief systems? This is per answer. For one, we can note the illogicality of requiring all Christians give away to pass, no one would possess anything. The human world keeps going through passes make machines and help each other survive. In this sense, it does seem that excellesus' teaching. At the same time, it is potentially important to locate the Gospel expectations of early Christian communities. Jesus appears to have spoken about the end of his ministry, and it is likely that many of his follows a were prepared to prophesised end times to arrive during their lives. The goal ground of material positions are sense in this context, where ensuring the standard for the afterlife is a matter.

However, for modern Chassa perhaps more important when considering wealth. wealth as six divine blessing is misleading, but it is also probably wrong to Instead, wearmay not be a concept that can be reduced to simple rules or primary prove a useful tool for enacting God's will, while for others it may ultimately lives, distracting them from being good Christians. Ultimately, what may be key idea of **stewardship**: the notion that human beings have a responsibility to care things in it.

This ideal is given primarily in the Genesis creation narrative, but it has broad applicability throughout the rest of the Gospel. Under it, we can say that the amassing of wealth and material possessions usually comes at the detriment of others, whether it be human beings or other animals. Similarly, care for the natural world involves investing in it with one's own power and means. By giving away one's excess wealth or monitoring how one interacts with the material world, one is not only following a careful are each to avoid the exploitation of others. This is a wardship does to

a certain extent clash with a new asylvacinterpretation of Jesus' teachings on we disagree as to the best serious and scripture, yet it also perhaps finds a more man how ordinates of the strips can look to manage their wealth effectively in their lives obstacle.

Discussion Activity:

What do you believe is the right Christian teaching on wealth? Discuss in pairs knowledge you have gained from this section.





B: Migration and Christianity in the U

It is commonly said that secularisation in the Western world has posed a real threthe UK. Church attendance is down, and many people, while holding they are redon't connect that belief to a specific denomination. However, at the same time misleading. Although Christianity is somewhat in decline in the UK, across the regrowing. Moreover, with migration to the UK increasing on the past few decade have been setting up shop and diversifying Christianity in a life mall areas of the correlatively little studied phenomenon, especially successful take a look at the way both Chave adapted to the charging in large of religious practice in the UK and what Christianity is setting.

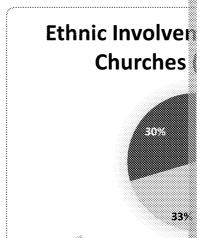
First, we have note a few important factors about the traditional perception of Christianity in the UK and the differences between this perception and the Christian beliefs migrants often possess. To start, just think of a typical church service, especially if you come from a practising Christian family. If you are a white British individual, chances are the service is held in an old church or abbey, built sometime in the distant past, with a predominantly white, ageing congregation. However, if you are a BME individual, this image might be far from your own experiences. This is not to suggest that there aren't mixed white and BME populations in churches. Rather, the aim of thinking more deeply about one's or all picture of Christian belief is to and a second one's perspective might in the reality of Christian (ip tou.y.

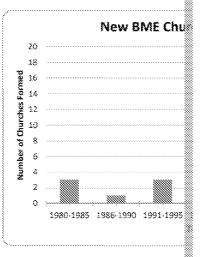
For example, a study of major churches in North East England found that roughly only a third had a white majority congregation. Instead, around 30% had a significant BME presence, while almost two fifths had a majority BME congregation, often of a single nationality. How is this the case? Well, as the same study also showed, there has been an incredible increase in BME churches since the start of the millennium, and it's a trend that is not showing signs of stopping anytime soon.

What's key to note, however, is that these new churches to necessarily as viscoustomed to in Britain. They often are formed in a maining centres, local half areas where there are significant migrant at least.

For some of you, these states, but the way segregated communities have form that new characteristics, but the way segregated communities have form that new characteristics are often located in areas underserved by more common Christian belief that have sprung up of the common characteristics.

One key example of this is the growth of Pentecostalism in the UK. We noted in Christianity emerged in the US, but as a Christian denomination it is arguably the world. The same is true in the UK. One of the fastest growing churches in Britain







Church of God, a Pentecostal Church with its roots in Nigeria. Quite unusually, it of attention on sending out missionaries to the West from countries in Africa, a the **reverse mission movement**. We will look at this in more detail later, but Pendistinct appeal for those who are typically uninterested in traditional forms of Ch

Pentecostalism often has a much greater emphasis on **charismatic worship**, in we shout and clap and generally engage in much more active in the soft prayer. This is Pentecostalism, which attempts to draw attention to the holy Spirit worshippers to try to achieve direct religion perionce of God. Typically, this mand no formal liturgy at the heart of their worship practice great value in the setting advantage at the heart of their worship practice.

Pentecostal a whole is also more popular among many African and Asian of to the UK have set up their own churches in order to reflect their own Christian lengage in their own forms of worship. Now, there are approximately 17,000 Pen UK and followers of Pentecostalism far exceed the number of Methodists, yet at to paint too misleading a picture of this movement. Pentecostalism is equally populate and its growth in Britain is due also to these influences. Young people in particular traditional church services and find the energy in Pentecostal forms of worship in background, however, we can begin to look at some of the challenges Christian is churches in the UK.

The Challenges of Christian Migration to the UK

In the first part of this section, we look at a look at the changing demographics of that due to migration there has been a revival in urban congregations and a shift being practised across the country. Importantly, to a certain extent this has also denominations. Many migrants will often be Catholic on obtaint and seek out typical expectations. To the naked eye, this in un of new Christians might appear for the Church. As fewer and feword a look is the people feel an attachment to the expect any increase in congression to be met with open arms. However, while Christian migrants is for a conclusion of different cultures, there assimilating the constraints into the UK, and in this part of the section we will

The first thing to note is that these challenges have not gone unappreciated by trein the UK. The Catholic and Anglican churches have issued extensive guidance an acceptance of migrants. A significant part of this does, however, revolve around other religions rather than dialogue with Christian migrants themselves. While the challenges, these are often dwarfed by concerns of inter-religious conflict in the Uthat Christian migrants are necessarily overlooked. Moreover, the acceptance of a universal principle of the Christian faith; whether the migrants are Christian or rethe Church being compassionate to those arriving in the UK. If you remember you might even recall that Jesus himself as times was thought to be a migrant, an communities being a positive voice regarding immigration as a whole is often em

However, at the same time it would be wrong to he accerise Church responses optimistic. All denominations encore a few variety of voices, and there are are worried about migration's wastern the 'Christian identity' of the UK. Nor a those of other roligians in the explored in the previous part, the growth of Pent young people of the perceived to be something of a threat to traditional Christ lie the most all challenges for Christian migrants. Although they are perceived to be and Catholic churches in the UK.



For instance, we noted how worship styles in Pentecostal churches more often the worship, which is very different from the more relaxed or even sombre liturgies churches. In fact, even Catholic and Protestant worship as a whole often takes of African countries rarely simply transplant non-African forms of worship and insternational cultural aspects into church services. Cardinal Wilfrid Napier, the head South Africa, remarked in 2003, 'You'll be surprised at how little of Rome there is South Africa,' and this short statement reflects a process of times called incult traditions are adapted into styles of worship by Class are dissionaries across the anathema to the Catholic Church's position of the Vatican.

So, upon minimal provided these difference of these difference of these difference of these difference of the country prove difficult to overcome. Taking once again the example Church, there is notably often a lot more singing and dancing. If Christian migrate themselves in an English Catholic service, they are much more likely to be perhaphymns, readings and prayers. This is not to suggest that either form of worship is diversity in the Christian faith naturally proves to be an obstacle when it comes to countries. Simply put, for many Christian migrants traditional Christian Churches provision or styles of worship they have become accustomed to.

Such obstacles in part explain why there has been an explosion in BME churches are even more fundamental issues than style of worship when it comes to Christ the first language of Christian migrants, who, used to speaking in their mother to themselves lost in the often technical theological language used by ministers durextent, many local churches have often sought to accommodate new Christian mispecific classes in another language, by providing subtitled accompaniment to se separate services in a second language. Nevertheless the plutions are often sizeable contingents of migrants from a specific clumber of the sizeable contingents of migrants from a specific clumber of each is practically in

The final issue we can the following at is the specific Christian beliefs migrants may denominate the final properties of the world the more conservative. This can, to some extent, lead to confinative Christians and Christian migrants, particularly around issues such as home and gender roles. Christian beliefs are also partially woven into the cultural attiticountries, and assertive Christians from other countries may find themselves at contain individuals of a wide array of sexualities or are led by female ministers. stereotype Christian migrants as illiberal or hostile but to note that the growth in naturally linked to more conservative positions on a range of social issues.

So, all together, these differences between the worship and beliefs pose an imposassimilation of Christian migrants in the UK. At the same time, such obstacles she ground between Christians of all styles and forms. More often than not, Christian engaged in ecumenism: the efforts of different Christian denominations and more relationships and better understand each other's practice. The road to unity is and differences need to be acknowledged before set or chations can be established however, we will look at a different approach this position, noting how some specifically targeting the UK as to the evangelism.

Discussio 🔑 ty.

Do you be aditional Christian denominations in the UK should adapt to the new Christian migrants, or is a better solution that such Christian migrants conchurches? Discuss in small groups or pairs.



The Reverse Mission Movement

The reverse mission movement is a term often used to describe the missionary at movements towards individuals in the UK. It is a somewhat controversial idea, fo talk of this kind of evangelism occurring, some have argued that it is less commor particularly contentious aspect has been the suggestion that reverse mission has native UK residents. Many critics have suggested that reverse mission as a whole native UK ministers or preachers leading Christian might populations. While the evangelism, the idea that there are missionary activities argeted towards a secul than reality. Nevertheless, it is an integration of the UK from native of the Abistian populations to more diverse BME.

First, it is in the note that reverse mission is not a new phenomenon. It has practised accessed elast 50 years by a number of new Christian movements that presence. For example, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), which we began sending missionaries from Nigeria to the UK in 1988, with current leader Englobal ambitions and wishing for a church in every city in the world. This might a point out it is just a reflection of Jesus' call to the disciples at the Great Commissed evangelism flows from the global North to the South is one rooted in certain racing many Christian churches across the world are independent entities with their ow UK there are over 670 RCCG churches and many more forming each year. They hand while the majority of followers are those from migrant populations to the UL UK becomes even more diverse in the future native UK residents, particularly the drawn to new Christian movements.

It is important to also consider how the reverse mission movement has functione secularised atmosphere of the UK. While traditional Christian denominations do their own communities, it is often less assertive than any new Christian move Redemptoris missio, a 1990 encyclical by Polician auril, marked a decidedly mapproach to missionary activities in a tradicio Church. Although it fundaments Church's missionary manda are recognised various obstacles and challenge stated the important are agrespectful and compassionate when undertaking from making fictargets for conversion and resisted strategies measured on into the Church he same is not true, as we've noted, for the RCCG. This is due nature of Pentecostal movements but also potentially to the cultural sensitivities activities. In the case of the Catholic Church, it has faced and still faces criticism European countries, whereas reverse mission, as a new and relatively untested passed level of scrutiny.

However, reverse mission also has a more moderate face, as ministers and pasted denominations move to the UK. These often fly under the radar more than new attract a lot of attention, but they are worth noting all the same. For example, Lawhich sends pastors between a number of European and South American country the UK have often helped set up ministries, catering not just to South American populations also, helping forge new multicultural Christian communities. Such a contained under the umbrella of reverse mission, encourses ag a wider set of go importance of mission efforts maintaining a globe flow of missionaries across the

Overall, reverse mission is still to sancy. However, it may prove to be an everover the next face day of shift its perception from a rhetorical turn of phrase Christian containing in the UK today.



C: Religion, Equality and Discrimination

We've already delved into some feminist theology when we had a look at the view how they strafe Reconstructionist and post-Christian beliefs. However, in this secontributions of two equally important figures, Rosemary Radford Ruether and Nexamining their impact on contemporary issues in the Christian Church.

To begin with, it is worth looking at traditional Christian acking on gender roles. Christian theologians have generally viewed as equal in principle but possible at first glance this might appear and to a degree, in reality it has off treated as second in state. Women in the eyes of many Christian individing and mothers are reply being to facilitate procreation and take care of the have been worked as the heads of the household and created by God to roles. From modern perspective, this naturally appears quite backwards. We that women are required to fulfil specific roles? Moreover, if women are equal is be essential parts of intellectual, political and spiritual working lives?

These questions have seen renewed focus in the last 100 years yet are not new, The Bible as a whole is not always clear on the roles men and women are suppose clear tension between the Old Testament and Jesus' teachings in the New Testament views have emerged about the various teachings on gender roles in Scripture. himself displays very little of what we might traditionally call misogyny. Although patriarchal society, some feminist critics contend that Jesus held prominently presented that Jesus is not exempt from feminist criticism, with only embellishing the patriarchal elements of his teachings.

Taking the more positive view of Jesus first, it can be not. It at he speaks very between men and women. Furthermore, even thought at 12 disciples are all menumerous times that Jesus had female from the late of Mary and Martha. There, Mart Mary has been spendire to the following in prayer and worship, neglecting her hotells her the supports the strain of equal importance and to let her follow her supports the strain of that Jesus did view women as possessing equal roles to men women should not be relegated to mere household duties. At the same time, decan be noted still that these are few in number and dwarfed by the parts of the with and teaches men.

Where the difficulty lies here is drawing out Jesus' true teachings from the circumot enjoy anywhere near the same luxuries and power as men in most first-cent tradition, it is naturally likely that many of Jesus' public conversations and teaching with men and that the Gospel authors were simply recording occurrences of Jesus selective of certain male-centred conversations they viewed as most important. careful readings of the Gospel texts may not be able to discern what is the most women featured in the narratives. What is apparent, nonetheless, is that to a lawomen in the ministry of Jesus may not have been fully considered.

Another great influence, however, on Change on gender roles has been been progressive in his views on which was, Paul is often viewed as much mor of problematic teachings which was letters which do put forward as Christian gender roles are to the Lord', strongly implying that men occupy a position ownen. Similarly, in 1 Corinthians 11:7, when dealing with dress codes, Paul arg be covered, declaring that 'woman is the reflection of man'. Such passages pose theologians, for even if it is held that women are in principle equal to men, these the notion that woman are a secondary or lesser image of God to man, justifying societies throughout history.



Despite the problematic nature of many of Paul's writings, there are also other phroader equality between men and women. Galatians 3:28, for example, declar and female; for all of you are one in Jesus Christ', which indicates that, underneawritings, there is possibly evidence within the New Testament to suggest that Christ there is true equality between men and women. Much of the discussion for down to reconciling the promise of Genesis 1:27, which states that God created imago dei, and whether this equality can accommodate the ssibility of differential look at next, although there have been overtine in a letowards the equality denominations and theologians have favour an equal but different' approach

The Catholic Church on South and Soles

The Catholic charter of the sout its position on the roles of women in an apostolic le dignitatem, in by Pope John Paul II in 1988. It covers a number of different concerned with outlining the Church's position on gender roles in light of changitakes a broad look at the women in the Bible, analysing their place in Catholic tracexample of Jesus as a supporter of women's dignity and importance. One particularly analysed is that of **Theotokos** (God-bearer) in reference to Mary. The Mulieris dependence of the kind of virtues and roles women are supposed to embody since people who has been most intimately connected with God in human history. Me that, for the Catholic Church, only a woman could have and symbolises the relationshould hope to achieve.

The Mulieris dignitatem therefore analyses the person of Mary in light of Genesis creation may still allow for the possibility of separate roles. In contrast to many holds that Eve's creation out of Adam in Genesis 2 was simply out of suitability, men and women are equal in status and there are no contrast ctions between the Mulieris dignitatem also contains much more contrast ctions between the importance of what have often been perceived as markets views of gender role for her role as a 'helper' for Adam and the 'emasculinization' of men in respective in the 'masculinization' of men in respectiticisms of the role as a 'helper' for Adam and the 'emasculinization' of men in respectiticisms of the role as a 'helper' swe shall see, have contended that such passages still perpetute Catholic with is in principle committed to gender equality under God.

Discussion Activity:

Is the Catholic Church correct in arguing that women can be equal but possess a justification for historical misogyny? Discuss in pairs or small groups.

Rosemary Radford Ruether

With this background in place, we can begin to look at the views of Rosemary Ra Both grew up with a Catholic upbringing but eventually deviated in their views. supporting Reconstructionist feminist theology, while Daly began to move towar position later in life. So, considering the Catholic context of both these thinkers, different conclusions about the future of Christianity ways women should answer this question, we shall first turn to Rucch agnt.

We won't delve too much introduction methodology, but one important elemenoting is the method of the income exegesis. You have probably encountered the Broadly, it is the process of attempting to discover the retext, but 'dialor' in this context changes the meaning of this process. It refer understand a text through the differences in understanding between two differences exegesis therefore is the process of 'reading out' from a text but with an eye to have been understood at the time of writing and how this differs from the this process, Ruether aims to uncover how particular pieces of Scripture would habsorbed in the cultural attitudes at the time of writing versus how they are understanding between two differences.



normal or radical to us now may have been received in vastly different ways by these differences is key to reconstructing a gender-equal theology within Christic case for Ruether, who is looking at how the 'God-male-female' hierarchy emergence neutral or female-oriented version of Christianity might exist beneath embedded

Diachronic exegesis formed a wider part of what is often called **feminist** hermeneutics. This is a wide set of principles that aim to ver the male-form assumptions, biases and influences behind the Bibaco Russiaer held that these principles were essential in reclaiming transfer stransfer principles and morals from patriarchal norms that influenced with at the time of its writing. However, delved even further into an an arrow of criticism, adopting from Paul Ricoeur he was a vay of analysing texts by considering and what they are visually interpreted them and what they eople might have previously interpreted them and what they considering might have personally gained from interpreting them a certain way. In the case the Bible, it can be suggested that its interpretation throughout history has been primarily from a male perspective and, as such, Christian thought has evolved in line with what benefits men the most in a typically patriarchal environment. Suc view is also arguably justified considering the long lineage of male theologians, s as Augustine, Aquinas and Luther, who on the whole deviated little from a poter interpretation of gender in the Bible.

With Ruether's methodology outlined, we can turn to deeper questions about he male-focused elements of Christian thought, namely Jesus and God. In contrast Ruether analyses the figure of Jesus not through present-day dogma but through Messiah, which would have been the most prevalent comparison levelled at Jesu analysing Jesus through this lens, Ruether exemplifies the use of diachronic exegnates been seen by his peers with how he is interpreted as a This is useful, as if accurately assess the views Jesus himself possess of gender, it is important to have been progressive or regressive in the accurate learning of the contract of t

What Ruet y argues is that in contrast to the male, warrior-type Meswished for cted by the Jewish population to liberate them from Roman of more radical and progressive figure. He led in what Ruether terms a 'prophetic lithe form of moral commands such as the golden rule, as well as criticism of legal endorsement of broad egalitarian social norms. The fact that Jesus embodied the is not a surprise that he clashed with both religious and political authorities. The quite scandalous to a largely patriarchal Jewish culture at the time, and key obselargely equal treatment Jesus gave his female followers and his encouragement spiritual lives.

Ruether holds in particular that these teachings are the underlying authentic mothe Word of God within the Bible. However, with the biblical authors themselve enlightened than Jesus himself, this liberating morality ended up being dressed is various Jewish cultures at the time of writing. Nevertheless, uether's important someone who fulfilled male expectations but rather assumeone who sought to social order that also promoted the equations women. The fact that Jesus was means also that his maleness is a cideral another than essential. As such, his manunderstanding his teaching all pact that Jesus was born a man ultimately cannot patriarchal and conclusion the superiority of men, as such a conclusion earthly teaching and the superiority of men, as such a conclusion earthly teaching and the superiority of men, as such a conclusion earthly teaching and the superiority of men, as such a conclusion earthly teaching and such as the superiority of men, as such a conclusion earthly teaching and such as the superiority of men, as such a conclusion earthly teaching and such as the superiority of men, as such a conclusion earthly teaching and such as the superiority of men, as such a conclusion earthly teaching and such as the superiority of men, as such as conclusion.

The same, Ruether argues, is true of God. Most Christians will hold God to be ge exclusively male terms such as 'Father', 'Lord' or 'King' when describing him. Where the extent, Ruether argues that the use of these male terms has contributed feminine perspectives in theology since power, wisdom and goodness are symbols.



masculine ideals. Furthermore, Ruether contends that the sole use of male lang phenomenon than might be expected. Going back further in history, there are of that were employed, one of which we will take a closer look at in the next part.

The Role of Wisdom

At the start of this section it was broadly asserted that many of the terms used to However, Ruether argues that this is a convention with the cedent in early for This means that female terms may have been his print to used to describe God, I marginalised or lost through patriarch that he. One particularly important te 'Sophia', often thought to reposite the maleness of the preference for male terms among schola fact, Rueth the properties of the preference for male terms among schola fact, Rueth the properties and the properties are the second that the properties are the properties and the properties are the prope

You might well see the focus of Ruether's thought coming together at this point. there is a **golden thread**, or a consistent set of themes running throughout Christ the importance of **liberation**. Whether it be the emphasis upon wisdom or the eteaching, this golden thread raises up both men and women and, as such, any in overemphasises maleness fails to do justice to the role of liberation in scriptural naturally implied to be less perfect or vital to the spiritual life than men. As such certain elements of Scripture are irrefutably patriarchal, there is much to be lear liberating theme is held in mind when reading it. More importantly, this critical be reconstructed with an eye upon gender neutrality.

Reconstructing God

So what is the way forward for modern Cincility. Ruether herself acknowledge unconvincing to traditional Christians, it is allowed the selection of certain passages than others, while discate head seeds thought to be overly patriarchal or misogyn it leads to the consistency of the selection of certain passages than others, while discate head seeds thought to be overly patriarchal or misogyn it leads to the consistency of modern theology should be adjusted themes with the construction of the terms used to destheologian typically argues that gender-neutral terms are preferred when referring as used, they should be an equal mixture of genders, rather than just male. To so theologians such as Ruether typically note that God is thought to be genderless in using male terms is not one that necessarily has to be upheld in theological disconfundamentally inaccurate. Moreover, the move to encompassing gender-neutral can only have the upshot of encouraging reflection on women's experiences in the

Similarly, overt references to Jesus' maleness should be downplayed if his malenthan essential. One is simply being more theologically accurate when one excluding narratives of his life that do not encompass his egalitarian and liberation-focused this proposal are perhaps more significant. Catholic ideas such as apostolic succession undermined, and adopting such a reconstructionist feminimal erspective towards lead to the conclusion that there should be an equal algorithm of genders in all Chathe ability to be ordained is contrary to the leading of liberation Ruether is what if such aims are too conservation. What if the patriarchal influences Rueth fundamentally unremovable which questions in mind, we can turn to the temperature.

Mary Daly

Zigo Education

Mary Daly was an American feminist philosopher and theologian who described feminist'. While her work initially began in a much more liberal or reconstruction beginning with *Beyond God the Father* in 1973, became increasingly radical, expression whether the liberation of women could ever occur within the Christian religion.



This transformation of thought, however, didn't come out of nowhere. From the encompassed many different radical themes. In *The Church and the Second Sex* Christianity presents only an illusion of gender equality, when in actuality wome theological discourse and denied participation in the spiritual fulfilment the religion of the main difficulties she identifies and which comes to play a key role in her lass the ultimately contends that both God's and Jesus' maleness are highly problem these aspects will always be interpreted as representing the presenting that the presenting the presenting that the presenting the presenting that the food is male then

So what does this mean? Well from signifies that the Reconstructionist proportion of simply possible to change anguage we use to describe God, or identify lied the foundation of the simply prioritise man over woman, and such recontextual proportion of the simply prioritise man over woman, and such recontextual proportion of the simply prioritise man over woman, and such recontextual proportion of the simple simply prioritise man over woman, and such recontextual proportion of the simple simple

This might sound quite abstract, but for Daly modern theological discourse was linfluences. Simply put, the only way forward was to abandon both the thought a discussion. However, because this thought and language are so prevalent, it requires creativity than usual to figure out how women can be truly liberated from its use represented a step backwards. Its endorsement of Jesus as a unique male savious male superiority in theology, regardless of whether the historical Jesus was egalication of all. All Christian thought has done for working Daly's view is encommong men: that women are a source of temptation of all.

Therefore, we can already sec who significantly diverges in thought from more summary above does not be justice to her criticism of the Christian religion. For her examination of the christian form of the christian type of the christian type

The Unholy Trinity

In contrast to the view of most traditional theologians, Daly argues that our more become known through study of Scripture or through specific forms of revelation. Christian ethics is a male construct, a consequence of patriarchal influences shap to suit their own ends. For women, this means their morals and virtues are focus idea that women are naturally submissive or victims and they should act accordinask for the same powers or wishes as men, whose morality is focused around entitlement, giving them the physical and psychological freedom to engage with the world as they see fit.

Daly argues this gendered separation of morality results in an overt concentration of **phallocentric power**. This means the provailing structures of society are naturally geared to read argue, men an advantage in their ends, while women are restricted from pursuing their own fulfilment or liberation. The fact are power is entrenched is not in conflict with Christian and Daly sees it. Rather, they are intertwined power Christian as through this concentration of phallocentric power Christian and war, phenomena that have accompanied the spread of Christian thought across the world. Simply put, although many Christians view peaceful one, the natural power imbalance that lies at the heart of the religion a these evil acts have been both overtly and surreptitiously endorsed throughout



Ultimately, Daly argues whatever female perspective there might be in Christian thoughton its own religious history, and institutionalised Christianity has failed to provide sure So why are the Reconstructionists so desperately trying to find liberating themes in a rethem? Daly here primarily just aims to point out that it may well be a false aim to try thistory has only subjugated women and given justification to the evil acts of men acrosmight not it be better just to envision a new religion with real egalitarian or female-for precisely what Daly proposes, as we shall explore in the next

Christianity and Myth

In her 1978 book *Gyn/Ecolor* IV n sents the fullest realisation of her radical Christianity is not on truct of male power but it also consists of pre-exist subverted in the compre-Christian beliefs in other ancient religions. In par show that Countries as a whole is based upon older goddess myths and stories example, she identifies the Trinity as having been formulated prior to Christianit Hellenistic, Celtic and African cultures. Similarly to Ruether, therefore, Daly look religious history to find pre-existing themes and ideas that justify looking at the

However, Daly's conclusions are far different, for she advocates 'stealing' back that taken from women by patriarchal Christianity. In doing so, Daly effectively recovered the precursor to Christianity and a more fitting basis for a religion that profine *Gyn/Ecology*, Daly perhaps makes some of her strongest criticisms of the place. One often-cited passage is where she describes Mary as the **Total Rape Victim**, for birth Mary is made to be subordinate. She is stripped of her agency in deciding a spiritually invaded by God while giving little resistance. This makes her devoid of hollow vessel exploited by Christian tradition who comes to represent the symbol Christian faith.

Thus, Daly seeks to cast herself as a **pirate** it ing has the personhood and diving Christianity stole from women. He was also holds that for the liberated wonew spirituality cannot just a speed from the pre-existing elements of Christianity. Instance the parameter of the pre-existing elements of Christianity is simply left behind. It is not a meaningful fashion so long as one wishes for the full and complete liberation of

At this point, we can clearly see the difference between Daly's and Ruether's confultimately irredeemable. The only way women can become reconciled with God and begin a new religious enterprise that develops an entirely new God-language the other end of the spectrum we find Ruether, who is still fairly radical in her at ultimately believes the God-language of Christian thought does not have to be a alongside more egalitarian principles. So what impact do these separate ideas h problem we will tackle in the last part of this section.

Christian Responses to Feminist Theological Debates

We've noted during this part of the section. Callolic Church's general position important that we connect the most of the section of Ruether and Daly with whole on Christian common it would be an understatement to suggest the with other Characteristics of the struggled to respond to many of the critical concerns of Ruether and Daly with other Characteristics of the struggled to respond to many of the critical concerns of Ruether and Daly with other Characteristics of Ruether and Daly with o

The ordination of women priests and bishops is probably an issue you have hear Among more liberal Christian denominations or those without an internal hierar



brainer. If, as Ruether suggests, there is a liberating tradition in the Gospels, led be wholly wrong to deny women the same spiritual opportunities as men. Jesus and there should be nothing stopping women occupying top positions in the Chuinto sharp contrast when we look at the Catholic Church, which to this day refus female priests and bishops. Why is this the case when other denominations, sucturned a corner on this issue and begun to accept women in higher positions of

First, it must be noted that the Catholic Church place good importance on sacrethe Church as a whole is not simply advice a christian directly given by God himself. Here a places the Catholic Church at a bit comodern issues such as the comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at a bit comodern issues such as the catholic church at the catholic chu

Furthermore, it is important to note that the very way that theologians such as R Bible is fundamentally at odds with Catholic doctrine. Their feminist methodolog Bible is not infallible or even the Word of God but the product of patriarchal cult critically dissected. This very starting point is rejected by the Catholic Church and orthodox Catholic theology is in conflict with feminist thought when it comes to fundamental impasse around issues such as female ordination as little change in about without an equal change in its methodologies.

It is easy to see at this point why post-Christian thinkers such as Daly reject the ide language is possible in a Christian context. In the case of fermior ordination, Daly sequality is not driven simply by giving women legal of the changing the very Christian thought and practice. On the other of the church is more open to wand women are able to possible of spiritual authority, God-language can be meawomen can be some of this entire of the church is unlikely that be will decide to be female ordination, and feminist criticism is vital to pressure the

We saw how the *Mulieris dignitatem* reflects this ongoing debate. It is important however, is not constrained to theological circles but has a distinct impact upon of Christian men, feminist criticism is likely to present an instinctive challenge to traditionally may be concerned with their role as head of the house or as a figure Similarly, in the case of Christian women, it may point towards a more lively future wife and, in any case, the liberalisation of Christianity as a whole may prove difficulty to face a changing cultural landscape. At the same time, change ultimately post-Christian future Daly envisions may present a greater appeal for those who by traditional denominations such as the Catholic Church.

Orinta u

- 1. Give one Bible verse that shows Jesus cautio in the dall to lowers about the dall
- 2. What is the Prosperity Gospel?
- 3. What is the Word-Faith make me and
- 4. What is Pentecost disk
- 5. What we ever emission movement?
- 6. What a golden thread' through C
- 7. What is the Mulieris dignitatem?
- 8. What is the unholy trinity in Daly's thought?



THEME 3: SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENTS IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

What you will learn in this section

- D. The conflicting views on the place of Christia lity the UK, including:
 - the value of Christian institutions as faith schools and whether the Christian country
 - the different was chartains' beliefs have come into conflict with UK la
 - the period of allenges Christianity faces in the twenty-first century at the large very restricted
- E. The potential conflicts between religious and scientific perspectives, includi
 - Richard Dawkins' arguments that faith is infantile and that religion has successes of modern science
 - Alister McGrath's response to Dawkins, including his claims that Dawking and religion address different questions
 - the debate around the limits of scientific enquiry and whether modern the gaps' style arguments
- F. The theological debate around religious attitudes towards pluralism and div
 - whether the Bible expresses exclusivist or inclusivist views
 - modern theological arguments for inclusivism, with reference to Karl R
 Christians'
 - John Hick's arguments for religious pluralism and his criticisms of ortholia

Starter Activity:

How do you think religion and science might so flice. Write down three examprecent years and compare them to all its shies throughout the rest of this the

Key Thinker	
Name	Karl Rahner
Born	1904
Died	1984
Key text	Schriften zur Theologie (1954–1984)
Why are they important?	Rahner is commonly thought to be one of the most influent
	twentieth century, writing on a vast number of topics and in
	Catholic doctrine today.
Did you know?	Rahner was well-known for being prolific, producing an estin
	throughout his life!

Key Thinker		
Name	John Hick	
Born	1922	
Died	2012	
Key text	Death and the Eternal Life (76)	
Why are	Hick is perhaps significantly one of the most influential and cont	
they	of the twe பெருக்கு வரு. Although Protestant, he argued much of	
importan'	ytı 🧢 🔞 er contentious ideas such as purgatory, universalism a	
Christians.		
T. C.	in the late 1950s, accepted a place at Cornell University in the	
Did you	becoming more liberal at that time and he faced severe criticism fro	
know?	with many even accusing him of heresy for not accepting the doctring	
	eventually led to him coming back to the UK for a place at Cambridg	



Introduction - The Relationship Between Religion and Society

It is often observed that, at least in the Western world, it is increasingly commor areligious, a historical process that is often referred to as **secularisation**. As a rerole in public life than it once did. In the UK, for example, there is a relatively dis **and state**, meaning that the Christian Church does not play an active role in influencements. For the most part, religious thought and countries have been deeple extent this is still the case across many than the nand, the rise of modern scientific er that religion was once that the case across many than to answer now are solved by secular means. Sidelining that the Christian Church is a beacon of moral guidance, as have often claimed that religion itself is a social malaise, responsible not only for progress but also for much of the conflict, violence and oppression around the weekling that the christian church is a property of the conflict.

Throughout the first section in this theme, we will break these claims down, seel Christianity faces from **secularism**: the view that individuals have the right to be religion in their personal and public lives. Despite this broad definition, secularis claims. Typically, supporters advocate an atheistic or materialistic view of the was having no scientific or philosophically reasonable basis. Furthermore, they also religious matters to individual choice. This means that governments cannot be a religious institutions, and processes such as education should not uncritically teal are often thought by traditional theists to present an existential threat to religion conservative Christians often bemoan the fact that political decision-making is so teachings of the Bible. However, as we shall see, secular criticisms of Christianity opportunity for the religion, pointing towards new way a figure was and remain a modern world. Such growth may come from soir accordances of the meaningful presented by Alister McGrath or modern world. Such growth may come from the conceptions of the Christian fails

Furthermore shall be the degree to which the UK can still be called a 'Ch often pops' possible discourse, yet it is often ill-defined, and, with much of the practising the stian faith, it is necessary to examine once again what relation identity and culture, for if being a Christian country simply means possessing cer good definition of Christian identity? Before we delve further in such debates, hanother system of thought closely tied to the process of secularisation: humanis as a viable alternative to religious life and shall be the first concept studied in the

D: The Challenges from Secularisation

When we consider the decline of religion in the world, we're not just pointing to ideas but the adoption of a new, secularly oriented system of thought. Most corpor areligious often support a broad set of ideas known as **humanism**. Humanists perceive to be dogma, superstition and faith-based thinking, preferring what the critical thinking and scientific discovery. In practice, this was a humanists are of religion and its impact upon the world. However prints phically, humanism also interesting arguments. Central to adher any affect the belief that meaningful which don't rely on God as a instance of individual and some and the need for scientific progress. This conflict with the latter over the former.

Why, though, is humanism important when considering the place of religion in the consider the rise of humanistic and/or scientific thought to be one of the major recovered across many different countries. Moreover, many thinkers who are synhave presented many of the key criticisms of religious thought that have arguable are ligious or atheistic. These manifest not just in a theoretical manner but also is



agree with humanist principles tend to agree also with secularism, since it argual would also be rational to ensure that countries are governed by principles which adhere to rational, scientific thinking. This does not mean that religion should not be allowed but rather that the practice and influence of religion should be relegated to private, not public, life. Religious principles, ethics and beliefs, therefore, should not influence key areas of society, including education, politics and commerce. However, in practice this proves quite different to enforce. The Christian Church is still broadly influential in many parties argued that relegating religion to private life is both understand impossible.

each other JK. By analysing key examples, It is possible to see how tensionand secular charles and how these tensions spill out into wider public debate.

How do Religious and non-Religious Views Conflict?

When we talk about the conflict between religious and non-religious views in pureferring to theoretical debates but the way differences in opinion or belief creat people, for those who are religious typically don't just hold certain views but prateveryday lives. This practice involves both enacting certain ethical principles and worship or religious expression. Moreover, societies as a whole are often expecting expression, the idea that in an equal society no person of any faith should practising their deeply held beliefs. Freedom of religious expression is also not control but one that arises out of an overall free society, where individuals are able to expenditions as long as they do not cause undue or unjust harm.

However, you may well have noted that the last part of the santence was a little harm? And shouldn't people be restricted from partial partial beliefs that are inhere even if they don't lead to direct have societies have struggled with balanceligious and non-religious and principles. However, many become that the partial principles is the conflicts be reagious and non-religious groups, which we shall explore in this important where are difficult to reconcile in a society that wants to champion

Furthermore, as we have explored already, there are many individuals who are because they hold that individuals should be free from the influence of religion in powith any religious groups that uphold a strong idea of freedom of religious expression that religion itself is a social harm, meaning any limiting of religious prace peaceful, fairer society. Such secularists include figures such as Richard Dawkins theme, and their tendency to view religion as mere irrational superstition means reconciliation between religious and non-religious views. In particular, we can do to illustrate this conflict: **faith schools** and the debate over whether the UK should be the solution of the superstition of the should be the superstition of the supers

Faith Schools

Faith schools continue to be a contention in a limit odern Britain, but before we to make a distinction. On the one was a faith schools run by a particular religious and in the school curriculum. Essentially, traditional in the school without in some way being either part of the denomination receive (often passed) religious teaching about this denomination. On the other which, while not run by a religious denomination, are strongly affiliated with a publiding. Students may have the option of learning more, and some important a religious buildings, but the denomination does not form an essential part of schools.



When people talk about faith schools, they are usually referring to the first, more around Britain, though for Christian denominations they are dwindling (for other potentially growing). The main criticism given by secularists and humanists is the kept out of education, for children cannot make an informed decision until they many secularists disagree about what this means. Religious studies, as you will revery specification, is still a part of the educational landscape of the UK. It can be be denied the option of learning more about religion. Some ecularists therefore religious education is acceptable so long as it is already the control of the educational though evangelical Christian belief in intelligible would have to be discussed as eit as a fringe view without means that religions are fringe view without means are fringe view.

The secular here revolves around the belief that religious ideas should no intellectual here revolves around the belief that religious ideas should no intellectual here as theories such as evolution. Dawkins in particular has been exposed to ideas such as creationism without effective disclaimers that they are scientific knowledge. What Dawkins ultimately holds is that this kind of uncritical not giving children the resources to rigorously analyse statements or proposition unwittingly endorse views that are irrational or mistaken. However, there are alcontend that religion should be banished from educational curriculums complete religion critically is giving it too much space, when there are more useful and implearn. Such a view is usually held by those who contend that religion as a whole categorically useless when it comes to explaining the world.

Perhaps the greatest issue, however, is simply that faith schools have a lack of or authorities. They are often free to pick their own curriculum and decide according teach students. However, it is important to also consider religious perspectives cassumes that religious thought is fundamentally irrational and dangerous, where their belief in God helps them to be better individed by such, it is not hard for religious education can add much to a child's less, accounting an awareness of spirit difficult ethical dilemmas. In fact, and so a balanced that Dawki indoctrination. Teaching of a particular split in their life, and so a balanced and comprehensively whether of the second process in their life, and so a balanced and comprehensively that the regalitarian option is to enforce a universally critical syllabus that learn, rather than leaving it up to the discretion of those in charge of a particular

Is the UK a Christian Country?

The question around whether the UK should be viewed as a Christian country is very politically charged. While some view it as simply an acknowledgement of the foundations and social identity of the UK as a whole, for others it has been deployed as way to deny the identity, existence and beliefs of other religions or even of those who are not religious at all! Part of the difficulty of assessing this question is that there is no easy way to define what it means to be Christian in the first place, for while the country as identifying as Christian in the population considered where the population considered when an eighth of those in the census.

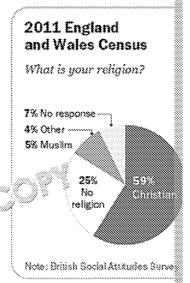


Figure 1: Graphic

Moreover, when other surveys are performed, such as the 2012 study by Pew Reto be fewer people identifying as religious. This has led to some suggesting that the way the question is worded, tends to make people, in effect, pick a camp.



However, at the same time, there do appear to be many ways in which the UK it broadly Christian. As you will study in Theme 4, Christian festivals are celebrated holidays often taking place on the major days of these festivals. Bishops still sit is Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Anglican Church, still plays a significant you will still find religious programming such as *Songs of Praise*, and emblems of the UK, from churches to crucifixes. In essence, just because individuals don't protect the country itself cannot be identifiably Christian, estable when so many organisations are built on Christian principles.

However, we can also question which are such thinking is a relic of the past that do attitudes. Secularisation which grow around the UK in all aspects of life whinfluential. Which was after festivals such as Christmas and Easter, these are refigures such as Claus being more prominent than Jesus. Similarly, there is concarnation, who more attention given to gift giving of presents and chocolate egattention given to scandals in the Church of England rather than its religious procomany have been critical of its past (and continued) stances on issues such as home

The rise of Britain as a more multicultural country is also an important aspect to this is due to forces such as immigration, many individuals also no longer subscri God, with many instead professing alternative spiritual views that don't chime we percentage of people who profess to have no religion has been rising steadily over outweigh those who identify as Christian. If this is the case, then should we respect the UK still has a Christian identity? What ultimately may matter is not the foundations but that present-day life and existence in the UK are not recognisable to hold that the UK has a distinctive religious identity, Christian or otherwise.

Discussion Activity:

Do you believe the UK should be a station country, or is this view mistal more secularised and many accountry? Discuss in pairs or small groups.

Governmen 2 na Keligion

While the issues explored in the last section are important, they still don't reflect ways that religious and non-religious views can come into conflict. In many ways religion in government is similar in nature to that of education. The major focus contributes to social ills when given too much of a space in political decision-mal the wider interests of those who are areligious or promoting views that are consunscientific. While many Western societies, including the UK, have a firm separa in reality the situation is a little more complicated. In the UK, for example, bishowhich scrutinises all key pieces of legislation by the House of Commons. More separties are regularly given donations by religious groups, and commentators ofte as the 'evangelical right' which can, in key states, strongly influence who gets elemight seem alien for British people, it is worth remembering that most prime micentury have still publicly professed Christian belief. So re is a n still plays an act government and policymaking.

Naturally, this attracts the ire of isome such as Dawkins, who often laments politics. Many conservative is included by the instance of politics. Many conservative is included by the instance of politics in its opposition, from his perspective, is not only scientification of the instance of preventing irrational dogma take precedence over reasonable critical thinking. The stance of religious thinking on political decision-making.



While naturally a difficult idea to implement, it is also perhaps more controversiand to a certain extent politics itself, is often described by thinkers as 'applied et political decisions one is making in the end draw on one's own (or others') ethical religious values are also their ethical values, should these not be taken into account other partisan groups get to influence political decision-making, why not religious the rejection of religion is simply due to its being irrational, but this of course is a shared by religious people themselves.

At the same time, it is easy to observe content eligious influences may have progress on key issues. From legiout a same-sex relationships to women's resought to interfere or proceeding the formula outcome for societies. Where difficulties emerge is preserving the freedomany theistically inclined people would support and not excluding religious persultogether where they may reflect the democratic will of a significant group of petherefore, more difficult than it appears. Even if one supports Dawkins' arguments be fairly implemented in society where many still consider religion to be important.

In the UK, for example, there was recently the case of a gay couple being turned adue to the owners' Christian beliefs about the immorality of homosexual relations in 2008, the gay couple, who were civil partners, sued the owners in Bristol Count unlawful discrimination. However, this victory paved the way for future appeals the being heard in the UK Supreme Court. While this might seem a trifling case at first about whether individuals should in effect be allowed to discriminate based on the Christians, this is a clear matter of freedom of religious expression. Society should they go against the grain of modern ethical thought, especially when it concerns the

At the same time, if such an argument is accepted if the mentially paves the way for discrimination on a greater scale. This hay the confidence to more vocally oppose and criticise the LGBTQ+ country. For example, while the gay couple won their case in the tree to court, in a similar case the US Supreme Court recently concluded courts. There, a gay couple attempting to buy a wedding cake in Colorado in 2012 were refused on a religious basis and in 2018, when the case eventually made its way to the Supreme Court, the couple lost, with justice Anth Kennedy stating 'religious and philosophical objections to gay marriage are proteviews and in some instances protected forms of expression'. While this was not to be a wide-ranging ruling by the court, it is important to note how such cases redivisions between religious and non-religious political views.

For many Christians, nonetheless, the case of the Cornish guesthouse is an exam system increasingly restricts the right to practise the Christian faith. For example employee refused to take off her white cross at work and was suspended as a recase that eventually went to the European Court of Human Rights in 2013. It rult that the employee had in fact been discriminated against that these difficult problems about the nature of discrimination. When certain religious view complaints that these are discrimination of same complaints can also be rate expression is restricted. However, as a parall analyse in the next part, these issues more as challenges for the expression for secular governments.





The Perceived Challenges to Christianity

While throughout this section various examples have been given where freedom seemingly under challenge, it is important to note that such challenges can also consequence of secularisation. Before the last few centuries, and even up until was an influential public force in British life. Its ethical principles were much mo fewer criticisms were levelled at the Church, which on the whole was seen as an Secularisation thus raises an important question: is front and freligious expression. Christian Church just now dealing with a society that wonger accords it special that have long held power or influence question.

This is an important consider, as the decline in role and status of the accompanity of the worries about the rights of Christians. However, with earlier concompanity the Cornish guesthouse, if LGBTQ+ individuals cannot refuse so be allowed the other way around? Moreover, if religious liberty for Christians ne others, can it really be said that this belief follows Jesus' example of compassion in the case of faith schools, it can be asked why any religion should view itself as a balanced and accessible education. This notion may in fact be a remnant of eximportance of giving children the critical tools they need to decide for themselve follow. The topic of exclusivism will be covered later in this theme, and during you how religious attitudes towards truth and salvation inform beliefs in freedom of

Nevertheless, the challenges faced by Christians can also be perceived to be opporthough potentially painful, may simply be a call for Christians to be more mindful others who do not share their views. Similarly, it might even suggest that Christian to criticise ideas that encourage discriminatory attitudes and should work toward holistic institution focused on the needs of the whole community, not just those emerge is a more secularised Christianity, but, despite the processations of more might ultimately be the direction in which Christianity has to grow to retain its re-

In this sense, secular criticis and property be an opportunity for Christianity to in the virtuous and property at the core of its teaching. While many conservative suggesting right for the religion to adjust itself at the whim of atheistic pagreater sens. Christian churches and groups have a duty to monitor themse and ensure their activities are reflective of the moral principles at the heart of the issues surrounding mission and evangelism, and although many denominations beconcerns around missionary activities, they are often seen as essential for church evangelistic enterprise where concerns arise as these often necessitate Christian convince others of the important truths behind the Christian faith.

To sum up, what is important to note is that challenges to Christianity in the mospositive and a potentially negative aspect. Moreover, such challenges may be no balance between freedom and equality for religious and non-religious people aliabandoning Christian spheres of influence, such as faith schools, or even ending However, such cases may well not be a restriction of religious liberty as much as Christian Church no longer holds the status it once disconnain to find other way the British community as a whole.





E: The Challenges from Science

We've noted many times in this course companion so far the intuitive way that so naturally conflict with a religious world view. In fact, you may recall that such ar Rudolf Bultmann, a theologian nonetheless! However, this tension or conflict cas an overly simplistic argument that misrepresents science as the foundation of ratexemplifying irrational thought be put forward without justification, for even a conscientific enquiry reveals a long list of failed theories which is a scientific result! Evaluating whether science and religion whether they truly clash when it compared us.

The Scientification and

There is still extensive philosophical debate as to what the scientific method is and how it relates to defining what science is (compared to non-scientific or 'pseudoscientific' disciplines). Roughly, however, we can say that the scientific method broadly encompasses the features in the diagram opposite. Researchers usually begin with a question about a feature or thing in the world which they seek to understand. They then might conduct some prior investigation into this question, seeing what past scientists have discovered before coming up with a **hypothesis** about their chosen question. A hypothesis is a proposed explanation for some phenomenon that has not been **verified** or **falsified** by study.

Once a researcher has a hypothesis (or even several hypotheses), they aim to experiment in order to test whether it is true. These experiments may well raise further issues in understanding the question, in which is see researchers may revise their approach or even the question, hat is calculated to get reliable experimental data that allow to develop a conclusion. This conclusion might be a singular or national at the develop answers to multiple and the singular or at theory that allows them to develop answers to multiple and hypothetical (like a hypothesis). Instead, it is an established ation or law that is confirmed or verified by existing experimental ata. Theories can certainly be proved to be wrong, but they also may well describe real states of affairs in the world.

Despite being a simplification, it is clear to see the general focus of scientific enquertain truths or facts about the world before investigating questions, and verify through rigorous observation and experimentation. This also means that scientifications about the meaning or purpose of objects unless contained within a spendenomenon. It is generally an **empirical** endeavour, looking at what we can lead observations and reasonable extrapolation. As such, it by and large views the we material objects, not asking what significance those objects have for human being for other material purposes. However, this perspective, as we will note, is very diversity look at some of the questions those who are religious tend to ask

The Religious Perspective

To summarise the religious world view in a paragraphs is inevitably an overs summarising the scientific oversion. It wever, those who are religious tend to a world and accordingly in a referent explanations. For one, there is no disting people device in the case of Christianity, people arrive at their beliewhether it is ingented in the Bible, having a religious experience or thinking about the yet behind each of these processes is often the idea that material explanations a or inadequate in explaining why things exist in the way that they do. There are is behind why human beings possess life and consciousness or why the world exist.



It is fair to say that some people don't question the world in this manner, and ther religion is no better at providing answers to these questions than science. However the world hold that their faith in a particular deity, person or belief system gives must be scientific enquiry can't. Some even hold that there is a kind of spiritual dimension world which can be investigated only through religious means. This is not to say the opposed to scientific enquiry but that they potentially have different scopes and a might be ethical in nature, such as the teachings Jesus give the ministry, or they mature, such as a creator being the explanation for the private exists at all in to note is that for the religious individual the providing and why, from their perspective that a quiry may be inadequate at providing

Still, not all wissessment of the religious perspective. For a key examprominent a religion when compared to science. It is his views we shall turn to find the science of the science of

Richard Dawkins

We've already partly explored Dawkins' views in Section D on the challenges Chr secularisation. There, we noted how Dawkins believes that religion is not only in harm. The best course of action is, therefore, to limit the influence of religion as faith-based thinking with a more scientific perspective on key political, social and our brief analysis of both the scientific method and the religious perspective, we credibility of this position. Are science and religion really at odds in the way Daw compatible in addressing different questions and parts of human life? First, we views before assessing a modern theological response to them by Alister McGrat

The God Delusion

The God Delusion (2006) is Dawkins' best-known of the conflict between so much broader scope than this issue, add a variety of criticisms of the religious by a variety of criticisms of the religious by is 'blind trust, in the above to what he begin in the teeth of evidence', and sin proportion is 's proportion' to the evidence, faith is by nature fundamentally irraworld where the explain the workings of the world using empirical evidence religion for guidance? In essence, Dawkins sets up a division between what he viscience and the irrational enterprise of religion, and this guides his approach to witheological issues throughout the book.

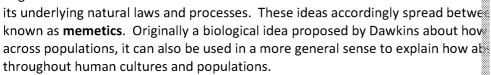
Perhaps the most important is Dawkins' reframing of religious discussion in scier in God should be construed instead as the **God hypothesis**. Simply put, if it is prethis claim should be put to the test in a similar way to any other claim that we mobjects. Moreover, the God hypothesis should be tested against other hypothese proposals about how the complexity of the universe can arise from simpler prince. Dawkins ultimately argues that such a process is essential if God is to be a meaning can in effect suppose any imaginary creature to exist such as a 'flying spaghetting for if faith is all that is required to believe in God, then one all did have faith in an improbable its existence and still be justified in or period belief. So, to summare that faith is ultimately irrational in nature the God hypothesis to evidential scruti





Dawkins and Faith

We can first question here Dawkins' picture of faith. Is calling it belief in the absence of evidence an oversimplification? If so, why do humans have faith in God? Well, Dawkins ultimately holds that faith is an infantile response to the world. It, along with religious thought, is at best 'an accidental by-product' of how the mind intentionally considers the world around it. In the absence of explanation for a particular aftire phenomenon, human beings and seek the provide answers for events the provide answers are wrong or causeless, the substantial answers are wrong or unnecessary such, a multitude of ideas or beliefs might form about the world which aren't connected to



Most importantly, memetics puts forward that the fittest ideas within a human oppopagate the most. However, the ability for an idea to survive is not necessarily reflects the nature of the world itself. Rather, its propagation is often due to how certain human desires about how they wish the world were ordered. In the case that at its core it presents a series of very attractive ideas. It gives a simple mess centred around one God, making it easy to understand and replicate among hum on faith also makes it difficult to reject, as belief in the Christian God does not have mpirical evidence. In fact, Dawkins contends that for our result of Christianity are cannot trust in powers beyond their control

Therefore, Christianity as a set explain the world around us. If belief were judg hypothesis, and apporthesis would be ruled out. Moreover, if Dawkins is conhave upon the portance of faith and submitting oneself to a higher power male objectively for its followers. They are fundamentally committed to an irrational fulfilling nature of Christian belief over its actual truth.

So, in sum, there are two key ideas here to digest. The first is that the faith respis a natural but misleading response to the apparent chaos and confusion of the Christianity as a religion embraces this faith within its belief system and orders it naturally attractive to human beings who are anxious or worried about this chao God looking out for human beings is certainly appealing in this context, and it is spread at the rate that it did. What Dawkins provides here is a **psychological** expelief. Through this, he is not seeking to disprove God entirely but put forward a about faith that is not couched in pre-existing ideas about God and his relationsh casts doubt on the notion that a vast array of religious possible and have their be

Furthermore, it reinforces the idea that is somety has progressed in knowledge world, scientific enquiry has been the role religion once had. The world who confusing is no long to the world is expected by the confusing is no long to the world is expected by the confusing is no long to the world is expected by the confusing is no long to the world is expected by the confusion of the world who world is expected by the confusion of the world who world is expected by the world is expected by the world who world who



The Design Argument

A central part of Dawkins' arguments against religion is not just that faith is irrat has little explanatory power when compared to scientific enquiry. Thus, even if the equation and try to demonstrate the importance of God through reason alor end. There is a huge number of arguments given for the existence of God based principles, but Dawkins singles out in particular the **teleological argument** or **arg** the philosopher of religion William Paley. This, as you will be aware from y holds the world itself displays evidence of being case its parts have a functionave arisen by chance alone. The best op a on therefore for this appearance considering the enormity and opinion of the world, is likely to be God. Paley, coming across a watch waterness. Even if one had no awareness of what the impres degree compared to a natural object such as a rock.

Dawkins, however, holds this argument both to be unscientific and fallacious at evolution and natural selection give a much better explanation of why there is the world. He makes fun of Paley in an earlier (1986) work titled *The Blind Watchma* comprehensively explains how complexity and function (or purpose) can arise in Thus, Dawkins holds that the design argument is fundamentally unscientific; it is antiquated religious thinking we identified in the last section on faith. However, design argument is a set of fallacies or errors that reveal themselves through this revelations about evolution and natural selection in the context of the design arguments for God.

First, Dawkins notes that design arguments don't end with Paley. There are 'fine-tuning' arguments, based at least in part on the notion of the **anthropic principle**: the belief that the universe is designed or built in a way to accommodate and sustain human "fine a larger scale level this might be the environment of the Fine, "con a larger scale this might be the way that certain in scrength of the gravitational force. For religious para there aspects that are in need of explanation (by a creator Gome to how improbable the existence of human beings is against this cosmological backdrop. However, Dawkins argues instead that, contrary to the religious person's inclinations, the existence of an incredibly powerful, intelligent, transcendent creator God is more **improbable** due to these conditions than **probable**.

Why is this the case? Well, just as with the design argument, science on the who states of affairs arise due to the interactions of simpler principles and origins. This due to evolutionary principles, while the cosmos is by and large determined by atomic particles around the universe. Therefore, if we were positing a hypothes would we not lead by scientific experience and hold it is more probable that it to interactions of more fundamental principles rather than a Go i who, in line with with contradictions and paradoxes due to his immens and Dawkins here appropriately accommonly mising the description mean the simplest expetitatione should not multiply explanting a cases beyond what is necessary. So why appeal to a complex craft when basic scientific principles will do?

We can elu this argument a bit further, however, by turning to Dawkins' cretermed the fithe gaps' argument. Through comparing the explanatory success of science throughout history.



The God of the Gaps

Dawkins' central argument is not intended to **disprove** God. This is important to intending to say that it is impossible that God exists. In his view it is perfectly postate of affairs where God did create the world. What he is arguing, as noted in of God is **improbable**; it is more likely than not that God does not exist. Since Daperson should proportion their beliefs to the evidence, or what is more probable rational person to believe in the existence of God. Sir and if you believe in the should be an atheist! Otherwise, one is subscalable gradient faith response

Let's tease this apart a little many thousen. How can Dawkins argue that science religion in explanation of Lawkins contends there has been a **regress** in explanation of the enquiry came to the fore, God was used to explain a vas natural work of comets to floods. Increasingly now, however, science explain and theologians increasingly have had to back away and claim that God instead recurrently off-limits to scientific knowledge. At first this might seem OK; can God things such as natural laws, cosmological constants and the universe itself? How examples of a **God of the Gaps** style argument. In other words, the gaps in scient evidence of God even if a comprehensive scientific argument for these gaps might

God of the gaps arguments are potentially guilty of what is sometimes called the words, they assume that because we are ignorant about some gap in our scientification gap must be supernatural in origin. However, the very same thing has been said issues such as the appearance of design in the world, so why should we assume ignorant about something, God is the best explanation? Dawkins ultimately hold providing explanations based on simpler, more basic principles is greater than the case of the creation of the universe, it is erroneous to suppose that because science means that God is a more probable explanation. In fact, it is precisely the oppose

Moreover, the God of the gaps argue is supposed by theologians suggest that explanation any more. Rat' any pothesis that under the weight of testing and so should disconstituted in religious person like the role God in religious thought, including Christianity. Religion is, therefore science, but awkins it is ultimately rendered irrelevant by science. Any confonly by religious people who refuse to accept this reality and maintain faith in God Throughout The God Delusion, Dawkins also makes a humanist case for a secular morality can be built upon biological ideas without reference to a creator God. A up on a meaningful life and is instead the product of a healthy, rational attitude

However, is this really the right picture of how religious belief functions? Do Chrahypothesis, designed to explain certain parts of the universe, or is the reality verdeeply affect the validity of Dawkins' arguments, for if the religious world view is with scientific explanation, then Dawkins' proposals might well be misleading. In Christian thinker who sought to challenge Dawkins' arguments in a book aptly na Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine.

Discussion Activity:

Do you believe Dawkins is corre that the growth of scientific knowle irrelevant? Discuss in raise and groups.

Alister McG

One of the main issues McGrath takes up in the first chapter of *The Dawkins Deli* idea of faith in religious belief. He argues the definition Dawkins gives of faith be evidence, even in the teeth of evidence' is very much underdeveloped, or even we considers the long lineage of theological discussion on the matter. In fact McGra Dawkins this poor definition is upheld primarily because it works for the polemic



religious belief. By setting it next to an elevated ideal of the scientific method, a evidence, Dawkins can effectively argue that if someone chooses to have faith, e deluded, although McGrath even argues that 'Dawkins does not offer a rigorous' In one of the first sections of the book, McGrath details a story of how, after a le Dawkins, he appeared to undermine the faith of an audience member whose be after seemingly accepting Dawkins' 'inadequate world view' without fully analys foundations. McGrath points out as a result that, regard whether one is a part in everyone's lives, and while it is important who be to not base their lives. equally important that one has the humi'a ecomise what delusions may un Dawkins-led atheist, being so certain the aligion is a delusion, may miss the delim to their own outlook. The main marises two through his ا کی ایک s that although religious belief is partially based on f tifiable. The second is that the wider arguments about religio reasonable' disclose his lask of knowledge and insight on religious matters. Analysing Dawkins on Faith

The first issue that McGrath addresses is Dawkins' contention that faith is infant. Dawkins regularly uses argument from analogy to argue against the validity of fabelief in Santa Claus or, more famously still, a flying spaghetti monster. The basi is all that is required to believe in God, then one could have faith in any other en its existence, and still be justified in one's own belief. However, McGrath notes really infantile in nature, often arriving later in life and from reasoning on life and he argues Dawkins conflates the religious indoctrination of minors with the since adults, arguing they are both the same, when they are very different. Simply be might believe in ideas based on their upbringing this does not mean the ideas are child believes in are not more refined and developed as an accide.

An example he gives of this is intended to deliver awkins' trust in science, possible verything is made of ators and science lessons without knowing understanding the complex and enind the atomic universe. In the same was believe in God of the season without knowing and evide modern the Forth for McGrath is not simply a state of uncritical belief but commitmen and what evidence can provide. It does not deny evidence and depending on the context, but Dawkins is wrong in arguing the religious person a simply a different kind of evidence from that which Dawkins is willing to admit, we God, inspiration through Scripture or an awareness of the limits of science and of

For example, we are commonly justified in believing that the external world around our senses, yet belief in the external world cannot be proved, nor is it necessarily of information we have about it is the signals from our own brain. To take a different illustrate this example by considering the work of the philosopher David Hurrinfluential analyses of **inductive reasoning**, a process of making a number of obsection about patterns and similarities in these observations. These conclusions argues, are commonly based on the idea that nature is uniform; things that we analytese remain constant if all conditions are kept the selection for a mein previous observations general observations of how things the struck.

However, Humanot is a logical gap in this reasoning. The idea that natural principle of the and effect is true, is not something a person can deductively known any other position, nor is it true by definition. It is only believed because uniformity of causes and their effects in the past. This means the idea of cause a inductive reasoning, which the individual striking the billiard ball then uses in the why the ball will move in a certain direction. This reasoning ultimately is circular reasoning using inductive reasoning itself. Hume concludes that there is a logical



that one can never prove why one thing necessarily has to be caused by another sun rising every morning, but there is no logical reason, only observation, to sug

Why is this important? Well, effectively it means that underlying our everyday lithings will be uniform, the kind of faith one cannot prove with empirical reasoning perhaps that the scientific method is not as grounded in reality as he might claim logical gap at the heart of inductive reasoning, one should be an extreme scent of assume the uniformity of things, but it still hint at it are are many times in things beyond reasonable evidence. Appropriately in jail might have faith in evidence that might be the case are a plant an individual might have faith that the market will turn a profit and appropriately of evidence showing there's no guarantee that science are a sewers to questions about the world around us does no being part a dinary person's life.

McGrath therefore does not disagree with Dawkins that there are examples of by that religious belief is uncritical and infantile in adults. In fact, he claims Dawkins accurate depiction of religious belief but using source material out of context in fundamentalism: to provide fuel for propaganda. One particular example he brighter than the argues he used to provide a quotation as evidence of early C was shown not to be have been uttered by Tertullian at all. As McGrath question impose religious, but not antireligious, dogmas and delusions?'

McGrath contends that Dawkins refuses to admit the contradictory evidence to ironically, his own atheistic beliefs are fundamentally irrational or even false. Pa Dawkins' perceived tendency to analyse Christianity purely from a sampling of from the moderate beliefs of most ordinary Christians. Naturally, for any it would be possible to discredit them based on the original of those who uncrit limits, including people who are atheists. Thus holders bawkins a fundamental theism is structured upon a one-sided with religious thought and his refusation of faith and religious beliefs.

The Existen 200 od

But what ab awkins' critiques of arguments for the existence of God? If fait should it not accommodate the diminishing explanatory power of the God hypot of faith, McGrath contends that Dawkins only really engages with philosophy of erecting easily taken down straw men in place of real discussion around deep an the case of Paley and the teleological argument he advances, many Christian wriconclusions, and the flaws in his argument have been pointed out by many philo Dawkins' criticism. Modern design arguments instead do not draw upon analogical watchmaker but instead point towards features of the world such as natural law scientific explanations but which, as foundational, do not have scientific explanations

In the case of Dawkins' probability argument, McGrath holds that Dawkins' argument, McGrath holds that Dawkins' argument is the cause something is complex, it doesn't mean it is necessarily more into a theory of everything, but it is equally easy to poir any complex scientific than ones historically preceding it; for example the complex of relativity versus Nethe universe. Thus, McGrath pushes the complex argument is being simpler necessarily mean it is between the case of Dawkins' argument, McGrath holds that Dawkins' argument, McGrath poir argum

McGrath notes issue particularly comes to the fore in the case of the unexperience beginning of the universe, only certain theories about it, and so know whether any alternative conditions could have been possible, save that an matter and antimatter at the Big Bang could have produced a vastly different entoday. McGrath reasons here that the puzzling aspects about the universe are of human beings exist to reflect upon them, and McGrath notes further that 'improve



entailed nonexistence'. While it may serve to help one appreciate the fine cond a theory that explains the existence of the universe and human life is inherently alternative universes that can be observed and judged against the one human be

So Dawkins is taking arguments about simplicity and complexity from an area in (within the universe) and applying them without precedent or evidence to an area applicable (outside the universe). This renders the probation argument invalid, probability of an unknown can't be measured by the is sown. In other words is not whether God is probable but whet'

The Limits of Science

In his critic os on the gaps style arguments, Dawkins presents the view the scientific encoes not necessarily have limits, or at least those limits are not knowable at present. Therefore, considering the success of science so far, it is wrong to try to identify gaps in scientific knowledge and claim God is a viable explanation. Here, McGrath actually agrees in part with Dawkins, saying that avoiding God of the gaps arguments is important and a 'good example of how a dialogue between science and Christian theology can lead to some useful outcomes', yet McGrath argues that Dawkins regressively pigeonholes the kind c explanations Christianity and other religions seek as 'God of the gaps' arguments and wrongly states that religion prevents advances in scientific knowledge, for while there are Christian fundamentalists who oppose scientific progress, most accept the validity of modern science. The question of God arises instead when people seek explanations for the world that are very different from the ones give by science.

McGrath cites in particular the theologian Richard in the who argues that of the universe as a whole requires explanation of the missing parts of our grasp and understand the world, and the property that understanding with increasing the question of why science is able to explain aspects of the universe the possess t

However, there are also more personal questions, along the lines of 'why somethed humans possess the tools to understand all the aspects of the universe that the science is fundamentally limited in its ability to answer these questions. It can esto evolutionary forces but not *why* it did. Such explanations have to appeal to idecommonly employ to describe the natural world. McGrath appeals in particular Gould's notion of **non-overlapping magisteria** (NOMA). In his 1999 book *Rock oprinciple* as follows:

Science tries to document the factual character of the world, and to develope explain these facts. Religion, on the other hand, any wees in the equally important human purposes, meanings, and with a popular that the factual domain of sever resolve. (Gould, Stephen Jay 2002)

This divisio the notation as we noted before, that science and religion don't each other, at it suggests is that, contrary to Dawkins' proposals, religion irrelevant by continued scientific discovery. Nor is the scientist committed to be not as a hypothetical explanation for various natural phenomena but as a source questions that science is incapable of answering sufficiently or meaningfully.



However, as a final word we can still question whether such a division still repression of the divine are simply a matter of subjective really a meaningful proposition at all? Could it not be that such questions are erand the universe simply a **brute fact** for which it is not appropriate to ask why? between science and religion, but this does not necessarily mean religion is useful kind of issues McGrath believes religion is in a position to address are just culture. Thus, even if one accepts McGrath's criticisms of Dawking an still be question justifies religious belief or whether it is a tacit admass on a situation is lack of explanator modern scientific and philosophical issue.

. ி. challenges from Pluralism and Div

The history jour thought is filled with prophets and thinkers claiming that the true knowled or grants the only means to salvation, Christianity included. More wars and conflicts over the inevitable arguments these claims bring about. As such than ever we are naturally sceptical of any individual who claims to have exclusive most religions are still reluctant to adopt a different stance, with many still holding special means to truth, knowledge and salvation. Considering the large number of and minor, this creates a distinct philosophical issue: how should religious individing religion makes, and how can these be reconciled with the contrasting claims of other standards.

This section will look at these questions in depth, examining three models of reliinclusivism and pluralism. While the main focus of these models will be Christia applied to almost any other religion that maintains some position about the absocialms. Similarly, while the issues analysed will seem quite abstract, they do have briefly mentioned in Section D how exclusivist attitudes greatly influence the way others, communicating with other religions and interpret their texts. In fact, able to be reconciled with each other is often directed abundant upon their will validity or reasonability of competing classic wever, before we get into such analyse the mentality that has defined to be considered throughout much of

In the contect of this mentality is that, for exclusivist Christians, other religions do not possess such means of knowledge or salvation and may only lead an individual towards condemnation. This might seem quite strict, but throughout the history of Christianity this was the view that most theologians held to some degree, although attitudes have shifted at various times. Many of the historical figures you will study in your A Level syllabus, such as Augustine and Luther, have adopted some variation of exclusivism, some more pointedly than others. This means that generally these thinkers have all held the view that those who do not have faith in Christ will be punished, regardless of the text they have led.

It is important to note that such exclusivest and fis have not always been a commof religion, particularly for pole distinctions. The emergence of Christianity apartially because Roman incidence of paganism was decidedly more pluralist in its angods and recommon beliefs of other cultures into its own during the conquest of other religious beliefs. Whether it be Gnosticism or Manichaeism, the journey to was paved by theologians explicitly rejecting some movements as heresy and make even if those movements were developed out of important philosophical concerns.



Nevertheless, it is also important to note that there are also potentially strong the based on the nature of Christian beliefs themselves. In fact, exclusivism as a whomatural conclusion of believing Christ to hold the truth or means to salvation. If distinctiveness of Christian teaching means that no other religion can be equally belief. Furthermore, many other key Christian doctrines arguably tacitly support beliefs about **predestination** and **election**, in positing that God preordains who exclusivist attitudes as they imply there are some individed who will have chose and those who will have chosen the wrong path.

Accordingly, many thinkers who could solve it would ear the libert of the Bible were thought it would ear the libert only Christianity holds the means to salvation other religion belief systems to criticise the foundations of Christian thought Christianity is often seen by proponents as a denial of the veracity of Scripture it noting that exclusivist attitudes do not always uphold this principle. Karl Barth, whought of as endorsing exclusivism, famously warned against upholding the Bibbelief was guilty of Bibliolatry. However, even Barth held that the Bible was still revelation in Christ such that it would be wrong to categorise Barth as a critic of

Overall, maintaining an exclusivist attitude towards Christian belief is arguably not thinking. For proponents, it is justified by a prior belief in the truth of Christ and are also key theological difficulties in reconciling exclusivist thinking with traditic example, it has often been criticised for the explicit (or at least implicit) idea that Christ will be punished. This stands in contrast with many of Jesus' teachings in emphasise the importance of good ethical conduct over religious observance. Excontext, this issue is still debated. Some argue that, under single predestination necessarily entail condemnation for those outside the Chapter in faith. R C Sproul only those who would willingly turn their back of Jerus Anowing he is the path to condemned, not those who are ignoration attains the condemned of the condemned of

Biblical Evidence for TN A This is is

The biblical process rexclusivism is often difficult to assess. Throughout the have studied aspects of Christian teaching that quite easily align with exclusione accepts Christian dogma to view the Bible as supporting it. Beliefs about the atonement are often detailed with the view in mind that Christ is the absolute sa Christianity itself as a religion is informed by a vast number of other religious and Perhaps the greatest support for exclusivism, however, comes from key passage Proponents often refer to John 14:6:

'Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to (John 14:6 NRSV)

John 3:16 carries a similar sentiment, proclaiming that 'God ... gave his only Son, should not perish but have eternal life' (NRSV). At first glance, both these passage attitude as they clearly state that only Christ provides the least only state that only st

Similarly, many passages in the Old Test and elem to present the view that Charles and even recognising the posterial validity of other religions or gods is covenant they have for a posterial valid.

You we the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your sou (Deuteronomy 6:5 NRSV)

'If you transgress the covenant of the Lord your God, which he enjoined on you, bow down to them, then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and good land that he has given to you.' (Joshua 23:16 N



However, we can question whether the Old Testament is authoritative in these requestion Jewish traditions and customs himself? Moreover, did Jesus not seek to place of the Old Testament God, who at times can appear capricious or overly justice.

Furthermore, there is an issue with the exclusivist passages taken from the Gosp aren't exactly mirrored by the Synoptics. John was probably written much later very different picture of Jesus' ministry. Some theologian— ue that this is due different sources, but others think that the autho action in their own ideas that Christian community they were part of vince in the section on inclusiving passages that don't seem to surge action. Christians cannot be saved, and these when considering the right and christians to hold. In fact, St Paul himself disconding to the considers the fates of those who cannot hear Jesus the earliest of the Christian Church, the potentially exclusionary nature of

So, overall, while Scripture does potentially contain evidence for exclusivism, it is questioned under a more critical approach to the Bible. If this is the case, though be prominent in Church doctrine throughout history?

The Church and Exclusivism

When looking at the history of exclusivism, it is important to note the role of the for instance, the Catholic Church – adopt the principle of extra ecclesium nulla soutside the Church'. This means that it is not enough simply to follow the teachin God. One has to be a member of the Christian community, which, in the eyes the keys to salvation through tradition and worship. However, the nature of the denomination to denomination. For Catholics, it refers specifically to the Romar priesthood and other clergy whose authority can be traced back to Jesus through Protestant denominations, the 'Church' often has a loge sea inition, pointing in body of Christians around the world. However, it gar is so of the definition of 'C ecclesium nulla salus is often seen as so that is order to give meaning to practic communion.

Note, thou is pressential to subscribe to such views and be an exclusivis salvation is ed through Christ without referring to the Church, but beliefs denominated exclusivist discourse throughout much of Christian history, and the *Dominus lesus* (2000), a declaration by Pope John Paul II, he reiterates strongly tonly Church to guarantee salvation through Christ. It also firmly rejects any form gives credence to other faiths outside 'what is true and holy in these religions'. pointed to inclusivist elements in the declaration, it does contain many exclusivis argues that in matters of salvation non-Christians are 'gravely deficient'.

One final important point is that although many denominations still maintain excregard each other as heretical any more. Instead, they often talk of schismatic dand generally avoid declaring any followers to be misguided about the means to many might claim to the true 'Church', in reality there is often much more agree key issues. However, at the same time the truth of Chris coctrine is still precultimate saviour, and it can be contended that if mis contacts, then severe disother faiths which present similar doctrines for we look at arguments for in look at why modern theologians and support exclusivism on a more philosoph

Modern The and Licrusivism

One apolog with an attitude in the last 100 years has been Hendrik Kraeme extensively immission work throughout his life. The starting point for his exclusion Christ as saviour, although this plays an important part, but the fundamental disargues that regardless of whether certain religions (for example, Abrahamic faith beliefs, they all profess their God or prophet to be the saviour and accordingly the religions that cannot be overlooked when thinking about truth and salvation. The



approach the question of exclusivism from a Christocentric position. His main position out beliefs and practices that appear to be points of contact or connection from reduces other religions to mere bundles of teachings, when they are whole belief have to be appreciated in their entirety. To engage in trite inclusivism is to either religions or fail to do justice to the ideas they present.

Kraemer's exclusivist position holds a certain impartial ar As we will explor pluralists often struggle to identify similarities or an era as between religions differences. However, there are other productions are theological arguments. Christocentric in nature. Karl Boran, however, has occasionally been identified importance he attaches to a week of Christ in his theology. In particular, Bart that human holds a certain importance he attaches to a week of Christ in his theology. In particular, Bart that human holds a certain importance he attaches to a week of Christ in his theology. In particular, Bart that human holds a certain importance he attaches to a week of Christ in his theology. In particular, Bart that human holds a certain in his theological arguments.

Barth and Exclusivism

We can elaborate on this more. Barth argues that the revelation given by Jesus Christ is ultimate. This means that Jesus Christ, for Barth, presents the true path to salvation, and, if this is accepted, then it must be necessarily accepted that all other religions can only mislead. From this idea, Barth develops the argument that religion itself is human work and contrary to revelation, which comes from faith in Christ and the Triune God. This revelation, for Barth, is a dynamic event, sent from God through the Word that is mediated through Jesus Christ. What is key is that human beings find salvation through this connection between God and the world, through Christ himself, through Scripture as witness to through ecclesia, the preaching of this witness. Religion, or Figure 1, is a separate entity which concerns itself with sanctifi at a hrough various rituals and rites that are performed in ording our constand God better. However, since revelation is freeling in My God, there are no natural points of contact bet This means lie of treelf inherently possesses no value. The only reason Ch ey engage with the revelation of God that he has freely given... religions, because they do not engage with this revelation, can only be considered

This background is important to appreciate when evaluating whether Barth is exsurface, it might appear that Barth is clearly endorsing exclusivism. If other religion contact with God, then surely this means that Barth is naturally presenting Christother faiths? However, the situation is not this clear-cut. Although Barth preservable means to salvation, his theology also emphasises the freedom of God's gracintellect, for acknowledging that religion is human work also means, for Barth, as have no real knowledge about God's plan for salvation or the reasons why God coway that he does. Therefore, human beings cannot make judgements about who such decisions or actions by God are ultimately unknowable. In practice, this me out that those of other religions do not possess some patients advation, even if it himself to human beings.

Some of Barth's critics have such size with thought here slides into **pluralisti** human beings will be some at the later of religion or life. However, this is perhaps A better into at the later of the Barth is somewhat **agnostic** about the natural for although is a clear path given by God through the revelations presented not the place of human beings to judge for themselves the reasons by which God places Barth closer to inclusivism, for the possibility of other religions sharing in salvation is not wholly excluded.



Ultimately, what discussion of Kraemer and Barth reveals is that exclusivism can perspectives and does not simply arise from dogmatic belief in one faith. It can be to the differences between various religions and the inability of human beings to salvation. Moreover, it may be that there is not a clear dividing line between except this closeness is for some a clearer indication that exclusivism itself is a the next part of this section we turn our gaze towards **inclusivism** and analyse we account of modern Christian belief.

Inclusivism

Inclusivism, in respect to Chris be be an interest to the view that although Christics salvation, other religions passess partial knowledge of this means. Typically, it is possible to an aristians to be saved, even if their respective religions can their teaching ne. As such, in comparison to exclusivism, Christian inclusivist conception of election, believing that Jesus died for all of humanity's sins, not just preordained to salvation by God. Similarly, inclusivists may also have a more postheology as, if multiple religions can share in knowledge of God and salvation, the of contact between God and human beings separately from revelation in Jesus C inclusivism can be seen as a broader attempt to reconcile the idea of a benevole. Christian faith, for if God is all-loving, it would be an unintuitive proposition to cloor no religion at all would be condemned, even if they led a good life. As such, no have attempted to provide accounts of how those living good moral lives might the beliefs they hold.

However, Christian inclusivists may have a variety of different viewpoints, even is other religions possess important theological insights. Where inclusivism in part is that it avoids some of the pitfalls of exclusivist attitudes while not sliding into significance of revelation through Jesus Christ. Furthering explanation between dareligions, as it implies that, at minimum by might share some teachings or bell Churches have been seen the wards more inclusivist positions in the last many key the parameters, it is worth considering how inclusivist attitudes might considering materials.

The Development of Inclusivism

We noted in the section on exclusivism that there are some significant Bible pass only Jesus Christ holds the keys to salvation, yet at the same time it was also que be interpreted in light of not only the historical development of the Christian fait intentions of the Gospel writers. This debate is particularly important for inclusive exclusivist attitude towards Christian teachings is not coherent when one consident Christianity and other religions. For a start, we can note that Jesus himself was Jeministry it is likely that he saw himself as a Jew, leading a renewal of or break with As such, Jesus often refers to Jewish law, the prophets of the Old Testament and in his teachings to help those listening understand their meaning and relevance

More transparently, we already noted that most the local insight into the nature of the local insight in the local insight insight in the local insight in the local insight in the local insight in the local insight insight insight in the local insight insight insight in the local insight in the local insight in the local insight insight insight insight insight in the local insight in



This idea is not just limited to religious thought. Christian theology throughout hareas of philosophical thought to influence its ideas. Some historians, for examp Jewish philosopher Philo, who synthesised Jewish teaching and Greek philosophe and the concept of the Logos. Perhaps more significantly, Aquinas and other medrew on Aristotle to help illuminate fields such as natural law, while Platonism is influence on many early Christian theologians. As such, an exclusivist may well sphilosophies could not possess certain knowledge of God livation if they ma Christian teaching over all other religious thought.

Such issues were appreciated by many with early Church Fathers. Although it whistory has revolved around a must statitudes, many early theologians consider appropriate a must sust in Martyr, for example, argues that those who peven if they aware of it, can arguably be considered to be on the path tow. Tertullian purporward that when a culture denies the influence of another on it fact a tacit admission of its influence, for in order to reject a school of thought, of acknowledge how one's own ideas have evolved either separately or away from point, however, is that religions do not arise in a vacuum and as such it is impossible has exclusive access to the truth about God and salvation when it has been so despends thought.

Although such views might not have enjoyed extensive popularity with later the Christian thought were less accessible, they have been raised once again in recein particular is mirrored in the writings of one of the most important Catholic the century: Karl Rahner. It is to his ideas that we shall turn to next.

Karl Rahner and 'Anonymous Christians'

Karl Rahner's inclusivist theology primarily aims to 200 et wo different principal Christus, the idea that it is only the atonemy of a us on the cross that allowed grace. Without this action of Jesus and gues that people would not be able principle is that any religion and salvation while acknowledged account in the control of the con

Rahner's solution is not to suggest that all religion must incorporate Christian ide those of other religions may in fact live their lives as anonymous Christians. This virtues embodied by Jesus in the Gospels and so has implicitly accepted God's grunaware of it themselves. What's interesting here is that, in endorsing this idea explicitly denies a principle that the Catholic Church continues to hold today: that the idea that salvation can only be found in the Church. Instead, Rahner argues open Catholicism, a central tenet of which is that Catholics should not be wholly open to the idea that those of other religions might fine the and salvation through the idea that those of other religions might fine the and salvation through encompasses all who follow its teach in the lives. This does not demean the Rahner. The natural depraying the visible Church still has a duty to proselytise to the However, the designing the essential role of the Church, Rahner allows for the lives to be salvations of their adherence to the visible signs of the Christian



Rahner and Scripture

The philosophical support Rahner gives for his inclusivism is much the same as that in this section. Rahner argues that God is revealed not just in the historical me whole of creation. One example is St Paul's sermon in Acts 17 at the Areopagus, Athenians' 'unknown God'. Similarly, Rahner acknowledges the importance of C before Jesus when individuals were aware of God's presence but unable to be example in the Christian faith was an essential and God's plan, it is no reveals himself to human beings, and there is a veriety of Ways that individuals no understand his being and work outside of the Control of the Contr

However, the key act and a container's proposals is that many of the more exclude the there are makes as in the Bible which do assert the uniqueness of Jesus Christ taking a very liberal approach to scriptural analysis, they are difficult to reconcile other equal sources of divine authority in other religions.

'There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given be saved.' (Acts 4:12 NRSV)

Not only do passages such as Acts 4:12 still make sense, but the original ideas preparation perhaps retain an even greater relevancy. Moreover, Rahner avoids sliding into no one religion has some exclusive or unique access to the truth about salvation idea of **Christian universalism** is endorsed: the belief that Christ died for everyor beings have the possibility of salvation through Christ. Finally, it seems as if Rahpromise of better interfaith dialogue offered by inclusivism. It supports a health **tolerance**, accepting the validity and partial truth of other faith traditions while sultimate path towards salvation. So what bad things we possibly say about will take a look at a few in the next part.

Criticisms of Rahner

Rahner's ideas night with seem attractive. They preserve the role of Jesus Critime acknowledge with people of other religions might share in this salvation. about anony Christians were and still are highly controversial. Among Cath undermining the role of the Church in mediating salvation. The Catholic Church, the authority of its teachings and traditions by referring to apostolic succession; it is not just Jesus who mediates salvation but the Church as a whole, supporting nulla salus in the process. However, Rahner's rejection of this doctrine severely clergy and effectively contends they are far from essential in matters of salvation of Rahner's theology is that sacraments such as the Eucharist (communion) are a be found outside the Church, what role should be accorded to any Christian pract

The criticisms of Rahner's thought always carry another difficult implication. The suggests not just that Christian practice is inessential but also that Christianity as matters of ethics. This was an objection put forward by a contemporary of Rahn argued that if individuals can be saved without practising by visible signs of Christianity itself is nothing more than a guid of the principle of the criticisms overlook his and probjection still poses an issue for Christian conception of the Christian and ethics.

A final issue are many whether Rahner's inclusivism is conversely insulting or 'pa' Critics such as mans Küng have argued that defining those of other faiths as anor presumptuous about their understanding of their religious beliefs but also reduce extensions or versions of Christian thought. It can, therefore, be reasonably argureligions would resist such a characterisation of their views if they hold a sincere importance of their faith. Rahner's theology doesn't really 'include' other religions.



form palatable to Christians, for while it can be contended that Rahner is speaking towards other faiths, it can also be thought that his adherence to the principle of endorsement of an exclusivist attitude that implicitly denies the wisdom and insign

So it might seem that exclusivism is inevitable if one seeks to guarantee the authoristian Church. But what if these weren't authoritative? What if they simply women unique than any other? These questions were addressed by an influential and will be the focus of the final part of this section.

Discussion Activity:

Do you think Rahner is an infeconciling traditional Christian teachings woutlook, on the properties of the differences between religions? Discussions of the properties of the

Pluralism

Religious pluralism, in contrast to exclusivism and inclusivism, holds that no one access to or knowledge of God and salvation. This equally means that, for plural different ways to salvation, and multiple religions might possess equally valid claeven if they present competing beliefs or principles. However, with these basic of different ways of interpreting pluralism. On the one hand, religious pluralism reasoning about the fallibility of the human intellect and the varieties of thought human beings are not equipped to judge what is and what is not the right religio it is necessary to acknowledge that each religion may have a valid claim to know On the other hand, some pluralists hold that if one analyses the competing claim possible to observe how they all are simply different forms of underlying univers all religious enterprise. Such ideas are often based on the concept of **philosophi**—that there is a single metaphysical truth from which all and or religious knowledge and or religious knowledge that call themselves Perennialists or, not call money. Traditionalists

Throughout the history of Christianity, suralism has been a rare proposal from theologians. The belief is que nature of Jesus Christ and the theology that arises from theologian, John Hick (who will be the focus of this section has arguably opened up the discussion in Christian circles to consider pluralism a viable model of Christian faith. In his 1993 work *God and the Universe of Faiths*, presents a detailed outline of how Christian pluralism is not just a valid but a justifiable position to take with respect to other religions, and much of his subsequent writing has helped flesh out this vision through discussion of a myria theological and philosophical issues.

Hick's central contention is that when one considers the various dimensions and claims and ends of various religions, it is a more viable solution to search for the emphasise their differences. Moreover, despite the claims of critics, he also argureligious pluralism does not reduce to relativism. For Hick, holding that all religional valid claims to knowledge of salvation is not the same as an angle of the proposal of the recognises that all religions are not and the pluralism through respecting the common goals. Moreover, Hick can the proposal of the pluralism itself? This we shall cover in the next part of this



The Evidence for Pluralism

We analysed in the section on exclusivism the argument that acknowledging reliwith competing claims can easily lead to exclusive mentalities, yet in the introduction how these competing claims may potentially not be real disagreements but reflect different religions undergoing various forms of growth. But how is it possible to Hick does not present one avenue towards choosing one presentation over another characterised as a complete overhaul of the assumption of the Christian faction proceed by analysing its parts, and it is no essention to appreciate the various reasons Hick has for presenting a very line and world view from that of Christian orthodoxy.

The first are by a reason Hick gives for pluralism is his belief in a benevole all-loving Go and do never condemn anyone to eternal punishment, regardless a leads him in turn to endorse **pluralistic universalism**, the idea that all human being regardless of life, religion or beliefs. We won't delve into this aspect of Hick's the number of views that are unusual for a Protestant theologian. One is that he are purgatory, contending that an intermediary state between life and the afterlife is universalism, as it means individuals can come to understand the moral nature of saved. Another is that Hick is ultimately a materialist. He does not believe that to human beings; such a belief is anathema to modern scientific findings. Instead afterlife God creates a sort of 'replica' of each person, comprised of their material

You don't need to know these aspects of Hick's thought in depth when evaluating to note that Hick is far from orthodox in his beliefs and these help inform his plus individuals are eventually saved, the exclusivity of Christianity is automatically to will eventually reach salvation due to God's benevolence, and it may be that Chrispaths that help human beings understand this proces.

The second and perhaps equally imposite it as on is the limitations of the human reflected in the immaturity of light itself. Hick's viewpoint is based not simply God but on how individual blue to possess their religious beliefs and the poter Importantly as a smether there is any independent way to rationally justify another, ulturally concluding that there is not. Taking a step back from our ow an incredibly wide range of spiritual and religious viewpoints across the world, ye experiences of ineffable, transcendental realities that cannot be proved using contact the case of Christianity, Judaism or Islam, the being and motives of God are larger religions such as Buddhism, higher states such as nirvana are wholly indescribab

What Hick argues (just like Barth) is that natural theology, or any other 'rational' justify belief in one religion over another. In any argument for a particular conce is always contradictory evidence to dispute its claims. Each religion may have go but these are by and large not based on independently analysable evidence but major figures. However, at the same time Hick notes that nearly all religions have reality and a way or path human beings can take to engage with that reality and process. What this indicates for Hick is that the most cohors it position to take is religion over another as preaching the truth about as a salvation but to view accessing an underlying reality or level of as a may have some partial knowledge can claim exclusive access 1... whethere

However, timately only an outline of Hick's work. Before we assess whe Christian fail worth exploring the more philosophical side of Hick's work and for theology in the future.



Religious Experience and the 'Real'

In the last part, we noted that, for Hick, there was no rational way to justify belief what are the grounds for religious belief? Hick contends that it is primarily **religion** their heart, he claims, are based on the different experiences individuals have has underlying reality and their attempts to get to grips with what they have experiences are naturally **private**, **incommunicable** and often **ineffable**, there is being in relating them to others, let alone understanding a overall implication as a whole. In fact, religious experience may itselie to be communicated artistic language, which can perhaps make the language and relating the strange and relating the s

More importantly, if religious the enence is the foundation for religious beliefs, the actually true and experiences of God. What this means is that no religious influences a straints upon human experience. These include the very cate to understant experience, the cultural influences upon the way we experience the circumstances of this experience. For Hick, this does not mean that religious experienceded the experiences originate from the same of the experience of the same of the experience are affected by the subjective elements of our which results in the differences in religious belief we can observe today.

By detailing the grounds for religion in this way, Hick seeks to avoid charges of relativism and separate himself from philosophers and theologians such as Don Cupitt, who advocate non-realist interpretations of God and religion. He employs categories developed by the philosopher Immanuel Kant in order to fur illustrate how a realist, pluralist position on religion is possible. Kant distinguished between what he termed the noumena (things-in-themselves) and the phenome (the things that appear). The phenomenal world is, the search the world as experienced by human beings, whereas the noun engage or a was fundamentally inaccess to human beings, who could contain the phenomenal world due to the structures of experience of experience occurring in the phenomenal world. Whatever tiles is, it is inaccessible to human beings except through the structheir experience.

So Hick, along with his initial evidence for pluralism, gives a deeper philosophica the competing truth claims of religion. However, if this account is true, it stands truth claims of most religions, which generally hold that they alone have exclusive salvation. So how does Hick resolve these tensions between his world view and is this aspect of Hick's thought we shall analyse next.

Demythologisation and Global Theology

Although Hick himself was a Christian, it would be unfair to characterise his theo of his work on pluralism was aimed not just at Christians but at people of all religions are the development of a **global theology**, and the compares of different faiths. between his perspective on religion to the shift in belief in the heliocentric matter the shift in the heliocentric matter the heliocentric matter the shift in the heliocentric matter the



However, Hick also argues for reanalysing and redefining many key Christian con the Bible, the source of Christian beliefs about the world, is far from reflective of of the scientific knowledge we possess about the nature and form of the universexpected under Hick's proposals, since the experiences of the Gospel authors an influenced by the language, culture and historical circumstances under which the means that whatever essential truths are contained with the Bible are buried with have to be picked apart by modern audiences. Simply public Bible for Hick is no wholly fallible witness to the experiences that his an all prividuals had of the Re

Therefore, Hick holds that, in ord and it is the core teachings and truths of the demythologise the storic and attempt to discover the historical being, however the historical being, however the historical being and attempt to discover the historical being however. The historical section is a supple with the real section in the creating modern audiences but should be undertaken as way to discover the historical section in the real section is such as the Trinity or the incarnation, which Hick argues have been previously different ideas from the myths surrounding section if it is his humanity. Recognising the mortality of Jesus and the power of his ordinary human beings, he holds, is arguably more inspiring than the divine pict. Christian Church. More importantly, however, it means that, for Hick, Jesus did relationship with God, and so the assertions within traditional Christian thought exclusive access to the means of salvation are ultimately unwarranted.

Through this section, it should be possible to see how Hick's pluralism is based nentire overturning of the assumptions made by many religions, including Christia benevolent, if the claims of religion should be judged against various different for if no religion can rationally justify its claims over those the her, then there are Hick's pluralist approach might provide the most one sit attitude towards eval. Nevertheless, each of these claims can have been made of Hick's arid link.

What do y we a global theology would look like? Write down at least the believe religious discourse could intersect. Then, once finished, compare with you agree on examples? If not, why not?

Evaluating Pluralism

It was noted earlier in this section that Hick's pluralism is quite contentious, and does it deny Christianity exclusive access to the means to salvation but it also de theological teachings that are often perceived to be central to the Christian faith have, therefore, argued that religious pluralism simply strays too far from conveit be the process of demythologisation itself or the dismissal of key aspects of the accounts, it can be argued that Hick's pluralism makes Christianity itself meaning moral teacher on a par with any other secular figure, and the best is little to inspire viewed as wholly human. However, such a view is particularly also misleading. The pluralistic views is as much to do with the pluralistic views at the heart of Challis belief that no one religion care and particularly exclusive claim to the truth about beliefs have to change for the pluralistic views is a such to still be reasonable and meaningful whe extent of manual pluralistic views is a such to still be reasonable and meaningful whe extent of manual pluralistic views is a such to still be reasonable and meaningful whe extent of manual pluralistic views is a such to still be reasonable and meaningful whe extent of manual pluralistic views is a such to still be reasonable and meaningful whe

Moreover, the are good reasons to believe that Hick may be right about his the work has gone into developing viable accounts of election in order to explain who beings to be condemned while saving others. Is it not just simpler and more combenevolent God would eventually save all human beings, regardless of their actions.



be that this process of salvation is longer and more painful for those who do converlooked that philosophically Hick's ideas may be fundamentally sound.

However, it also possible to criticise Hick from the other end of the spectrum. He Real' as representing an actual being or thing that exists outside our perceptions contained in the noumenal world? Non-realists might contend that Hick is assured committed to ideas such as demythologisation, he should and this to his belief may be that there is no one underlying cause and and the myriad different physical themselves in different ways depending a specific propositions about and a specific propositions about and a specific proposition of the commitment to a realistic portrayal of Christian own ideas!

Alasdair McGath makes a similar point here, contending that Hick provides no veconnection between the 'Real' in the noumenal world and religious experience is not only leads to questions about whether there is a Real but also makes it imposhas had a genuine religious experience in the first place. Similarly, it can be quest constitute a genuine religion with meaningful access to truths about salvation. Further that Satanism should be considered to possess the same privileges as Christianit has argued that Hick is still closer to inclusivism as his authentic religious experies or maligned faiths which do not possess reasonable or valid spiritual beliefs.

Therefore, even if Hick's pluralism does possess some theoretical advantages, he fleshing out the exact dimensions of the 'global theology' he proposes, yet with the development of interfaith dialogue, it may be that his vision is unwittingly re

- 1. What is freedom of religious expression
- 2. Give three examples of why the still be called a Christian country.
- 3. What is a God of the configurat?
- 4. What are nor the ping magisteria?
- 5. What principle does Dawkins appeal to when trying to argue less pare than his non-existence?
- 6. Give a Bible verse that is viewed as evidence for exclusivist attitudes towa
- 7. What is Solus Christus?
- 8. What does Hick believe is at the heart of all religious experience?





THEME 4: RELIGIOUS PRACTICES T RELIGIOUS IDENTITY (PARTS 1

What you will learn in this section

- D. The theological discussion around ecume ic fet in the Christian Churck
 - how the modern ecumenics ് ച ഉറപ്പെ developed from the World Mi
 - the beliefs and missis of the World Council of Churches, including dial ecumonical forms on
- w th World Council of Churches has succeeded in its ecumenical E. The the wal debate around the ideas and goals behind the Charismatic N
 - how the Charismatic Movement developed in the twentieth century are Christian denominations
 - the main beliefs and practices of the Charismatic Movement
 - the various religious, philosophical and scientific challenges faced by th
- F. The theological debate around the aims and goals of liberation theology, in
 - the political, ethical and religious foundations of liberation theology
 - the thought of Gustavo Gutiérrez and Leonardo Boff, particularly in relapresented to the Catholic Church
 - the Catholic Church's response to liberation theology and its theoretical

Starter Activity:

What do you know about Marxism? The term is often used in a political context Write down three examples of how you have heard in a political compare progress through Section F in this theme.

Key Thinker	
Name	် Gutiérrez
Born	1928
Died	N/A
Key text	A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation (19
Why are they important?	Gutiérrez is a Peruvian philosopher and theologian who was
	development of liberation theology in the 1960s in particula
	importance of the preferential option for the poor.
Did you know?	Gutiérrez' interest in the Christian faith was spurred on by h
	teenager due to being afflicted with osteomyelitis, which he
	importance of hope and prayer.

Key Thinker	
Name	Leonardo Boff
Born	1938
Died	N/A
Key text	Church, Charism 4 . P Ner: Liberation Theology and the Ins
Why are they importan	Boff was a harkey figure in the development of liberation to the judgment of liberation to the structure.
Did you know?	Boff has been routinely silenced by the Catholic Church thro prevented from attending various conferences and summits



Introduction - Modern Influences on Christian Identity

We've noted before when looking at feminist theology or theories of the atonen both secular and religions, in the last century have greatly influenced modern Ch categorise such influence as merely theoretical is a mistake, for the modern era way Christianity is practised around the world. These changes have taken place degree, Christian denominations have seen a push tower of influences. This has seen what used be more significal theoretical transfer of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the property of the property of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of the place of the atonen common spiritual ground and ways of the place of t

At the same time, however many also been a great diversification in the way the world. The provide is the growth of the **Charismatic Movement**, especially and technologically, many Christians have four many traditional denominations, especially those whose liturgies had been large. This led to many seeking alternative ways to express their faith and a large number Churches which embraced unconventional forms of worship. Moreover, the emport of faith proved appealing to those who wished for a more dynamic element to the

Finally, in this section we will explore liberation theology, a Christian movement elements of political theory to form a system of thought which valued moral practice theology was not only greatly influential in South America, where it found most directly with the Catholic Church over a number of decades. Perhaps most context Catholic hierarchy by its figureheads Gustavo Gutierrez and Leonardo Boff, who changes they believed should be implemented in the Catholic Church.

For the moment though, we turn to our first major topic: the **Scumenical Mover** last 100 years.

P: ನa ್ರುಪಾs Identity through Unificat

Ecumenism is a term of describe the various efforts different Christian den undertake the various efforts different Christian den undertake the various efforts different Christian den undertake the various efforts with each other. We have referroughout mpanion, but in this section the concept will take centre stage ways that churches across the last century and a bit have sought greater cooperadenominations. The term 'ecumenism' itself comes from the Greek 'oikoumene whole inhabited world', and hints at the potential of efforts to develop a single why would such a result be an aim of Christians today?

Well, any ecumenical effort has to be considered in light of the historical conflict. Church. It has never been a monolithic faith throughout its entire existence, who early Jewish Christians or during the Reformation, when Christians split into now Protestant traditions. Even throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries upheavals, with the rise of many evangelical movements and the loss of a lot of such as the French Revolution. While to a certain degree historical schisms heal scars in the various Churches that underwent them and the life ill haven't disappet them, the introduction of the filioque clause. You have seady studied in light of Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

So in an important sense comminations hope to both repair the schisms of the past arise again a uture, for while there may be significant differences in doctrin denominations, all are arguably united in having Jesus as their figurehead and te important way, this unity arguably should be stressed over what differences the the divisions that separate them worshipping together overcome.



However, you may well have noticed that there is still some ambiguity here in the Are they performed simply to ensure all Christian denominations get along, or is important thing to note is that while many Christian Churches and movements a few are agree on what the short-term and long-term ambitions of ecumenism should Christian Church) might just mean good intra-faith dialogue, without any correvising doctrine. However, some might take a more radical approach and argue denominations should seek to unify under similar teaching and form a singular spread the Christian message across the world. In Some over such aims Christian denominations to pull away from the sain summerical efforts in order to

Nevertheless, first it is useful a look at the starting point for most modern former. It is the **World Missionary Conference** in 1910.

The World Mannary Conference

Throughout the nineteenth century, there was a concerted effort by many Protestant Churches to engage in missionary works around the world. This period of time in particular saw transport become increasingly open to everyday people, and many missionaries saw the British Empire as a suitable opportunity to proselytise in other countries that had not been extensively exposed to the Christian faith. Nearly all Protestant denominations were involved in some way or another with these effects of the Church Mission Society, an organisation set up in 1799 by the Church of Exposed to the Church of Exposed to the Church of Exposed to the Church Mission Society, an organisation set up in 1799 by the Church of Exposed to th

Why are these efforts linked to ecumenism, though? Well, in the latter half of the disparate Protestant missionary efforts that were being undertaken weren't always Tensions often emerged between missionaries and local communities in non-European to acknowledge that if the long-tension of missionary efforts sustaining churches in different countries, there you are a dissionary Conference (WMC), a Protestant missions set up across are a poweenth century.

The WMC to accept the first and 23rd June of that year, and over 1,200 de Protestant ary societies. It is important to note that no figures from Cathinvited, and any a few Catholic Anglicans attended. Furthermore, the WMC was taken place around supporting Protestant missionary works. Previously, smaller London in 1888 and in New York in 1900. Furthermore, the organisation of the being formed, which researched different topics around mission and each product o delegates and formed a major part of the presentations and discussions during

Although this might seem less incredible now in an era when communication is enthis was a huge endeavour at the start of the twentieth century and marked perprospect of Protestant unity was raised. The call to evangelise had a sense of unmovements and denominations under one cause and kick-started an internation persists until the present day. It proved that under the right circumstances and denominations could not only develop good relationships but work with each of

However, at the same time we can note a few project of this conclusion. The file ecumenical efforts involved only Project in A 2 mominations. What of the Cathol Moreover, they included only a great as from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest up in other count is a serious from missionary societies and not any frest u



The World Council of Churches

The success of the WMC in 1910 was a rallying call not just for Protestant denomenance Christian churches and traditions across the world. In 1920, for example, the Econorthodox Church wrote a letter that urged all Christians to cooperate more and organisation similar to the League of Nations, which had just emerged after the example that the Econorthogonal States are well received by most church leaders and by 1937 it was agreed Churches (WCC) should be established, although its book and was delayed by the War. However, on 23rd August 1948 delegates of (4°) therent churches assemble existing movements to officially found the same begin a push towards ecume of Christianity.

However, to mb simp of the WCC ended up becoming much broader than join now encome most Orthodox Churches around the world, some Pentecosta independent movements. The main anomaly is the Catholic Church, which since calls to join. The reasons why will be explored later in this section, but for the mathe WCC embodies the key ecumenical aims we explored at the beginning of this WCC has held 10 assemblies, each in a different location around the world, and ecouncil has broadened its horizons beyond the borders of Europe.

Furthermore, while the WMC was primarily focused on mission, the WCC has for broader variety of issues. These include commissions on **justice**, **peace and creadevelopment**. These in particular show how the WCC views ecumenism as not justice evangelism but a way to engage properly with a variety of social and et Christian Church. In the justice, peace and creation commission in particular, at as diverse as the environment, racism, disability and the rights of indigenous peace such efforts is that ecumenism is not only key for good intraction with relationships be work towards the peaceful resolution of conflict arcism approach to such matters, then they risk be will approductive or irrelevant.

However, there is one term so recan explore a little further: **diakonia**. Identifiperceived as a constant of the community service can help us under WCC are the constant in all areas of the Christian Church.

Public Witness and Diakonia

'Diakonia' is a Greek term that is widely used in modern Christian theology when As a Greek term, it has no easy translation and varies greatly depending on the context example, it is used 32 times, being translated as 'service', 'ministry' or 'relief', but to signify the call for Christians, especially those in the clergy, to help those who a marginalised. As we have already noted, the WCC has a specific commission dedication and development across the world, but what does this mean exactly in the service of the context of t

Well, in any country that has a significant Christian presence, it is unlikely that the simply one movement or denomination. In fact, there are likely to be numerous community, each with its own charitable aims and ambition. However, although advantages for those seeking representation in the arrival number of the communities. The natural way Christian and the conference of the cooperation between Christian of the cooperation cooperation between Christian of the cooperation cooperation between Christian of the cooperation coop

On a smalle day level, this might not be a huge issue, but when one consider large-scalar uctural phenomena, this individualistic approach to diakonia it. Christians seek to serve. An important idea here is that diakonia isn't just about those who are poor and oppressed but instead working towards the goal of endicoordinated response from different Christian denominations, churches and moway for Christians to commit themselves to service in divided religious communications.



contribute to a stronger implementation of what is often called **public witness**. and Church intervention on particular social and political issues in which poverty are involved. For Christian clergy, this is often viewed as more than a protest. In resources, influence and infrastructure to articulate important opposition to law perceived to be causing suffering and conflict around the world. Nonetheless, posimilar actions such as marching, demonstrations and handing out leaflets. There efforts, however, with public prayer vigils also being held.

Importantly, public witness and diakonia has a very time belief that proper Christinvolve standing in solidarity with the proper can be according to the values Jesus expressed through the public was said and more effective when Christians are united than we Ecumenical theorem as a clear role in ensuring that Christians of different pool research and have much bigger impact when engaging in acts of public achieved, though? For the answer to that question, we can turn to the idea of expression and have much beginning to the proper Christians have belief that proper Christians have belief that proper Christians have belief that proper Christians of which is a constant.

Activity:

Research and note down three significant examples of Christian public witness few decades. Do you believe that Christian ecumenism made a difference in the

Education and Ecumenical Formation

Another important commission in the WCC is dedicated to education and ecume sounds complex, in essence it simply refers to the continuing efforts of the WCC accordance with modern ecumenical values. As we noted in the introduction, this filled with schisms and splits, and if ecumenism is to be effective, organisation become complacent when it comes to ensuring that future generations learn frow WCC regularly engages in a number of distinct process. The lit comes to both renewing the ecumenical commitments of current managers.

The first is providing training in all, research groups and courses for current focused around leads in a fit the WCC providing ministers with tools to break peaceful recommend in a single providing their resources so

theological icons and combining their resources so that an effective, ecumenical theological education is provided to all clergy in their relevant Churches. The third is through providing direct study opportunities at the **Ecumenical Institute**, an institution located in Switzerland where those seeking further training in ecumenical work can go to learn.



The key takeaway from learning about these different processes is identifying how in ecumenism. Ecumenical formation in an important sense requires learning not movement's beliefs are but productive ways to connect with those beliefs and fix connections can serve to help diakonia and public witness, they conveniently also ecumenical efforts: evangelism and mission. In the final of this section, we truly succeeded in unifying different Christian Christi

Unity, Mission and Ecurra 4. A Macions

The WCC cross of the pass its work around three major areas. The first two, pulsecumenical ion we have already taken a look at. However, the third, unit relations can be viewed as the core aim of the WCC and the real measure by whithe spirit of the original World Missionary Conference that persists through ecur WCC as a whole seeks a global fellowship of Christians around the world. However, to succeed in building such a fellowship, and have ecumenical efforts highlighted exposed the intractable divisions between different denominations?



The amount of direct ecumenical effort the WCC performs is too long to list here as if it is succeeding in all its aims. In comparison to the WMC, the WCC has a we projects around issues such as migration, indigenous people and social justice. On world mission and evangelism, reflecting the idea that mission activities are no less (from Europe outwards) but are a conjoined effort between Christians across the strong focus on international dialogue and representation of ecumenism as a passetween different nations, cultures and religions.

In this broader sense, the ecumenical activities the WCC can be highlighted as a numerous spin-off organisations and the world to coordinate emergencies the stage of poverty. Similar organisations have been founded activities (the penical Advocacy Alliance) and even the providing of fair loans communities the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund and the Ecumenical Development

At the same time, you may well notice that many of these ecumenical activities a social justice and poverty. This has led to the WCC being criticised by conservation not being focused on what they believe its primary aim should be: mission. For alliance has resisted membership of the WCC (although many of its churches are differences in ambition and the tendency of the WCC, in its view, not to prioritise Evangelicals in particular often hold that mission is the most important principle most of the WCC's programmes and efforts are not solely focused on evangelising

Whether or not these allegations are serious is another matter, but it is important on social and political issues is not without consequence. The natural sides both conflicts means that this focus does affect the possibility of Christian unity, and reprioritising the political aims of high-ranking WCC members over the concerns of Nevertheless, such a focus may well also simply be viewed as important steps to public witness, for it can be argued that if the aims of the WCC are simply to get evangelise, then it has failed in realising Christians' commitments to peace and justices, while a focus on political and social issues potentially breeds adversaries, the WCC to do.

Nevertheless, there is also a final broader issue we need to cover: the role of the whether its non-membership can be considered an ecurious of failure.

Discussion Activity:

Do you believe the WCC is right in it library on social issues, or should it dedicated Discuss in pairs or small in ups.



The Catholic Church and the WCC

We noted at the start of the section that most Catholic Churches are not part of We should be more specific here and state that it is the Roman Catholic Church the refused membership. However, this body represents the vast majority of Catholic around the world and so on the surface is a significant absence from the WCC who comes to ecumenism. Nonetheless, there is a debate to be had about whether the membership really affects the activities of the WCC. It is in a retain to note that it is not a member, the Roman Catholic Church or who is a time decades has increasingly worked closely with the WCC with an analysis projects across the work Moreover, it sends observers to a final the WCC with an appropriate projects across the work moreover, it sends observers to a final the WCC with an appropriate projects across the work moreover, it sends observers to a final the WCC with a project across the work moreover, it sends observers to a final the WCC with a project across the work moreover, it sends observers to a final the WCC with a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings which we will be a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings which we will be a project across the work more meetings. So with the WCC with a project across the work more meetings which we will be a project across the work more meetings which we will be a project across the work more meetings which we will be a project across the work more meetings

Well, a signing reason is the historical issues around how the Roman Catholic C Christian denominations. Until the last 60 years, the Roman Catholic line had been the world to the Christian faith was if they all joined the Catholic Church. This was coherent with the view that the Roman Catholic Church was the 'one true Church' Furthermore, the Roman Catholic Church still extensively used the term 'heretics' a habit which was seen to undermine serious ecumenical efforts. Ultimately, this that the Roman Catholic Church did not send observers or delegates to the WCC's

However, in the early 1960s, after the election of Pope John XXIII, the Roman Camore inclusivist approach and permitted much more ecumenism among Churche redintegratio was published, a decree on ecumenism that ended the use of the test separated brethren') and marked a turning point in Catholic relations with other Roman Catholic Church therefore sent observers to the WCC's 1961 conference joint ecumenical activities. However, the Roman Catholic Church has never truly policy, meaning that it ultimately refuses to admit other continuous as equal activity and participation in the fashion that the VCC of Jures.

At the same time, there have by chell rems of WCC policy and practice that have efforts to bringing the Proposition Church closer to membership. One control Liturgy, an proposition of the Faith and Order C it is a liturgy combines common elements of Eucharistic practice around the WCC ecumentaries. Although it was designed in order that individuals of diworship together and find common ground, for some critics of the WCC it is evid unified Christian faith that in part dissolves traditional denominational divisions. such a goal is unwarranted while it views its worship traditions as sacred, and in sought clarification from the WCC that it did not make official judgements on do tools such as the Lima Liturgy.

However, despite such differences, it can be argued that in reality the non-mem Church is not an overwhelming issue while the main focus of the WCC is on issue education. So long as Catholic societies, organisations and Churches work with the end poverty and oppression, membership is not an important concern. Such a because the Roman Catholic Church engages in ecumenism, which does not judge of upholds the importance of its own traditions. In this send long as the Roman a reasonable degree in WCC efforts, then its ecumenial efforts have worked.

Nonetheless, there will always brance to always brance to



E: Religious Identity through Religious Exp

The idea that human beings can directly experience God is not a new one. Religione of the main forms of evidence for God's existence. At the same time, however the beginnings of mature theology with separation from the more fantastical was identified and demonstrated. While the early apostles were said to be imbued we people, the same is not so much the case for Christian cleropoday in traditional and presence can be felt through activities such as a year of the giving of sacram or work through any one particular individual graph of people.

However, when one castra and important religious figures who have said to have some way compensation of God. Furthermore, a certain kind of mythologica abandoned have last century. Plenty of Christians still believe there is a literal control throughout the world. So ultimately there is a tension between so-called mature faith and the broad history of supernatural thinking across the history of the religious figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations figures who have said to have some way compensations for the compensation of the com

But why does this tension matter? Well, in this section we will be studying the good Movement and its impact upon Christian communities today. The Charismatic Normalism interdenominational Christian movements in the last 50 years and has set traditional Churches adopt new beliefs and practices as a result. The movement organisation but the influence of various Pentecostal figures, groups and ideas upon the belief that 'gifts' of the Holy Spirit are still available to Christians today.

We have already taken a brief look at Pentecostalism at various points in this con already have a broad understanding of this movement as well as what **charismat**. However, the Charismatic Movement does not simply mean the Christian denormor does it mean they entertain all aspects of charism at a worship in services. The churches that have adopted elements of some best phenomena in their liturgies denominational beliefs.

We can bre the particle bit further first by exploring what 'charismatic' mea' (Charismatic strom the Greek term 'charismata', the plural of 'charis', mea' itself has a number of meanings but primarily is translated as 'grace' in the New talk of charismata, they are typically referring to a gift of God's grace. Naturally, involves practices which are said to impart gifts of God or the Holy Spirit to those community and congregation involved, these can take a wide variety of forms, from the Speaking in tongues. In this sense, the Charismatic Movement shares a lot withose in the Charismatic Movement are often more focused on the way these gift Christian practice, especially within churches that have seen a decline in participal comparison to Pentecostal churches, which see these phenomena as emblematic beings and a call to evangelise across the world.

But has the Charismatic Movement truly succeeded in revitalising Christian congare these spiritual gifts really signs of God's grace or just prodogical delusions which we shall address throughout this section. Figure it is important to note how grew over the last century and took century and secusions around worship in

The Growth and Influence of an "marismatic Movement

The birth of palamatic Movement largely began at the start of the 1960s. been growing pularity since the start of the twentieth century, it largely had in mainstream and traditional Christian denominations. However, after the Secondor in many Western countries began to change, especially in the USA. Healing group religious activities and pastors began holding meetings and gatherings that interdenominational rather than Pentecostal in focus. This opened many Christic denominations to Pentecostal practices, and a few ministers began incorporating



in their services. One particularly important date is often thought to be 3rd April Episcopal rector, began to preach to the congregation about his Pentecostal experceived gifts of the Holy Spirit. Since the Episcopal Church is the American wing preaching attracted a lot of controversy, especially since he had incorporated the Sunday service. Soon after Bennett began talking about Pentecostal worship prathough not without his example attracting great attention in both local and nation

Perhaps more importantly, it showed how the Charismatic renewal in Pennsylv spread beyond US borders into Evanta America and Africa. However, the found its surest footing in the day of a has radically changed worship practices a communities of the communities

Taking the Anglican Church first as an example, there has been considered grown practices, particularly within the evangelical Anglican traditions. Although evange prioritised the experiential aspects of faith over liturgy, it wasn't until the end of practices were brought over from the USA and many Anglican Churches began in more common to Pentecostal Churches. Of particular importance was Michael Hintroduced the Charismatic Movement into his services in 1912 and became a movement in Britain from the 1960s to the 1980s and or of the Fountain Truin 1964 to promote charismatic practices in 1918.

Catholic and Protestant Churches.

Now there are several large with the Charismatic smaller ones will be Holy Trinity Brompton, a large London church which up the Alph Ses, a modern set of evangelistic courses that are often credite congregation was strongly affiliated with evangelical, however, is that the curr Justin Welby, was strongly affiliated with evangelical Anglicanism and on numerous he has engaged in various forms of charismatic worship. For example, in a July 20 Telegraph Welby stated that he had spoken in tongues before, saying, 'Oh yes, it discipline — you choose to speak and you speak a language that you don't know

While the Charismatic Movement has proved impactful on all levels of the Anglic be said of the Catholic Church. Although the Church as a whole has been support Renewal (CCR), practice has been limited to lower-level members of the Church outside traditional Catholic services, churches and institutions. We noted earlier Pennsylvania, but it was two figures, student Ralph Kiefer and history professor much of the initial impetus, bringing charismatic practices to the city of Pittsburg practices began to take hold in many Catholic churches a companion ganisations across spreading internationally.

In 2013 it was estimated that there was over 160 million members of Catholic of four Popes have officially considered the movement's existence, with all gene revitalise flag Considered the movement's existence, with all gene practices, such that the CCR should continue to share baptism in the Holy Spirit However, at the same time, there has been significant criticism of the CCR, with holding that sharing gifts distracts individuals from real Catholic teaching and practices perhaps a deeper concern about the irreconcilability of Catholic and Perforder to address whether mainstream Church traditions and the Charismatic Mosimportant to delve deeper into the exact beliefs and worship practices upheld by



Key Practices and Texts of the Charismatic Movement

The Charismatic Movement does not have a fixed list of worship practices that it Instead, part of the appeal is that, just like Pentecostal Christianity, it reorients sexperience of the people participating. The central idea, as we explored in the instant and spirit are still able to be experienced or are available in some broader form exactly are these gifts, and what happens to people when they experience them

An important summary can in effect by found in Co. Smans 12:1–11. There, in have supernatural origins and can be supernatural

'To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirit tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues..' (1 Corinthia)

However, when we look at different forms of worship, it is the faith healing and out. Moreover, it is these practices that attract the most controversy, with critic delusional behaviour or outright deception when it comes to these elements of supporters of the Charismatic Movement claim that these rectices aren't exact continuation of events that occurred in the early Charismatic presence of the Healt was then, and modern charismatic worship that it as the simply a reflection of the present day.

These beliefs makes Pentecostalism, and both these movements emphasized it is recorded how the presence of the Holy Spirit caused mirramong peop moreover, the disciples, especially Peter, are referred to as being act with the power of God. So the Charismatic Movement effectively follows this charismatic practices is due to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit manifest themselves up to it through faith in God. However, we can go a little further her practices. Most notably, we can ask what effects they have upon worship and he influences church services.

The Implications of Charismatic Worship

Before we look at the real-world implications of charismatic worship, it is worth theoretical issues surrounding its practice. Within Christian thought over the lass continual debate between two perspectives often called **cessationism** and **continual** camp believe that spiritual gifts ceased to become available. Christians after the Those in the latter camp, however, believe that the spiritual gifts never ceased accessed by Christians today. We alluded to the introduction, but than you might expect.

The conflict primarily arose during the Reformation, when theological challenged thoric Church over its records of healings and miracles. What's the Reformation there was no explicit Church doctrine over spiritual gifts. It was abundance of supernatural occurrences around the apostles was a present realit were still times when gifts were said to occur and there was little disagreement a Spirit still working in the world in such a manner. However, the divide between



Catholic Church led to Protestant movements becoming cessationist and the Cat continuationist doctrines in return.

It is important to note, though, that this debate does not reflect the same issues denominations and the Charismatic Movement today. Even though the Catholic continuationism after the Reformation, it was viewed as a necessity in light of does or the belief that saints throughout Catholic history had proceeding med various mirac could receive spiritual gifts in everyday life was very a life of unique view promote Charismatic Movement. In this sense, the continuation of the Catholic Church might be said with the catholic continuation of the continuation of the catholic Church might be said with the catholic continuation of the catholic continuation

Nonetheles training and denominations, for the Anglican Church traditionally held with the advent of the Charismatic Movement this stance has been challenged w Canterbury renouncing cessationism. Even in the case of the Catholic Church, w continuationism, there is a subtle challenge presented to its doctrines by the gro Movement, and it is still very possible that the future will see some changes to C the beliefs of the CCR.

Church and Practice

The debate around cessationism and continuationism has implications beyond the Holy Spirit are available to Christians today, it calls into question the hierarchy of the proper church service is based around charismatic experiences, then the neeliturgy is reduced. Moreover, the emphasis becomes not on learning about biblic on directly receiving the spiritual gifts in a holy setting. Such issues are why man denominations have been cautious about endorsing charism ic worship, even if Christian communities around the world.

To illustrate these issues, we can be a modern Pentecostal worship, which charismatic experiences into the companied by long periods of music, singing an same time, will often be accompanied by long periods of music, singing an spiritual gift. We explored in this section so far. The best way to understand in Pentecostal service and witness it for yourself, for the involvement of charismatic produces services that are often intense and chaotic as each person receives the and experience. Some people will get up, move and sing. Others will speak in to completely silent and still.

While this might sound disordered, these elements of charismatic worship are of Christians. There is an implicit **egalitarianism** (dedication to equality) in the way no one is required to show faith in any particular way. Instead, individuals are freshey wish. This is in stark contrast with mainstream Christian denominations, who services that stick to strict liturgies. Moreover, this egalitarianism has often led women in Pentecostal churches. Historically, women were arrimportant force in Pentecostalism and often filled religious roles that we will also also also also them The fact that the Catholic Church, for example start and religious roles that we will be a continuous of won Movement in many ways offers spirit and the present in mainstream.

So we can see the interference of the Charismatic Movement in both theoretical charismatic persus really genuine? Shouldn't we heed the words of the cesevents that supernatural in origin? In the next section, we shall explore supernatural charismatic Movement faces, both religious and naturalistic in origin.



The Challenges to Charismatic Worship

Before we look at some of the weakness of the Charismatic Movement, is import explored so far. One primary strength is potentially the continuation of gifts that trace from the early Church to the present day. Simply put, why shouldn't the more practices of the early apostles? Moreover, the receiving of spiritual gifts does have considered in the more practical side, we have also seen how charismatic experiment egalitarian and dynamic than mainstream Christian and communities that were previously marginalised to one considered.

However, we can also questing the identity of charismatic worship from a religion. To start, one can not the other approaches potentially wielded God's pa quick and the fashion. Now that Christianity is a worldwide religion, it mathing is how the Bible is a witness to these miraculous events, rather than individe miraculous occurrences. If this is the case, then the signs and gifts which accompressed in the compression of how the Holy Spirit is open to all, but were instituted for a specific parthermore, critics of the Charismatic Movement have noted how services inconvex experiences and worship tend to focus less on teaching, meaning that the full im not be imparted to the congregation. The emphasis on experiencing the Holy Spabout moral principles and spiritual ideas that help mature a person's faith.

Perhaps the greatest worry, however, is how charismatic worship may be exploit purposes of financial or social gain. We explored before how teaching the Prosp Christian leaders becoming very wealthy themselves, and the dangers of encourage well documented by critics of the Charismatic Movement, for while many minown terms, there are questionable practices by individuals as squerading as fait. Movement. Since charismatic worship is based on a gray piguitive experiences, is there are less-than-honest individuals taking a very ge of its beliefs and practices.

Naturalistic Issues

These more the bound of a concerns also give way to naturalistic issues. If the away with the second of the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit at all. Especially spirit at all and the holy spirit

For example, there have been recent issues with some Pentecostal Churches tell medication and instead rely on faith or hold that God had cured them, and in maindividuals becoming significantly more ill and some even dying. In 2011, medicate people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome underreported. In the case of glossolalia, a famous 1972 people had died after giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome under giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome under giving up HIV medication, and it is likely that such phenome under giving up HIV medication, and it is likely

Such evider on the generally dissuade those supporting the Charismatic Move on experience of can be argued that what matters to the individual is the subject not whether these make sense in a scientific context. Healings therefore don't have the wrong interpretation of gifts. Rather, those involved in charism or aches removed that significantly improve the quality of their mental life. Similanguages are new in such a way that they do not mirror human language (being



generated in such a way that they bear meaning only for those speaking and hear congregation. If this is the case, then it can be argued that scientific criticism of prevent them from being meaningful or important to Christians.

Nonetheless, such scientific issues do cast doubt on the validity of the Charismatic suggested that charismatic experiences can be naturally explained in the same veil whether it be the result of certain neurons firing in a partir way or external factor neuroses (e.g. depression, anxiety) producing an experience of which individuals attained to the same veil of the control of th

All these explanations do not necessarily conflict with each other, and all support worship is due to some kind of **placebo effect**. In fact, it may be the case that nupsychological and sociological) all come into play in charismatic worship and interist that naturalistic explanations do in some way undermine the idea that supernations charismatic worship, and this puts a dent in the continuationist beliefs put forward for the fact that charismatic experiences are subjective in nature means they car attempts so far to analyse the unique qualities of charismatic worship have cast

In fact, it can be argued that a mature Christian belief is not focused on miraculo doubted by modern scientific knowledge but on understanding what Jesus' minishow it can give meaning and moral guidance to people's less even if this reality there are spiritual gifts. At the same time, it may well that, regardless of verification with the charismatic worship are strong length for them to discount naturalisit may well be that their value of calculation of verification, and natural explainables weaknesses in the line and practices of the Charismatic Movement.

Discussion ty:

Do you believe that the various naturalistic and philosophical issues presented pose a problem for the Charismatic Movement today? Discuss in pairs or small



COPYRIGHT PROTECTED



F: Religious Identity through Responses to Povert

Liberation theology is a Christian movement that emerged primarily out of Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s as a response to the economic and social oppression many poorer people suffered under unjust political systems in the region. In many ways, it sought to distinguish itself from Christian orthodoxy at the time, putting a keen emphasis on information of orthopraxis and the preference of orthopraxis and the preference of this section, but we can initially say the defined the measure of the proposition and practice of Christian terms as liberation and the preserve as liberation and the preserve as liberation and practice of the proposition and practice as liberation.

became the of many who defined themselves as liberation theologians that doing enough to help those who needed it the most and, as a whole, was failing and social vision Jesus presented throughout his ministry.

Perhaps the most distinctive element of liberation theology, however, was its ble teaching with political theory. The most important figure thinkers drew upon as Not only did Marx offer a theoretical structure from which to understand the var economic reasons for the impoverishment of human beings, but for many his we illuminated Jesus' struggle to liberate his followers, suffering under the oppression authorities at the time of his ministry. As such, Marx's work provided liberation methodological basis for understanding how Jesus' teachings can be applied in not the Church can work to overcome the oppression and impoverishment of people

Liberation theology's use of Marx was controversial at the time (and still is controc Christian thinkers, including the Pope himself, critical it introduction of secula theology, arguing it risked distorting the moderate argued from Scripture. motivated by liberation theology's in the ed disagreements with the work and Church itself. Liberation the liberation are discussed in the political argued that the liberation of the poor and marginalised. As a whole, the theologians, the Catholic Church had at its core become part of the very social streaming and its control to the poor and marginalisation and oppression of the poor in Latin America. Only forcing a radic Church operated could ever help those who were truly suffering under unjust polithurch from becoming complicit in the activities of those benefiting from the imphuman beings.

The heyday of liberation theology has arguably passed, but its influence has been theologians still operate under its principles today. In this section we shall exploit liberation theologians, how they exemplified the application of Marxist thought the ways Christian thought can work with secular political theories. First, though Marxist concepts: alienation and exploitation.

Alienation and Exploitation

An important first thing to note is the eracon theology does not advocate supconcepts to displace Christian have developed in a society and the way Christian these issue this remains the ultimate source of truth and moral guid teachings to evant within a modern-day political context. Nevertheless, midentify a Marxist society as one that is closer to the ideal Christian society than the former has a much greater focus on community, justice, sharing and equality arguably holds an obsession with the growth of material wealth and, through this exploitation of other human beings.



Of particular interest to liberation theologians is how Marx explores the nature production under a capitalistic economy might naturally lead to oppression and that is defined by the way human beings transfer wealth through various means more often than not don't consider how our wealth is divided. Although inequa pressing political issue in the last decade, we typically still search for jobs that ar don't question the system which structures and delivers those wages. Marxists, analyses these structures the full extent to which capitalisms lieties engage in ex revealed. At their heart, capitalist societies, for Many that e on taking advantage than they truly deserve.

How are Human Being () 1 31 31

Let's break pw _______rurther, though, for typically the ordinary I slightly at the suggestion they are being exploited. person mig. Many people anjoy their work and believe they are being paid a fair wage, if not a wage which supports the life they wish to lead. However, Marx's concept of exploitation is a bit more fundamental than this idea. It holds that in a just society people would be paid for the total economic value of their work. Simply put, whatever work I do in an ideal society, I should reap the rewards for. However, Marx notes that in capitalist societies this does not happen. One has employers, who take a share of the value of the work for themselves, even though they did not contribute directly. In fact, whatever work one does, one is likely to also be paying for a vast array of employers who earn money simply due to the fact that they own the place of work or prod

As an example, imagine you work in a pizza takeaway. Each pizza costs £10, and you can make 10 pizzas every hour, meaning the total of money that can let's imagine there's an additional £20 per hour cled whe cost of running the p cost of ingredients, operation of facilities are not overall, the total value of emp £28 per hour. However, you'r @ @at, & £100 per hour in value. So where is the this is of course a gross of wed example, but Marx notes that it goes to the takes the to the control of the many halfors and the many halfors are fair 🎇 fore, regardless of whether one believes one's wages are fair, 🕷 structured, capitalist societies are always exploitative because they thrive on pay economic value of the goods they are tasked to produce. Exploitation as such is

This exploitation, however, occurs only because capitalist societies are divided in those who do not. Capitalists therefore really are those who own what Marx cal These are the machines, instruments or entities that govern the extent to which the case of the pizza takeaway, a person could not make pizzas without the over However, this ownership, we can see, is manifestly unfair. Simply because a per production, they can extract wealth from others despite not doing any of the wo often than not this ownership is not even justified. A cursory glance around the individuals who have inherited the wealth they possess. Even among those who Marx would note that their wealth inevitably trades on the increasing exploitation

What is important to note, however, is the long ough Marx opposed capitalism, capitalists) and the pro' and working class) suffered from not being able to ur ្តd ្រារាន់ societies (although the proletariat inevitably suffer 🗪 system that had emerged from the way human beings produ and could be replaced to the benefit of all by another system which erased the e **communism**. Much is said about what communism is or isn't, but Marx argued was the idea that workers themselves should own the means of production. Sim should communally own the machines, instruments or entities that produce goo profits with everyone else.



For liberation theologians, this Marxist analysis of exploitation was not just theologians, the tradition of **latifundia** and **hacienda** – large plantations and workhologians – mirrored Marx's criticisms of capitalism. Much of the land and mean hands of wealthy individuals who took much of the value generated by their workerun. Moreover, the workers often had no choice but to accept these small was means of production and so if they quit their job they workers. To a certain around the world and is, in large part, why Marx' (see as), a still thought to be redisciplines today.

How are Human Beings in the my

Another core, this process of the workers find themselves in when producing goods in a cap because ordinary workers are separated from the means of production and the fexample that can be given of this concept is the assembly line worker. These incomposed for the entire workday performing repetitive tasks with little or no creative engative typically, for those who do find some fulfilment in varied and interesting work, the shocking or saddening. One might wonder whether people in such jobs feel any whether they feel disconnected, yet Marx holds this same kind of feeling persists environment for a number of reasons, and in any job one is likely to find people

The first reason is that most modern workers in the world do not produce goods. Whatever we create is typically sold back into the market without the buyer hav Whether it be physically manufactured goods or more abstract services, the industrial workers now do not see the completion of their work from beginning to encapitalism means that people are forced to compete with others. Increased produce a capitalist society, and growth is typically used as the society of its success. This overtaken by competition to produce it more quick and efficiently than one's individuals under capitalist societies and deficiently denied autonomy in their working patterns. They are as ally coced to turn up to work at a particular time, produce it work to specific deadlines and get to leave only when the produce is a particular time produce.

What this all adds up to is any ordinary worker being treated as if they were a machine. They are expected to produce goods as if they only impassively cared about the value of the work rather than the result, and even if they do care, they are separated from the fruits of their work in the end. This treatment all adds up to a person eventually (and perhaps very quickly) being alienated from the work they do, and this alienation has a pernicic health. It creates feelings of worthlessness and detachment, and breeds a lack these are the kinds of feelings that anyone who has worked an ordinary job is like what Marx argues is that such feelings are expected. They are not rooted in som society and work are structured. Moreover, they would not be experienced if ou such that we owned the means of production and we weren't so radically separate

Liberation theologians argued that this concept of an income could easily be ider marginalised. Many have to work menions with intitle reward or satisfaction. little time for one's religious life and becomes a crutch to get the becomes fundamentally so a gred with the idea that God is looking out for hutheologians and do the Church as a whole needs to avoid the former. It can sits idly with the idea that God is looking out for hutheologians and encouraging alienated workers through their everyday lives using the property of the same of encouraging and ending structural oppression, alienation and explain the same aims aren't by themselves radical and are present in Catholic social to this field we will explore in the next section.



Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic social teaching (CST) is a broad field covering the various doctrines the Catholic social justice. Generally, these are oriented around concerns of how to people and how wealth is distributed throughout society. Although it has its room thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas, it stems from study of the Bible, and its definite theology came with Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum novarum*.

It's important to take note of CST as many of the decovered in this section are Catholic doctrines. In CST it is regular! If the how society should care first for human beings should enjoy in a fire from and how they possess important right Moreover, it generally the society and the Church have a responsibility to among citization to their disadvantage. So the question remains, the Catholic and the company of the company o

Well, one initial major difference is that although the Catholic Church has commituative, it has not addressed certain structural issues in society, such as the alient noted. For liberation theologians, this is a sign of a lack of commitment by the C systems which naturally impoverish and marginalise people. In fact, although the committed to social justice, it has often criticised movements such as socialism a equality between individuals across the world. This means that although the Catengaging in charitable activities, for liberation theologians it does not address rolenable poverty and oppression to persist.

However, these concerns also raise a broader criticism of the Catholic Church by such as Leonardo Boff and Gustavo Gutiérrez (who we will cover later) have cont overly concerned with **orthodoxy** (right thought) over **orthogoaxis** (right action), whole spends too much time debating what is the fighting to do and not enouprinciples to truly challenge and address per six poppiems of social justice acre concerns are not just rooted in policy and place. Liberation theologians point to evidence for how Jesus where the fighting individuals out of pove with presenting the six guments for his moral principles. In the next section little more

The Figure of Jesus in Liberation Theology

We've explored in many ways already how capitalism might end up exploiting we this idea be understood within a Christian context, when traditional doctrine foc social sin? Much of Christian thought is generally focused on how the death of John of human beings. This means that any analysis of sin itself is largely spiritual in nowhat social or political contexts this sin is found within. However, as you might the work of Crossan, this interpretation of Scripture has been contested.

For one, Jesus himself might have been much more of a political and social liberal traditional Christian thought. You might recall the mission statement at Luke 4:1 he has come to 'bring good news to the poor' and to 'set 'by aptives free'. In phave often seized upon the idea of reversal in the poor will prosper and by the overturning of the order such that the poor will prosper and by the first. One key example of the Jesus preaches that 'the first shall be first'. However, we this to indicate the way the poor wishing to instigate a revolution on Earth that we oppression poor.

Moreover, to some extent there is the idea of corporate responsibility present in Testament, God is regularly depicted as holding the Israelites responsible for the population. Similarly, God is often portrayed as punishing entire cities or civilisal Taking this into account, it can be argued that the revolution from a capitalist so



socialist or communist society is one that is potentially supported by Scripture. A rests on the possibility of a classless society, but where liberation theologians of reconciling this idea with Marx's more radical ideas about the struggle to reach so the bourgeoisie would not be interested in giving up their wealth voluntarily. The this is the case is violent resistance to the capitalist order such that the means of away from the capitalist class and given to the workers.

Whether such violent revolution is equivalent to is all it us idea of reversal for strong debate. Most liberation theologically advocate for structural change limiting of capitalist enterprise is a which is a same time, most are keen to en aspect of necessary changes in the same time, most are keen to en aspect of necessary changes in the movement, Gust different and all is a cant kinds of liberation. The first is political and social ending of six and laws that entrap the poor. This form of liberation neces engagement with political issues. The second is human liberation, which aims to focusing one's charitable engagements on the poor and ensuring society is more third is liberation from sin, the traditional kind of liberation focused on by the Clarelationships between God and human beings. Thus, Gutiérrez does not abando instead argues it has to be integrated with wider political and social concerns.

The Preferential Option for the Poor

Liberation theology, perhaps more than any other Christian movement, puts the at the front and centre of its thought. At heart, this principle dictates that Christ care for those who are marginalised or powerless in society before those who are However, many liberation theologians often go a bit further, specifically claiming poor and decries those who are rich. The basic idea behind this is that if one is one's peers, then one is to some degree complicit in their powerty, as it is likely to others in some way or failing to give one's wealth who heed it.

The doctrine of the preferential or the poor can be seen to have its roots many narratives and passon besus notably sided with those who were so of the prevailing the make a direct declaration of his preference for those who However, the me plenty of other supportive passages. For example, the parab Matthew also reinforces Jesus' commitment to the poor. In particular, at Matthe goodness of those who help those in need and throughout emphasises the imposof those who are dispossessed. Similarly, in the Old Testament the prophet Amonypocrisy of the religious authorities of his time in a similar vein to Jesus' criticist he even affirms that God plans justice against those who have oppressed the post Amos criticises the inequality between the rich and the poor in Israel that was prexample might be found in Exodus, where Moses with God's assistance frees the them out of Egypt.

So, on a core level, the preferential option can be seen as a vital part of Christianity's emphasis on virtues such as justice and fairness. Many liberation theologians, however, also approach the provide on a practical level. Those who are privileged have the time specified money to find fulfilment in their lives, while those the provided in a practical unfair treatment or marginal and provided in a part of their daily lives may be difficult. This is perhaps may be a part of their daily lives may be difficult. This is perhaps may be a part of their daily lives may be difficult. This is perhaps may be a part of their daily lives may be difficult. This is perhaps may be a part of their daily lives may be difficult. This is perhaps may be a part of their daily lives may be difficult. This is perhaps may be a provided attempts to be a provided in their daily lives may be difficult. This is perhaps may be a provided in their daily lives may be difficult. This is perhaps may be diff



When liberation theology first declared its support for a strong version of this process. Should Christianity, with its emphasis on universal morality, focus arguing they are more blessed than another? In fact, it seems perfectly viable to who are poorer without affirming they are somehow greater in the eyes of God. seems to require the prioritisation of one group above another, even though Chremphasises God's universal love for humanity. This is a tricky question, for in many whether liberation theologians are making an affirmation and the nature of God.

In fact, such a criticism may be misplaced on onsiders the wider theoret. As discussed before, most liberation of plans hold that orthopraxis should tale. Within this context, the proposed of those around you. One has to direct one's engagement of poor and marginalised. This idea is far less controversial and liberation the grans' focus. It has even been reaffirmed in recent years by the Francis in his 2013 apostolic exhortation Evangelii gaudium stresses the need for poor, arguing that is an essential vocation for any Christian to help those in need that those who are poor need greater time for their spiritual lives, since they will preoccupied with day-to-day survival.

Liberation Theology and Christian Institutions

As we've noted before, liberation theologians in Latin America were quite critical they considered it to value **orthodoxy** (right thought) much more than **orthoprase** considering the context and teachings of Jesus' ministry, the latter is arguably mout of poverty and oppression. Moreover, considering the corruption and violer Latin America, it was clear to many liberation theologians that the Catholic Churcown moral principles, if not altogether complicit in these nefarious activities. Ovinstitutions of government and Church were responsible inforcing structural marginalisation of many poor workers.

The key takeaway from this for 'j' era ich meologians is that the Christian Church restructure itself to hele the foreed. Moreover, it had to address the concern them how confermed them in the present, not just in the speculated a early confermed to Medellin, the Latin American bishops agreed that priests whe 'awaken in inaviduals and communities ... a living awareness of justice [and] a se solidarity'. Without such principles, the Church risked becoming irrelevant to the difficulties. Still, all this is still just theory, so how did liberation theologians converged.

One key response was the development of **ecclesial base communities** (EBCs). The groups of Christians who meet outside a Church context to study the Bible and we teachings with their local communities. EBCs originally began in Latin American meaning **lay catechists** took over the duties of overseeing communion and other parishes. Over time, however, they started to develop their own identity and particular as a whole. In particular, they focused on an egalitarian model of biblication of simply be preached to the congregation; rather, groups would form to look as in rather than out), whereby individuals would use their own experiences to guid Therefore, the search for the 'objective meaning' of control of the sea

As a result, within EBCs ther of a greater emphasis on the social and poland a broader rade of now his ministry related to the modern world. On EBCs me to artime ordinary Christians became more directly involved their moral less together with their perspectives on poverty and oppression the advantage of encouraging praxis on behalf of ordinary Christians and, for macalienation that came with simply being an invisible member of a traditional, hier liberation theologians, EBCs were an important example of how Christian practice empowerment of ordinary workers and demonstrated the natural structural flaw to an extent, was largely inaccessible and unrelatable to ordinary suffering Christian



Naturally, some Christian thinkers argued that EBCs were not authentic reflection. While they might be empowering to some, they also risked distorting the message anyone to read their own meaning into the Bible. However, liberation theologia minor in comparison to the strengthening of faith and community that resulted EBCs. In fact, such criticisms highlight traditional Christianity's blinkered focus on What the Christian Church should be designed to do rather was focus on the concespecially those who are poor, marginalised and oppress the Church fails to serve their needs, then, for liberation theologians of the Start large.

This concern above all we have the primary way that liberation theologians Catholic Chapte, the work of both Gustavo Gutiérrez and Leonardo the movement and economic consure. As we shall see in the next section, radical political and economic policies they advocated but to the transformation place within the Catholic Church itself.

Discussion Activity:

Do you believe that the Catholic Church (and other Christian denominations) faction too much? Discuss in pairs or small groups.

Gustavo Gutiérrez and Leonardo Boff

Liberation theology on the surface seems like quite an attractive approach. Why engage with the political situation and work towards helping the poor and oppreinitial appeal there have been questions about whether liberation theologians hap resented a coherent vision behind their movement. It is well known, for exampreligion, calling it the 'the opium of the people' and holding at it contributed to poor and oppressed. This meant that they developed minital attitudes that justing and failed to direct their anger or disagram and at the ruling capitalist class. So as if liberation theology has a common mardle to overcome. How can a theology about the afterlife fully a people towards reversal and revolution in this limits and the suppose of the suppo

Well, the Ca Church certainly held these issues to be problematic for liberal growth in the 1960s and 1970s many members of the Catholic clergy were more viewing it as good for revitalising and renewing Catholic communities, this sensibiliberation theologians started taking aim at the hierarchies and structure of the Critiques by themselves were not enough to worry many members of the Catholic with that liberation theology and its use of Marx also threatened to create a 'pothe Church. Simply put, the Catholic Church had always viewed itself as a neutral mixing politics with theology, the liberation theologians were undermining the the Church and threatening to turn it into a political organisation.

At the same time, it is easy to criticise such worries, and, for the liberation theological Catholic Church exemplified its lack of commitment to social justice. Gustavo Gusthe Church as a whole had fail to live and stand alongside is poor and oppresse important act in order for Christianity to be orient to by a ds orthopraxis rather experienced life from the perspective of the second act would then be such that any teachings and ethic to the min an understanding of and solidarity of history. This a term and the history of theology and the world. Any Christian, spiritual or the power, should be aware of the poverty around the world and than the people they are supposed to represent.

These ideas naturally led Gutiérrez to support grass-roots Catholic movements of (such as ecclesial base communities). Such movements naturally had a greater present than figures inside Vatican City, who lived natural lives of relative luxury.



grass-roots movements and groups held more authority than the Church itself, a controversial among more conservative figures in the Catholic Church. In the en (later Pope Benedict XVI) in 1983 and 1984 requesting and beginning an investig the end, Gutiérrez was almost unordained from the Catholic Church in Peru, but in a tie. Nonetheless, this marked a period during which a 1984 Holy See saw Podenounce liberation theology and publish a 36-page Vatican report which declar fundamentally incompatible.

Perhaps the worst was saved for the libe the bogian Leonard Boff. Beginning of essays which were called *Chur a, Charant and Power*. These took aim at the libe Catholic Church, with Bogian Leonard Boff. Beginning reflect the contribution of his ministry and not become a rigid, overbearing spiritual live eryday people. He even suggested the power of the papacy state Catholic church reorganised as a whole so that it shed its monarchical struct system based on community and cooperation. Naturally, like Gutiérrez, Boff saw ideal examples of such organisations and of how the Church can rediscover the viduring his life.

You can imagine how well such critiques went down with conservative Catholic to before Cardinal Ratzinger in Rome in 1984, and his writings were charged with beconcerns were arguably with Boff's meshing of theology and politics, it is undensified the concerns were arguably with Boff's meshing of theology and politics, it is undensified the charch played a part in his later censure for a year, handed down in March 1985 allowed to publish, travel or lecture publicly for a year without permission. Even still required to work with a personal censor, who had to approve everything that Although Boff accepted this silencing, he later accused Ratzinger of 'religious ter into conflict again with the Church a number of times.

Catholic Responses to Liberation Theology

From the last section, you might got a last that the Catholic Church's response to liberation theology. It a little unfair or harsh. However, it did have clear records from the liberation theology's views, and in this part we will expose makey issues with the movement. In fact, we can start with the cord of reversal itself. As we explored, both liberation theology and Marx agree on the need for widespread revolution and social change as a permanent way of ensuring that the poor and oppressed can be free of the economic and social constraints that capitalism brings. However, they markedly disagree on the physical methods involved in this revolution, even if in principle they agree that it requires ordinary people to initiate economic and social changes.

Taking the agreements first, liberation theologians have often criticised the simple often promoted by the Catholic Church and other charities. In particular, it has be only temporarily helps those who are poor and suffering. This means inevitably only for as long as it lasts, with the structures of capitalism ensuring they have no improving their own situation or realising their own situation

However, How



Furthermore, it can also be argued the revolution Marx seeks is an economic one communist future Marx proposes may ultimately be an atheist one, and the liber difficulty in explaining the role of religion once certain structural sins are dismans.

However, we can go even further here and question liberation theology's ideas a Traditionally, the Catholic Church has criticised the movement's use of Marx her unfortunate circumstances the poor might unfairly find the elves in, identifying structures is the wrong approach. This is because the poor the Catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The description of solutions implies tacitly the held accountable for sin, but remains a tructures. For many, therefore, ackrindividuals of their sin. The solution of their sin. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions. The solution of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their actions of the catholic Chavoid responsibility for their a

While one might be inclined to consider Ratzinger's criticisms here as somewhat importance of political systems in the world, he does potentially highlight how C conceived of as a universal set of moral principles that naturally clash with any c such, although a liberator in some senses, was simply putting forward a notion of act, regardless of the situation they find themselves in. If this is true, then Christ Marx's historical materialism, which judges moral requirements based on the pot the more pressing concern of whether Christianity can be meshed effectively with

Christianity and Secular Ideology

Much of your Year 2 work has dealt with how Christianity reconds to secular ides the most keenly studied areas of modern theology. You have denominations have since their formation, academic theology have guidely progressed in the opposite theology, liberation theology or relief to all salism, more than ever theologians have under theories can add to all salism, more than ever theologians have mirror than thought. On the one have mirror than the control truths; why should secular theories have any say? have mirror than thoughts, and those predisposed to distrust natural theology presents revenue that are timeless and immutable, then secular ideologies can

On the other hand, there is the argument that secular ideologies may be in some alternative viewpoints on the world that may still be inspired by divinely given recontext of Christian thought can only add balance and insight to traditional theo movements may well have exposed hidden sexism in the structure of the Christian theology may have shown the need for Christian belief to accommodate certain fact that denominations such as the Catholic Church have felt the need to respondevelopments of its own, may be testament to the fact that in order to keep up needs to engage with the forms of thought that define that world. Moreover, it new phenomenon. Throughout its history, Christianity has worked with and channew kinds of thought, and different perspectives have only improved our unders

Nevertheless, there may also be limits. In the as of marx, adopting his ideas we they naturally stand in conflict with Chairful eaching. As such, liberation theologilemma. Its use of Marx mission conflicts application might prove to be the very unthemselves and of issues once again bring up the difficulties explored in feminism: we the rise of secular ideologies undermines Christian thought of initially appear to be a boon for theology may inevitably show that in its tradition with the theoretical problems of the modern world and at least subtly show that limited usefulness in dealing with political and social crises.



Liberation Theology Today

While much of the last part of this section has been taken up with the conflicts be the Catholic Church in the 1980s, it is important to note how the landscape has a some evidence that the Catholic Church has in part adopted some of the talking Pope Francis himself in the *Evangelii gaudium* criticises the 'crony capitalism' that prevents people from achieving fulfilment and autonomy in their lives. Moreove optimism at the election, and the two are friends, with the landscape has a some evidence of the particles. Moreove optimism at the election, and the two are friends, with the landscape has a some evidence of the particles. The landscape has a some evidence of the particles are followed by the landscape has a some evidence of the particles.

Furthermore, it is impossible to note that although liberation theology drew off N is still indel the Latholic social teaching that preceded it. The body of ethic Church was by the foundation for a theologically inspired view of political limesh Christian teaching with political theory. The argument therefore can be minever in conflict with Catholic teaching and instead sought a renewal of its though modern political injustice. Its aim was to make the Catholic Church relevant to owith poverty and not become a faceless hierarchy incapable of responding to pe

Quick Quiz

- 1. What major denomination is currently not a member of the WCC?
- 2. What is the term the WCC gives to its programme of ecumenical education
- 3. What is the Greek term for 'spiritual gifts'?
- 4. What is glossolalia?
- 5. Give two potential naturalistic explanations for charismatic experiences.
- 6. What is orthopraxis?
- 7. Which liberation theologian was officially censured had Catholic Church for
- 8. What is the name given to smaller, autonom () or Christians in South







ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES

Theme 1 Activity

Look up the Gospel of Thomas through the link below and read verses 1–10. We between it and the Synoptic Gospels? Write down three reasons why you believe shall not be.

This activity is designed to get students locking irreally at the apocryphal source parts of Thomas in particular reflection to a lock the students to try to analyse of frequences themselves from their previous studion of particular later of the students for which directly mirrors the parable of the Students for whether this is evidence that Thomas precedes the Sylater date.

Theme 3 (Parts A/B/C) Activity

Research three modern figures who believe in the Prosperity Gospel and note use to support their views. How would you go about criticising or challenging town scriptural knowledge?

This activity is designed to try to get students to critique the Prosperity Gospel point of view rather than a cultural one, which is often the more intuitive perspanses already included in the section, but possible examples might be E W Ker Robert Tilton, T L Osborn, Joel Osteen, Creflo Dollar, Kenneth Copeland, Reverence.

Theme 3 (Parts D/E/F) Activity

What do you believe a global theology would look like? While down at least the believe religious discourse could intersect. Then the property described, compare with you agree on examples? If not, why not?

This activity is designed to try to think about pluralism not just practical ones. How would be proposed is people discuss their ideas on an equal foolinclude God igi and prience, the created world, the nature of faith, worsh

Theme 4 Activity

Research and note down three significant examples of Christian public witness few decades. Do you believe that Christian ecumenism made a difference in the This activity is designed to get students thinking about how ecumenism function practice rather than just in theory. There are many social issues which have see the denominations come together. Examples can vary from the Christian Campaign clean water campaigns by Christian Aid. Most social issues campaigned on by the ecumenism of some sort, though it may require students to research more deep





Answers to Quick Quiz

Theme 1 Quick Quiz

- 1. Apocrypha
- 2. Muratorian Canon
- 3. Objective inspiration holds that God had direct involvement in the writing Subjective inspiration holds that the involvement of God was mediated the experiences of the biblical writers
- 4. John Calvin
- 5. Kerygma/kerygma
- 6. Realize the specific of the second of God had inaught with his arrival. Futurist eschatology holds that Jesus taught to the or be inaugurated.
- 7. The Gospel of Peter and the Gospel of Thomas
- 8. Critical realism

Theme 3 (Parts A/B/C) Quick Quiz

- 1. 1 Timothy 6:10
- The Prosperity Gospel is a modern Christian belief that acquired wealth is reward for faithfulness.
- The Word-Faith movement is a modern Pentecostal movement which emp praying to God for material, physical or financial reward.
- 4. Pentecostalism is a form of Christianity which focuses on the presence of the emphasises the importance of experiencing God over intellectual apprecia
- 5. The reverse mission movement is a modern phenomenon in which non-Watypically on the receiving end of evangelical efforts missionaries to see
- 6. Ruether argues that the golden thread is a new enteraching of prophetic runs throughout Christian Scriptur, and the its various culturally conditions.
- 7. The Mulieris dignitatem is and common letter by Pope John Paul II, published Catholic Church's and roles and dignity of women against the character and an actual and an actual and an actual and actual actual and actual actual and actual act
- 8. The control of the three practices that Daly supposed throughout history as a result of its patriarchal influences.

Theme 3 (Parts D/E/F) Quick Quiz

- 1. The belief that human beings have the right to practise their religion freel
- 2. Festivals, presence of the Church in the House of Lords, architecture, relig
- 3. A theological argument in which gaps in scientific knowledge are thought to it is typically used as a criticism of arguments that in some way rely on the
- Stephen Gould's term which he employs to show how science and religion concepts and ideas
- 5. Occam's razor
- 6. John 14:6
- 7. A Protestant belief, meaning 'by Christ alone', that hold that only through
- 8. The Real

Theme 4 Quick Quiz

- 1. The Roman Catholic @
- 2. Ecumenisal for
- 3. Char
- 4. Speak source tongues
- 5. Mass hysteria, placebo effect, psychological pressure
- 6. Right action
- 7. Leonardo Boff
- 8. Ecclesial base communities

