

Course Companion for GCSE Edexcel A

Paper 1B: Christianity Full Course

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Contents

Thank You for Choosing ZigZag Education	
Teacher Feedback Opportunity	
Terms and Conditions of Use.....	
Teacher's Introduction	
Introduction to the Course and How to Answer Exam Questions.....	
Beliefs and Teachings	
The Trinity.....	
The Creation of the Universe and of Humanity	
The Incarnation	
The Last Days of Jesus' Life	
The Nature and Significance of Salvation and the Role of Christ within Salvation	
Christian Eschatology	
The Problem of Evil/Suffering and a Loving and Righteous God	
Divergent Solutions Offered to the Problem of Evil and Suffering and a Loving and Righteous God	
Summary for Beliefs and Teachings.....	
Practices	
Christian Worship.....	
The Role of the Sacraments in Christian Life and their Practice in Two Denominations	
The Nature and Purpose of Prayer.....	
Pilgrimage	
Christian Religious Celebrations.....	
The Future of the Christian Church.....	
The Role and Importance of the Local Church in the Local Community	
The Role and Importance of the Church in the Worldwide Community	
Summary for Practices	
Sources of Wisdom and Authority.....	
The Development and Structure of the Bible and its Unity as the Word of God	
Divergent ways in which the Bible is used in the Daily Life of a Christian	
Divergent Responses to Sources of Personal and Ethical Decision-making by Christians	
and their Inter-relationship.....	
Jesus as the Word of God and a Role Model.....	
The Church as the Body of Christ.....	
The Growth and Development of the Church	
Leaders and Leadership in the Church	
The Role of Women in the Church.....	
Summary for Sources of Wisdom and Authority.....	
Forms of Expression and Ways of Life.....	
The Meaning and Significance of Paintings and Drawings within Christianity	
The Divergent Meaning, Significance and Purpose of Icons within Christianity	
The Meaning and Significance of Sculpture for Christians.....	
The Purpose and Use of Symbolism and Imagery in Religious Art.....	
The Meaning and Significance of Christian Drama	
The Purpose of Literature in Christian Life.....	
The Nature and Use of Traditional Styles of Music in Worship.....	
The Nature and Use of Contemporary Music in Worship.....	
Summary for Forms of Expression and Ways of Life.....	
Answers	
Beliefs and Teachings	
Practices.....	
Sources of Wisdom and Authority	
Forms of Expression and Ways of Life	

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Teacher's Introduction

This resource has been designed to support the learning and teaching of Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies Option A, Paper 1 Option B: Christianity. All areas of the specification – Beliefs and Teachings, Practices, Sources of Wisdom and Authority, and Forms of Expression and Ways of Life – are covered, and questions and activities are included to test knowledge and ability, and to help students to engage with the topics.

The information is comprehensive, and images help to illustrate concepts. (Qur'an) quotes are included to help students to understand the material and subjects. A brief introduction to the course and answering exam questions at the start, and answers/a mark scheme are included at the end.

This course companion can be used in full as an alternative or complement to the specification or for independent learning or revision. Alternatively, teachers might use a section as a classroom activity or homework.

This specification covers a particularly broad range, in terms of time periods and aspects of a Christian's faith and Christianity's impact on their lives. This should help students to understand and develop their thinking, enabling them to approach issues from different perspectives.

Where students need to know contrasting religious views on specific topics, several other religions and non-religious views are given where specified.

We have sought a balance between explaining relevant concepts in sufficient detail without oversimplification, while not going beyond GCSE level and becoming too complex. We have tried to present all views in a neutral and informative way.

Hopefully this resource will encourage students in their learning and help them to succeed in exams. It should take the pressure away from teachers by providing the bulk of what they want to teach to their class.

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* resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

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Introduction to the Course and How to Answer

This course aims to cover many aspects of Christianity and to assess your understanding of material covers several subject areas: what Christians believe, and why; which part in, and how the Church as a whole operates; which sources Christians trust Church and Christian roles, such as leadership, have developed; and expression and drama. There will be reference to the importance of various aspects of Christianity from different points of view from within Christianity. The sections on the afterlife are from other religions so that you can compare and contrast these with Christianity.

This course companion is designed to equip you with the information you need knowledge and ability to answer related questions. Not all the questions and answers are exam-style, but those which are should be answered in particular ways.

The exam board will ask you to give quick facts and statements, as well as asking you to 'explain' and 'evaluate' beliefs and opinions. When answering all questions it is important to try to use technical terms where possible and to write well, using a style that is easy to follow and using correct spellings and grammar. More or less writing will be required, depending on the number of marks. Try to spend as little time on the shorter questions as possible, to allow yourself more time for longer ones.

For each of the four sections you will get a 3-mark, 4-mark, 5-mark and 12-mark question in the exam – a few extra marks are given for spelling, punctuation and grammar – and also terminology – based on the 12-mark question sections 1 (Beliefs and Teachings) and 3 (Sources of Wisdom and Authority).

Hopefully this resource will be interesting, informative, and help you to achieve good results.

For the **3-mark question** you will be asked to 'state three' or 'outline three' examples. For 'state' questions, you can give three one-word answers, and for 'outline' questions you can give three one-sentence answers. You will get one mark for each point up to a maximum of three marks.

For the **4-mark question** you will be asked to 'explain' two reasons or ways; often two which something is important. You need to give two different points, and, to get full or justify both; for example, with a quote or other evidence. So you can think of it as and a mark for developing each point. This should show that you understand information to recall it. The developments must be relevant to the point they are justifying and you will not get full marks if you use the same justification for both points you give in one.

Alternatively: you may be asked to describe two differences between Christianity and another religion (use the same religion for both differences). You will get a mark for making two points about Christianity, and a mark for contrasting this point with another religion, and you should mark two points about Christianity, and contrast each (in a different way) with your other.

The **5-mark question** is very similar to the 4-mark question, but you could be asked for reasons or ways). As well as making two points and developing/justifying both, you should source of wisdom or authority, such as the Bible or the Catholic Catechism (as well as development/justification). Again, try to make sure your points are as different as possible; marking gives you credit for every point/development you make.

The **12-mark question** is the longest, and there is a little more to remember. You will need means giving arguments and justifications **for** and **against** the statement (so agreeing with alternative point of view). Make sure you have good reasons for all the points you make and also need to come to a conclusion; picking the most convincing side of the argument (based given!) and saying why you think this is the case. You need to refer to Christian teaching, and on Christianity (not on other religions or from non-religious points of view). If specified, you Christian points of view – this could be specified on any of the 12-mark questions, but is up

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Beliefs and Teachings

A key part of any religion is its beliefs and teachings. These are particularly important within Christianity, especially mainstream branches, compared to many other world religions (such as Islam, Judaism and Buddhism) which can be seen to be more practice-focused.

Teachings can come from interpretations of the **Bible, Old Testament and New Testament**; from the Church, often expressed in **Creeds**; and from **theologians** and philosophers who have sought to answer difficult questions about religion. Different Church **denominations**, have different beliefs, depending on how on which teachings they accept.

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Keywords:

- ♦ **Bible** – the Christian Scriptures, made up of the Old and New Testaments
- ♦ **creed** – a statement of belief
- ♦ **denomination** – a particular branch within a religion, e.g. Catholicism, Anglicanism
- ♦ **New Testament** – section of the Bible concerning the life of Jesus and his early church
- ♦ **Old Testament** – section of the Bible concerning the time before the birth of Jesus
- ♦ **theologian** – someone who studies religion and God

The Trinity

The **Trinity** is a concept within Christianity which refers to the belief that there is one God, existing as three persons at the same time. The three persons are God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit. However, there is unity within God – there are not three separate gods. This concept is rather confusing, and it has caused much controversy and debate within Christianity. Not all Christians believe in the Trinity, but most do.

Keywords:

- ♦ **Ascension** – when Jesus was raised up into heaven after his resurrection
- ♦ **baptism** – here, immersion in water to symbolise spiritual cleansing
- ♦ **disciples** – followers, here of Jesus, often referring to his closest twelve male followers
- ♦ **divine** – godly, above humanity
- ♦ **gospel** – means 'good news'; the four books at the start of the New Testament
- ♦ **idolatry** – worshipping something other than God, which is forbidden in Christianity
- ♦ **ministry** – here, Jesus' work of teaching and healing
- ♦ **Pentecost** – when the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples after Jesus' ascension
- ♦ **prayer** – communication with God
- ♦ **prophets** – people who speak to God and/or can predict the future
- ♦ **resurrection** – coming back to life after dying; Christians believe Jesus was resurrected
- ♦ **sin** – something that separates people from God, going against God's will
- ♦ **Ten Commandments** – ten important rules given to the prophet Moses by God
- ♦ **Trinity** – the concept that God is one being, but three persons

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Nature and significance of the Trinity as expressed in the Nicene Creed

Because Christians in the early Church were not sure exactly how to describe the **Trinity**, there were different opinions. One priest called Arius, for example, did not think that Jesus was God. However, a bishop called Athanasius argued that he was. Different people and groups had varying ideas. The Emperor Constantine was fed up with the disputes and called a Church council (a meeting of Christian figures of authority) in 325 CE to decide the matter – this was the first Council of Nicaea (named after the place where it was held). The Nicene **Creed** was not actually completed until the first Council of Constantinople in 381 CE, but by then it was decided that God was one **substance** but he contained three different Persons – this granted Jesus full **divine** status.

Important
The persons of the Trinity are referred to as 'he'. Some Christians believe that God is male, but others believe that God is gendered, but not in the same way as gender attributes in our society. Also, the Creed says that both the Father and the Son are in God's image and likeness.

The Creed mainly contains what Christians believe about the three Persons of the Trinity, statements about Jesus' life, and other Christian beliefs about the Church and the world.

About God (and his nature), the Nicene Creed states that:

- ◆ God is one.
- ◆ God the Father made the world and everything else.
- ◆ Jesus is also God, and everything was created by him / with his help, as the Father.
- ◆ Jesus came to Earth as a human, born of the Holy Spirit and his mother Mary.
- ◆ Jesus died, rose, and **ascended** to heaven.
- ◆ Jesus will come at the end of time to judge humanity (those alive and those who have died).
- ◆ The Holy Spirit gives life and has influenced **prophets**.

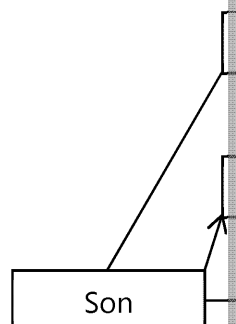
The Emperor Charlemagne, alive in the eighth and ninth centuries, made an addition to the Nicene Creed, based on **theology** from St. Augustine. Previously, the Creed had claimed that the Holy Spirit 'proceeds from the Father', but this was changed to 'the Father and the Son'. The Orthodox Church disagreed with this alteration, because they saw no reason for it, and this is one of the reasons for their split from the Catholic Church.

St. Augustine was a theologian and philosopher in the fourth and fifth centuries. He was one of the middle of the Trinity and wrote the Nicene Creed. His views were very influential in the doctrine of the Trinity. Christians believe that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Some Christians think different Persons of the Trinity have different importance, with the Father being more important than the Spirit. Others see no reason for this belief and view them as equal.

The Creed says different things about the different Persons of the Trinity, but teaches that they are one God. The Creed shows that the Trinity has been an important aspect of Christian belief for a long time. Significance of the Trinity, and the way the Trinity is expressed in the Nicene Creed includes:

- ◆ Christians believe that God wanted to save them, and that his plan has been in place for a long time (indicated by the belief that Jesus has existed since creation and that the Holy Spirit has spoken through prophets, including the Old Testament prophets).
- ◆ Christians see the different Persons of God in different ways – they perceive the Father as the creator, the Son as the saviour, and the Holy Spirit as the comforter.



¹ <http://anglicansonline.org/basics/nicene.html>

Nature and significance of the oneness of God

As stated above, Christians believe in one God, not three gods. So God's nature is significant for a number of reasons:

- ♦ The God of the Jewish people in the **Old Testament** is one God. Christians are worshipping the same God, not a different God.

'Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.' (Deuteronomy 6:4)

- ♦ Christians are expected to worship only one God, and worship of anything other than God is **idolatry** (worshipping a false god) and this is forbidden in the **Ten Commandments**.

'You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them...' (Exodus 20:4–5 NRSV)

- ♦ If Jesus (God the Son) is the same being as God the Father, then all his teachings should be followed.

Nature and significance of each of the persons individually

There is biblical support for different persons of God the **Trinity**.

- ♦ Genesis, the first book of the Bible, refers to both 'God' and 'the spirit of God' (Genesis 1:1–2 NRSV).
- ♦ In the **New Testament** Jesus addresses the creator God, who was worshipped by the Jews, as 'Father' (e.g. Matthew 5:16 NRSV).
- ♦ Jesus was referred to in the **Gospels** as the 'Son of God' (e.g. Mark 1:1 NRSV), sent from the Father, and when early Christians worshipped him as God they distinguished him from God the Father in this way.
- ♦ At **Pentecost**, the early **disciples** received the Holy Spirit, sent by Jesus, which is said to have descended on them like flames (Acts 2). The Holy Spirit is thought to guide and inspire Christians.

The Father

As shown in the Nicene **Creed**, God the Father is believed to be the creator of the world, and to have sent Jesus (the Son) to save humanity. He is significant because he decided to create humanity and also to save it – without him Christians believe they would not be here, and would not have hope of heaven. The Father is seen as powerful, and the God who was in control in the **Old Testament**.

'In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God (Or: spirit) swept over the face of the waters.' (Genesis 1:1–2 NRSV)

The Son

As shown in the Nicene **Creed**, Jesus is believed to be the Son of God (and also believed to have existed before Creation, and to have come to Earth to save humanity for Christians, because they believe that it is through him that they have been able to have a relationship with God, and go to heaven after death).

'Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."' (Matthew 16:16)

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The Spirit

The Holy Spirit is often seen to be the Person of God who communicates with people in the everyday – he has spoken through **prophets**, and, as promised by Jesus, was sent to the **disciples** after Jesus' death (this event is known and celebrated as **Pentecost**) so that God would be present with humanity. Some Christians say that he lives in their hearts. He is significant to Christians as he is the Person of God who they can continually experience.

'Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them; and all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability.' (Acts 2:3–4 NRSV)

All the Persons Individually – Together

One good example in the Bible where all the different Persons of God are present (see Matthew 3:13–17). Jesus begins his **ministry** by being baptised, and God's approval of Jesus as the Holy Spirit descends to be with Jesus.

'And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and resting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16–17 NRSV)

How this is reflected in Christian worship and belief today

- ♦ Most Christians believe in the **Trinity**.
- ♦ Some Churches use **creeds**, such as the Nicene Creed, which express their beliefs about the Trinity, in worship.
- ♦ Christians celebrate Trinity Sunday, the birth of Jesus at Christmas, his death and **resurrection** at Easter, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at **Pentecost**.
- ♦ Christians **pray** to Jesus as well as God the Father, and may pray to God the Father 'in Jesus' name'.
- ♦ Blessings can be, and **baptisms** are, given 'in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'.
- ♦ Christians may feel that they experience the Holy Spirit acting in their lives, and Pentecostal Christians put particular importance on the role of the Holy Spirit.

Quick questions

1. State the **three** Persons of the Trinity.
2. Explain **two** reasons why Christians believe in the Trinity.

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The Creation of the Universe and of Humanity

Christianity, like many religions and world views, has a **Creation** story to explain the world; the creation of the universe and humanity. Christians believe that God entrusted it to humans.

Keywords:

- ◆ **Creation** – the account of how the world and universe were made
- ◆ **doctrine** – set teaching or belief
- ◆ **dominion** – control over something
- ◆ **grace** – what God grants to humans, which saves them
- ◆ **literal** – something exact and factual
- ◆ **metaphorical** – something which is symbolic
- ◆ **original sin** – sin all humans inherit because of the Fall
- ◆ **personal sin** – sins committed by an individual
- ◆ **reason** – a rational capacity for understanding and making decisions
- ◆ **saviour** – someone who saves; Jesus came to save Christians from sin
- ◆ **sin** – something that separates people from God, going against God's will
- ◆ **stewardship** – a state of managing resources in a responsible way
- ◆ **symbolic** – something which represents something else
- ◆ **the Fall** – the doctrine that humans lost God's grace when they disobeyed him
- ◆ **Word of God** – Jesus; through which God's power is expressed, and his teaching

Synopsis of biblical accounts of Creation, including the role of the Word of God

The first book of the Bible, Genesis, gives two different accounts of **Creation**.

Genesis 1 and the start of Genesis 2:

Before the creation of the world, there was nothing. But God's Spirit moved, and God spoke, and things began to come into being. God was present at Creation and played an important part. Over a period of six days God created the world: light; sky and the earth; land and plants; the sun, moon and stars; fish and birds; animals; and humans in his image. God gives the world to humans to look after, is pleased with his creation on the seventh day.

Why do Christians believe in the Word of God?
and John 1:1-14

'In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God (Or: spirit) swept over the face of the waters.' (Genesis 1:1-2 NRSV)

'Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.' (Genesis 1:3 NRSV)

'So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.' (Genesis 1:27 NRSV)

Genesis 2:

This differs to Genesis 1. There is more detail, and some things even happen in a different order. God created Adam before animals in this account. Furthermore, the creation of woman is different; she is created after the animals, out of one of man's ribs. Man is commanded to work the land and keep the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

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Genesis 3:

The serpent tempts the woman to eat the forbidden fruit. She protests that she is not to eat, and shares it with the man. They lose some sense of innocence, which is why they are naked and hiding from God. God discovers that they have eaten the fruit and casts them out of the Garden of Eden.

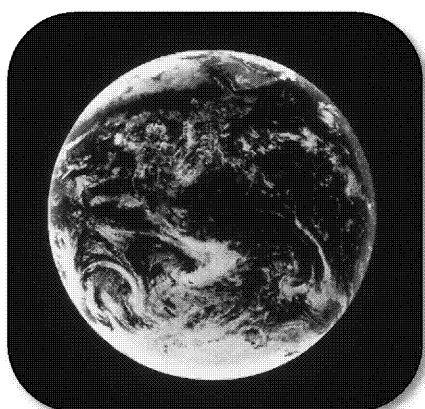
Note: Christianity shares the Creation account given in Genesis with Judaism, and everything in the same way as Christians.

John 1: 1–18:

God's **Word** is with God at Creation, and God creates through him. It then becomes flesh, which is not recognised, but grants humans God's **grace**. This passage supports Christianity's belief that Jesus was embodied in the person of Jesus – that God the Son pre-existed Jesus and that Jesus was God. It claims that the Word, Jesus, was present at Creation, so existence of the Word is important in Creation at different levels – he helped to create the physical world and the new beginning for humans who want a relationship with God. Jesus is God because he brought God's teaching (his word) to Earth – this is significant because if the Word came from God, then it should be followed.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him, nothing came into being... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.' (John 1:1–18)

The accounts mention God (the Father), Jesus and the Holy Spirit, emphasising the Trinity in the Bible.



The world, which Christians believe was created by God.

Divergent ways in which biblical accounts are interpreted by Christians

Different Christians interpret the Creation account in different ways:

- ◆ Some believe that it is **literally** true that God created the world within seven days, and that the first people called Adam and Eve.
- ◆ Some believe that the Creation story is a metaphor for the process of evolution, and that the Bible is scientifically accurate. Note: this does not mean the Bible is untrue, but rather that it is interpreted differently.
- ◆ One interpretation of creation leads to the belief that the world was largely associated with **St. Augustine** was through humans taking and eating the forbidden fruit, they fell from God's **grace**. Humans are sinful from this, and need **saving**.

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Importance of Creation for Christians today

Creation is important to different Christians today in different ways.

A **literal** interpretation may make it hard for Christians to trust scientific findings. Christians feel special, as humans are, on this interpretation, uniquely created in God's image, not evolved from monkeys. Believing a literal account of Creation can be comforting, as such an account emphasises God's power – if he was able to create everything, then surely he can do anything. Literal interpretations are more of a modern phenomenon (developing with the rise of fundamentalism becoming popular around 100 years ago), rather than an older view displaced by science.

A more **metaphorical** interpretation will not conflict with Christians learning about the latest scientific interpretations of the world, and Creation may be important to them in reconciling their faith with scientific beliefs – if they believe that God created everything, but through the actions of other beings.

Creation is important for many Christians because they believe that God gave them the right to rule it, or have **dominion** over it.

'God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." God said, "See, I have given you every plant that yields seed upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall eat of them."
(Genesis 1:28-29 NRSV)

Some Christians believe this means that the world is theirs, to exploit for their own benefit, or whatever they want, and control animals.

However, many Christians believe that dominion also comes with great responsibility. As God has made them **stewards** of his creation; people who manage it and protect it. The Creation story reminds them that the world is God's and they should care for it.

'Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries.'

The **doctrine** of the **Fall** has varied impact. Augustine felt that fallenness arose from the sin of Adam and Eve were passed on through sex – this is called **original sin**. This idea may lead some Christians to view sex negatively, and women may be seen as inferior to men because of Adam. Some Christians feel a greater need for a **saviour**, Jesus, because of the Fall.

Christians who do not agree with St. Augustine are less likely to see sex or women negatively. For example, many see women as equal to men because Genesis 1:27 says that both men and women were created in the image of God. While such Christians feel they need God to save them, they may be more positive about the human condition – St. Thomas Aquinas thought humans still had their **reason** as a moral compass. Some Christians only believe in **personal sin**; disobedience committed individually, so do not feel that all humans are born with original sin. Some Christians view the Creation story positively; if humans were once in God's image, it is possible to draw closer to him again if Christians try to follow his teachings and live by his commandments.

St. Thomas Aquinas, a medieval Christian philosopher, wrote about the human condition and the role of reason.

The account of Creation in John 1 is important because it reinforces to Christians that Jesus existed, as has the Trinity, and that God cared enough about his creation to send his son to save humanity.

Quick questions

3. Explain **two** ways in which a Christian may interpret the Bible and its account of Creation.
4. Explain **two** reasons why the Creation narratives may be important to Christians today. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

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The Incarnation

Most Christians have come to believe that Jesus is God, and so during his time on earth he was **incarnate**; or God in the flesh.

Keywords:

- ◆ **Incarnation** – in Christianity, the belief that Jesus was God in the flesh
- ◆ **Jewish law** – what the Jews followed in order to please God. Many Christians believe that Jesus fulfilled the law by dying and rising, so that Christians do not have to follow it anymore
- ◆ **miracle** – in Christianity, something which appears to be done by God and is beyond natural laws and human nature
- ◆ **Transfiguration** – when Jesus was transformed, and began to shine, in front of his disciples, and Moses and Elijah appeared

Nature of the person of Jesus as the incarnate Son of God

The exact nature of Jesus as both God and human has been debated within Christianity.

- ◆ Some early Christians claimed that Jesus was completely God and merely appeared to be human.
- ◆ Some Christians have believed, and still believe today, that Jesus was fully human, but had a special relationship with God.
- ◆ Mainstream Christianity teaches that Jesus was fully human and fully God. Most Christians feel that Jesus' human nature and **divine** nature were both present all of, or most of, the time. When Jesus suffered, he felt pain as any other human, but he had the power of God. Some Christians believe that, as a human, Jesus was not completely aware of God's plan all of the time.

Importance and significance of the person of Jesus as the incarnate Son of God, and of the incarnation for Christians today

Jesus being the **incarnate** Son of God / the Incarnation is important to Christians for several reasons:

- ◆ This shows God cared about Christians enough to become a human and die for them.
- ◆ This shows that Jesus had God's authority and taught his will, and so Christians can follow his teachings and practice for certain.
- ◆ This shows that God has power – to become human, raise the dead, pe... establishes that God has the power to grant life after death, meaning th... forward to the afterlife.
- ◆ It helps Christians to have a personal relationship with God, because th... a relationship with them. Some Christians feel that by following Jesus... can come closer to God, and having an incarnated God makes it easier...
- ◆ Belief in the Incarnation has led many Christians to see Jesus as a fulfilment of the law, meaning that they no longer need to follow this for their **sins** to be forgiven and saved from condemnation.
- ◆ Belief in Jesus being God incarnate (or the only incarnation of God) is unique to Christianity. Some Christians view Jesus as a **prophet**, and some Hindus believe that Jesus was one particular god) among many. Therefore, belief in the Incarnation sets Christianity apart from other religions and is one of their core beliefs.

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Biblical basis for the teaching of the incarnation

The word '**incarnation**' originates in Latin; as such, it does not occur in the Bible (it is written in Greek). The belief in the Incarnation is not universally held, and it is not one of the **Gospel** writers and other writers of the **New Testament** did not believe in. However, the New Testament can still be used to provide evidence for the Incarnation.

References to Jesus as God Incarnate:

- ♦ John 1:1–18 claims that Jesus has existed as God since before **Creation** and is the **incarnation** of God.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us... Jesus Christ...' (John 1:1–18)

- ♦ 1 Timothy 3:16 claims that God was revealed as a human [as Jesus].

'Without any doubt, the mystery of our religion is great: He (Or: God) who was vindicated in spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among Gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.' (1 Timothy 3:16 NRSV)

References to Jesus' God-like Qualities / Divine Nature:

- ♦ Jesus healed many people, including the Centurion's servant, a leper, the woman with haemorrhages, a blind man, and he raised Lazarus from the dead (Luke 7, Matthew 8 and 9, John 9 and 11).
- ♦ Jesus performed other **miracles**, such as making five loaves and two fish feed thousands, walking on water, and calming a storm (Matthew 14, Mark 4).
- ♦ Jesus claimed the authority to forgive **sins** and cast out demons, typically which he backed up with his healing abilities (Mark 2 and 5, Matthew 9).
- ♦ At the **Transfiguration**, Jesus was changed, and 'his face shone like the sun' – this makes him seem more than human (Matthew 17:2).
- ♦ Even though he was killed, he was **resurrected**, confirming his power over death (Mark 14–16, Luke 22–24, John 18–21).

Disbelieving people reflected Jesus' practices and did not understand his power.

Significance of the biblical basis for the incarnation for Christians today

- ♦ Christians have a source, which they trust, which can be used as evidence for the Incarnation.
- ♦ Christians can make a case that belief in the Incarnation was around early on and not developed centuries later.

Quick questions

5. Outline **three** reasons why belief in the Incarnation may be important to Christians today.

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The Last Days of Jesus' Life

The belief that Jesus died and was raised from the dead is of central importance. The events surrounding Jesus' death are often referred to as his '**Passion**', because of the suffering involved. Jesus' Passion is remembered especially during Lent, but it is crucial to the whole religion.

Keywords:

- ◆ **baptism** – here, a sacrament which involves being anointed with, or immersed in water, to signify a new life in Jesus
- ◆ **blasphemy** – offence to God (saying or doing something against God)
- ◆ **covenant** – a promise between people and God
- ◆ **Crucifixion** – when Jesus was put to death on a cross
- ◆ **Eucharist** – sacrament which involves sharing bread and wine in remembrance of Jesus
- ◆ **Last Supper** – Jesus' final celebration of the Jewish Passover with his disciples
- ◆ **Lent** – the period of preparation before Easter. Christians remember Jesus' time of suffering and sacrifice Jesus made by dying
- ◆ **Passion** – referring to the events surrounding the suffering and death of Jesus
- ◆ **Passover** – an important Jewish festival celebrating God's deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt
- ◆ **Sabbath** – the Jewish holy day
- ◆ **sacrament** – a particularly important worship practice which has even higher status in religions such as the Catholic and Orthodox Churches
- ◆ **Temple** – the Jewish holy building in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus, which was destroyed in 70 AD

Synopsis of biblical accounts (Luke 22–24)

The **Gospel** accounts do not *all* agree on *all* the details of Jesus' **Passion** and Resurrection. Some events occur in some gospels and not others. This synopsis gives the details of what is agreed in all accounts (Luke 22–24), while also providing some extra details from the other gospels which differ considerably.

The Last Supper:

The **Last Supper** was when Jesus celebrated the Jewish **Passover** with his closest **disciples**; twelve male followers. Passover is celebrated when God liberated the Jewish people from the land of Egypt. Jesus tells his disciples that he will not drink wine again until he is in God's Kingdom. He takes bread, and tells them that it is his body, telling them to eat it, and to do this in memory of him.

'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

He shares wine, saying that it is his blood.

'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'

This sharing of bread and wine is reflected in the Christian practice of the Eucharist (or *Sacraments*).

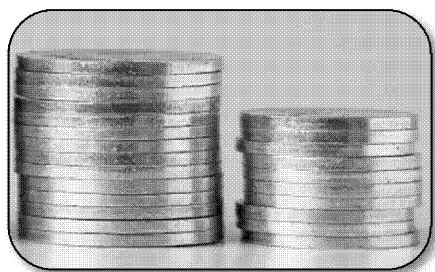
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At the meal, Jesus tells the disciples that he will be betrayed and that his disciples discuss who will do this.

There is also a debate about who will be greatest among the disciples. Jesus says that if anyone wants to be great, the disciples must serve others. Jesus predicts that Peter will deny him three times (he had previously sent them taking nothing with them).

‘Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is my blood of the new covenant.”’ (Luke 22:19–20 NRSV)



Jesus was betrayed for money.

Betrayal and Arrest:

Judas agrees to betray Jesus to the Jewish leaders at the Last Supper, and they promise him money. They go to a place called the Mount of Olives, and Jesus prays. He prays to God not to have to go to the cross. He wakes the disciples who he wanted to go with him.

Judas and a crowd come to arrest Jesus. Judas goes to kiss Jesus to indicate who he is (a kiss was a common greeting), but Jesus asks if he will betray him in this way. His disciples attempt to defend him, and one cuts off a slave's ear; however, Jesus stops them and heals the ear. He rebukes the crowd for arresting him at night, not when he publically teaches in the Temple in the day. He is arrested and taken to the high priest. When Peter follows Jesus he is recognised, but denies Jesus three times as Jesus had predicted.

‘While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him, “Why are you betraying the Son of Man?”’ (Luke 22:47–48 NRSV)

Trial:

Jesus is mocked and tried before the Jewish Council. Jesus prophesies and disputes with the elders and they condemn him. The elders take Jesus to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, because the Jewish leaders do not have the authority to condemn Jesus to death. Pilate questions Jesus but does not want to punish him. Luke's Gospel is the only account in which Pilate sends Jesus to King Herod (because Jesus is from Galilee, which Herod rules). Herod asks Jesus straight back when Jesus will not talk to him. Pressured by the Jewish authorities, Pilate condemns Jesus to death, and releases another prisoner for the Jewish people. Jesus and let him go.

‘Then Pilate asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” He answered, “You say so.” He said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find no basis for an accusation against this man.”’ (Luke 23:3–4 NRSV)

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Crucifixion:

In Luke's Gospel the soldiers make a traveller called Simon of Cyrene carry Jesus' cross to the **Crucifixion** and on the way to his crucifixion, Jesus talks to the crowd, telling them not to weep for him, but for themselves, as dark times are coming.

Jesus is crucified between two other criminals, and the soldiers gamble for Jesus' clothing. Jesus is mocked – taunted and told to save himself. In Luke's Gospel he talks to the criminals either side of him on other crosses – to remember him, Jesus tells him that he will be with him, that day, in heaven.

'Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."] And they cast lots to divide his clothing.' (Luke 23:32-35)

The sky goes dark from about midday until 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when Jesus dies. When Jesus dies, the curtain in the **Temple** is ripped in two.

Jesus' body is given to one of his followers, Joseph of Arimathea, to bury. The Jews did not want bodies left on the crosses, as it was the day of preparation for the Passover.

Resurrection:

Jesus died on the Friday, and the **Sabbath** (Saturday) the next day was kept as a day of rest. Consequently, the women who followed Jesus could not go to prepare his body until the Sunday morning. The **resurrection** story varies greatly between the different gospels, so here are synopsis of all four versions (in the order they appear in the Bible).

- ◆ In Matthew's Gospel, an angel appears to the women and tells them that Jesus has been raised, and then Jesus appears to his **disciples** when the women have told them to come and see.
- ◆ In Mark's Gospel, a man (often presumed to be an angel) is sitting in the open tomb and tells the woman that Jesus has been raised. In the longer ending of this Gospel, Jesus appears to **Mary Magdalene** and then to his disciples.
- ◆ *In Luke's Gospel*, two men (often presumed to be angels) appear to the women and tell them that Jesus has risen. The women are scared and tell the disciples.

Mary Magdalene was a close follower of Jesus, and one of his female disciples. She is mentioned in several of the Gospels. Some reports that she had an illness, which she was cured of by Jesus. There is no record of her after the resurrection.

The disciples do not want to believe them, though Peter goes to investigate. Jesus appears to two of his followers on a journey, though they do not realise it is him until they sit down to eat. He also appears to Simon Peter and his other disciples, proving to them that he is alive and teaching them. He tells them to wait in Jerusalem [for the Holy Spirit] and to preach the good news about him.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus does not emphasise that he is commanding his followers. In the other gospels, this is highlighted more and Jesus commands his disciples to **baptise** followers (see the section on *Sacraments*).

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‘While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling robes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground before them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here!” (Luke 24:4-5 NRSV)

‘Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day. Repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.’ (Luke 24:46-47 NRSV)

- ♦ In John’s Gospel, Mary Magdalene finds the empty tomb and alerts some of the other women. She then sees two angels sitting in the tomb, and then she sees Jesus. Then Jesus appears to the disciple Thomas, and then again when Thomas is present. Thomas is known as ‘Doubting Thomas’ because he would not believe that Jesus had risen until he saw him. Jesus then appears to his disciples again when they are fishing.

Ascension:

In Luke’s Gospel, the account of the **Ascension** is very short – Jesus blesses his disciples and goes up to heaven and they worship him.

‘While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.’ (Luke 24:51 NRSV)

Significance of these events to understanding the person of Jesus Christ

Christians believe that the purpose of Jesus’ life was so that he could teach God’s will, and then die as a sacrifice to save humans from their **sin**. Christians believe that Jesus’ life and death formed a new **covenant**, a promise between God and humankind. Jesus replaced the old **covenant** of the **Jewish law**, so that Christians no longer needed to follow this, but could instead be saved through Jesus.

Different aspects of Jesus’ last days also have particular significance for Christians. This table summarises the significance of these events for the person of Jesus Christ.

Aspect of Jesus’ last days	Significance
Jesus died at the time of the Passover festival	For Christians, Jesus became the Passover lamb. The Jews celebrated the Passover to remember when they had marked their doorposts with blood so that they were saved from the plague of death in Egypt, and so that they were saved from the Egyptians. Now, for Christians, Jesus was the sacrifice that saved them from sin.
Jesus washed his disciples’ feet	Jesus showed humility and servanthood; he was not a person who put others above himself. This shows that Jesus, and the Church, are called to serve others.
Jesus gives his disciples bread and wine	Many Christian denominations remember Jesus’ sacrifice through the sacrament of the Eucharist ; sharing bread and wine as a reminder of Jesus giving his life to save them from their sin – Jesus died because of his sacrifice.
Jesus praying before his arrest	This shows Jesus’ human side – Jesus was afraid, and did not want to go to the cross. However, he was willing to overcome this to follow God’s plan.
Jesus at his trials	Jesus deliberately said things to the Jews which would get him arrested, trying to acquit himself. He did not appeal to Pilate to free him. Jesus was in control and wanted to follow God’s plan – he knew he would die for his sacrifice.

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Aspect of Jesus' last days	Significance
Fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy	Many Christians believe that various aspects of Jesus' life and death fulfilled Old Testament prophecy . Some believe that he is the 'suffering servant' of Isaiah 53. Some believe that Judas' betrayal and sold for 30 pieces of silver, and the robe of blood, both correspond with prophecies, and that Jesus' death was foretold (among other things). If Jesus fulfilled prophecies, then his death and resurrection to redeem humankind had been part of God's plan. (Some Jews do not believe these prophecies were fulfilled, and therefore do not believe in prophecies in the first place.)
Destroying the Temple and rebuilding in three days	When Jesus had spoken about destroying the Temple and rebuilding it in three days, in his trial in front of the Jewish Council in some gospels it was interpreted that he meant the Temple in Jerusalem where they worshipped. However, Jesus interpreted that he meant himself; that God dwelt with him. The Jewish Temple was destroyed, less than 50 years after Jesus' death. Jesus was seen as replacing the physical Temple – that they should worship him, not through animal sacrifices, when Jesus was resurrected.
The Temple curtain tearing in two	The Temple curtain separated the Holy of Holies (the most sacred part of the Temple where God was supposed to dwell) from the rest of the Temple. The tearing of the curtain was seen to symbolise that Jesus' death had removed the barrier between God and humanity.
Jesus rising from the dead	Christians believe that Jesus overcame sin and death through his resurrection.

Pause for thought:

What do you think would have happened if Jesus' disciples did *not* believe that he had risen from the dead?

Quick questions

- Outline **three** things Jesus told his disciples at the Last Supper.
- Explain **two** reasons why Jesus' last days/death may be significant to Christians.

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The Nature and Significance of Salvation and the Role of Christ

Christians have complex and varying beliefs about **salvation** and **atonement**.

Keywords:

- ◆ **atonement** – making up for something; in Christianity, Jesus achieving salvation by paying a price
- ◆ **free will** – the ability to choose what to do
- ◆ **predestination** – the idea that God has chosen who will be saved in advance
- ◆ **salvation** – being saved, having been saved; in Christianity, Jesus brought humans salvation

Nature and significance of salvation and the role of Christ in salvation

Salvation refers to the view within Christianity that Christians have been saved from death and resurrection, from **sin** and its consequences.

Christians believe that doing wrong (sin) separates them from God, and causes death (death). However, Jesus died instead – he paid the price which they should have paid to have a relationship with God, a clean slate. Also, when they die, this will be followed by life on with God in heaven. So salvation is significant because it offers Christians opportunities and cancels their debt of sin – God forgives them.

‘For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.’ (Romans 6:23 NRSV)

Jesus’ role in salvation is that he brought humans salvation – without him, there is no chance at a relationship with God. In John 3:10–21, Jesus explains to a man that he has come from heaven, so that those who believe in him can have eternal life. He says that those who believe will be saved, but those who do not believe will not.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” (John 3:16 NRSV)

Christians, from the beginning of Christianity, have taught that salvation comes through Jesus’ **disciple** Peter proclaimed this in Acts 4:8–12 – that everyone must believe in Jesus.

“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12 NRSV)

Some people wonder why Jesus had to die to end this separation between humans and God. Could he just click his fingers and make everything ok if he wanted to? One Christian view is that God is both just *and* merciful. Wrong had been done, so a just God *has* to punish. However, he is merciful and wants to forgive. The solution: he accepts the punishment for them. He can forgive humanity. This is like paying a debt for a friend – the debt is paid for them instead of them.

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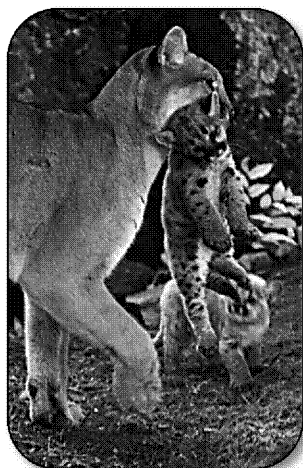


Extension – Different ideas about salvation:

Christians accept that there is salvation because Jesus died and rose again. However, there are different views about who can receive salvation, and how.

One view which some Christians, such as St. Augustine, hold is that salvation is given by God and that God has **predestined** who to save; chosen them at the beginning of time. If humans have sinned, they have no right to salvation, and God has not chosen to save everyone. This means that humans do not have to worry about being perfect, because God does not require every individual has done.

A second view held by some Christians is that humans have **free will** to choose whether to accept what Jesus has done for them, and that salvation is down to the individual. Humans must receive God's grace and follow Jesus. This seems positive because no one is automatically excluded, but it puts pressure on Christians to believe and live good lives.



How to remember this?

Some people liken the first view of salvation, through predestination (being chosen by God), to a cat. Cats pick their young up by the neck to carry them.

Some people liken the second view of salvation, where the human must reach out to God, to a monkey. Baby monkeys must grab onto their mothers to be carried.

Nature and significance of atonement within Christianity and its links to other religions

Atonement refers to *how* Jesus achieved salvation, and how he redeemed humanity from (or atoned for) their sins, so saved them from the consequences.

Atonement is a significant concept because it explains how it was possible for God to pay humans' debt himself and heal the rift between God and humanity. Without atoning for humans' sins, he could not have brought them salvation.

Extension – Different ideas about atonement:

There are different ideas about how Jesus managed to atone for sin and save humanity. Some think Jesus could pay the price to redeem humans because he was human, but he was able to overcome death because he was **divine**. Some think Jesus achieved atonement through sacrifice, which was necessary for sin – death (this view is used throughout because it is a popular view). Some think the sacrifice defeated the devil, so that he could no longer control sinners. Some think atonement is not fully explainable.

[Jesus, speaking about himself:] 'For the Son of Man came not to be served but to give his life a ransom for many.' (Mark 10:45 NRSV)

The link between salvation and atonement: Salvation is *what* Christians believe Jesus did for them when he saved humanity. Atonement refers to *how* Christians believe he did it – through his sacrifice.

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Associated concepts – law, sin, grace and spirit

Law: Before Jesus, Jews aimed to achieve **salvation** through following God's law (the Jewish law), but many Christians believe that this was not a permanent solution, and Jesus' sacrifice replaced this (most Jews still follow the Jewish law). Instead of following a written law, they should instead follow the spiritual law of love, perfectly expressed in Jesus.

'This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, I will put my laws in their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.' (Hebrews 8:10 NRSV)

Jesus' role in bringing Christians salvation through **atonement** for their **sins** is important because Christians today can feel free from sin, and also free from following the Jewish law. This is not to say that they can do anything they want, but that they do not have to perform special steps to purify themselves, and that if they do something wrong and repent, they believe God will forgive them. This means Christians do not have to fear death, or punishment, and can have a new start, having faith that God loves and cares for them.

Sin: Some Christians feel that sin is within the human condition, and inherit it (original **sin**). They also believe in **personal sin**. Others only believe in personal sin, and that humans do not constantly sin. Jesus can be seen as a second remedy the **Fall**. Regardless of whether humans inherit sin, they all act against God, so they need saving – through Jesus.

Grace and the Spirit: Christians believe that **grace** is a spiritual gift which God gives in order to save them. For example, Christians believe that sending Jesus to save them is an act of God's grace.

The Holy Spirit; the third Person of God in the **Trinity**, is also believed to be able to send his grace; by sending Christians the Holy Spirit to help them in their lives. Christians think about grace and the Holy Spirit is likely to be closely linked to **salvation**; whether they believe that God chooses select people to bestow it, or that anyone can receive grace and the Holy Spirit in their lives if they choose. Christians feel that they can also receive God's grace through his teaching in the **sacraments**; for example, reliving Jesus' sacrifice in the **Eucharist**, or accepting forgiveness through **baptism**.

'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.' (Romans 8:2 NRSV)

Quick questions

8. Explain **two** teachings about salvation within Christianity. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

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Christian Eschatology

Eschatology refers to anything relating to the end of things – everyone's death and what happens after. In Christianity, it usually refers to a time when the world will end and to what happens to humans when they die. Unlike Judaism, which does not believe in an afterlife, the afterlife has been very important within Christianity.

Keywords:

- ◆ **catechism** – here, official Catholic teaching
- ◆ **eschatology** – anything to do with the end of things
- ◆ **heaven** – a place people go after death, where God is
- ◆ **hell** – a place people go after death away from God
- ◆ **immortality of the soul** – where a spiritual part of a person continues forever
- ◆ **judgment** – when people will be rewarded or punished for their lives
- ◆ **parables** – stories with an inner meaning, for the purpose of teaching
- ◆ **purgatory** – a place Catholics believe people may go after death to do penance
- ◆ **resurrection of the body** – the physical raising of a person who is dead

Divergent Christian teachings about life after death (including how beliefs are shown in the Bible)

Nature and Significance of Resurrection (Resurrection of the body and soul)

Not all Christians agree on how life after death works. Some believe that God will raise our bodies at the end of time. Others believe that a spiritual part of a person, the soul, goes straight to **heaven/hell/purgatory** (see the section on these below). Some believe in both; that the soul will enter the afterlife immediately after death, but that the **resurrection** for everyone at **judgment** at the end of time, where souls and bodies are reunited. In other words, people will enter a spiritual realm after death based on their actions. Some believe many will go to purgatory to **atone** for sins (see more on this below). At the end of time, everyone on their actions during life *and* after death, and people will then enter the rest of eternity (people who had previously been in purgatory have the chance to enter heaven).

Therefore, there are varied beliefs about the nature of resurrection: some believe it is immediate at death; some believe that it is delayed until the end of time; some believe we will be resurrected while some believe that it will not be, and that in heaven the resurrected will have new bodies, completely different to earthly bodies. However, all Christians agree that this is available to them because Jesus has saved them and God has the power to raise the dead.

Different Bible passages support different ideas about resurrection.

Some Christians believe in **resurrection of the body** because Jesus was raised from the dead in a new body of bodily form, and he raised others from the dead physically; for example, Lazarus, Jesus' friend's daughter (Mark 5). Also, Jesus taught that the dead will be raised from their graves.

“Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the graves will hear his voice and will come out...” (John 5:28-29 NRSV)

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However, other Christians believe in **immortality of the soul** because Jesus (6:47; 17:2), not life which ends and then starts again at some point in the future. Jesus told the thieves on the cross that he would be in heaven that day, which implies that they would wait to be resurrected at the end of time.

[to the thief on the cross] “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”
(Luke 23:43 NRSV)

The Catholic Church teaches that both will happen, because the Bible teaches that Jesus did not want to deny any teachings of Jesus.

Resurrection is significant because:

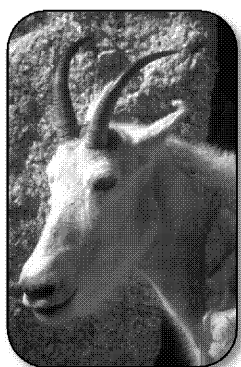
- ◆ Christians believe that there will be life after death.
 - This can comfort them because they know death will not be the end.
 - This can encourage them to live good lives because they know God will reward them.
- ◆ The existence of resurrection illuminates the character of God.
 - God is powerful enough to overcome death (demonstrated by Jesus being brought back to life in the Bible).
 - God is loving and forgiving – he wants humans to enjoy heaven with him.

Nature and Significance of Judgment

Judgment is the event at the end of time and/or when each individual person is judged by God. It is based on what they believed, and whether they lived a good or bad life. Judgment results in people being sent to heaven, hell or purgatory (see the next page).

Judgment is significant because it decides the eternal fate of a person – who will be saved and who will be condemned.

Jesus taught that after death people would be judged depending on how they lived. He told **parables**, or stories like Aesop's fables, to explain what **judgment** and the end of time would be like. He told the parable of the sheep and the goats, and the parable of the ten bridesmaids.



The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats Matthew 25:31–46 NRSV

Jesus will come back at the end of time and separate the good people (sheep) from the bad people (goats). He will grant the sheep the 'kingdom' and 'eternal life' because they fed and watered him, welcomed him, clothed him, and cared for and visited him. The sheep will ask when they did these things. Jesus will tell them that when they did these things for anyone, they did it for him.

He will then tell the goats that they did not care for others, and help them. They will be condemned to 'eternal punishment'.

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The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids Matthew 25:1–12

Ten bridesmaids were waiting for the bridegroom, but he was delayed, so they for five had brought extra oil for their lamps. When the bridegroom (representing Jesus) came, the five with extra oil had run out. They had to go to buy some more. When they got back to the wedding (representing heaven), everyone else had gone in, but the doors were locked and they were not ready for the kingdom of heaven to come at any time.

It was not just Jesus who taught that people would be judged at the end of time. Early Christians believed in judgment and continued to teach about judgment.

Taking it further

Read more about the end of time: Matthew 25:1–12
Parable of the Talents – where Jesus says that those who will be judged favourably and those who will not.

‘For all of us must appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each will receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.’ (2 Corinthians 5:10)

Nature and Significance of Heaven, Hell and Purgatory

Most Christians believe in **heaven**, which is a place where people will be with God. From the passages about **judgment** and the end of time, Jesus says he will bring his **disciples** in heaven (John 14:2–4). Those writing in the New Testament also believed in life after death, as expressed in 1 Corinthians 5:1–10.

“‘In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, I would have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And yet I am going to the Father, where I am going.’” (John 14:2–4 NRSV)

‘For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building with hands, eternal in the heavens.’ (2 Corinthians 5:1 NRSV)

Most Christians also believe in **hell**, somewhere outside of heaven and away from God. In the passages about judgment Jesus does not make hell sound very nice. It is compared to

“‘[being thrown out into the darkness], where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’” (Matthew 25:30 NRSV)

Hell has been portrayed in many different ways. In medieval times, ‘doom’ paintings, depicting scenes of judgment, were common on the walls of churches, to remind Christians that they would be judged and not be condemned to the terrors of hell.

Some Christians, believe in a place called **purgatory**, where Christians can go to purify their sins before being allowed to enter heaven. Belief in purgatory is taught by Catholics **pray** for those they believe to be in purgatory, in the hope of helping them reach heaven.

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The Church of England has rejected purgatory, because they believe that it is not in the 39 Articles of Faith in the Church of England Book of Common Prayer (added in the 1500s), Article 22 states that the Church does not hold the Catholic belief that purgatory is not supported in the Bible, and has therefore been created by the Church.

The **Catechism** of the Catholic Church defends belief in purgatory – in Article 1031 (official religious teaching)³. It uses Bible verses to support the case for purgatory. It talks about a **sin** which cannot be forgiven now, or after death. The Catholic Church believes that some sins *can* be forgiven after death – and if they are not forgiven before death, they have to do something to purify themselves after death in order to be forgiven.

“Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.”

The Catholic Catechism also points out that the tradition of praying for the dead is from the **Old Testament**. If people were already in heaven or hell forever after death, there is no sense to pray for them.

However, it can be argued that sins might be forgiven at judgment without purgatory after death, and, especially with belief in resurrection of the body, that praying for the dead that God will judge the dead more favourably at a future judgment.

Belief in heaven, hell and purgatory is significant, as it encourages Christians to live good lives. These beliefs are also significant because they create boundaries between different beliefs. The different beliefs about purgatory held by the Church of England and Catholicism are significant.

Divergent understandings as to why beliefs about life after death are important for Christians today

Because Christians believe Jesus died so that they could have eternal life, many Christians believe that death is not the end. Those who feel that they are living lives pleasing to God may not fear death because they believe it is not the end. The teachings are important because they reassure Christians that their lives are meaningful.

“Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live” (John 11:25)

The teachings of judgment in the New Testament also encourage Christians to live good lives. Christians consider a ‘good’ life (for example, taking care of the hungry and the sick, shepherding sheep and the goats, Matthew 25), in order not to ‘go to **hell**’. So the teachings are important because they help Christians to make decisions, knowing that they will be judged. Some Christians portray the teachings about life after death as not reassuring, but scary – in order to encourage them to know what will happen if they are not good.

Because some Christians believe that they should focus on the afterlife, belief in purgatory is important in influencing them to isolate themselves from normal life – many Christians have felt that because they value the afterlife more than human life that they should desire, to focus on worshipping God and on the afterlife.

² <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/book-of-common-prayer/articles>

³ http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p123a12.htm

Some Christians interpret...

“No one comes to the Father except through me [Jesus]” (John 14:6)

... to mean that only Christians will go to **heaven** – such Christians, therefore, feel that they must believe and practice Christianity in order to go to heaven when they die. This often leads to Christians trying to convert others to Christianity so that they too can experience heaven. This belief is important because it influences Christians’ views of non-Christians and also their actions – without such a belief they might not be as concerned with converting others.

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However, other Christians interpret John 14:6 as meaning that no one can experience God except through Christianity, but that people can experience God in other ways. This belief is important, as those who hold it will feel that people of other religions ultimately want the same things.

Beliefs about the afterlife and their significance in other religions

Important! You need to be able to compare and contrast beliefs about the significance from Christianity and one other religion practiced in Great Britain (Islam, Judaism or Sikhism).

Judaism

Keywords:

- ◆ **Olam Ha-Ba** – Hebrew for the world to come, the Jewish afterlife
- ◆ **Tanakh** – Jewish scripture with most of the same content as the Christian Old Testament

There is not one fixed concept of the afterlife in Judaism, though many Jews believe in an afterlife.

There is evidence in the Jewish scriptures, in the **Tanakh** (which has roughly the same content as the Christian **Old Testament**) for there being an afterlife. The Jewish afterlife is **Olam Ha-Ba** (Hebrew for ‘the world to come’).

‘Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt.’ (Daniel 12:2 NRSV)

However, Jews are not decided about whether there is **immortality** of the soul, or even whether souls may be **reincarnated** and live more than once.

For many Jews, there will be an equivalent of the Christian heaven where the righteous go to live with God and friends again. Some believe in an equivalent of the Christian hell where the wicked go to live in punishment and others believe that evil people will not have an afterlife at all, but cease to exist.

To Jews, this uncertainty about an afterlife can be significant in making them value life on Earth, placing a special value on it, because they do not know what will happen after death.

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Islam

Keywords:

- ◆ **Akhirah** – afterlife
- ◆ **Jahannam** – hell
- ◆ **Jannah** – heaven
- ◆ **Qur'an** – The Qur'an is the Muslim holy book, which the majority of Muslims of God (Allah) revealed through the Prophet Muhammad

Muslims, like Christians, believe in **heaven (Jannah)** and **hell (Jahannam)**. **Akhirah**. Unlike some Christians who believe in **immortality of the soul**, a **resurrection** of the body and **judgment** – that people will be raised from the dead and judged then according to whether they have lived good or bad lives. Those who have lived good than bad will go to heaven, and those who have done more bad than good will go to hell.

People do not have to be Muslims to go to heaven; some people from religions other than Christianity will also be admitted. This differs from the belief of some (but not all) Christians that only Christians will go to heaven because they feel that Jesus is the only way to God.

Here are some **Qur'an** quotes about life after death:

[about heaven] 'Allah will admit those who believe and work righteous therein to the Gardens beneath which rivers flow: they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and shall therein wear garments there will be of silk.' (Qur'an 22:23)

'Every soul shall have a taste of death: and only on the Day of Judgement shall we recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden (of Life): for the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception.'

Islamic belief in the afterlife is significant for many of the same reasons that Christianity is significant to Christians – it can reassure them of heaven and reminds them of the consequences of going to hell.

Buddhism

Keywords:

- ◆ **dukkha** – suffering
- ◆ **karma** – literally, action. Buddhists believe that there are good actions and bad actions, and that the laws of karma mean that good actions will result in good consequences and bad actions in bad consequences.
- ◆ **nirvana** – being extinguished – the state reached when one is liberated
- ◆ **reincarnation** – the belief some continuation of a person is reborn again in another body or state after death. (Buddhists do not believe in a soul.)
- ◆ **samsara** – the cycle of birth and rebirth



In Buddhism (as well as other religions such as Hinduism and Sikhism) it is believed that death will normally result in **reincarnation**, or rebirth, where a person is reborn again (often on Earth).



Images of the Buddhist realms

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This belief can be significant because it gives people a motivation to be good. Good actions in this life are believed to affect whether someone will have a good rebirth. People could have a fortunate human rebirth, or a less desirable rebirth; as an insect, for example, they do not want a bad rebirth, so they will try to be good. The process through which good actions result in good consequences and bad actions result in bad consequences is known as **samsara**.

However, many Buddhists wish to break out of the cycle of rebirth (**samsara**) and suffering (**dukkha**). This results in Buddhists placing a great value in achieving **nirvana** (liberation) where a person is extinguished, or ceases to exist in the same sense we understand existence. Such a belief is significant because it will affect how people live. It can lead to Buddhists practicing meditation, and performing good actions, in order to achieve liberation.

The Buddhist belief in rebirth differs from Christian beliefs – Buddhists believe that the achievement of nirvana, is dependent on their actions. Christians believe that God will guarantee them a place in heaven, and that if they go to heaven, this is because of their faith in Jesus. Also, Christians believe that they will have one life only, and an afterlife afterwards, not one which may never be attained.

Buddhists believe in six realms which someone can be reborn into after death: the highest is a realm of happiness, and the lowest is hell, a realm of torture. The human realm is considered more preferable than heaven and more preferable than hell, as are the additional realms of hungry ghosts.

Unlike in Christianity, someone could be in hell before leading a human life, as rebirth into a human life always comes before heaven or hell. Animals are also part of the cycle of rebirth, but Christianity does not specifically teach about an afterlife for animals.

Non-religious arguments against life after death – short course only

Non-religious people argue against life after death; they claim that it is not real and that people are mistaken in believing in it.

A Source of Comfort

Many non-religious people argue that religious people believe in life after death as a source of comfort. Believing in life after death comforts people when they face death because they believe that they are/will be in a better place, or that they will be reunited with loved ones when thinking about their own death, as they believe this will not be the end of their existence.

As death is something which is commonly feared, it makes sense for human beings to soften the blow and to see death as a gateway to a new life. However, just because something is desired by many, does not mean that it is real. Because it is so desirable, it is often seen as a human invention and dream, rather than being a reality.

Social Control

Further, some non-religious people have argued that religion in general is not a source of comfort – and that this is actually damaging. The sociologist Karl Marx is famous for his theory of the 'opium of the people'. He believed that the rich and ruling classes encourage people to believe in life after death to keep people happy and gave them hope, but, like drugs, this was not good -- because it prevented people from taking action against the negative things in their life, such as oppressive governments. The belief in life after death has, arguably, been used as a form of social control to stop people from questioning the status quo.

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If life after death is not real, as non-religious people would argue, then belief is damaging – people should stop being comforted by belief in life after death. Lives on Earth worth living. If they put up with disappointing lives in the hope of a better life which will never come, then this is their loss.

Lack of Evidence

As people do not come back from death – certainly after long periods of time, even if doctors can revive people whose hearts have stopped – there is no evidence for life after death. No one can say for certain that they have been dead, experienced the afterlife, and then come back to tell the tale.

Those who have had near-death experiences and report being in the afterlife can briefly be dismissed as hallucinating, and many people are sceptical of reports of ghosts. While **resurrections** have been reported in some religions e.g. Jesus' resurrection, this was long ago and alternative explanations range from Jesus not being dead in the first place, to his **disciples** creating the story of his resurrection.

Because of lack of scientific evidence proving life after death, many non-religious people are justified in believing in it.

Fraudulent Accounts

While some see claims of life after death as mistakes; mistaken belief in religious natural phenomena as experiences of the afterlife or ghosts, others see many accounts of life after death as being deliberately fabricated.

As dealt with above, one explanation for Jesus rising from the dead is that he was never dead. Many reported sightings of ghosts have been proven to be hoaxes. Some accounts of people who have experienced the afterlife have been later withdrawn. For example, the boy in *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven*, later claimed that he had made up his experience of heaven while in a coma.

Because some accounts of life after death have been disproven, or people who claim to have experienced the afterlife later withdraw their claims, this reinforces the arguments of the non-religious that there is *no* life after death.

Christian Responses to Non-religious Arguments against Life after Death

Christians can respond that just because life after death is a source of comfort and control, this does *not* mean that it is *not* real. Many things which are comforting to most people (in normal circumstances) do not suggest that a belief that friends are still alive is illusory because it is comforting. Many real things – such as promises of heaven – can be used to manipulate people into compliance – but sometimes the promotion is given for good reasons.

Also, Christians can respond that the argument that because one case is false, all cases are false, is flawed. Many humans are occasionally, or frequently dishonest, but no one moves to a position where everything which everyone says is a lie. It is known from experience that if you ask a group of people about an accident, you will get different details, you will get embellishments, and you will get 'witnesses' who did not see the accident at all. This does not mean that the accident did not occur, or that no accidents ever occur.

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Regarding lack of evidence, Christians will argue that there *is* evidence for life after death. The reports recorded in the Bible of people being raised from the dead, including Jesus, are seen as evidence of life in the afterlife, and then returned to tell the tale. 1 Peter 3:18-22 talks about Jesus, who was made alive, and that he now resides in the spiritual realm of heaven.

'He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit...the resurrected Jesus has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities and powers, subject to him.' (1 Peter 3:18, 21-22 NRSV)

Christians also believe Jesus' teaching that there will be life after death (see Luke 23:42-43); that there is a place for them (John 14:2); that people will be with him in paradise (Luke 23:43); and that they will be raised from their graves (John 5:28-29).

For Christians, the Bible, the word of God, is enough evidence for their belief in life after death.

Quick questions

9. State **three** places which Christians may believe people enter after death.

Now try this...

10. 'Immediately after death, people go to heaven, hell, or purgatory.'
Evaluate this statement.
Argue for *and* against this statement. You must refer to Christian teaching.
Christian points of view. Reach a conclusion which follows from your argument.

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The Problem of Evil/Suffering and a Loving and Righteous God

The problem of **evil/suffering** is one issue which has faced Christians and it raises a question:

'If God is all-loving, **righteous**, and all-powerful, then why does he allow evil and suffering?' (1)

Keywords:

- ◆ **benevolent** – loving and kind
- ◆ **evil** – tends to refer to moral badness and choosing to do the 'wrong' thing
- ◆ **faith** – here, belief in God and trust in him
- ◆ **moral suffering** – suffering caused by a human being's wilful action, like murder
- ◆ **natural suffering** – suffering caused by natural events, like a tsunami, or disease
- ◆ **omnipotent** – all-powerful
- ◆ **Psalms** – book of poetic writings in the Bible
- ◆ **righteous** – good, fair and just
- ◆ **suffering** – experiencing pain

Problems it raises for Christians about the nature of God

Christians believe that God is loving, or **benevolent**, and many believe that God is omnibenevolent. He protected and guided the Jewish people in the **Old Testament** to save humanity from **sin**. Human conceptions of love imply that someone who loves does not want any harm to come to them.

'God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world, and we might live through him.' (1 John 4:9 NRSV)

Christians also think that God is **righteous**, that he is fair and just. Therefore, when he has promised to care for them – a fair God will keep his promises. If he is fair in rewarding the good and punishing the bad.

Christians believe that God is powerful. Many believe that he is all-powerful, particularly shown in his **creation** of the world, and the **salvation** of humanity. If all-powerful can, theoretically, do anything. In this case, they could stop evil and suffering.

'For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not in temples made by man, who is not like any mortal, who does not see as mortals see; he sees as he is. He is the Lord, who is alone, who does not have a partner. He is the Lord, who is the God of Israel, who is the Lord, who is the God of Israel, who is the Lord, who is the God of Israel.' (Deuteronomy 10:17 NRSV)

Bible passages such as **Psalms** 103 teach Christians that God has these characteristics: he is righteous (he works for justice); is powerful (has commanded the Jewish people); and is loving (has steadfast love).

'The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. He has shown his power to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.' (Psalm 103:6-8 NRSV)

If God is all-loving and all-powerful, this raises the questions about his nature:

- ◆ Does he care that humans suffer?
- ◆ Has he unfairly abandoned humans?
- ◆ Can he stop evil and suffering?
- ◆ Or is there some other solution to the problem?

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How the problem may cause believers to question their faith or the existence of God

- ♦ If God *is* **benevolent, righteous** and **omnipotent**, it does not make sense for God to allow **suffering**, or allow the innocent to suffer when the wicked often succeed.
- ♦ If God *is not* benevolent, righteous and omnipotent, this seems to undermine the faith of those who are based on belief in a loving God, holds that God was powerful enough to defeat death, and is fair and good.

Some believers wonder why they should trust in a God who allows bad things to happen, so they question their faith and whether they should keep believing. Some people have left Christianity, because its portrayal of God is (in their opinion) not accurate, and therefore not a Christian faith.

Some believers question whether they should believe in the existence of God. If God *would* be benevolent, righteous and omnipotent, but clearly *is not* – so he does not exist.

Nature and examples of natural suffering and moral suffering

Natural suffering is **suffering** (pain) caused by natural events, such as natural disasters or disease. Examples include pain caused by tsunamis, volcanoes, earthquakes, HIV/AIDS and cancer.



Volcanoes cause natural suffering

Moral suffering is suffering (pain) caused by something a human being chooses to do, such as killing someone else. Some would say that moral suffering is a result of **evil**. Examples of moral suffering include the pain caused by murder, theft, and exploitation.

The importance of separating these two types of suffering will become clear when we discuss the problem of evil/suffering.

Quick questions

11. State **three** aspects of God's nature (which Christians may believe he is) that are problematic, given the problem of evil/suffering.
12. Explain **two** reasons why Christians may question their faith or the existence of God, because of the problem of evil and suffering.

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- ◆ **Book of Job** – a book in the Bible about one man's suffering
- ◆ **charity** – giving to and helping others
- ◆ **free will** – the ability to choose what to do
- ◆ **vale of soul-making** – a theory by John Hick that humans must work to con

There are solutions found within the Bible to the problem of **evil and suffering**. Christians, as they believe that God teaches them through the Bible.

Psalm 119 implies that *God is being **righteous** in allowing evil and suffering* *punishment* for their **sins**, and are already lucky that Jesus died to bring the God punishes the wicked, and also that he treats those who worship him w

'You rebuke the insolent, accursed ones, who wander from your commandments. But you have dealt well with your servant, O LORD, according to your word.' (Psalm 119:174)

Psalm 119 also shows that God's word reassures the Psalmist, even when he is suffering makes him turn to God. One argument for why God allows suffering is that it *helps us have a closer relationship with God*, as they turn to him in times of trouble. See also the sections below on *the Book of Job* and *Prayer*.

'This is my comfort in my distress, that your promise gives me life... Trophie
come upon me, but your commandments are my delight.' (Psalm 119:105)

One reason for evil and suffering explored in the **Book of Job** is that they are a test. The Book of Job is viewed by some Christians as a poetical exploration of suffering and it tells the story of a man called Job who had many good things and was loved by God. The devil tempted the devil to cause bad things to happen to Job to see if Job will still worship God. Job was a good person, but he had never been tested; the real test was to see if he was a good person when bad things had happened to him.

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Some Christians say that God should not be doubted, and that *the problem is beyond our understanding*. The Book of Job indicates that God's reasons are beyond our understanding.

[God to Job] "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? ... you have understanding." (Job 38:4 NRSV)

This is also supported by the Psalms:

[The mind of God] 'Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high and mighty. How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them; they are more than the sand...' (Psalm 139: 6, 17-18 NRSV)

Theoretical solutions

Some Christians try to solve the problem of **evil and suffering** by coming up with solutions which will solve it. These cannot be tested in everyday life.

Maybe God is not omnipotent

Most Christians would not deny that God is **benevolent** but some Christians think God is not **omnipotent**. Maybe there are limits to his power. Some believe that he cannot create something heavier than himself. Others say that there are things which are not possible, however powerful God is. They might ask if it is possible for an all-powerful being to create something so heavy that it could not be created. Or create a being more intelligent than themselves. These are paradoxes – it is impossible to find a satisfactory solution.

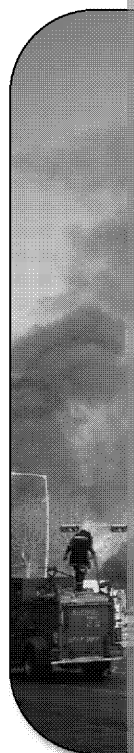
This could theoretically go for the world too – it might be impossible to create a planet which supported life which would not have bacteria and viruses which cause illness, and which would not have earthquakes and volcanoes which cause destruction.

Free will

Many Christians believe that people are able to do evil things because God gave humans **free will**. Some Christians argue that it is more loving to allow people to make their own decisions – otherwise humans would merely be puppets, and that would not really be living. In order to have genuine choice, the consequence is that some people will make bad choices which hurt others. This also shows that people are genuinely good if they choose not to do evil – if people had no choice to do wrong, would they really be good? This links back to evil and suffering being a test of character.

Vale of soul-making

John Hick presented a theory called the **vale of soul-making**. The idea is that people are not perfect when they are created, and they need to complete their soul, and they can only do this through the trial of suffering. As dealt with above in the sections on *the Book of Job* and *free will*, some people think that someone is not good if they have not been tested by suffering, or have not done good in the face of evil. If God wanted to create 'good' creatures, then this would be a problem. Creation was not a one-off event in the past, but that creation is ongoing – God is creating good beings by giving them the chance to be good in the face of evil and suffering. People are making their souls through overcoming difficulties and can actually be said to be good.



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Practical solutions

Some Christians give practical solutions to the problem – why **evil and suffering** exist in day-to-day life.

Prayer

Many Christians feel that experiencing evil and suffering encourages Christians to pray. If they experience evil/suffering they might not pray to God for help and be grateful if he appears. They might neglect their relationship with him.

Some Christians also feel that praying to God about experiencing evil and suffering is a meaningful relationship with God – Christians rely on him to help them, which they wouldn't if they never suffered / had problems. They may also feel angry with God when they experience evil/suffering as in the **Book of Job**, but if they realise that evil and suffering are part of God's plan, they may choose to have a stronger relationship in the end.

'For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; he did not turn away from me when I was in distress, but heard when I cried to him.' (Psalm 22:24 NRSV)

Some Christians also feel that the existence of evil and suffering helps to prove God's existence when prayers are answered – if no one ever had cancer, then no one could be healed in response to prayer. Evil and suffering allow God to show his benevolence in helping those affected.

Christians feel that they should pray to God to reduce evil and suffering. Some Christians feel that prayer has resulted in God stepping in to end or reduce a particular instance of suffering.

Does God do good for good? If you're good for good, then you've had good for good.

Would the world be a better place if there was no evil and suffering?

Charity

Some Christians believe that without evil and suffering there would be no need for charity. This would be bad. If Christians need to help the sick and the hungry, as described in the parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25, there needs to be people who suffer illness and poverty. Christians feel that they should help those who are suffering, because Jesus taught that we should love our neighbours as ourselves.

'And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."' (Matthew 25:40)

Regarding *evil and suffering as a test of character*, it is possible that people would be better if they did not help people, and they could not help people if there was no evil and suffering.

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Success of solutions to the problem

Solution	Pros	
God is righteous in allowing evil/suffering	Christians believe that those who do wrong deserve punishment, and, that as everyone has sinned, all deserve punishment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Evil people suffering as babies does not matter whether or not they and do not deserve punishment ♦ Jesus is suffering as a Christian and should be punished
Allows people to have a closer relationship with God	There is an argument that people are closer to God when they feel that they need him due to suffering.	There are other ways to ensure a closer relationship, e.g. speaking to God, which does not require suffering.
A test of character	If there was no suffering, it might be easier to be happy and good, as you would not have difficulties to overcome. One might not be able to say that someone was truly good if they had never suffered, as they would never have been challenged.	Even without suffering, there would be opportunities for people to face basic issues, such as a student with a learning difficulty not helping in class, which would challenge their moral character.
A test of faith	People might not have faith in God if they do not feel a need for God.	People might have faith in God without suffering, as they might have a personal relationship with God that does not require suffering.
Beyond human understanding	This is impossible to disprove.	Many people believe in God as it does not require suffering.
God not omnipotent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ God could be powerful enough to create the universe without being able to do everything. ♦ If God is unable to stop evil and suffering, this allows that he is loving and does not want there to be evil and suffering. ♦ Many other events have both good sides and bad sides; for example, rain that is needed by some to grow food, may flood others out of their homes. If actions which God takes are seen to have similar consequences, it is not hard to see that creating free agents will lead to good actions and bad actions; or that creating life will lead to viruses as well as doctors. 	Some people believe that the problem of evil is a logical contradiction. God could have created a world where evil was impossible to exist, but this would be impossible to achieve.
Free will	Many people would rather be free, with the possibility that people will do evil. They think that a life without freedom would not be worth living – most humans would not choose to be slaves, even slaves that were extremely well-treated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Some people believe that free will has been misused, and that people have a free will to choose to do evil, but no free will to choose to do good, which is a contradiction. ♦ This does not mean that natural disasters, such as cancer, are a result of free will.

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Solution	Pros	
Vale of soul-making	This explains suffering as something which is beneficial to humans – this is not hard to understand. We already accept that pain is good in situations where it stops us doing more harm to ourselves, e.g. the pain from touching a hot oven stops people from touching it for too long and being seriously burnt.	Many people created hurt need to suffer them suffer
Prayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ People who are not particularly religious sometimes say that they pray when in trouble – evil/suffering may prompt the religious to pray more often if they want to ask God for help, and help to deepen a relationship with him. ◆ When people pray for someone's suffering to end and this happens, then this may strengthen faith more than if there was no evil and suffering in the first place. ◆ Sometimes prayer does seem to be answered, and someone's suffering stops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Christians about m being e only talk membe ◆ Many C evil and stop all
Charity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Giving charity is important – Christianity teaches that those who do not help others will not go to heaven. If there was no suffering, then it would be harder to give charity as there would be less need for it. ◆ Also, giving charity when you yourself are in need shows greater compassion for others. ◆ Charity does help to stop some suffering in the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There w charity - with les to help school. ◆ Charity there ar intentio

Some people are not able to accept that God is right to allow **evil and suffering** **omnipotent**; or that he uses evil and suffering to test humans, etc. and for successful. They may lose **faith**, or never believe in God.

For others, these solutions do solve the problem of evil and suffering and a suffering is just, or is good for humans in some sense, and/or free will with freedom.

Pause for thought:

You can see whether you accept the free will solution by asking yourself v were offered the ability to plug into a miraculous machine and experience a vir happy. But none of your 'friends' in the machine would be real and none of the be real either. Or, you could remain in real life, with struggles and hardships, bu own choices, work hard for your own goals, and trust your friends. Many people are convinced they would not want to live a 'fake' life. (This scenario is based on Machine, created by the philosopher Robert Nozick)

Quick questions

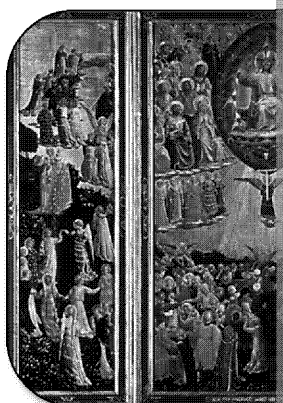
13. Outline **three** solutions to the problem of evil/suffering.

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Summary for Beliefs and Teachings

- ♦ Many Christians believe in one God, in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, known as the **Trinity**. Christian beliefs about the Persons of God can be found in the Bible.
- ♦ Christians believe that God **created** the world. Accounts of this are found in Genesis and John. Some Christians believe that these accounts are to be interpreted literally, but others think they should be interpreted **metaphorically**. Some Christians believe that Adam and Eve betrayed God in the Garden of Eden that this was the **Fall**, and humans became **sinful** through **original sin** since then. Others do not see Adam and Eve as the cause of such severe consequences. Christians may take comfort from accounts of Creation because they are created in God's image, and that they should look after the world.
- ♦ Many Christians believe that Jesus was the **incarnation** of God; God in human form. In the Incarnation, Christians may feel that they know what God wants through Jesus. They are saved through his sacrifice.
- ♦ After sharing a final **Passover** meal, the **Last Supper**, with his **disciples**, Jesus was betrayed by Judas. He was tried by the Jewish Council and the Roman Governor and condemned to death. He was **crucified**, buried, and then he rose back to life. By his death and **resurrection** saved them, and allowed them to have a relationship with God.
- ♦ Christians believe that Jesus brought them **salvation** by dying for them. Jesus **atoned** (made up) for their **sin**. Many Christians believed that Jesus fulfilled the law so Christians could now be saved through Jesus, rather than by following the law. There are different views on whether God only extends the **grace** of salvation to those who believe or if it is available to all who seek it and the Holy Spirit in their lives.
- ♦ Christians have various understandings concerning **eschatology**, the end of the world. They believe that people would be **judged** after death and that they should be prepared for it. Most Christians believe in **heaven** and **hell** and some believe in **purgatory** before heaven. Some Christians believe that God will **resurrect** people at the end of time, and some believe that the **soul** lives on immediately after death. Some believe in both. Some Christians believe that only Christians will go to heaven, the only way to God, but not all do.
 - Different religions have different ideas about the afterlife and its significance – Jews do not have a fixed concept of the afterlife; Muslims believe in **heaven** and **hell** and **judgment** at the end of time; and Buddhists believe in **reincarnation** and eventual liberation from being reborn.
- ♦ The problem of **evil and suffering** exists because it is hard to explain why, if God is **loving, righteous** and **powerful**, he allows **evil and suffering** to exist. Believers may question their **faith**, if they feel that God allows **natural suffering** or **moral suffering**.
- ♦ Solutions to the problem of **evil and suffering** can be biblical, theological or philosophical. Solutions include: God being **righteous** in allowing evil and suffering; evil being of character and **faith**; God's will being beyond human understanding; evil and suffering being necessary for **soul-making**; evil and suffering allowing people to grow with God through **prayer**; and evil and suffering allowing opportunities for good. There are pros and cons of all of these – some people consider some solutions successful.



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Practices

Religious practices are very important within Christianity. Christians **worship** God in various methods and speak to him through **prayer**. Special practices called **sacraments** are performed by different **denominations**. Christians have set celebrations and may make **pilgrimages**. These practices are very important to many Christians.

Keywords:

- ♦ **church/Church** – has various meanings: a collection of Christians OR a Christian building (church) OR the authority in a particular denomination (Church)
- ♦ **pilgrimage** – making a physical journey to draw closer to God
- ♦ **worship** – devotion to God

Christian Worship

Worship is a very broad term covering acts of devotion to God. This often refers to God. In Christianity it also covers things such as asking for forgiveness and learning about God. It can be formal or informal, in a group or done individually; so it can vary in practice.

Keywords:

- ♦ **baptism** – a sacrament which involves being anointed with, or immersed in water, symbolising new life in Jesus
- ♦ **congregation** – the members of a Church who are not leading a service
- ♦ **creed** – a statement of belief
- ♦ **icons** – important religious images within churches like Orthodox Churches
- ♦ **liturgy** – set worship; either exact words or a format

Liturgy

What – *Liturgy can be used to describe a set service, where specific words are used and followed, but it can refer more generally to a format for worship.* The priest or minister leads the majority of the service, but there may also be parts where the **congregation** sings or gives general responses, prayers, or to take part in **creeds**.

When – A **liturgy** where everything is set may be used when the service involves a set format. Liturgy for the **Eucharist** is very common, as are **baptism** liturgies. There are also special celebrations, such as Easter and Christmas, and events such as marriages and funerals.

The Book of Common Prayer is a book published in 1549 which contains liturgical texts for various occasions. It is the official prayer book for the Church of England, and has been used for over the years. It provided services which the Church of England deemed appropriate and should be accessed by all individual churches.

Why –

- ♦ Such liturgies serve the purpose of unifying Church practice, as the same words are used in different churches within the same **denomination**. This means that the same sacraments, for example, are being celebrated in line with Church practice.
- ♦ Having set words can also help to unify Christians who attend different churches. If they attend a service at a different Church with the same liturgy, they will be participating in the same way.

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- ♦ Participating in the same liturgies can allow congregations to participate in what is coming, and consequently do not need to try hard to understand what they already know and understand it.
- ♦ Having a set service can make celebrations and sacraments seem special; putting up decorations can help to make people feel festive; the service reminds people of what they are celebrating, and that it is special.

Liturgical worship

What – *Liturgical worship involves a set format for worship, though each service will be different.* A service might, for example, include a set number of hymns or songs; a sermon or a talk; prayers of different types; a set number of Bible readings; meditation; focusing on **icons**; or other elements of worship. However, these hymns, prayers and readings etc. will vary between different services with the same structure. Not all liturgical services will contain all elements.

When – Such services will be common at many churches if there is no particular celebration, or sacrament being celebrated. Sometimes part of a service will follow a liturgical format, but a particular liturgy will be introduced for a part of the service which involves a sacrament.

However, no particular elements are necessary to qualify a service as liturgical. Services in the Quaker Church, a Protestant denomination, which involve sitting in silence and waiting to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, could be called liturgical, as they still involve a structure.

Why –

- ♦ Churches often perform services according to a structure which their denomination follows.
- ♦ Churches often use a structure, or structures, which appeal to their congregation to follow the service easily and know what is happening.
- ♦ Liturgical structure allows services to be planned in advance.
- ♦ Liturgical structure allows all desired elements (e.g. prayers and a sermon) to be included without being forgotten.

Non-liturgical worship

What – *Non-liturgical **worship** is where there is no set structure to worship; it is spontaneous.*

When – Spontaneous, personal worship is non-liturgical; where an individual worships through song, or **prayer**, for example. However, some churches or groups have times when people talk or pray spontaneously, and where the service has not been strictly planned.

Why –

- ♦ If Christians decide to worship God spontaneously, then worship will be spontaneous.
- ♦ Some denominations choose to have non-liturgical services because they believe it is more genuine if the structure is planned and there is less flexibility to worship than what one wants to.

Some people will class Quaker worship as non-liturgical because no hymns, prayers or sermons are planned in advance. Some Pentecostal Churches, Protestant Churches which believe in the Holy Spirit, are non-liturgical, and worship with less structure. This is because they believe they should worship as they are led to by the Holy Spirit. When they worship, they wait for the Holy Spirit, who they believe will tell them what to pray, and how to praise God.

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Worship practices

Different worship practices are incorporated into worship services of all styles.

Reading the Bible – this is done because it holds God's teachings and Christians read them through it. This can be done in formal service, or informally in a small group. Most Churches follow a lectionary; a set list of which Bible passages are to be read. The sermons are based on the readings given.

Sermon/talk – many Church **denominations** listen to a priest or other worship leader talk about a particular passage in the Bible and/or a religious theme such as salvation. Sermons take place in a formal service, but it could be spontaneous.

Prayer – there are many forms of prayer, through which Christians talk to God. Prayer can be ordered in a formal service, but Christians can pray whenever they want. Prayer is both informal and individual.

Singing – through this Christians can praise God and reflect on religious themes. Singing takes place in structured worship, but Christians may sing to praise God individually.

Sacraments – these have varying importance in different Churches. Some Christians believe in sacraments. Some feel that sacraments are a way for Christians to remember what God has done for them. These are associated with more formal worship and take place within a **liturgy**.

Meditation – Christians may meditate on God, the Bible or their religion, or on their own lives, among other things. This is more likely to be personal and informal, but could be built into structured worship.

Focusing on icons – in some churches, such as Orthodox Churches, Christians express devotion in worship through paintings of Jesus and the saints. They use icons to get closer to the divine; this can be during worship, or at home individually.

Worship is significant to Christians because they want to maintain and develop their relationship with God. Worship allows them to praise and thank him; ask him for help; repent of their sins; learn about God's will; and concentrate on becoming better Christians.

Divergent Christian attitudes towards the practices, meaning and significance of non-liturgical forms of worship in Christian life today

Christians from Churches such as the Catholic Church are likely to feel that **sacraments** and liturgical **worship**, are particularly important. The Catholic Church believes that sacraments should take part in sacraments, and **liturgies** help to explain the purpose of worship. Sacraments have been authorised by the Catholic Church as appropriate ways of worshipping God. Liturgical worship, and practices associated with it, are significant because they pass on God's **grace**. Catholics will also worship God individually, and this may be seen as a complement. The Church does not see this as a substitute for liturgical worship.

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Christians from the Church of England or other Protestant Churches such as have strong feelings in favour of liturgical worship, like the Catholic Church. Some feel that liturgical worship is important because it helps Christians to different individual practices are significant – Christians should not forget to for example, and so liturgical worship is significant because it allows Christians ways, and Christians attending liturgical services do not have to be creative, God – the worship is prepared for them. Some such Protestants will also prefer liturgical worship – feeling that it is significant because it allows a more personal liturgical worship. Personal prayer with God is meaningful because Christians themselves as individuals.

Some Christians do not see liturgical worship as significant at all. Some feel practices (other than prayer) which need to be carried out in order to have that formally-structured worship does not help Christians to reach God. So non-liturgical worship as significant, because if they wait for God the Holy Spirit to worship, then they will be worshipping authentically – they will see any prayer God to do (such as singing) as significant because they are called by God to practices should be carried out for the sake of it.

Practice and significance of worship in other religions

Important! You need to be able to compare and contrast the practice and worship in Christianity and one other religion practiced in Great Britain (Buddhism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism).

Judaism

Keywords:

- ◆ **Midrash** – commentary on the Jewish scriptures
- ◆ **Sabbath** – Jewish holy day (Friday evening until Saturday evening)
- ◆ **tallit** – Jewish prayer shawls with tassels
- ◆ **tefillin** – boxes containing verses from scripture which are bound to a Jew's
- ◆ **Torah** – first five books of the Tanakh

Worship can take place in the synagogue, the Jewish holy building. **Prayer** is an aspect of worship. There are three lots of prayers which should be said daily wherever a Jew is. There are synagogue services which people can attend and are able to. These take place in the evening, the morning, and the afternoon/evening until evening, as this is how they are described in the Genesis account (world). There are extra services on the **Sabbath** (Jewish holy day, Friday evening and at festivals).

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In Orthodox Judaism (a traditional and stricter form of Judaism), women ordinarily pray at home, or in separate female synagogue services. Orthodox men and women are separated in the synagogue. In Reform Judaism (a more liberal form of Judaism) women can pray in the synagogue, together with men, without sitting separately.



Orthodox Jews

Many Jews wear hats at synagogue services, out of respect to God – especially men and married women. Some Jews (mainly men, especially in Orthodox Judaism) wear prayer shawls with tassels (**tallit**), and some wear **tefillin** – boxes containing verses from the **Tanakh** bound to their foreheads and left arms. **Torah** (the first five books of the Tanakh).

‘The LORD said to Moses: Speak to the Israelites, and tell them to make fringes on the corners of their garments throughout their generations and to put a blue cord on the fringe at each corner. You have the fringe so that, when you see it, you will remember all the commandments of the LORD, and not follow the lust of your own heart and your own eyes.’ (Numbers 15:38-41)

‘You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and fix them as an emblem on your forehead.’ (Deuteronomy 10:6-7)

Services in the synagogue also contain readings from the Torah and also from the **Midrash**. The readings are explained and discussed – often with the help of **Midrash** – the scriptures.

Some synagogue services contain music, though the type of music and who sings varies between synagogues.

Services can be led by anyone (only men in Orthodox Judaism), but are often led by a rabbi (equivalent of a priest) or a hazzan (a cantor – someone who can sing and lead the services). Services are led in Hebrew (the language of the Jewish people), though Reform services are partly in the common language (English in the UK). Traditionally there must be at least three men for a service to take place.

When the Jewish **Temple** still stood, prior to 70 CE, Jewish worship involved sacrifices at the Temple, though Torah study and prayer were still important. This sacrifice does not occur in modern Judaism.

Worship is significant to Jews because Jews believe that they should serve God by obeying his commandments and serving God. Worshipping with others is also significant because Jews believe that when Jews meet together, God’s presence is with them. Trying to understand God is also important for Jews, as they feel that God’s commandments to them are of great importance. Worship centred on prayer has become particularly important to Jews because of the destruction of the Temple; they have developed their worship of prayer more fully since then, still serving God.

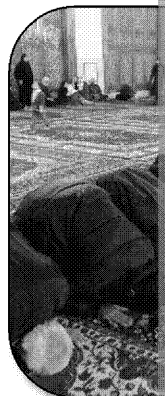
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Islam

Keywords:

- ♦ **Ka'ba** – a black, cube-shaped building inside the **Al-Masjid al-Haram mosque in Makkah/Mecca, Saudi Arabia**
- ♦ **rak'ahs** – Islamic prayer movements
- ♦ **Salah** – prayer/worship within Islam
- ♦ **wudu** – ritual Islamic washing before prayer



Worship within Islam is largely **prayer** – **salah**, the word for prayer, can also be translated as worship. Muslims must pray set prayers five times a day at certain times. At mosques (Muslim holy buildings) there will be calls to prayer to encourage

All prayers must be prayed towards Makkah (Mecca) in Saudi Arabia – special black, cube-shaped building inside the holiest mosque (**Al-Masjid al-Haram**). Muslims must be clean before praying, and must ritually wash their face, hands and feet (this is called **wudu**). Special movements known as **rak'ahs** must be performed during prayer.

Prayers at midday on Friday are particularly important because the Prophet Muhammad said then would be more significant to God, and all prayers said on Fridays are more significant. Muslims usually add 'peace be upon him' (pbuh) after the name of the Prophet (to show respect.) Friday is also important for other reasons; for example, many Muslims believe that one of the most important verses in the **Qur'an** was revealed on Fridays, men especially will try to attend the mosque for these prayers. Women pray in a special section of the mosque – this may be screened off, or be behind the men. The imam (equivalent of a Christian priest) will also give a sermon.

Worship and prayer are significant for Muslims because prayer is one of the things that someone needs to do to be a good Muslim, as commanded by Allah. Prayer is significant because it helps Muslims to have a good relationship with Allah, it encourages Muslims to follow Allah's will and live good lives, and the fact that everyone prays reminds them that they are all equal to Allah.

'Recite what is sent of the Book by inspiration to thee, and establish prayer. Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds; and remembrance of Allah (thing in life) without doubt. And Allah knows the (deeds) that thee do.'

Quick questions

14. State **three** Christian worship practices.
15. Describe **two** differences between the practice of worship in Christianity and another religion you have studied. Refer to Christianity and ONE other religion in your answer.

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The Role of the Sacraments in Christian Life and their Denominations

Keywords:

- ◆ **altar** – a table on which a sacrifice is made; in Christianity, where the bread and wine of the Eucharist, remembering Jesus' sacrifice, are blessed
- ◆ **baptism** – a sacrament which involves being anointed with, or immersed in water, in the name of Jesus
- ◆ **conversion** – when someone starts to follow a religion after having followed another or had no religion
- ◆ **Eucharist** – sacrament which involves sharing bread and wine in remembrance of Jesus
- ◆ **ordained** – someone who is a member of the clergy, such as a priest or a vicar, who has authority to perform services and administer sacraments
- ◆ **ordinance** – religious ritual which demonstrates the participants' faith
- ◆ **real presence** – the belief that Jesus is somehow present in the bread and wine of the Eucharist
- ◆ **sacrament** – a particularly important worship practice which has even higher status in some churches, such as the Catholic and Orthodox Churches
- ◆ **transubstantiation** – the Catholic belief that the bread and wine at the Eucharist become the body and blood of Jesus

Role of sacraments and ordinance as a whole, and divergent Christian views on the number of sacraments in Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant traditions

Sacraments are a few really important practices within Christianity. Christians use them to commit to God and worship him.

Ordinance refers to religious ritual and many Christians also take part in religious practices, but not all feel have the importance of sacraments.

Christians feel that such practices (sacraments and ordinances) are an important part of their life, helping them to commit to God and worship him.

Roman Catholicism

Some Christians, such as Catholics, believe that there is spiritual power with sacraments. The Catholic Church holds that God's grace is given *through* the practice of the sacraments for this purpose.

The Catholic Church observes seven sacraments: **Eucharist**, **Baptism**, **Matrimony**, **Holy Orders**, **Penance**, and **Anointing of the Sick**.

Orthodox Christianity

The Orthodox Church observes the same seven **sacraments** as the Catholic Church and also refers to them as 'mysteries'. It also holds many actions taken by the church as sacraments. For example, some Orthodox Christians feel that burial is a sacrament. The Orthodox Church views sacraments as a way of communicating with God, though how this happens is different from the Catholic view.

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Anglicanism/the Church of England and some other Protestant Denominations

Most Protestant **denominations** do not observe seven **sacraments**. Many see **Baptism** as sacraments (e.g. the Anglican Church and the Methodist Church). Some see Baptism and the Eucharist as sacraments, other rituals not considered sacraments (e.g. marriage is an ordinance in many Protestant Churches). However, not all rituals, such as penance, would be practiced.

Article 25 of the Church of England's 39 Articles of Faith⁴ affirms the belief that the other sacraments recognised by the Catholic Church are not really sacraments – that even if those that administer the sacraments turn out to be bad people, the sacraments – they will still have shown God's grace. Article 34 implies that sacraments, once abolished, individual churches can choose which rituals they perform, regardless of whether they are established by humans and not by God.

Variation in Protestant Denominations

There is variation within Protestant Churches; for example, some Lutheran churches see Penance (Penance) as a sacrament, whereas Quakers and the Salvation Army do not. Some churches do not have baptisms or practice the Eucharist at all, as they do not see them as sacraments. Christians to rely on outward **symbols**.

Some Protestant Christians see sacraments as **symbolic**, rather than having intrinsic power. Many Protestants feel that sacraments are an outer *sign* of God's grace, or a sign of commitment to God, rather than God's grace given to humanity. So sacraments are seen symbolically in some Protestant Churches; however, some Protestants, such as Lutherans, have a similar attitude to sacraments as Catholics.

The Baptist Church practices **Baptism** and the **Eucharist** as ordinances, rather than sacraments, that these practices help them to demonstrate their **faith**, but that the practices themselves do not have power.

List of Sacraments

- ◆ Confirmation is an affirmation of faith; in those churches which practice confirmation, it is done when the Christian is old enough to confirm their faith for themselves. If it is undertaken as an adult, confirmation may be combined with baptism.
- ◆ Matrimony refers to marriage. While this is practiced in all Christian denominations, it has particular importance to it. It is seen as a promise to God as well as one to each other.
- ◆ Holy Orders are **ordained** members of the clergy, important in leading the church. There will be a special service in order to ordain someone a member of the clergy. They vow to serve God and the Church. This usually happens after a period of training, often years. Becoming a member of the clergy is significant because it shows a commitment to their life to serving God and prioritised this above other aspects of their life.
 - Catholic priests are not allowed to marry, but Article 32 of the Church of England's 39 Articles of Faith states that vicars and bishops can choose to marry or remain single.
- ◆ Penance means being sorry for one's sins and seeking to make up for them. In Catholicism, Catholics regularly go and confess to a priest and ask for forgiveness.
- ◆ Anointing of the sick is done by a priest to give strength and healing, physical or spiritual, to the recipient. Anointing here involves being marked with the sign of the cross in oil, normally on the forehead, but sometimes on other body parts as appropriate to an illness.

Baptism and the **Eucharist** are covered in more detail overleaf.

⁴ <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/book-of-common-prayer/articles> (reference for other references to the 39 Articles in this section.)

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Nature and importance of the meaning and celebration of baptism in a

Christians practice **baptism** because Jesus was baptised and commanded his followers in his name.

[The Great Commission] “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19–20 NRSV)

Baptism involves being anointed with, or immersed entirely in water. Anointing of water being poured over the head. The former is normally done if infant baptism, the latter if an adult is being baptised. Baptism is important because it shows the parents on their behalf, wishes to commit to the faith and begin a new life for themselves. Churches, such as the Methodist Church, allow people to choose to have their infants baptised, or to wait so they can choose adult baptism for themselves when they are older.

Baptism is important because it symbolises a new life following Jesus, and a new life through accepting his sacrifice. Christians also hope to receive the Holy Spirit (in their hearts) to help them in their life with God.

Baptist Church

Denominations such as the Baptists only practice adult **baptism** when a Christian makes their own decision to commit to Christianity, after growing up with it as a Christian. This is called **conversion**, seeing this as more reflective of Jesus' baptism and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Christians will be asked to affirm their faith and promise to follow Jesus before baptism.

Catholicism and Anglicanism

Denominations such as Catholicism and Anglicanism practice infant baptism, baptising children into the Church, and follow this with confirmation when a Christian is older. This is called the **faith**. If infant baptism, also called christening, is practiced, water for the baptism is poured into a receptacle which could hold a bowl of water. In some churches, the font is placed in the church, to show that baptism is a spiritual entering into the Church, the body of Christ. The child will be baptised in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with water poured over their head three times, as the priest/vicar mentions each Person of God. (Some Catholics use a font for the baptism.) The children may be signed with the sign of the cross (on their forehead). After baptism, they now belong to Jesus. Parents and godparents will be asked to affirm their faith in the child in the Christian faith. A candle may be presented to symbolise Jesus' light.

Article 27 of the Church of England's 39 Articles of Faith explains that baptism is a sign of new life and of membership of the Church family. The baptised can expect their sins to be forgiven and baptism shows their faith. It also confirms that the Church feels infant baptism to be a good practice.

In the Bible, Jesus did not baptise, but he sent his disciples to baptise in his name. Jesus said, “Whoever believes in me, whoever is baptised in my name and who trusts in me, will never perish. I will raise them up on the last day.” (John 3:16–18) Jesus said, “Whoever believes in me, whoever is baptised in my name and who trusts in me, will never perish. I will raise them up on the last day.” (John 3:16–18)

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Nature and importance of the meaning and celebration of the Eucharist

The **Eucharist** is the sharing of bread and wine which represent Jesus' body on the cross for the forgiveness of **sins**. Jesus told his **disciples** to do this to remember his sacrifice which would bring them **salvation**; many Christians celebrate the Eucharist because Jesus commanded it. Taking part in the Eucharist as Christians because it reminds them that they are saved through Jesus' **crucifixion** sacrifice means that they are free to have a relationship with God. The Eucharist includes Holy Communion and the Lord's Supper.

'Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."
(Luke 22:19 NRSV)

'Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink now, each of you, from this cup, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."
(Matthew 26:27-28 NRSV)

Similarities between Catholic and Anglican Eucharist

Bread and wine are blessed by the member of the clergy presiding at the Eucharist. The congregation receives the bread and wine at the **altar**. The bread and wine are consecrated by someone **ordained**; by priests and deacons (and bishops).

The Eucharist may take place within a set **liturgy**. In Catholicism, this is the Eucharistic Prayer, which includes the words with congregational responses, and set prayers. **Creeds** are also included, as are hymns, or words to music. There will also be a sermon, Bible readings and a collection. The service may vary. During the service, the **congregation** will be asked to confess their sins and believe that their sins are forgiven.

Wafers are used instead of normal bread. Among other things, crumbs are not allowed to be wasted (and because the bread represents Jesus, it is important). Alcoholic wine is used, given in a big cup, called a chalice. A blessing is usually available for those who do not receive the bread and wine.

Catholic Eucharist Details

Within some churches, such as the Catholic Church, any bread and wine left over from the Eucharist is called reserved **sacrament**. The bread and wine are stored safely in a box called a tabernacle.

Catholics believe in **transubstantiation**; that the bread and wine in the Eucharist become the body and blood of Jesus when blessed. This is one reason why it needs to be consumed immediately. The Eucharist is particularly important to Catholics as it is a sacrifice again, every time they celebrate it. Most Catholics will not receive the Eucharist at a service at a Church of another **denomination**, because the beliefs about the Eucharist are different. Belief in transubstantiation is the main difference between Catholicism and Anglicanism. Anglicans do not believe in transubstantiation.

In the Catholic Church someone must be confirmed to receive the Eucharist.

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Anglican Eucharist Details

Occasionally, in some Anglican churches someone who is not **ordained**, but has been trained, may be allowed to help with the distribution.

Some Churches, such as the Anglican Church, believe in the **real presence** – that Jesus is present spiritually in the **Eucharist**.

Article 28 of the Church of England's 39 Articles of Faith states the Eucharist is a **sacrament**, and that those who receive it with faith are receiving a share of the body and blood of Christ. It also states that **transubstantiation** has no basis in the Bible and is wrong, and it should not be reserved (saved), or worshipped. Article 31 states that Jesus' sacrifice is for sins, and that priests who claim that Jesus is resacrificed in the Mass are wrong. Article 32 states that those who are wicked do not really receive sacraments, even if they receive them. Article 33 states that the Eucharist should not be denied to ordinary people, as Jesus' sacrifice should not be denied to those excommunicated (cut off from the Church) until they are reconciled (Article 33).

Some Anglican churches expect those receiving the Eucharist to be confirmed. Some Anglican churches allow those of other denominations who receive the Eucharist in their own churches to receive it in an Anglican Church.

Other Denominations

There is a lot of variation in the practice of the **Eucharist** in other **denominations**.

In the Baptist Church, Baptists are all handed bread and wine in their seats, at the same time, to show unity in Jesus. (Small individual glasses are used for wine.)

The Church of Scotland passes the bread and wine of the Eucharist from member to member in the congregation.

The Methodist Church uses non-alcoholic wine and normal bread (many denominations use unleavened bread).

In the Orthodox Church, the (normal) bread and wine are given mixed together in a single vessel.

Many Christians see the bread and wine as symbolic, but not actually, in any sense, the body and blood of Jesus – unlike strict Catholics or Anglicans. In many denominations it is a personal choice whether to receive the Eucharist or not and confirmation is not necessary.

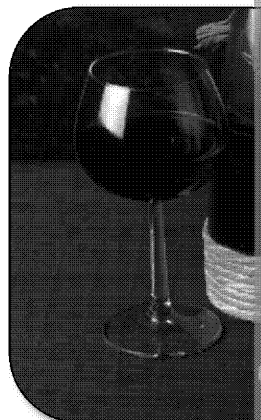
Quick questions

16. State **three** practices which may be considered Christian sacraments.

Now try this...

17. 'Baptism is the most important religious practice for Christians.'
Evaluate this statement.

Argue for *and* against this statement. You must refer to Christian teaching.
Reach a conclusion which follows from your argument.



Bread and wine. The Eucharist is a sacrament in many Christian denominations.

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The Nature and Purpose of Prayer

Prayer is communication between Christians and God. Christians believe that God may answer, possibly directly through a **vision**, or indirectly by **inspiration** or an event which happens in their lives. Prayers are often said at church services or any time. Christians feel that prayer is very important to maintain a relationship with God.

Keywords:

- ♦ **crucifix** – a cross with Jesus on it
- ♦ **inspiration** – an indirect communication from God to humans that they believe in God
- ♦ **Lord's Prayer** – a prayer which Jesus taught his disciples to pray
- ♦ **rosary** – a beaded necklace with a cross or crucifix attached
- ♦ **vision** – an apparition, often of Jesus, which may communicate explicitly to God

Types of prayer – nature, examples, when, why

There are different types of **prayer**. Some prayers are *set prayers*, and some are more *informal* types of prayer.

Set prayers are prayers which have exactly the same words every time they are used, or follow a set structure – the same prayer will be used by different Christians. Some set prayers are prayed on many different occasions, for example the **Lord's Prayer**. There are also set prayers for particular occasions or days, sometimes called a 'collect'. Others may have some set words but places where alterations can be made, such as praying for others and adding in relevant names; or they may have no set words but a set structure, such as confessing **sins** and then asking for forgiveness.

Set prayers can be used when Christians do not know what to pray, or when they know a particular prayer which expresses this well. They are often used because Christians believe they ought to pray these prayers in the way he taught them to in the Lord's Prayer. Different **denominations** use set prayers which express the things they feel it important to express to God.

However, Christians can pray anything to God, and may choose to mix up different types of prayer without planning this, or just have a conversation with God about anything. An example would be someone having a conversation with God about everything in their life. Christians can use informal prayer whenever they want to talk to God. Informal prayer when they pray on their own, and when they want to talk to God about anything. Informal prayer can be better in these circumstances because Christians may have their own thoughts, and set prayers will not contain details personal to them.

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Different prayers – nature, examples, when, why

Different types of prayers can be said depending on what a Christian wants to say. Psalms are good models for Christian prayer, and examples of different types of prayer.

Adoration – praising God and marvelling at his creation and his work in the world. Christians pray this to let God know what he means to them because they love him.

‘Blessed be the Lord, for he has heard the sound of my pleadings. The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults in the Lord. Give thanks to him.’ (Psalm 28:6–7 NRSV) (adoration and thanksgiving)

Thanksgiving – being grateful to God for what he has done for humanity and personally, when/because Christians want to let God know that they are grateful.

Confession – telling God that one is sorry, and what for, and asking for forgiveness. Christians pray this to believe they have acted against God’s will, because they want to apologise.

‘Both we and our ancestors have sinned; we have committed iniquity, and our fathers have been faithless. Save us, O Lord our God...’ (Psalm 106:6, 47 NRSV) (confession and supplication)

Intercession – asking God to help others, when Christians know of others in need. If for an individual, they are highly changeable and personal. Christians may often pray for people in need, Christians in the world and to guide politicians, because they believe he can help. Many prayers of intercession will be very individual; for example, ‘Please God, help my mother to find a new job’. Christians will pray for someone in need because they want God’s help.

Rosary – Catholics often pray with the help of a rosary, a beaded necklace with a cross or **crucifix** attached. Holding the beads reminds them of which prayers to say and helps them to focus. Praying with the rosary can be an aid to **meditation**. There are some set prayers which can be said with the rosary, including prayers affirming faith and confessing sin. One rosary prayer, the Hail Mary, is said in devotion to Mary, and because Catholics want her to speak to God for them.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.

The Lord’s Prayer

The **Lord’s Prayer** is very important to Christians because it is a **prayer** which is used to pray. What is usually used today has been slightly modified, but it is very similar to the original. The Lord’s Prayer incorporates adoration and confession. It also features supplication, asking God to help the person praying. These are also features of many Christian prayers. Christians want to ask God for strength and guidance. Christians pray this as a way of saying they want to have a relationship with God in the way he wants. The Lord’s Prayer is used in church services to unite Christians in a common prayer to God, and can be used by Christians to strengthen their relationship with God.

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When teaching the Lord's Prayer, Jesus also teaches that prayer should be done for show. He tells the disciples to pray sincerely for what they need – need, so they do not need to use fancy words. Jesus warns that if Christians God will not forgive them.

“Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.

Divergent Christian attitudes towards the importance of each type of prayer

All Christians think that **prayer** is important.

Some, such as the Catholic Church, will think that set prayers are particularly important. These have been taught by Jesus, other sections of the Bible, and the Church. They feel that set prayers communicate what is in their hearts to God. Set prayers can also be important because they know that other Christians pray these prayers, and so praying is connected to the Christian community.

Some Christians, such as liberal Protestants, feel that informal prayer is part of a personal relationship with God should be personal – some see praying set prayers (or formal prayers) as unnecessary, because they are not personal, and so have less meaning (in their view).

Quick questions

18. Outline **three** purposes of prayer.

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Pilgrimage

Keywords:

- ♦ **monastic** – relating to monks; men who remain unmarried and devote their lives to living in religious communities
- ♦ **pilgrimage** – making a physical journey to draw closer to God

Nature, history and purpose of pilgrimage

Pilgrimage usually involves a physical journey which is undertaken to become spiritually closer to God. Pilgrimage is an opportunity for Christians to focus on and develop their faith, and this is what they aim to do while on pilgrimage.

Christians could choose to make a pilgrimage to anywhere, but there are many popular pilgrimage sites, and often an important part of pilgrimage is interacting with other pilgrims who have similar reasons for pilgrimage.



A procession at a pilgrimage site.

Pilgrimage is not only a Christian practice and has been going on for thousands of years. It was an important early in Christianity because Christians wanted to visit places Jesus visited, and other important locations within early Christianity. As Christianity spread, pilgrimage sites also spread further afield, and are visited for many different reasons.

Interpretations of Luke 2:41–43

‘Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. (Luke 2:41–43 NRSV)

Some Christians will see Christian **pilgrimage** as a continuation of the Jewish practice of pilgrimage.

Jews used to travel to the Jerusalem **Temple** for the important celebration of the Passover. The Temple was the center of the wider Jewish community when celebrating, and because it was more special than any other place in the Jewish holy place (Jews believed that God resided within the Temple). Sacrifices at the Temple as part of the festival. Not all Jews were able to go to Jerusalem for the Passover or celebration, but they might make the effort to go once, or even more often. Some of Jesus felt that they were commanded to go on pilgrimage.

‘Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the festival of unleavened bread [Passover], at the festival of weeks [Shavuot], and at the festival of booths.’ (Deuteronomy 16:16 NRSV)

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Some Christians may also feel that they should go on pilgrimage, as the Jews

Others will feel that this is a Jewish custom, and as Christians do not celebrate all Jewish commandments, they do not need to go on pilgrimage. Jesus died so they do not need to undertake pilgrimages to ensure their salvation.

When Jesus was on pilgrimage in Jerusalem he used it as an opportunity to read of scripture, and to teach. Some Christians will take this as a purpose for their Jesus' pilgrimage as a model for theirs.

Divergent Christian teachings about whether pilgrimage is important

Many Christians do feel that **pilgrimage** is important to Christians today. So **faith** has been strengthened by visiting a special place. Some feel better about who are also seeking him at pilgrimage sites. Some communities are able to and can deepen their **faith** as a group. Some religious communities are able on God because of money they receive from being visited by pilgrims (people).

Catholics are more likely to deem pilgrimages important because of the places visited, e.g. somewhere Jesus or the apostles lived, or where a vision has been seen. Some Catholics journey to particular sites because they are thought to be places of healing.

Paul
Do you think
place can make y
you think that
meaningful

Not all Christians believe places are important in themselves; many Protestants geographical locations hold any spiritual importance. Protestants are more important if it is a means to spend time **worshipping** privately or with others meeting and sharing with other like-minded Christians is important.

Some Christians do not think that pilgrimage is important for Christians today they can spend time developing their relationship with God without travelling. point of spending time and money worshipping somewhere else when they

Significance of places people go on pilgrimage

There are different things that are special about different pilgrimage sites. Things being special include:

- ◆ They are places where Jesus lived, taught, died and rose.
- ◆ They have a lot of Christian history – they were important places in the Churches and Christian sites.
- ◆ They are places visions have been seen.
- ◆ They are sites of healing.
- ◆ They house Christian communities or they are places people come together

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Jerusalem, Iona, Taizé and Walsingham

Jerusalem

Jerusalem has always been a significant pilgrimage site for Christians because some feel they can become closer to Jesus through walking where he walked. Jerusalem is especially important because this is where Jesus was condemned to death, and he would have been **crucified** and was reported to have been **resurrected** in the surrounding area. Pilgrims can see the remains of the Temple at which Jesus would have worshipped, and in the surrounding area are also Bethlehem, his birth place, and the River Jordan where he was **baptised**, among other places of interest. Pilgrims in Jerusalem will spend time visiting important sites, such as the Western Wall of the **Temple** (which remains after the Temple's destruction), and places which they believe Jesus visited, as well as many churches which have been built since the time of Jesus. Some will walk the way Jesus took to his crucifixion.



The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem

Iona

Iona is an island off the coast of Scotland. Hundreds of years ago it contained a monastery where monks who helped to evangelise the surrounding area. Situated here now is a cenobitic monastery where people come to participate in a Christian community. Iona is not only significant because Christians can come here to worship. As well as worship and other activities, visitors can tour the abbey on Iona and go on walks to see important spots on the island.

Taizé

Taizé in France is interesting in that it incorporates a monastic society of which members come from several different denominations and come from many different countries – making it ecumenical and significant. It is famous for a particular style of music and for popularising it among young people who are young and come to join in religious activities with the monks, including singing and prayer.

Walsingham

Walsingham is in Norfolk in England. It is important to Christians who place particular importance on Jesus' mother, Mary. A vision of the Virgin Mary was seen of her here, and the Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Churches all have shrines to her here. Some feel that it is significant because they can feel closer to Mary there. Pilgrims can come to pay devotion to her at the shrines.

Quick questions

19. State **three** places where Christians may go on pilgrimage.
20. Explain **two** reasons why going on pilgrimage may be important to Christians. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

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Christian Religious Celebrations

Celebrations are very important to Christians. The whole Church year is built up time building up to celebrations. Two of the most important are Christmas

Keywords:

- ◆ **Annunciation** – the announcement of the angel Gabriel to Mary that she would give birth to Jesus
- ◆ **apostles** – Jesus' disciples after his death, who spread Christianity
- ◆ **martyrs** – people who die for their faith
- ◆ **Messiah** – meaning anointed/chosen one, referring to Jesus coming to save the world
- ◆ **prophets** – people who speak to God and teach his word, they may see the future
- ◆ **saints** – Christians who have died, especially those recognised by the Church as
- ◆ **good person**, living close to God and doing his work
- ◆ **vigil** – staying awake at night for a reason, such as meditation or prayer
- ◆ **virgin birth** – the belief that Mary was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus, not
- ◆ **conventionally**, but by the Holy Spirit

Nature and history of Christian festivals in the Church year

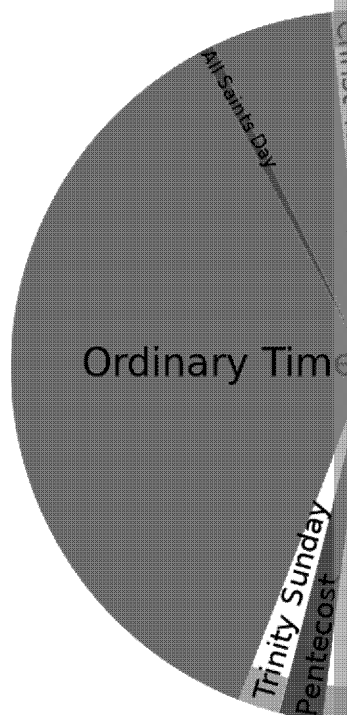
Much of the Church year is classed as 'ordinary time' – no festivals are being celebrated.

The main festivals in the Church year are Christmas and Easter.

Christmas is preceded by advent (the time leading up to Christmas) and followed by Epiphany – which celebrates the wise men's visit to Jesus in western Christianity and Jesus' baptism in the Orthodox Church – and the rest of Christmastide, the period after Christmas. Christmas celebrates Jesus' birth.

Easter is preceded by Lent (the time of preparation before Easter), and is also linked to Pentecost (the coming of the Holy Spirit after Jesus' ascension). Easter celebrates Jesus' resurrection.

Other festivals include All Saints Day and **Trinity** Sunday, which celebrates God the Trinity. The Catholic Church celebrates many more saints' days, in memory of important saints. All Saints Day remembers saints (all dead Christians are saints in this context), to honour them, and in some traditions to pray for their souls to help them in the afterlife. Saints' days in general stem from early Christian tradition to honour **martyrs** – those who die for their **faith**.



This diagram shows the Church year (though the Catholic Church has a different calendar).

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Nature and significance of celebrating Christmas and Advent

Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus, believed to be the Son of God, who saves humans from their **sins**. At Christmas, Christians may refer to Jesus as Emmanuel, which means 'God with us'. While Easter, which celebrates Jesus' death and **resurrection**, may be more important, there would be no Easter without Christmas, and so Christmas is just as important. Without Jesus coming to Earth, he could not have died for Christians' sins. Jesus, as God **incarnate**, could give Christians an example to follow and pass on. Christmas gives Christians a special time to focus on this, and to aim to imitate Jesus and God. Christmas is also a time when Christians hope and pray for peace in the world. Christmas is celebrated on different days in different countries and traditions. In England, it is on 25th December, but this was probably not Jesus' birthday!

Advent, the time leading up to Christmas, is an important time for preparation. Christians symbolically welcome their **Messiah** into the world again. Note: this starts four weeks before Christmas, not on the first of December! This means that sometimes it begins in late November and sometimes in early December. Historically, it was more like Lent, a time of fasting, but as emphasised today. It is significant because it allows Christians to prepare their hearts for Christmas.

[Prophesy, taken to be about Jesus] 'For a child has been born for us, and his authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' (Isaiah 9:6 NRSV)

Practices associated with Christmas and Advent

Many Churches run Advent courses, to **meditate** on the meaning of Christmas.

Many Churches also have Advent wreaths; an Advent wreath is a ring made of greenery, with four candles around the outside, and one in the centre. For each Sunday in Advent, one, or one more, of the candles is lit. On Christmas Day, the candle in the centre is lit in addition. The four candles are normally said to represent God's people, the **prophets**, John the Baptist, and Mary, Jesus' mother; or hope, peace, love, and joy. The central candle represents Jesus, the light of the world. Additionally, the circularity of the wreath can be taken to represent the everlasting, and the greenery to symbolise new life. Lighting candles on the four Sundays focus Christians' meditations on the events leading up to Christmas, and its significance.

Often Churches hold carol services, to remember Jesus' birth and its meaning. A Christingle service, where a candle is inserted into the top of an orange to represent the light of the world. Many churches hold a midnight service including the **Evangelical** Christmas, and Jesus into their hearts.

History of Christmas – synopsis of biblical accounts of Christmas and the Nativity

Both the Gospels of Matthew and Luke contain birth narratives and they do not agree on when Jesus was born, so this combines the main points from both.

A woman called Mary received a visit from an angel telling her that she had been chosen to have a baby. This is called the **Annunciation**. Mary was not sure how she could have a baby because she was a virgin, but the angel told her that the baby would be conceived by the Holy Spirit. Joseph, Mary's fiancé, found out that she was pregnant, and was going to be with her. An angel appeared to him in a dream and explained.

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Joseph and Mary had to travel to Bethlehem for a census (to be counted), so many citizens he had. There were no rooms available, so they stayed in a stable. They were visited by shepherds, who had been told by angels that the **Messiah** was born.

Three wise men travelled from the East following a star which they believed was the King of the Jews. They asked King Herod where they might find him. Herod's advisors told him Bethlehem. Herod was worried about there being another king, and asked them where they had found the Messiah. The wise men also visited Jesus and his parents, and did not go back to Herod. The visit of the wise men is celebrated at Epiphany, on 6th January. Herod decided to kill all the male babies within a certain area in order to kill Jesus. Mary and Joseph escaped with Jesus to Egypt, after being warned by an angel.

Many Churches teach that Mary was a virgin when she gave birth, and that Jesus was not Joseph's biological child. Not all scholars or Christians agree with this position, but it is widely accepted. Note: this is the **virgin birth**, and this is not to be confused with the immaculate conception, which is believed predominantly by Catholics; that Mary, Jesus' mother, did not inherit **sin** because of the **Fall**, unlike other humans.

Jesus' birth and these events are celebrated by Christians at Christmas.

Nature and significance of celebrating Holy Week and Easter

Easter celebrates Jesus being **resurrected** from the dead after being **crucified**. It also celebrates that Jesus fulfilled the **Jewish law**, **atoned** for humans' **sins**, and that Christians can be saved from sin, and to be able to have a close relationship with God. Easter is a Jewish **Passover**, which does not fall on the same date every year. Easter falls on the first Sunday in March or April.

1 Corinthians 15:12–34 can be interpreted as showing that Easter provides a *possible* for humans to have an afterlife (as Jesus rose), and that because of Easter, God has granted that this *will* happen if humans follow him (because of the resurrection brought salvation).

'But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are to come. As death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being. For as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.' (1 Corinthians 15:20–23)

The writer of the letter, St Paul, argues that there must be resurrection of the dead because Jesus was resurrected from the dead. Therefore, Easter is significant because celebrating Jesus' resurrection gives Christians real hope for the afterlife.

It also emphasises that the whole of the Christian faith rests on Easter; the resurrection. If Jesus did not rise, then he has not brought salvation, and there is no point in following him. But if Christians do follow him, then they can expect to be resurrected.

Holy Week refers to the week before Easter (Sunday to Saturday), and is a time of preparation, sometimes including fasting, for forty days, excluding Sundays. Special days include Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday.

St Paul was originally a persecutor of Christians. He was converted to Christianity after a vision of Jesus. He was a significant figure in the early Church, and his experience with Jesus speaking to him is a key part of his conversion. He wrote many of the letters in the New Testament, and his teachings are central to Christianity.

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History of Easter and Holy Week – the events they celebrate

Palm Sunday celebrates the Triumphal entry, where Jesus rode into Jerusalem and was enthusiastically greeted by the crowd, who laid cloaks and tree branches on him, and shouted:

“Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.”
(Matthew 21:1–11 NRSV)

Many churches have crosses made out of palm branches. It celebrates Jesus' death for humans' **salvation**. It serves to remind Christians that Jesus was a revolutionary in a conventional sense.

Also often remembered during Holy Week is the turning of the tables in the Temple, when Jesus went into the Temple and threw out all the people who were making a profit, by selling animals for sacrifice or changing money (Matthew 21:12–13). Jesus drove people in the Temple, though the priests were angry. This is significant, because God wants people to be devoted to him, and is not concerned with people making money.

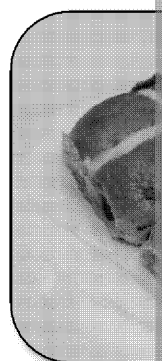
[Jesus cleansing the Temple] ‘He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house will be a house of prayer’; but you are making it a den of robbers.”’ (Matthew 21:13)

The rest of Holy Week and Easter celebrate the events described in the section ‘The Life of Jesus’. It might be worth recapping these.

Maundy Thursday celebrates the **Last Supper** and, in most **denominations**, the **Eucharist**. Services are often held on the evening of Maundy Thursday and sometimes foot-washing. Sometimes the arrest and trials are remembered.

A service is often held on Good Friday morning or afternoon, depending on the denomination, to remember the **crucifixion**. Sometimes the arrest and trials are remembered.

Services on Easter Sunday celebrate the **resurrection**. The Eucharist will be celebrated. Some churches are decorated with flowers as a sign of new life. Easter is not just important because of what Christians celebrate, but the fact that they do celebrate is important also. Celebrating Easter demonstrates Christians' **faith** and it makes sure they remember why they are Christians, and why they are grateful to God. Without festivals such as Easter, it might be easier for Christians to stop thinking about their faith in detail. Celebrating festivals means that the events important to Christians are brought back into their minds, with the aim that this will deepen their relationship with God.



Hot cross bun
Friday (in the UK)

Different ways of celebrating Holy Week are carried out in different churches. Some hold **vigils**, where people stay awake overnight. In some churches there are stations in the church with stations to meditate; and symbols, such as a cross, a whip, a candle, are placed in prominent positions.

Quick questions

21. Explain **two** reasons why Christmas is important to Christians.
22. Explain **two** reasons why Easter is important to Christians.

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The Future of the Christian Church

The twenty-first century is an interesting time for Christianity. Christianity has been declining in Western countries which had traditionally been strongly Christian, and **agnosticism** is spreading. However, Christianity does appear to be on the rise in the South. If this trend is to continue to flourish, Christians should learn lessons from the past, and

Keywords:

- ◆ **agnosticism** – neither believing nor disbelieving in God or gods
- ◆ **atheism** – disbelief in God or gods
- ◆ **evangelism** – spreading the news about Jesus and trying to convert people
- ◆ **food bank** – somewhere people can go to receive food when they are in financial difficulty
- ◆ **Great Commission** – when the risen Jesus told his disciples to go and preach the Gospel to all nations
- ◆ **Great Schism** – the split between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches in 1054
- ◆ **missionary work** – committing time to evangelism and helping people practice their faith
- ◆ **Reformation** – the split between the Catholic Church and Protestant Church (and other aspects of Catholicism) in the 1500s
- ◆ **St Paul** – a key figure for Christians; he helped to spread early Christianity and had many converts
- ◆ **street pastor** – a Christian volunteer who provides practical support on the streets

Purpose of missionary work and evangelical work

Evangelism is spreading the news about Jesus with the aim of **converting** people to Christianity. After Jesus' death, Christians have been trying to convert others, with many of them doing so as part of their **missionary work**. This is where Christians specifically commit time to evangelising others, often to meet their practical needs. This can be voluntary or paid.

Christians evangelise in the aim of fulfilling Jesus' command to spread the news about him – he commanded his **disciples** to do this before **ascending** to heaven. This is known as the **Great Commission** (commissioning is giving someone a task to do).

'And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to all creation."
(Mark 16:15 NRSV)

John 20:21-22 also makes it explicit that the purpose of missionary and evangelical work is to continue Jesus' mission – God the Father sent Jesus, and then Jesus sent his disciples to spread the good news, with the help from the Holy Spirit.

'Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." After he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."
(John 20:21-22)

History of Church growth, missionary work and evangelical work

Christian **evangelism** and **mission** began with Jesus. He reached out, taught and healed, but he only reached a relatively small group of people compared to the number of Christians today. The rapid growth of Christianity began after his death.

To begin with, after Jesus' death, evangelism took place very locally. Jesus and his disciples lived, in Jerusalem and in the surrounding areas. Within a few decades, Christianity spread further, for example to Greece and Italy. Most evangelism was still by word of mouth, as local communities kept in touch via letter writing.

'And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord was working with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.'
(Acts 1:8)

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Within a few centuries, Christianity had more of a structure; there were priests and bishops, and it had become centralised in Rome. It benefitted greatly from State power, for example when the Roman Emperor Constantine **converted** in 312 CE. When rulers converted to Christianity, they tended to evangelise their subjects, and Christianity spread with colonisation in surrounding countries and via trade.



Map showing the spread of Christianity

After the **Great Schism**, the split between the Eastern Orthodox and Western Catholic Churches, both branches of Christianity spread separately. Christianity became a major religion of Europe.

From the fifteenth century onwards, European countries began to colonise other parts of the world. It was practically important to them because if they converted the people they were colonising, the people were more likely to accept their rule.

Slightly later missionaries were sent by Churches, rather than state powers. In the 16th century, during the **Reformation** where Protestants (protesters) split from the Catholic Church, Protestants wanted to expand their own **denominations**.

In modern times evangelism and missionary work can be local and global. It is needed because more people in Christian countries may be atheists and agnostics. The majority of people (who did not belong to another religion) attended church. Modern transport overseas has made it easier for missionary organisations to send missionaries.

Divergent ways this is put into practice by the Church locally, nationally and globally. Missionary work and evangelism can be local, national or global.

Local

- ◆ Some local church communities hold events and activities (e.g. toddlers, the elderly) for the local community; to provide for them, and also as a way of evangelism. (missionary and evangelism)
- ◆ Vicars and priests go into schools to introduce children to Christianity.
- ◆ Some local churches help local charities to benefit the community. (missionary)
- ◆ **Street pastors** (volunteers who do not have to be **ordained**) provide practical support, talking to members of the community, providing support for vulnerable people, and promoting good social behaviour. (missionary)

National

- ◆ There are national initiatives to evangelise, such as Alpha courses, which provide an introduction to Christianity. (evangelism)
- ◆ Messy Church is another national initiative – where churches provide activities and incorporate worship, to introduce families to the Church. (evangelism)
- ◆ Many **food banks** are run by Christian organisations to help those who are in need.

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Global

- ♦ Many missionaries work in countries where Christians are struggling, or well-established; as well as in less-economically-developed countries, but with other considerations, such as health care (helping with physical as well as spiritual) (missionary and evangelism)

Christian attitudes as to why evangelical work is important for the Church and individual Christians

Christians **evangelise** for many reasons. Primarily, this is because Jesus came to earth and make more disciples after he rose from the dead, in the **Great Commission** given to the **apostle** who was active shortly after Jesus' death, who is highly regarded by Christians. Much of his time evangelising (as recorded in the biblical book the Acts of the Apostles and detailed in his letters in the New Testament). Therefore, many individual Christians believe that evangelism is important, and evangelise as part of their service to God.

Some individual Christians are also be incentivised to evangelise out of a desire to know God, especially those who believe that Christianity is the only way to know God. It is important to help other people to know God. In the Great Commission, those who did not believe would not be saved.

'The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned.' (Mark 16:16 NRSV)

Aside from these reasons, the Church needs to evangelise in order to maintain its presence if it is to raise funds and encourage volunteers to serve the local and global community. It is important to the Church because it helps to keep the Church going.

Quick questions

23. Outline **three** ways that evangelism may be put into practice.

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The Role and Importance of the Local Church in the Local Community

The local church, within Christianity, refers to both a building for worship and a community of Christians. An area within which a church works is sometimes called a parish. Churches hold services on Sundays; they do many other things as well.

Keywords:

♦ **ecumenism** – cooperation between different churches and different denominations

Role and importance of the local church – how it helps the individual and the community

The role of the local church is to help Christian believers – those who attend church – and also to help the community in general. It is important because it provides a place where people can worship and receive support.

For Christians, a local church can do a lot. It will aim to be the centre of Christian life in the community through living practices, by providing worship and a good example for Christians.

It will provide services, usually once or twice on a Sunday, but within some churches there are also services throughout the week as well. These allow Christians to **worship** God and to receive sacraments. For Christians for whom sacraments are important, the Church is essential to their faith. Services for **baptisms**, marriages, funerals, and other such occasions allow Christians to participate in important moments in their lives. As well as services, there are often Bible study groups, or other religious meetings, such as **prayer** meetings, at the Church, or other venues such as members' houses. Structured worship is especially important for Christians who are not sure about the best way to worship God. Activities such as listening to sermons and being led in prayer can teach a Christian something they did not already know, or make them reflect on an aspect of their faith they had not really thought about before. Churches may facilitate different age groups by running separate activities for younger children, or run services in local schools.



The outside of a church.

When Christians are in hospital, or unable to attend Church, a priest/vicar or minister may take them access to a recorded service, take them sacraments, or go to special services. Many Churches broadcast their services, or stream them online to be more inclusive. Church members may also visit Christians who need to discuss a religious issue, or someone who has experienced something that has happened in their lives and they need support. Sometimes, this is something that is difficult for them to do for themselves. These visits are important, as they make sure that everyone is supported by those who need it.

As well as worship, services and church groups allow Christians to spend time with each other, build friendships, and allowing them to talk about their **faith** and share life experiences. Some church groups are not necessarily worship-focused, such as youth groups or weekly meetings. These allow Christians to connect with each other. Friendship and community are also an important part of the church.

Some churches also take part in **ecumenism**; which is where churches work together with other churches of different **denominations**, and carry out joint activities or services, and work together. This is important because it helps to unite the Christian community, and can also achieve more, when used in partnership with those of other churches.

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Local churches can also do a lot for the community who may not be church-goers. Some outreach activities (those that reach out to the community), such as Alpha courses, may be aimed primarily at **evangelism**, which can be important in introducing people to the Christian faith. Others may be more aimed at catering for practical needs. Churches run activity clubs for young people, toddler groups, lunch kitchens for the homeless and many other things. For some people the church is a provider of activities, companionship, or basic necessities, which means that it improves their lives.

Local churches may also undertake projects on a larger scale, such as building a new house in the country, or running another type of charity project. Local churches often help with fundraising for charities and good causes, and may also support local issues and raise concerns with the local government. Some churches support **food banks** which provide food for the needy. Some support **street pastor** initiatives – putting volunteers on the streets to help and support communities and vulnerable people. Such community involvement can be a great help to the community – projects will be funded, the hungry will be fed and the vulnerable will have a voice. In some areas where there are street pastors, crime levels have fallen.

Why the local church helps the individual believer and the local area

Local churches (those who run and support them) wish to help Christians (improve their) spiritual lives, through teaching them, providing them with **sacraments**, and supporting their **faith** by cultivating Christian friendships and helping others. They may do this because they want what is best for other Christians/people. They know that faith helps in their lives, and so want to help others in this way. They may also do this for this reason – they want them to be happy.

[The Golden Rule] 'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; this is the love of law and the prophets.' (Matthew 7:12 NRSV)

The local church also wants to help individual believers and the local area by doing what God would serve him.

'... whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all.' (Mark 10:43–44)

'And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these members of my family, you did it to me."' (Matthew 25:40)

The early Church also emphasised that church leaders should serve their members. In 1 Peter 5:1–4, the writer tells Church elders that they should look after their **congregation** for God, and they will be rewarded for it. It also tells them to be good examples to the flock.

'... I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, not by compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it. Be examples to the flock.' (1 Peter 5:1–2 NRSV)

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Many Church leaders will, therefore, feel that they must look after individual Christians in their communities and do so willingly. Some may do this for the heavenly reward, while others may be more motivated out of compassion. Some may interpret this passage to emphasise churches caring for Christians (God's flock), and *not* non-Christians in the local community, but others will feel that everyone is a member of God's flock, whether they accept it or not, and so everyone should be provided for.



The outside of a church

Providing activities and aid as a church also means that church members can get involved in helping others; so, by facilitating this, churches help people in two ways – helping those in need and doing good by helping them.

Churches also wish to evangelise new Christians to help others come to know Jesus and become new members.

Quick questions

24. Explain **two** reasons why a local church may help local Christians and the

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The Role and Importance of the Church in the Worldwide Community

The Church in the worldwide community can refer to the entire global Christian community, or it can be used to refer to an individual Christian **denomination** globally; for example, the Anglican Church is worldwide. One **ecumenical** organisation which aims for all churches to work together without trying to make them the same, is the World Council of Churches. The World Council of Churches is made up of the main Christian denominations. The Catholic Church is not a member, but can join if it wants to. The World Council of Churches wants Christians to work together for a better world and to feel unity in Jesus.

Keywords:

- ◆ **persecution** – being treated badly, for example because of religious beliefs
- ◆ **reconciliation** – being reunited in a positive sense with someone one was separated from

Role and importance of the Church in the worldwide community

An entire Christian **denomination**, or group of denominations, has much more influence than a local church. The Church has campaigned worldwide for many issues, including:

- ◆ for peace, and **reconciling** civil conflict and conflict between nations
- ◆ for the end of racism and other inequalities and breaches of human rights
- ◆ for welfare for the poor

The worldwide Church is important if it can make a positive impact on these issues and make a difference to people's lives.

The Church works for worldwide evangelism which is important because Christians can bring others to their **faith**, and also provides the Church with members.

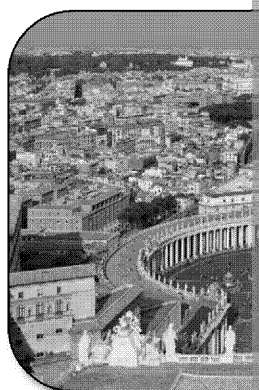
On a global scale, denominations can try to set guidelines for worship practices and particular beliefs. If they did not do this, then there might not be unity within the same denomination.

The Church in the worldwide community may be important to Christians because there are many other Christians who are committed to their faith and experience. Using modern technology, a worldwide Christian community can help Christians, and someone who can answer their questions or help with their problems locally. Another Christian to help them with a religious or practical problem further away.

The Church also supports many charities worldwide which seek to evangelise and provide aid, providing spiritual and physical help to others.

How and why it works for reconciliation

The Church in the worldwide community works to **reconcile** conflict and inequality in a number of ways. Some Church leaders try to negotiate between conflicting parties to get them to come to an agreement. For example, Pope Francis, 266th leader of the Catholic Church, worked to reconcile the US with Cuba. Churches speak out against inequality and campaign for laws to change to make things equal.



Vatican City – the centre of the Catholic Church

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For example, the Christian Church, including members such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, helped to reconcile white people and black people after apartheid in South Africa.

The Church works for reconciliation out of compassion. They want everyone to live in a better world. They also work for reconciliation because Jesus stressed that this means to treat enemies well, to forgive others, and to treat people with respect.

‘So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First, be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.’ (Matthew 5:23–24)

‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.” But I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...’ (Matthew 5:43–44)

‘Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against you, how many times should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven.”’ (Matthew 18:21–22 NRSV)

“‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’” (Matthew 22:39)

The Church also works to reconcile people with God, through **evangelism**, which is covered in the section on *The Future of the Christian Church*.

Problems faced by the persecuted Church

Many Christians worldwide are **persecuted** for their beliefs. They may not have access to Bibles, and they may even face threats and violence. This can happen in states that dislike all religious beliefs (which has occurred in communist states), in states that dislike Christian religion (such as North Korea); or where a country officially allows freedom of religion but other religions wish to eradicate Christianity and promote only their religion (such as Boko Haram in Nigeria). This is not new, and indeed Christian states and Churches have persecuted **atheists** and members of non-Christian religions as well.

The Church has tried to support persecuted Christians, but this is not always enough. The worldwide community can try to combat persecution in several ways. It can form alliances to ensure freedom of worship in different countries, and sometimes support members of other religions for a more tolerant society.

Some Christians seek **reconciliation** with their persecutors, and forgive them, and others. Christians try not to lose **faith** due to persecution, believing it is part of God's plan. Churches may meet and worship in secret to preserve the safety of their members, or be forced to leave their homes to escape persecution.

Divergent Christian responses to teachings about charity

Many Christians feel that they should give money as/to charity, and do good things to help others.

Jesus taught Christians to love their neighbours and his life shows how much he helped others; charitable gifts and actions are a practical application of loving others.

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In the parable of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:31–46) Jesus taught and provide clothing, food and shelter, will be the ones to inherit the kingdom – really doing it for him – and those who do not, will not.

‘Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you gave me hospitality, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are now with me...”’ (Matthew 25:34–36, 40 NRSV)

Jesus also taught in Mark 12:41–44 that giving a small amount, when it is all that you have, is more important than giving a lot if it does not make a dent in your personal wealth – he praised the widow who gave a small amount to the Temple because she cannot afford it.

St Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 13 that love is more important than giving. Christians need to care about giving charity and give benevolently; just going through the motions is meaningless. This implies that he felt Christians would be rewarded for working hard, not doing so because they want a reward.

‘If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.’ (1 Corinthians 13:3 NRSV)

Different Christians have different attitudes towards charity. Some feel that it is important to give, but this is what is taught in the parable of the sheep and the goats – if they give out of love. Others take what St Paul said seriously, and feel that they must give charity with a pure heart, as loving people is more important than giving charity, charity is not that important.

Some Christians are not too worried about how much charity they give, as long as they try to give as much as possible, as Jesus commanded people to give their possessions to the poor.

‘You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, then you will have treasure in heaven...’ (Mark 10:21 NRSV)

Some Christians give a tithe, which is a set amount of their income (often a tenth of their income, as ‘tithe’ derives from), because this was commanded in the Old Testament. Some Christians give for expenses such as taxes; others calculate it in different ways, or try to give a set amount.

‘Set apart a tithe of all the yield of your seed that is brought in year after year to the Lord your God.’ (Deuteronomy 14:22 NRSV)

Work of Christian aid – what it does and why

There are many charities which work worldwide to help others, for example Christian Aid. Christian Aid aims primarily to support people (Christians and non-Christians) practically, especially in less-economically-developed countries, responding to natural disasters; providing medical care, shelter and education; and helping refugees.

They do this because of the biblical teachings to help others, and out of compassion. People who do not have what they need to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives. Christian Aid believes that everyone deserves the chance to have a fulfilling life, and wants to help make this a reality.

Quick questions

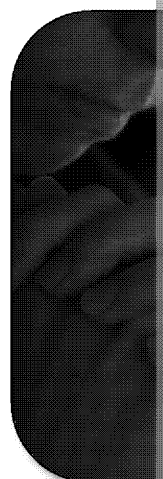
25. Outline **three** reasons why Christians give charity.
26. Explain **two** reasons why the Church works for reconciliation in the world community. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

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Summary for Practices

- ♦ **Worship**, devotion to God, can be practiced in many ways. Some worship set words and actions, and some follow a liturgical pattern. Others do not. Included in worship, including a sermon, Bible readings, singing, **prayer**.
 - Different religions **worship** in different ways. **Prayer** is particularly important to Muslims. There are three sets of prayers which Jews are expected to say every day (as well as those of either religion might want to offer). The Jews' holy building is the **Temple** and their holy day is the **Sabbath** (Friday evening until Saturday evening). The Muslims' mosque and their holy day is Friday.
- ♦ Some **denominations** practice up to seven **sacraments**, special **worship**. Not all, accept **baptism** and the **Eucharist** as sacraments. Baptism is when a person is accepted into the Church through being anointed with, or immersed in water. The **remembrance** of the **Last Supper**, where bread and wine are shared, is a sacrament. Jesus sacrificing his body and blood for the **salvation** of the world and the forgiveness of sins.
- ♦ **Prayer**, talking to God, can take place at many times and in many forms. Prayers can be set (exact or structured) or informal. Common types of prayer are adoration, thanksgiving, confession and intercession. The **Lord's Prayer** is particularly important to Christians as this is the prayer which Jesus taught them to pray.
- ♦ Many Christians go on **pilgrimages** – they go on a physical journey to help them progress in their faith. Some go because they feel that a particular place is significant, while others go mainly to spend time worshipping and to be with other Christians. Popular pilgrimage places include Jerusalem, Iona, Taizé and Walsingham.
- ♦ Christians celebrate many events. Christmas and Advent are important and symbolically prepare for the birth of Jesus. Holy Week (including Palm Sunday, Thursday and Good Friday) and Easter remember Jesus' sacrifice when he died. Christians celebrate the new life which Christians can inherit because of his **resurrection**.
- ♦ The future of the Church is uncertain. **Evangelism** – **converting** others to Christianity – has always been important to Christians because of the need for Christians to make more **disciples**. Evangelism happens in many different ways: through national church outreach, and through travelling missionaries, among Christians.
- ♦ The local church is important for different reasons. It provides services and activities for Christians and the local community, in order to help Christians to grow in faith and **evangelise**.
- ♦ The Church does many things in the worldwide community – including addressing social inequality, and **evangelising** – and individual **denominations** try to establish their own beliefs. Some Christians are **persecuted**, and this is a problem for the Church. The Church has worldwide support charity, including charitable organisations such as Christian Aid.



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Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Christians have to choose which sources of wisdom and authority to trust when making decisions about their life and their faith. The Bible, especially Jesus' example, is an important source, as is the Church, through official teachings, and its leaders. There is an internal conflict, and different **denominations** have been formed where the authority has been questioned. As well as the Bible and the Church, Christians must also use their **reason** and their **conscience** to make decisions.

Keywords:

- ♦ **conscience** – an inner moral sense which helps someone to tell right from wrong
- ♦ **reason** – a rational capacity for understanding and making decisions

The Development and Structure of the Bible and its Unity

The **Bible** is the book of Holy Scripture, or religious text for Christians. It is divided into the **Old Testament**, which deals with events and teachings from before the birth of Jesus, and the **New Testament**, which primarily deals with the life of Jesus and what his followers did after his death. 'Testament' in this sense means **covenant** – a promise between God and his people. The two testaments are called 'Old' and 'New' because the Old Testament deals with the old covenant with people before Jesus, and the New Testament deals with the new promise through Jesus. The word 'testament' is also linked to the word testimony – a statement of Bible record testimony, something people tell to others, in this case mainly to God. The books of the Old Testament are also part of the Jewish Bible, but the Christian Bible includes them in a different order, and the Jews interpret them differently. Christians do not all agree on which books should be included in the Bible. Different sections of the Bible, like large chapters (although each book is also divided into chapters), which all Christians officially include are called the 'canon', and some of the books which Christians include form a section called the Apocrypha and are included in some versions of the Bible. Even though there are different types of books with different purposes, and different interpretations, the Bible is seen, united, as the **word of God**. The New Testament is particularly important as it contains God's new promise to Christians, to save them through Jesus.

Keywords:

- ♦ **Dei Verbum** – Latin for 'Word of God', is an important document of Catholic teaching from the Second Vatican Council

Development and Structure of the Bible

Old Testament – Law, History, Prophets, Writings

The **Old Testament** developed over many years. Some Jews and Christians believe that the Law was received from God, much of the first five books of the Bible, though most modern scholars disagree with this. The Old Testament section of the Bible had not been completed by the time Jesus was alive. Many of the stories in the Bible would have been passed down orally before they were written down. Some of the Old Testament may have been written during the time the Jews were exiled in Babylon.

Most of the Old Testament is either a history of what has happened to the people of Israel, or teaching; or **prophecy**. There are also some more poetic books.

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The first five books of the Bible (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy*) are often called the books of the law, although they contain history as well. They include interactions which the authors believed took place between God and early humanity, including God giving his 'chosen people', the Jews, commandments to follow. Genesis includes commands that God gave to individuals and their families, for example, he made a **covenant** with Abraham and told Abraham that he must circumcise himself and all the males of his household – this became a mark of Jewishness (circumcision is removing the foreskin). Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy record God giving many (over 600) laws to Moses to give to the Jewish people.

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After these come history books, such as the two books of *Samuel* and the two books of *Kings*. These contain further history of the Jewish people, such as their journey to the Promised Land and whether the rulers and the people were obedient to God.

Then there are the writings, which are varied, including books like *Psalms* and *Psalms of David*. These teach spiritual truths, and some encourage believers to think about their faith and their expressions of praise and thanksgiving to God.

The Old Testament ends with a large section of prophetic books, such as *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Malachi*. These are named after the **prophets** they contain information about, or prophesy. Prophets were called by God, and what he sent them to tell the Jewish people. Some prophets had extra roles as well as being prophets – for example, the prophet Daniel convinced King Darius of Babylon to stop worshipping false gods, without having to pray to the King.

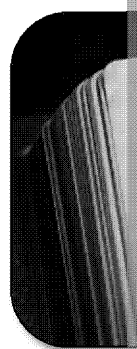
The Old Testament has been developed to show Christians (and Jews) how God looked after his people, and it is also meant to teach them. This can be through the law and also through prophesy and **meditation** on different themes.

The New Testament – Gospels, Letters

The **New Testament** also took a while to be finalised. However, it was largely confirmed in the 300s by Church leaders who collected together the early Christian writings which they thought were most important. Not all the books agree, as different writers had different interpretations of Jesus and his life, and different opinions on what Christians should do and believe.

The New Testament starts with the **Gospels** (books about the life of Jesus) which were all written by different authors (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*). *Acts of the Apostles* contains one book of the *Acts of the Apostles* after Jesus' death (a book describing what the **apostles** did after his **ascension**). The majority of the remainder is formed from letters written by different Christians to other Christians or to churches, many by **St Paul**. It ends with the book of *Revelation*.

The New Testament was developed to teach about Jesus, to **evangelise**, and to show how Christians should live their Christian belief, practice and living.



A Bible

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Divergent Interpretations of the Authority of the Bible

Different Christians have different views on the authority of the Bible – some believe everything it tells them and follow it completely, and others take a less strict approach. This often correlates with how they interpret it, and who they think it was written by.

As with the account of **creation**, some Christians believe that the entire Bible is **literal** and some believe that parts are **metaphorical/symbolic**. Those who feel that the word of God will be more likely to see it as authoritative, as they will feel that it comes directly and exactly from God, and so cannot be wrong. They will feel that it is their duty to read and teach Christians.

Those that feel that parts of the Bible are symbolic will not necessarily see it as a source of authority on things – for example, some will not feel that it is an authority on exactly how the world was created. They may believe in the Big Bang and evolution.

Some Christians believe that the Bible was **inspired** by God; that God commanded the writers to write and edited it, but not every word was given directly by God. People want to feel that the Bible teaches spiritual truths, and that all of it is literally *or* *is* *from* God.

This is supported by 2 Timothy 3:16 (part of the New Testament) which teaches that all Scripture is inspired by God. Therefore, it is very important for guidance and teaching. Those who disagree may not believe that 2 Timothy 3:16 was inspired by God.

'All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, training in righteousness' (2 Timothy 3:16 NRSV)

The Catholic Church also teaches in Chapter 3 of *Dei Verbum* (literally 'Word of God'), an important document of Catholic teaching, that all scripture is inspired by God and is therefore inspired by the Holy Spirit, and so is what God wanted written. It is written, and humans must work to understand the meaning of what is written in the Bible. The Bible can be interpreted in many different ways.

Some Christians believe that the Bible was written by humans about God. Some are influenced by God, but that much is human opinion and belief. They are uncertain if the historical details are accurate, so may not take the Bible to be an authority on the Bible's key teachings, and many believe that there is some accuracy to biblical teachings. Some certain books of the Bible, such as the Gospels, have more authority, and those that were written by one Christian to another, do not have authority for Christians today. The Bible is for guidance and teaching, but may not follow it to the letter, and some will accept the Bible as important and what they mean.

Implications of these Understandings for Christians Today

There are direct implications of these understandings for Christians today. Those who believe that the **literal word of God**, or are more likely to disagree with scientific or historical claims that contradict the Bible, are more likely to take a hard line on specific Biblical texts. Those who may be firmly against homosexuality because Leviticus 18:22 NRSV commands

'You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abom

(Note: This quote is addressed to men, meaning that men should not commit ho

⁵ http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const

Some will also disagree with female **ordination** because 1 Corinthians 14:34

‘... women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, as the law also says.’

Those who believe that the Bible was **inspired** by God may also follow Bible teachings. Many will not have a problem with scientific accounts (e.g. the Big Bang) when they believe that God inspired a **symbolic** account of **creation** to be written.

Those who feel that the Bible has less authority / was written by humans may feel that commandments were relevant at the time they were given, but are not relevant now. They may think that loving your neighbour is more important than banning homosexuality. They may not think for women to lead in churches now, because they are educated, and were not the standard when 1 Corinthians was written.

There are also implications for how coherent Christians' beliefs seem, based on the Bible. An understanding that the Bible is not all completely factually accurate, but still needs to be followed, can be problematic if Christians are seen to be picking and choosing what to believe. This may indicate that they do not have strong foundations for why something should be believed or practised because it is in the Bible would not accept.

However, it could also be seen to be easier to defend a non-literal understanding of the Bible. Where scientific accounts appear to contradict the Bible, or where different parts of the Bible contradict each other. For example, Galatians 3:28 NRSV states that:

‘there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.’

This can be seen to contradict the teaching that women should not speak in church because if gender does not matter to God, then Christians should not discriminate.

How Christians understand the Bible will have implications for their day-to-day decision-making. Those who take a literal interpretation of the Bible are likely to use the Bible for guidance and teaching and apply specific commandments and rules, such as the Ten Commandments and other rules given throughout the Bible, to life. They may also try to apply the principle of ‘love your neighbour’ to situations which do not occur in the Bible, such as IVF, or globalisation.

Those who feel that much of the Bible is of human origin will still see it as a guide but may not follow all teachings exactly, or feel that all guidance in the Bible is outdated for modern day. They will be more likely to apply broader rules such as ‘love your neighbour’ and to try to work out the reasons behind rules and apply these reasons.

Different Christians applying the same broader principles may well come out with different conclusions.

Quick Question

27. Explain **two** ways in which Christians interpret the authority of the Bible as a source of wisdom and authority.

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Divergent ways in which the Bible is used in the Daily Life of Christians

Christians use the Bible in many different ways, to teach and guide them, pe

Keywords:

- ♦ **lectionary** – a list of Bible readings for certain days/occasions

In the Home

Individuals may read the Bible at home, to build a relationship with God.

Christians may also hold Bible study groups to look at Bible passages in more detail. Some Christians read the Bible on their own, or with the help of scholarly books.

In Church

In most church services in mainstream **denominations**, the Bible will play some part in **worship**. Many services will have Bible readings, from the **Old Testament** and the **New Testament**. If a **sermon** is preached, it is often based on the Bible readings used, so Christians can see how and why the Bible readings are relevant to their **faith** and what they can learn from them. Some hymns and worship songs are based on Bible passages, which provide Christians with another way to connect to these. Bible readings in Church are used to teach Christians about God, and also about what God wants them to do with their lives.

Informal and Formal Worship

As seen above, the Bible can be used in worship in both the home and church. This worship can be formal or informal.

For example, Christians could pick a Bible passage to read that helps them with something current in their lives, either individually, or in a service that has been planned in advance. These are examples of the Bible being used more informally.

The Bible can also be used formally in worship, often in Church services. For example, in the Church of England *Book of Common Prayer* lays down guidelines for which parts of the Bible are read and when. This includes a **lectionary** (a list of Bible readings for different days of the year) which sets Bible readings all year round (there are several different year-long lectionaries). There are also set Bible readings for festivals like Easter and Christmas, and for other special occasions. These tend to be used in formal worship services, where there is a set structure.

As a Source of Comfort and Guidance

Christians may read the Bible to feel comfort from knowing that God cares for them and all humans. Much of the Bible can be used to reassure Christians; 1 Corinthians 10:13 says:

‘...for God is faithful; he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.’

The Bible also shows other people in difficult situations, which can show Christians that they are not alone in experiencing difficulties.

Christians also use the Bible as a source of guidance to help them to know what is right and wrong, to make decisions, especially following the example of Jesus and commandments which are given. Some Christians follow exact commandments, and others will try to apply broader principles.

Quick Question

28. Outline **three** ways in which Christians may use the Bible.

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Divergent Responses to Sources of Personal and Ethical Decisions for Christians, their Significance and their Inter-relationships

Christians use many sources to help them make personal and **ethical** decisions. They use individual **reason** and personal **conscience**. They may combine different measures to arrive at a measure of a solution.

Keywords:

- ◆ **ethical decision** – a choice regarding moral issues
- ◆ **natural law** – rules about morality drawn from nature and reason
- ◆ **religious experience** – a way in which Christians feel that God communicates with them

Use of the Bible

As mentioned earlier, many Christians use the Bible to help them with personal and **ethical** decision-making.

Some Christians will follow specific instructions given in the Bible. They will make the personal decision to give money to the poor because of Jesus' teachings (e.g. Mark 10:21) and the ethical decisions not to murder, commit adultery, or steal because these things are forbidden in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). Others will follow general principles taught by Jesus, such as loving others and treating them well (e.g. Matthew 7:12).

Some Christians feel that the Bible has teaching which can be easily applied to all situations. They feel that even if there is not a specific command for something, a general rule, like loving one's neighbour, can be applied.

Others feel that a downside of using the Bible to make decisions is that it can be out of touch with modern life. There are many personal decisions to make about issues such as genetic modification or IVF which are not dealt with in the Bible, and it is possible to have different views on what is right and wrong. For example, genetic modification or IVF are loving things to do.

Whether or not the Bible can be used effectively in all cases of decision-making is a matter of debate. Many Christians believe that it helps them to know what God wants (and to some, it is the **literal** or **inspired word of God**).

Role of the Individual

Reason

Many Christians believe that because God gave humans **reason**, they should use it to work out what is right and wrong, and use it to help them make personal and **ethical** decisions. Thomas Aquinas argued that reason can help humans make decisions, even if they do not believe in God, because humans still have the capability to understand what is right and wrong. Reason can be used to work out what is right or wrong, starting from basic principles.

For example, the Catholic Church advocates following **natural law**. One idea is that God has shown humans what is right through nature and reason, so they will follow it. For example, because sex naturally produces children, some Catholics feel that using contraception is against nature, and disobeys natural law – they exercise their reason to draw conclusions from nature.

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However, there are problems with using reason; someone's reason is often shaped by their culture and the social climate, so slavery seemed reasonable to many Christians when slavery was widespread. Christians, therefore, feel that reason is not particularly valuable when making moral decisions. This can lead to many different conclusions about how best to act, using rational arguments.

However, it could be argued that examples like slavery are not really justified. Christians do use reason differently even if they have been raised in similar circumstances. In many cases, reason would be quite successful in arriving at conclusions commanded in the Bible. For example, it is not reasonable to murder someone, because no one wants to be murdered. If everyone murdered everyone else, there would be no one left.

Reason can be helpful to Christians in helping them to apply biblical teaching, if they can apply biblical teaching to an issue which is not covered in the Bible, or if they think the Bible is silent on an issue.

Conscience

Many Christians also use their **conscience** to decide what decisions to make. Conscience is what they feel is right. This can be particularly helpful in a situation where the Bible is silent on an issue and Christians have to evaluate which is the most loving, or does the Bible allow it? For example, should someone be left to suffer for a long period when they are nearing the end of their life? Should euthanasia (mercy-killing) be allowed to put them out of their misery?

Conscience can be used alongside the Bible when applying broader rules – for example, 'love your neighbour as yourself'. If they can see how they feel about different situations, they would wish to be treated. Sometimes a feeling about what is the best course of action can be helpful. For example, whether to accept a young, loving couple having sex before they get married. Christians may also use conscience as a guide, weighing up pros and cons rationally. Christians may also use conscience as a guide, with their head and their heart agree on what is right.

Conscience is significant because everyone has instinctual feelings about right and wrong. If conscience has been given by God, it is a way of knowing his will in all situations.

Some Christians believe that God can guide them through the conscience, so they can make decisions which he approves of. The **Catechism** of the Catholic Church (1776-1779, 1780-1781, 1782, 1783, 1784, 1785, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798, 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807, 1808, 1809, 1810, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, 1815, 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 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Jesus as the Word of God and a Role Model

The example of Jesus, as shown in the **Gospels**, is very important for Christians. It shows the person and character of Jesus and God, and it gives them a model to follow. It is very important for Christians to follow Jesus' example so that they are doing God's will.

Keywords:

- ♦ **gentile** – non-Jew
- ♦ **reconciliation** – bringing people together who were separated, or not on the same terms
- ♦ **social justice** – the idea that everyone deserves equal legal rights and opportunities. Men, women, genders and races, for instance, should all be equally protected, and all have the same rights. Resources should be distributed fairly

Beliefs and Teachings about Jesus as the Word of God

In John 1, Jesus is portrayed as the **Word of God**. As discussed in the section on *the Creation of the Universe and of Humanity*, the **Gospel** of John teaches that Jesus was with God (the Father) before the beginning of the world, and took part in **creation**. He then came down into the world to be a guiding light, and allowed those who believed in him to become God's children.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.' (John 1:1, 14 NRSV)



He also brought God's **grace**. John warns that people did not recognise Jesus – the Gospels teach that people need to hear and accept God's Word through Jesus.

Beliefs about Jesus as the Word of God intertwine with beliefs about him as **Trinity**. The Church has taught that Jesus, as God's Word, was able to be a God and humans on earth, conveying God's message. Therefore, Christians can believe that humans have experienced his teaching through Jesus, and can feel reassured that Jesus will send Jesus.

Divergent Understandings of Jesus' Role in Modelling Practices

In Mark 8:34–38 Jesus tells his **disciples** and a crowd that if people want to save their life, they must put him first and follow him.

'He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to save their life, they must lose it and be ashamed of me and of my words. But whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this present world, I will be ashamed of them at the end of the world."'

He emphasises that for someone to be a disciple, Jesus has to be the priority. If people want to keep their life, they will lose their life (everyone dies), but those who spread the message about him will be saved (they will have life after death). If people are ashamed of Jesus, they will be ashamed of them; it is implied that this will not stand up to **judgement** at the end of time.

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The commands for **discipleship** have been interpreted in different ways. So that Christians should go without, and live a life without any worldly distractions translated it, less harshly – they believe it means that Christians must put Jesus' desires if they conflict with discipleship; however, Christians do not have to

Carrying one's cross links clearly to **crucifixion**. Criminals might be required to carry a cross before being put to death on them. This reference is quite likely to have been Jesus' crucifixion, though some Christians believe Jesus may have used it, kneeling. It shows that discipleship may not always be pleasant, and may involve large

Telling disciples to follow Jesus can be taken in several ways; firstly, they have to follow Jesus' example. Secondly, they have to follow Jesus' example.

So Christians vary in whether they think that Jesus expected Christians to just follow his practices, and whether it is also necessary for Christians to make sacrifices – denying themselves and dying for their **faith**.

Divergent Implications of Jesus' Example in Showing Love for Others

Possibly the most important thing which Christians believe Jesus modelled for others. Jesus was compassionate to all, healed people, and Christians believe in love of the world. This shows a great amount of love.

Jesus taught Christians to love their neighbours – those around them. In the Samaritan (Luke 10), Jesus teaches that helping others is a practical expression of love.

The parable also teaches that Christians should help others even if it is inconvenient. They should not opt in and out of showing love for others, but should do so all the time, even if it is inconvenient.

Not only did Jesus expect Christians to love the people who were kind to them, but to love everyone, even their enemies.

'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' (Mark 12:31)

'No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friend.

'... Love your enemies...' (Matthew 5:44 NRSV)

Divergent Implications of Jesus' Example in Showing Forgiveness

Jesus taught Christians to forgive everyone, multiple times. This means that Christians should forgive and should not hold bad actions against people.

'Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but seventy-seven times."' (Matthew 18:21-22 NRSV)

As Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive a *member of the church*, it shows that they should forgive other Christians, but that it is not as important to forgive everyone. Christians feel that they should forgive everyone.

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Jesus himself forgave those who might have seemed unforgiveable, such as the adulterous woman. Jesus made the point that everyone has **sinned**, so it is not just others who have sinned. This shows Christians that they should forgive others.

[Jesus, of the adulterous woman] 'Let anyone among you who is without sin, throw a stone at her.' (John 8:7 NRSV)

However, Jesus did say that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit would not be forgiven (saying or doing something against God). There are different interpretations of this: that it is unforgiveable to know God, Jesus and the Spirit and then choose to reject them; that it is unforgiveable to claim that God's goodness is evil, or say that work for the Devil. Some feel that this means that Jesus' forgiveness was not really for everyone. Others feel that Jesus and God will offer forgiveness for everything, but that those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit reject this forgiveness.

'Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy except the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.' (Matthew 12:31 NRSV)

Jesus also taught that if people do not forgive then God will not forgive them. That receiving forgiveness themselves is conditional on them forgiving others.

'For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.' (Matthew 6:14-15 NRSV)

Divergent Implications of Jesus' Example in Showing Servanthood

Jesus was not a typical leader; he served others, by healing and helping them, and symbolised his servanthood by washing his **disciples'** feet. He also showed that he submitted to God's will, by dying on the cross.

He taught that those who wanted to follow him should prioritise helping others over themselves, and that those who helped others would be rewarded. Some Christians follow this teaching by helping others generally, and others feel that they must follow Jesus' example more closely.

'Whoever wants to be first must be last, and whoever wants to be last must be first.' (Luke 14:10 NRSV)

Divergent Implications of Jesus' Example in Showing Reconciliation

Reconciliation, in this sense, means bringing people together who were separated by sin. Jesus brought reconciliation between God and humans – showing that we can have a relationship with God. Jesus' death also overcame **sin**, which separates us from God, and reconciled people and God. This was symbolised by the curtain tearing in the temple.

Further, Jesus' teaching and healing was for everyone, not just the Jews. He healed the Centurion's servant, and taught a Samaritan woman. Samaritans followed a version of Judaism that was looked down on by Jews. Rather than bringing **salvation** for a specific group, Jesus showed that God wanted to grant his **grace** to everyone. This shows Christians that they should not look down on people different to themselves badly – Jesus wanted to reconcile all humans with God.

'...we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son.' (Romans 5:10 NRSV)

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Divergent Implications of Jesus' Example in Showing Social Justice

Social justice is the idea that everyone deserves equal legal rights and opportunities. Different genders and races, for instance, should all be equally protected, and wealth should be distributed fairly.

Jesus spent time with those that many Jews would have termed 'sinners' and tax collectors and Samaritans. He treated women well, and did not exploit people. The kingdom of God he created was open to all, regardless of previous religion, gender, or status. Jesus has inspired Christians who have worked for causes such as gender or racial equality, against the slave trade, or for women's rights.

Jesus also commanded people to give their wealth to the poor, indicating that the kingdom of God was a society to be provided for – many Christians feel that they should work for fair wages and taxes to narrow the gap between rich and poor.

'Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.'" (Matthew 19:21 NRSV)

Divergent Implications of Jesus establishing the Kingdom of God

Jesus taught many things about the kingdom of God – these sometimes seem contradictory. The kingdom of God is ambiguous. However, Christians believe that Jesus' teachings make it possible to enter the kingdom of God.

Some feel that it is a spiritual state, which Christians can inhabit now, when they are alive. For example, Jesus taught that the kingdom was like a mustard seed – which grows into a large tree (Mark 4:30–32). As Jesus had previously spoken about sowing seed in the field, this suggests that the kingdom is present, and expanding. He also talks about his acts as being the kingdom of God to Earth.

'But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.' (Matthew 12:28 NRSV)

Some think that the kingdom of God refers to heaven, life after death with God. **Supper** Jesus says he will not drink wine again until he is in the kingdom of God. This suggests that he entered heaven shortly after this, after his death.

'Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink new wine in the kingdom of God.' (Mark 14:25 NRSV)

Some people feel that the kingdom of God is on Earth and in heaven – it is wherever someone is in a relationship with God, alive or dead.

Jesus taught that those with worldly concerns would find it hard, or would not be able, to enter the kingdom of God, and that those who do God's will would experience it. Therefore, some Christians feel that they must give away all their wealth, and many others attempt not to become too attached to worldly possessions and to give away excess money.

'Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.' (Matthew 19:24 NRSV)



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Significance of these Beliefs for Christians Today

Beliefs about the example Jesus set for Christians are very significant.

- ◆ They are significant in affecting Christians' actions – Christians will aim to serve them and serving them; by treating everyone well; and by giving money to the poor.
- ◆ They are significant in affecting Christians' attitudes – Christians should be humble before God – reconciled to him, and treated well by Jesus.
- ◆ They are significant in affecting Christians' feelings towards others – Christians should love others and think well of them, as Jesus appeared to care for everyone.
- ◆ They are significant in shaping Christians' faith – they will believe that there is a God, who wants to have a relationship – and they will want to please him and his kingdom of God.

Quick Question

31. State **three** examples which Jesus set for Christians.

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The Church as the Body of Christ

Understanding the Significance of the Church as the Body of Christ and including the Nature of the Church as the Body of Christ

The Church is often referred to as the Body of Christ.

Romans 12:4–6 talks about Christians and the Church as the Body of Christ. Christ' implies that there is a unity between all Christians; that they are joined. The Body of Christ is an entity that all Christians are part of.

'For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, though we are many, we are one body in Christ, and individually we are members joined to his body, each with a gift that differs according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith

One Corinthians 12 also conveys this message – Christians have unity in the Church through **baptism**.

'For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptised into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.' (1 Co

The extract from Romans 12 and the whole of 1 Corinthians 12 state that, like a body, different parts of the body (different Christians) perform different roles. The Body of Christ can be understood to be significant because this celebrates different gifts – some people can be vicars, some people can be **missionaries** and live their lives, while sharing Jesus' love with others. The passages say that God has given us different gifts – all the gifts are from God, and all are important.

This explanation of the Church can help Christians not to feel that they are more important than other members of the Body of Christ, as all parts of the body are important. It can help Christians not to feel that they are more important than other Christians – even if they think they are. This does not mean that the roles others fill are not. Indeed, St Paul argues that the least important members of the Body of Christ should be given extra respect. Christians who already seem important do not need extra respect.

Understanding the Church as the Body of Christ is also significant because it encourages Christians to care for other Christians as much as they care for themselves, as injury to one is injury to the whole. If Christians think of themselves as a unit in this way, they should care for others' needs first, and not to concentrate only on themselves.

'If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all are honoured with it.' (1 Corinthians 12:26 NRSV)

Another reason for describing Christians as the Body of Christ, used by some Christians, is that, at the Eucharist, the Body of Christ, at the Eucharist, so Christians are joined through the

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Some Christians could argue that Christians must be baptised to be part of the Body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13, given above, suggests that people join the Body of Christ and others will see baptism as an outer sign of membership of the Body of Christ. Those who follow Jesus are members of his body.

The Church is also referred to as the People of God.

Firstly, this is significant, because the Jews were known as God's people – if this is so, then this shows that they have legitimacy; Jesus was part of God's plan for the world and those who follow Jesus are also his people. St Paul says that God has not rejected them Jesus.

'I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, of the tribe of Benjamin.' (Romans 11:1)

Being the People of God is also significant, as this indicates that Christians are part of God, and that they can experience the Holy Spirit directly acting in their lives.

'For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."' (2 Corinthians 6:16)

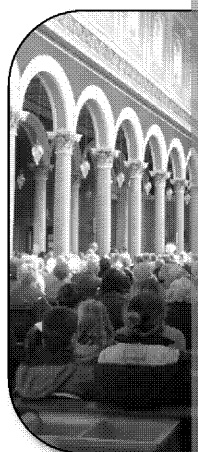
It also shows that God cared enough about humanity to send Jesus. Christ died for them so much that he sent Jesus to restore the relationship between God and humanity and have a relationship with them and for them to be his people.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into light.
(1 Peter 2:9 NRSV)

Divergent Ways in which this Belief is Important to Christians Today

Believing that the Church is the Body of Christ and the People of God is important in various ways to Christians today.

- ◆ Believing in the Church as the Body of Christ helps Christians to feel part of a larger whole, where they are all important to Jesus.
- ◆ Believing in the Church as the Body of Christ can help some Christians to accept diversity in the Church – though there are many different **denominations** and Christian organisations, different Christian beliefs and practices, it can be viewed that all Christians are fulfilling different functions and roles as members of the Body of Christ.
- ◆ Believing in the Church as the People of God can help Christians to feel part of a larger whole.
- ◆ Believing in the Church as the People of God can encourage Christians to help the Church to grow because they want everyone to belong to the People of God.



Christians

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Quick Question

32. Explain **two** reasons why it is helpful for Christians to refer to the Church as the Body of Christ. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

The Growth and Development of the Church

After Jesus' death, Christianity slowly began to grow in numbers and develop. It has gone through many changes and developments over the centuries. Not all are members of the Body of Christ; however there are now many different beliefs and practices.

Keywords:

- ◆ **apostolic succession** – the belief that priests in certain denominations can trace their authority back to Jesus and his disciples and that this is important
- ◆ **excommunicate** – formally cast out of the Church
- ◆ **Filioque** – 'and from the Son' in Latin – an addition to the Nicene Creed stating that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son
- ◆ **Great Schism** – the split between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches in 1054
- ◆ **indulgences** – grants of God's grace which the Catholic Church sold
- ◆ **laity** – ordinary Christians who are not ordained as priests
- ◆ **monasteries** – places where monks lived and studied
- ◆ **Protestants** – Christians who protest against the rule of the Pope and Catholic Church
- ◆ **Reformation** – the split between the Catholic Church and Christian groups who became Protestants in the 16th century

Early Church – the Establishment, Development and Growth of the Church

After Jesus' death there were many communities of Christians. Even at this time there were disputes about whether to allow gentiles (non-Jews) to join Christianity with other issues. Whilst some Christian communities allowed women leaders as well as men, others formed an authority structure where male leaders passed on their authority to others. This became **ordination**. They wanted to be able to trace their authority back to Jesus through this process called **apostolic succession**, and to have a consensus of the community. Consequently, within the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, the first Church in the south-east Europe, the authority of Church officials has been valued highly. The Pope, leading the church, in charge of priests, who in turn were in charge of deacons. Deacons and clergy were responsible for the non-ordained **laity**.

This became the foundation for the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Christianity grew with the help of Constantine the Roman Emperor, who converted and wanted his subjects to be Christians. Christianity and the Roman (Catholic) Church.

Great Schism and Filioque Controversy – Split of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches

The Catholic Church ('catholic' means universal) and the Orthodox Church (which means 'true belief') have traditionally been separated by whether they spoke Latin (Catholic) or Greek (Orthodox). Many of the early theologians are valued by both regardless of which language they spoke both. The Orthodox Church (which encompasses many different branches) is often referred to as the Eastern Church, as it was traditionally based in the East (in this case the term refers to areas like the Middle East and eastern Europe), but it can be found anywhere.

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However, although the leaders in the Greek-speaking world and Latin-speaking world did not agree on everything, and started to grow apart, the two Churches are seen to have been strongly linked for the first millennium. The **Great Schism**, which was the start of a major West/East divide, happened in 1054 CE when the bishop of Rome (Pope Leo IX) and one of the leaders of the Orthodox Church (Oecumenical Patriarch Michael Keroularios of Constantinople) **excommunicated** each other.

It took nine centuries for the Great Schism to be resolved (in 1964, at the Second Vatican Council (VI) and a leader of the Orthodox Church (Patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople) agreed that the church was still united.

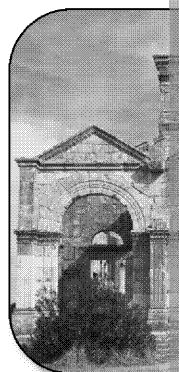
Some reasons for this were that members of the Orthodox Church disagreed with the Catholic Church. The Bishop of Rome had assumed for himself over other bishops and the Church the title of Pope (from 'papa': 'father') – and they disagreed with changes which they felt were being made for invalid reasons.

The Orthodox Church disagreed with the Catholic change to using unleavened bread for the Eucharist, as they did not see that there was no good reason for the change.

They also disagreed with the addition to the **Nicene Creed** of the *Filioque* clause, which said that the Holy Spirit came from God the Father *and* God the Son, rather than just the Father. The Orthodox Church did not accept this change to **doctrine** either.

Catholicism and Orthodoxy after the Great Schism

Catholicism continued to be popular in Western Europe, though there were always heretical groups. The Pope's influence, and that of his advisors, the cardinals, grew. The Pope commanded crusades on the Holy Land, the Church sought greater control over married life and sex, and many **monasteries** were formed. The Church tightened its **doctrines**; it established firmer positions on certain beliefs, such as on the position of Mary (Jesus' mother) – for instance that she was conceived without sin, and was above other humans in this respect; and it produced more detailed explanations of practices such as the **Eucharist**.



At one point, there were different claims on the papacy, and for a while there were rival popes in Avignon, France, as well as Rome. By the middle of the second millennium, the papacy exerted political power over State rulers such as Henry VIII. After the Protestant Reformation (see below), much of western Europe ceased to be Catholic, and Catholicism sought to reassert its influence as well as trying to **evangelise** in western Europe.

Orthodox Christianity spread through the East of Europe and western Asia, and into Russia, where it had links with those in political power. Orthodox Christians were often persecuted towards Catholics when crusaders imposed on Orthodox territory, though in some ways it developed in similar ways to Catholicism, with monasticism being popular, and a focus on religious imagery. However, the Orthodox Church did start to translate religious texts into local languages for believers. Many Orthodox Churches also allow married men to become priests. Many Orthodox regions were conquered by Muslim and other non-Christian powers, and were areas where it was still supported by the political establishment.

Today, Catholics and Orthodox Christians live all around the world, though Catholicism is dominant in many parts of western Europe and a strong Orthodox base in the East.

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Reform: the Establishment, Development and Growth of the Protestant Churches

As well as a split between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, there has been a split within Christianity. There have always been people who disagreed with aspects of Christianity, but, in the sixteenth century, events came to a head and some leaders and groups broke away from the Catholic Church, in what became known as the **Reformation** – because they reformed Christianity. These groups became known as **Protestants**, because they had protested against the Catholic Church.

One key moment in the **Reformation** was when **Martin Luther** nailed his ninety-five theses to a Church door; ninety-five problems he had with the Catholic Church. Luther's aim was to change the Church, rather than to create a new **denomination**, hence the name 'Reformation'. However, the Church did not want to change, and after a number of arguments between Luther and various Church leaders, the Pope **excommunicated** him, resulting in Luther starting up his own Church. Other reformers, such as John Calvin in Switzerland, followed suit and set up their own religious communities.

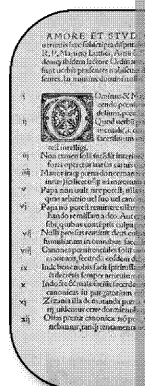
Some reasons which Luther and others had for rebelling against the Catholic Church were its sale of **indulgences** and its abuses of power and wealth. Luther did not think that the Church should be selling God's **grace** or claiming that people could get to heaven through living a good life, but that **salvation** could only come through being saved by Jesus. Further, the Pope and Church leaders had a lot of influence and were accumulating a lot of money, which did not seem fair or just to reformers.

The reformers also wanted the **Bible**, which they saw as the main source of authority of Church elders in the Catholic Church), to be available to ordinary people. This meant them having to rely on the Church to be able to access the Bible. Luther coined the term **sola scriptura**, which is Latin for 'scripture alone', because he believed that is how Christianity should be. In the Catholic Church, the Bible and **liturgy** were in Latin, which not all people could understand.

Note: In the Catholic Church in the UK today, services are not normally in Latin, but some parts are still in Latin.

Reformers placed emphasis on the Bible and a Christian's personal relationship with God, rather than Church leadership and provided this in the spoken languages. They also tried to return to what they saw as an earlier and more accurate form of Christianity. But their churches still resembled the Catholic Church and reflected their worship practices.

Reasons for the success of the Reformation include that the printing press had been invented, which allowed Luther to spread his ideas and print German Bibles. Many political rulers and nobles also liked the idea of a **Protestant** religion, because it meant they did not have to pay as much money to the Pope, so many areas were open to the ideas of reformers for religion.



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Establishment and Development of some Nonconformist Protestant Churches

Although Protestants such as Luther did not alter Christianity much from Catholicism, other reformers did. Later reformers started churches such as the Baptist Church and Methodist Church. The Baptists and the Methodists focused less on rituals, though **baptism** and the **Eucharist** were still important. There was even greater focus on the Bible and churches became plainer, without the distractions of art and architecture. Such as the Quakers and Salvation Army were even further removed from pop culture, not using **sacraments**, and placing a greater emphasis on gender equality and social justice. Such Churches are referred to as 'nonconformist' because they differ from the recognised Protestant Church in the UK.

Establishment, Development and Growth of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, churches that place a greater emphasis on the Holy Spirit have been particularly popular. Existing in multiple global locations, Pentecostalism is named because the Holy Spirit is believed to have arrived at **Pentecost** (the anniversary of the day the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles) rather than the usual rate the apostles received it. Pentecostals believe they will receive the Holy Spirit above that of the Bible or Church leaders. Pentecostals believe they will receive the Holy Spirit to enhance their spiritual lives, such as speaking in tongues, a mysterious, spiritual experience. Where Pentecostalism flourished, there were often mass conversions, with people making a dramatic turn to Christianity.

Pentecostalism became popular because it taught that anyone can receive the Holy Spirit and have direct contact with God. Being inspired by the Holy Spirit also gives people the ability to believe God has given them a message to pass on, whereas in other branches of Christianity, only an **ordained** leader or teach other Christians about God. This branch of Christianity has disadvantaged groups such as women and ethnic minorities. Traditionally, Pentecostals live on a simple life, expecting their reward in heaven. Pentecostalism has grown in popularity in the southern hemisphere in less-economically-developed countries where many people feel a sense of hope to the diminishing **faith** in the more-economically-well-off northern hemisphere.

A revival of Pentecostalism in the late twentieth century, Charismatic Christianity, emphasises the Holy Spirit, though it emphasises that a bountiful life can be a reward for faith. Not just for the wealthy. Charismatic Christianity has been enabled by multimedia, and travel. Charismatics can broadcast their services, or tour. This is popular because it promises people a more prosperous life.

While many Pentecostals and Charismatics are Protestant, some Catholics have Charismatic leanings.

Changes in the Church as the Body of Christ, and Divergent Understandings of the Development of Diverse Denominations within the Church Today

The Church, as the Body of Christ, is certainly not united in many ways. There are many branches and sub-branches of Christianity. However, while the Church seems to be divided, it can be argued that there has never, since the first days of Christianity, been complete unity in everything, and there have always been different beliefs and practices within different denominations.

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Different Christians interpret 1 Corinthians 12 in different ways. The Catholic Church sees itself as the true Body of Christ, the one true Church. It feels, therefore, that Christians from other denominations do not belong fully to the Body of Christ. It views **denominationalism** as a barrier to the Catholic Church to belong fully to the Body of Christ. It views **denominationalism** from the Catholic Church as not practising the Christian faith correctly. The development of diverse denominations is seen as significant as it feels that different denominations are wholly correct in their beliefs and practices, and desires to bring all Christians together.

Some other Christians also feel that their denomination is correct and that others are misguided, but many Christians believe that all Christians are equal members of the Body of Christ and are fulfilling different roles in different ways.

Some Christians see the development of diverse denominations within the Church as a sign that they feel that new denominations can get back to the truth of early Christianity by returning to tradition getting in the way.

Some Christians feel that it is significant that there are many diverse denominations because that God can be experienced and reached in many different ways, and that everyone can experience him in a way that they connect with.

Quick Questions

33. State **three** different Christian denominations.

34. Explain **two** reasons for the Great Schism.

Now Try This...

35. 'Different denominations are very similar despite having different leaders.' Evaluate this statement.

Argue for **and** against this statement. You must refer to Christian teaching which follows from your argument.

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Leaders and Leadership in the Church

As briefly covered in the sections on the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, leadership has varied, and its importance has differed between **denominations**. Some denominations have leaders, globally, nationally, and within individual churches to guide others.

Keywords:

- ♦ **celibacy** – refraining from sexual activity
- ♦ **Evangelical** – a type of Protestant, often concerned with being spiritually reformed
- ♦ ***Lumen Gentium*** – an article of Catholic teaching from the Second Vatican Council, ‘On the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, in which the Kingdom of God is at present being brought about in the world’

Church Roles and their Significance

Laity

Within the Church, those who are not **ordained** are known as the **laity**. They form the **congregation** in a church service. As ordinary Christians, they share a relationship with God and obey him, and they may look to a priest, or figure of the Church for guidance or teaching. Some Churches, such as the Methodist Church, allow laity to lead services and preach (lay preachers), if they undergo some training. The Quakers do not have ordained leaders, and any member of the laity may speak in the name of the Holy Spirit. Even Churches where only priests lead services may allow members of the laity to read **Bible** readings, or lead **prayers** in church services. There are often other roles that the laity can do to help the church, such as leading children’s activities, singing, or an administrative role, such as assisting with church finances. The laity are significant because the majority of Christians, **worshipping** and serving God, and without them there would be no ordained clergy to preach to – and there would be far fewer Christians!

Lumen Gentium

Chapter four of ***Lumen Gentium***⁷, an article of Catholic teaching, stresses that the laity are important because they exist in the secular world, with jobs and occupations – they live in the ordinary world in the day-to-day. They can also serve God by being **missionaries** in the world. They are just as important as priests and those who are **ordained** because they are important. *Lumen Gentium* teaches that it is important for the laity to receive the **sacraments**, to live full Christian lives in the service of God, and to receive help from God. In the Catholic Church are not permitted to marry, the laity are significant because they form the family, and this is important because family life is given by God. *Lumen Gentium* teaches that the laity should follow Church leaders.

Chapter five of *Lumen Gentium* teaches that people of all positions in the Church should **evangelise**, and give charity – important aspects of Christian life for everyone.

It teaches that priests (and other ordained Christians and Church leaders) should look after the spiritual lives as well as looking after lay people. They should have a particularly strong role in teaching. *Lumen Gentium* teaches that celibacy (which should be practised by all those ordained) helps them to be more available to the Church.

⁷ http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_1964_12_07_lumen_gentium_en.html

Ministers (Priests/Vicars/Pastors)

Ordained church leaders may be known by different names in different **denominations**, including priest, vicar, minister or pastor. These are the basic positions of clergy, who run one or a few churches. 'Minister' is also a generic term which can be used to refer to ordained clergy in all denominations. Here is a basic list of the terms used in different churches; in this section, they will be referred to uniformly as ministers (in parts relevant to all denominations).

- ◆ Priest – Catholic and Orthodox Churches
- ◆ Vicar – Anglican Church
- ◆ Minister/Pastor – Other Protestant denominations.

Ministers will have trained, usually for years, studying the Bible and the teachings of their particular church, as well as learning practical elements such as proficiency in public speaking. The role of a minister is varied. They must lead and prepare services, for Sundays, and any mid-week worship. They may also prepare material for Bible study or prayer groups, or other religious activities. A minister is likely to visit the sick, and may visit prisoners, members of the **laity** with problems or questions, and religious duties, a minister may be involved in Church administration, and the Church is run.

As well as preaching, in most denominations which observe **sacraments**, or a member of the clergy can give, or at least supervise, sacraments. Even in churches like the Catholic Church, the priest will listen to the confessions of members with oil. Hence ministers are significant because they lead worship, assist Christians access to the sacraments.

In some denominations, such as Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity and some Protestant churches, women may be ordained, for reasons including that **apostolic succession** has tradition because Jesus and his disciples were all men, and that **St Paul** taught that women should not lead the Church (see the section on *the Role of Women in the Church* below). Catholic priests cannot marry, in order to be fully committed to their role, and to God. Being a minister is a full-time role.

Ephesians 4:11–12 explains that ministers are important because they help ordinary Christians – they bring more members to the Body of Christ, and he says that they have been given their gifts by God, so this implies that it is in their gifts, and recognise that they can only help others because God has helped them.

'The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ' (Ephesians 4:11–12 NRSV)

Extension – Some churches have a position called deacon. They are ordained and are lay (laity) positions in others. Though Catholic deacons are ordained, they obviously cannot become priests if married. Deacons may have normal jobs. They can do many of the same things as priests/vicars, including performing baptisms, but they cannot lead the Eucharist. In some ways they are similar to lay preachers.

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Bishops

Bishops, in churches including the Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican **denominations**, or those with status similar to a bishop in other denominations, are more senior than ministers/vicars/priests (churches which have 'pastors' do not tend to have 'bishops'). As well as performing priestly duties, they are generally the only ones allowed to ordain priests/vicars, and may be the only ones to confirm Christians in the Catholic Church, unless the bishop gives a priest his blessing to do so. They may be involved in the organisation of multiple churches. In the Anglican Church, the most senior figures are archbishops, who have authority over other bishops. They are significant because of their important position in the Church.

Pope

Within the Catholic Church, the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the most important figure. He is the head of the Catholic Church and has the ultimate say on the Church's position on particular situations, practices, and its **doctrine**. He is considered to be God's representative on Earth and infallible (always right). As well as priestly duties and deciding the opinions of the Catholic Church and what it should aim to do, he makes many visits and speaks out on global issues. He is significant because he has millions of people following his teachings, and has the power to decide the future of the Catholic Church, and to make an impact in the world.

Pope Francis has worked to improve the environment and has worked to bring about a more peaceful world.

Divergent Ways in which the Leaders Support and Interact with One Another in Different Denominations

Priests/vicars provide support for bishops, who have more churches to oversee and issues in their churches. Bishops in turn provide such support for priests/vicars (in the Anglican Church) or the Pope (in the Catholic Church) – feeding back issues and providing control and supervising ministers.

The Pope/bishops provide guidance for less senior members of the clergy, and oversee events such as **ordinations** and confirmations.

Priests/vicars, bishops and the Pope meet to discuss their churches and churches internationally, as appropriate. In the modern age they can write to each other or email each other.

In churches without bishops/the Pope, there may be a less clear authority structure, with each other, and utilise the strengths they have, relying on different methods and situation and skills needed. Therefore, there may be a difference between churches with a clear leadership structure (e.g. the Catholic Church) and churches with a less formal structure (e.g. the Methodist Church) as in the former, those with more authority (such as the Pope) but in the latter, there will be more scope for those with specialisms, who may have authority, to help with decision-making.

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Divergent Understandings of the Importance of Each of these Leaders in Christian Traditions

Members of the clergy are more likely to be regarded as particularly important in the Catholic Church) in which Church authority is the ultimate authority for how they should live and through which they can experience God. Bishops will be regarded as more important than priests because they have more authority, though priests may have more personal authority because they may have a close relationship with their priest if their priest has helped them at key times in their life.

Christians from churches which see the Bible or the Holy Spirit as more authoritative than the clergy, whilst respecting the clergy, may not see them as more important than their own authority over them; rather seeing them as performing a different Christian role.

In churches where there is a clear leader of the church, such as the Archbishop of the Church of England, or the Pope in the Catholic Church, Christians may see them as more important because they can define the Church's position on particular issues and provide a clear direction.

Catholics see the Pope as particularly important because of the belief that he is the successor of Jesus on Earth. Many Protestants reject belief in placing so much importance on one person, and focusing so much on the Pope takes a Christian's focus off God.

In Churches such as the Catholic and Anglican Church, there are clear authorities. The Pope is the most important figure in the Catholic Church and bishops are more important than priests. This is not the case in all churches. For example, in the Methodist Church (in the UK) there are ministers who oversee a small local group of churches (called a circuit) and are called circuit superintendents, and may go back to being ordinary ministers. The Chair of Methodist Ministry is the highest position in the UK Methodist Church, a bit like the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is an annual position, which someone new holds every year – previous Chairs of Ministry have been being ministers afterwards. Methodist leaders, therefore, are not placed on a pedestal but are more like ordinary members of the community.

Quick Questions

36. State **three** different types of clergy/ordained people.
37. Explain **two** ways in which the laity are important. Refer to a source of authority and authority.

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The Role of Women in the Church

Gender has been an important issue within Christianity. Women have not always been treated equally with men, or been allowed to be **ordained**. Although most Christians today see full equality between men and women and many allow women to perform the same roles as men, including being ordained, others do not allow women to perform all of the same roles.

Divergent Understandings of the Basis of Roles within the Bible

The Bible can be used to support men and women having different roles, and also to support them having the same roles. There are several quotes which can be used for these purposes; below is a selection.

For example, 1 Corinthians 14:33–40 teaches that churches should be orderly and, as part of this, women should not speak in church, and also that they are to be subordinate [to men]. Many Christians have used this to argue that women are not **ordained** as priests/vicars and that men should be in charge of their wives.

'... women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to subordinate, as the law also says.' (1 Corinthians 14:34 NIV)

However, other Christians have suggested that not speaking in church may be asking questions – the passage continues by saying that if women do not understand, they should ask their husbands at home, and the passage is about orderly worship (not being disrupted). Some have also suggested that this letter, originally to a church in Corinth, may be a model for all Christian men and women, but just for this particular church. If that is the case, that women have a much higher standard of education, it may be perfectly acceptable for them to speak in church, and to preach.

There are, however, other passages which support different roles for men and

1 Timothy 2:8–15 also suggests that women should not be ordained or preached for this that Adam was created before Eve (in Genesis 2), and Eve led Adam should not be trusted to teach men.

'I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep
formed first, then Eve' (1 Timothy 2:12 NRSV)

Ephesians 5:21–33 also supports the case for men being in charge of their wives. Paul compares a husband's authority over his wife to Jesus' authority over the Church.

‘Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the church, just as Christ is the head of the church’ (Ephesians 5:22-23)

The Bible can also be used as evidence that women should fulfil the roles of place importance on roles such as these rather than leadership. For example the Bible are important because they were wives or mothers, such as Mary,

However, other Bible passages can be used to support men and women having equal roles. For example, in Romans 16:1–16, St Paul talks about many Christians, both men and women. He mentions Phoebe, a female deacon/minister (implying that she had an important role including preaching), and the **apostles** Andronicus (male) and Junia (Junia is a female name). This would imply that there were female apostles.

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and were in Christ before I was.' (Romans 16:1, 7 NRSV)

On the other hand, others will not interpret this passage so leniently. Some suggest that Phoebe implies the level of a priest or vicar, and some suggest that Junia is actually an apostle (and that Andronicus and Junia are not a couple, but companions). This suggests that women are active in Christianity, and will see the women Paul mentions as fulfilling perhaps different, roles.

There are also other biblical arguments for gender equality, and for women having equal roles to men. For example, reported in the Gospels, Jesus, treated women well, had female followers, and individuals such as Mary Magdalene, and spoke to women, such as the Samaritan woman at the well, who other Jews would not have associated with. Jesus challenged convention and the authority of the religious leaders. If Jesus' association with gentiles (non-Jews) such as the Centurion's servant is taken as evidence that Jesus came to save Jews and gentiles equally, why should women be an exception? The question as to why Jesus' positive treatment of women is not taken to grant them equal status and the opportunity to fulfil the same roles.

In terms of female leadership, some scholars have argued that the criteria for being a follower of Jesus, and experiencing the resurrected Jesus. Women fulfilled these criteria, and were possibly the first witnesses of the **resurrection**. This means that women should have leadership on the grounds that there were no female apostles. Also, St Paul's letters and other early Christian documents suggest that prophets should be allowed to lead. Many prophets are recorded in the Bible, including Anna, the prophet present at Jesus' birth.

Historical Development of Attitudes towards Women as Leaders

There is evidence to suggest that many of the early Christian communities were egalitarian, and women were seen to have the same access to **salvation**, and were allowed to lead.

However, when Catholic and Orthodox Christianity became predominant, for the **succession** of male clergy, women ceased to be allowed to lead worship with men. Arguments for not allowing women to be ordained include that Jesus and his apostles were men, and a priest takes Jesus' place in giving the **sacrament** of the **Eucharist**, and imitating Jesus. Also, Jesus' mother Mary had different roles within Christianity. The Church also used the example of the apostles (see above) to support their decision not to ordain women. Further, because churches in the West and East have never ordained women, this tradition has become part of the Church's identity.

Male-only ordination, and male leadership, also appealed to new converts from Jewish worlds, where there was already a male hierarchy; men were in charge of religious life, ordinations, or female equality, may have alienated a large number of potential converts. Many have been unwilling to give their wives and daughters a higher status.

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For many centuries Church leadership was predominantly male. The Quaker clergy, have always allowed women to speak in Church and take leadership in the denomination in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Over time, as women gained rights in other areas of life, there were also calls to lead in church, and to be ordained. Women (in countries such as the UK) gradually could work and own property. These changes in society helped to highlight changes such as in religion. Many Protestant denominations now ordain women, though this has occurred relatively recently (in the last 50 years).

Different Roles of Women Today in the Church and Christian Life and the Role of Women in Different Denominations

Women today fulfil many roles in the Church and Christian life.

Churches such as the Quakers have provided gender equality for many years; men and women are not seen differently in a religious sense – they can perform all of the same roles in the family and in the Church.

Other Protestant Churches have begun to **ordain** women recently, such as the Methodist Church in 1974, and the Anglican Church in 1993. However, whilst female ordination allowed Methodist women to take *any* of the same roles as men, it was not until 2014 that women could become bishops in the Anglican Church.

For many Protestants, women are viewed as equal to men, and are not expected to submit to their husbands or fulfil different roles to men. Many Christians argue that as the Bible portrays men and women as spiritually equal, they should be practically equal, and should not have to fulfil different

‘So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.’ (Genesis 1:27 NRSV)

‘...there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus’

The Catholic, Orthodox and some **Evangelical** Churches may never ordain women earlier. This does not look set to change any time soon, though there has been deacons in the Catholic Church.

Within such churches, women may be particularly associated with other roles such as mother, and are viewed as having important roles within the **faith** without being ordained. A wife and mother can be seen as religious roles – Christian men need support from women. Christian children can be produced and raised by women. Most churches that do not allow female ordination today do not teach that women are intrinsically inferior to men. Women have different, though equal, roles. They feel that women can be seen as submitting to men as they feel this is God’s will; it is not to be seen as degrading. For example, Genesis 2 says that woman was created as a helper for man. Some churches believe that men and women are created equal, but with different roles, it is not for humans to decide if women are not being treated equally. Christian women are, in the same way as men, to worship God and live lives which help others, and give a good example of Christianity.

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'Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper like himself." (Genesis 2:18 NRSV)

Christians who disagree can argue that the word for 'helper', in Genesis 2 is also used on several occasions in the Old Testament to describe God, and therefore if a wife is her husband's helper, this in no way makes her less important than him; it would actually indicate that the role of helper is more important. They may also claim that it is contradictory to give men authority and say that they are equal – they feel that churches which do not ordain women and give women different roles should give women the same roles because they acknowledge the same God.

Is it possible to have true equality without equality of roles?
not allowed

Quick Question

38. Explain **two** reasons why Christians may **not** allow female leaders in the church. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

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Summary for Sources of Wisdom and Authority

- ◆ The Bible is the Christian book of scripture made up of the **Old Testament** and the **New Testament**. It contains the history of the Jewish people and their **law, prophecies** and other writings, as well as accounts of the life of Jesus (**Gospels**) and the early church and teachings to Christians. It was developed over long periods of time, though is regarded as the unified **Word of God**, and is used as a source of guidance and teaching. There are different Christian interpretations of the authority of the Bible – as the **literal** or **inspired** word of God, or as the work of humans.
- ◆ The Bible can be used in informal and formal **worship**, in Church and in the home, and as a source of comfort and guidance.
- ◆ Christians use different sources in making personal and ethical decisions, for example the Bible, **reason**, and **conscience**. The Bible is significant because Christians believe it teaches God's will – it contains many rules which can be applied to life. Reason is significant because it can help Christians when they need to evaluate something which is not clear. Conscience is significant because some Christians feel that God speaks through conscience and gives guidance about specific situations.
- ◆ Christians find the portrayal of Jesus in the Bible highly important in teaching and setting them an example for how to live their lives. Jesus, as the **Word** of God, brings all humans **salvation, reconciling** them to God, and teaches the **Word of God**. He also sets an example for Christians to love others, forgive, serve others, and to strive for **social justice**.
- ◆ The Church can be understood as the Body of Christ – all Christians are part of it, playing different, but important roles. The gain or loss of one is the gain or loss of the whole. The Church is also understood as the People of God – God chose to send Jesus to establish a relationship with humanity – those who follow Jesus are his people.
- ◆ The Church has developed in many different ways over time. It gradually split into Catholic and Orthodox churches formed the bulk of Christianity, spread during colonialisation. Due to language differences and differences in belief and practice, the **Filioque** controversy, the Catholic and Orthodox Churches drifted apart. The **Schism** in 1054 CE, though they remained very similar in many respects. The Eastern Orthodox Church diverged from the Catholic Church during and after the **Reformation**, and Reformers like Luther did not want to change much from the Catholic Church. The Anglican Church rein in Church authority, promote the **Bible** as the way to learn about Jesus. The Puritan Church aspects of **worship**, such as saint worship. Later reformers differed much from the Catholic Church, putting even greater emphasis on the Bible, or relying on the Holy Spirit, as in Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches.
- ◆ There are many different roles within Christian churches. The majority of Christians are more ordinary members of the church, while many **denominations ordain** priests/vicars/pastors/ministers who lead **worship** and the **sacraments**. Different progressions of authority, with many having higher positions for more senior roles. The Catholic Church is headed by the Pope, whom Catholics believe to be God's representative on Earth.
- ◆ The role of women has been varied within Christianity. The Bible can be used to support different roles for women – not leading in church and being subordinate to men. However, it can also be used to support the case for the same roles for women as men. The attitude to women in the Church has varied over time. In the Catholic Church still do not **ordain** women, and some Christians see women in different roles. However, many Protestant Churches do ordain women, and in these churches women fulfil similar roles, with women not being subordinate to their husbands.

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Forms of Expression and Ways of

Beliefs and practices are very important to Christians, but also of importance to their belief, and enabling certain devotional practices. Different types of art, such as paintings and drawings, have played an important role in many Christians' **faith**, as has **symbolic** imagery. Orthodox Christians, place a particular emphasis on **icons** as a way of drawing closer to God. Writing and performing religious drama, literature and music, are also ways of expressing and expressing their faith.

The Meaning and Significance of Paintings and Drawings

Significance of Paintings and Drawings – the way they are used to express faith and those who observe the art

The tradition of creating Christian art is a long-standing one. Like creating any other form of religious art can be seen as a form of devotion by the artist; a way of expressing their faith and service to God. Creating religious art can be significant as an act of worship. Artists who create religious art believes, wants to praise God, and wants to spread their faith.

The **Catechism** of the Catholic Church Article 8.6 (2502–2503)⁸ teaches that religious art should show Christians the beauty and awesomeness of God, and strengthen Christians' faith and draw them closer to God – by making them want to praise God and communicate with God. Religious art is important to Christians if it can strengthen their faith and relationship with God. The Catholic Church, bishops, and others, fill churches with religious art for these reasons, and religious art helps to bring the viewer closer to God.

Art can trigger emotional responses, and part of the importance of religious art is to help people understand **symbolism** within the art, as well as relating to it through their own personal experiences of their faith.

Divergent Ways in which Paintings and Drawings May be Used in Churches

Churches, especially within the Catholic and Orthodox denominations, and other religious groups, have traditionally had much art inside them. This includes stained glass windows, religious paintings, and drawings. Church, including on the ceiling, or behind the **altar**.

One reason traditionally given for art within churches is that it can teach the uneducated about Bible stories and Jesus – it is significant for this reason. In cases where much of a church service and the Bible were only in Latin, and people were not able to read and write the common language, but would not understand Latin, religious art could learn about and experience their faith pictorially, rather than through text.

Even when religious ideas were and are accessible through text and speech, visual representations reinforces a message in a Christian's mind, and will allow them to remember stories and ideas in the future.

Different religious art can be used in churches for different reasons, e.g. pictures on the ceiling can be used to remind Christians of heaven; pictures of Jesus serve to remind Christians that their God cares about them, and encourage them to care for others. Religious art and images can enhance the **worship** experience overall.

⁸ http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a8.htm

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Christians may personally own Christian art, such as paintings and (smaller) art enhances their faith through reminding them of, or allowing them to meditate on, if it helps them to build a relationship with God.

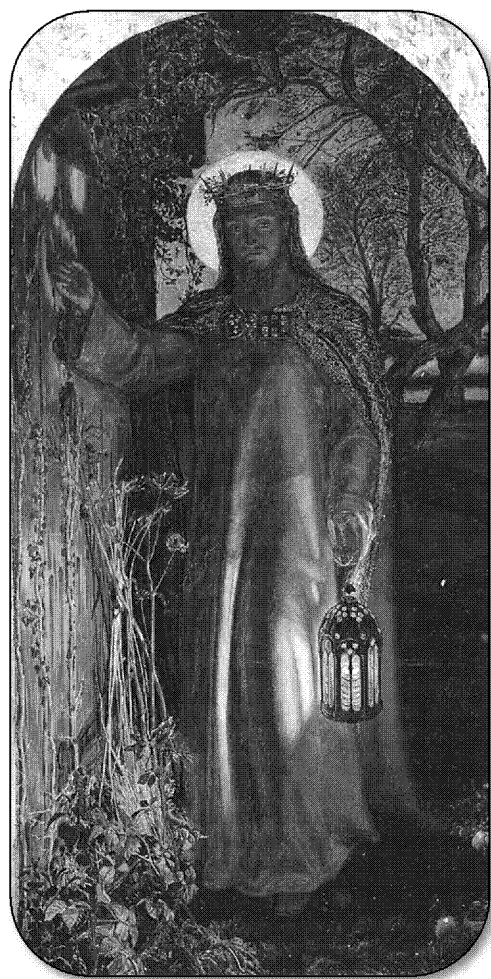
Churches and Christians will use different art depending on what they want to convey. Examples below.

Divergent Portrayals of Jesus in Art

Many examples of Christian art, paintings and drawings, are portrayals of Jesus in different scenarios and sometimes painted for the purpose of conveying different aspects of his life.

While much Christian art shows an adult Jesus, Jesus is also often shown as a child, emphasising his vulnerability, and his obedience.

Some pieces aim to portray his divinity, to remind Christians of his power and to inspire them to be grateful for his love and fearful of his judgement. Pictures of 'divine' Jesus are often painted on ceilings to show the distinction between God and humanity.



The Light of the World

Other pieces emphasise Jesus' humanity, his suffering, and his death. Pictures of Jesus' crucifixion and his death on the cross can remind Christians that Jesus is the **incarnate** God who had human experiences. Pictures of Jesus' **crucifixion** show his human suffering and show him transcending degradation. Such pictures may be used during Lent to remind Christians of Jesus' sacrifice.

Artists from different cultures have created different versions of Jesus, allowing people of all races to connect with him. For example, in some paintings or images of Jesus, you might see a version of him as a white, bearded man. Since Jesus was born in the Middle East, he is often depicted with a slightly darker skin.

The Light of the World, William Holman Hunt

The Light of the World, painted by William Holman Hunt, represents Jesus with a halo of light, carrying a lantern. This, and the title, refer to John's Gospel where Jesus is portrayed as the light of the world. This image has different things to different people, but it is significant in that one image can convey so much.

'Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'" (John 8:12)

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The lantern shows that Jesus is the Light of the World – this can be interpreted as a symbol of goodness, and like light drives away darkness, Jesus came to save the world. It can also remind Christians that someone can be led through the darkness by the light, and Christians can follow Jesus' example to live a good life, and will all go through difficult times in their lives.

'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.'

The picture also has Jesus wearing a crown, showing his divine authority and prompting Christians both that Jesus has the authority to lead them, and prompting Christians that if Christians are in **symbolic** darkness, Jesus still cares enough to search them out.

In the picture, Jesus knocks on the door, echoing Revelation 3:20 NRSV:

'Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.'

The door has been painted without a handle, which could show that humans cannot save themselves, but that they must let him in, as he cannot save or lead them if they do not.

The Return of the Prodigal Son, Rembrandt

As well as portraying Jesus, many works of Christian art tell Bible stories. Not only do these teach Christians biblical narratives, but how the story is portrayed can convey relevant religious themes. This can be particularly helpful for stories with an inner meaning, which would have to be explained in addition to reading the Bible passage, as some people may relate better to themes experienced visually.

The story of the prodigal son **symbolises** that God will always forgive those who repent and turn to him, and that he does not value those who have served him for a long time more than those who have struggled and returned to him.

Rembrandt's painting clearly shows the father's love and forgiveness for his son, and the son's humble gratitude at being accepted back. It also shows the disapproving brother looking on.

The picture can remind Christians of many things; that God is a **benevolent** father, and that Christians must try to see how the son's despair has been turned to joy, rather than being left at the edge of the picture resenting God's mercy to others.

Some have commented that there is a deeper significance to the picture in that the father bestows his forgiveness on a child who clearly does not think he deserves it, and has not tried to beg it from him – this is in line with teaching that God freely gives his **grace**, rather than with the view that humans can earn it. Different Christians have held and debated the different views.

Quick Questions

39. Explain two reasons for religious art in churches.
40. Outline three features of a piece of Christian art which you have studied and explain what they symbolise.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11-24

The Parable of the Prodigal refers to a story in the Bible where a son asks his father for his inheritance and spends it all and then decides to go home and work as a servant. Instead, the father celebrates his return.

The brother of the prodigal son has always been obedient, and the father has always been there for him. The father celebrates his return, and so celebrates the return of the prodigal son, and so celebrates the return of the prodigal son.

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The Divergent Meaning, Significance and Purpose of Icons

Icons are special two-dimensional paintings which represent Jesus and the **Saints**, including Mary, Jesus' mother, and which are **venerated** in some **denominations**, especially the Orthodox Church, and to some extent in the Catholic Church. They are used in **worship** as a way of drawing closer to God. Some denominations reject the use of icons.



Icons cannot be just any picture of Jesus or a **saint**, and only so much artistic variation is allowed. Icons are believed to convey what a saint actually looked like, either because they have been originally copied from portraits made during the saints' lives, or because the artist has been **inspired** by God. The most important thing about an icon painter is that they are a practising Christian and are of appropriate character. They must follow particular painting techniques and use the right materials. Complete church before they can be used in a church, or in a Christian's home.

Keywords:

- ◆ **communion of saints** – a link between all Christians, living and dead
- ◆ **dedicate** – in Christianity, symbolically give to God
- ◆ **iconoclasm** – dislike and destruction of icons
- ◆ **icons** – important religious images within churches like Orthodox Churches
- ◆ **idolatry** – worshipping something created; something other than God. This is against the Ten Commandments, rules which God gave to the prophet Moses in the Old Testament
- ◆ **venerate** – treat in a special way, here in order to do honour to the subject of the icon

Use of Icons within the Orthodox Church and in Denominations that Reject Icons

The Orthodox Church has used icons since early Christianity. However, while the Orthodox Church has **icons**, there were instances of **iconoclasm**, or revolt against icons, when the eighth and ninth centuries. Orthodox Christians celebrate the end of this period on 'Orthodoxy Sunday' on the first Sunday in Lent.

Attacks on icons were carried out by those who believed that **venerating** icons was against the Ten Commandments, God forbids worship of anything other than him, and the special treatment of icons as **worshipping** something other than God, or creating idols. Today, many Protestants reject icons, feeling that they do not have **symbolic** value and that they distract from the **worship** of God.

'You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.' (Exodus 20:4)

Christians who do use icons argue that icons are not idols, and that they are not themselves, but help the worship of God. Icons are also strictly two-dimensional objects, not meant to mean three-dimensional objects.

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Image of Jesus which is used in icons (only certain images which are deemed to be accurate are allowed to be replicated as icons).

The Way Icons are used to Express Devotion; the Divergent Ways used in church and other settings and Purpose)

The idea behind the **veneration** of icons and the Holy Spirit can be granted through **sacraments**, and the Bible teaches that God can be revealed through icons. Icons are a link between Earth and heaven, and are supposed to be able to access the person which it is showing.

Icons serve as a visual focus for devotion, and are also kissed, and believers light candles to put in front of them. Orthodox Christians

stress that they are not **worshipping** the icons, but that the reverence given to an icon is part of their worship of God. Icons can cover a vast amount of the Orthodox Church, and there will be an iconostasis, a screen covered in icons separating the **altar** from the rest of the Church. This **symbolises** a boundary between the spiritual worlds which can be crossed through God's grace.

The Orthodox Church believes that icons are significant because they believe in the **incarnation** of God, he crossed the boundary between the spiritual and the material, and they believe that by venerating icons, material bodies are as spiritual souls. They believe that without material aspects of worship like icons, they deny the importance of Jesus becoming physical. Using icons demonstrate that Jesus saved the whole of **creation**.

The Orthodox Church also stresses the **communion of saints**, which in the broadest sense means the connection between dead Christians and living ones, not just recognised saints. Icons can help to form a link between the living and the dead, in the material and spiritual realms. Some believe that **prayers** offered to an icon will reach the saint in the icon, and this person will pass the prayers to God. This was endorsed by **St Basil the Great**, a founding father of the Orthodox Church. In Homily 24, one of his teachings was that of an emperor, which were respected. He pointed out that no one thought of the emperor, or that there were two emperors, but the images were respected. That respect paid to an image of the emperor was respect paid to the emperor. The icon was veneration of the subject of the icon.

Important

St Basil the Great (of the 4th century). He is important in all denominations, and his teachings formed the formation of Orthodox Christianity. He was poor, helped with the poor, influenced Church teaching, and was celebrated within the Church. He had a strong sup

Some Christians have icons in their homes to use them as a focus for devotion.

Quick Question

41. State **three** ways in which Orthodox Christians may interact with icons.

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The Meaning and Significance of Sculpture for Christians

Significance of Sculpture – the way this is used to express belief by the church and how to observe the art

Christian art does not stop with two-dimensional representations; there are also many Christian sculptures. These can be created for, and help observers with, their **faith** for the same reasons as given above in the section on *the Meaning and Significance of Paintings and Drawings within Christianity*. Artists deepen their faith through expressing it in sculpture, and observers can feel connected to God's beauty and his awesomeness, and learn about figures associated with their faith. Sculpture is significant because it provides a focus for meditating on faith – when creating it, or observing it.

Sculpture has sometimes been seen as problematic within Christianity, because of the possibility that it might lead to **idolatry**; worshipping the art. However, it has still proved popular in some denominations like Catholicism and Anglicanism.

The **Catechism** of the Catholic Church Article 8.6 (2501)⁹ teaches that creating sculpture is honourable because it uses the human power of creativity given by God, and implies that sculpture is important because creating sculpture is a way of expressing a relationship with God – the spiritual beauty shown as material beauty.

Divergent Ways in which Sculptures and Statues may be used in churches

Not all Christian sculpture represents people. Many churches have elaborate carvings that are awe-inspiring. Many Christian architects wanted to reflect God's greatness through their buildings to draw in and captivate believers.

Lots of churches, especially Catholic and Anglican churches, have sculptures of saints standing on their own within the church. Being looked down on by statues of saints encourages Christians to live good lives, and remind them of God watching them.

Much Christian sculpture has also been used to decorate tombs and sarcophagi, which reflects the Christian emphasis on an afterlife.

One important feature of sculpture as opposed to two-dimensional art is that it can stand outside. Christian sculpture outside of churches can bear witness to Christianity. An example of this is the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which is a landmark of the city.

Quick Question

42. Outline **three** ways in which Christian sculpture is used.

⁹ http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a8.htm

The Purpose and Use of Symbolism and Imagery in Religion

Symbolism and imagery have been very important within Christianity. Symbols have different significance in different ways and for different reasons, and have been used in many different ways.

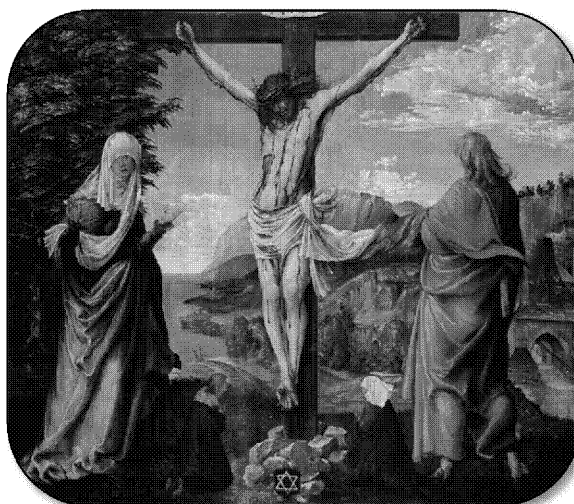
Keywords:

- ♦ **evangelist** – someone who spreads the gospel, specifically the four Gospel writers.

Common Christian Symbols – Purpose, Use, the Way this Symbolism is Used, and the Divergent Ways in which they may be used in Church and Other Contexts

The cross has been of central importance to Christians. A **crucifix** (a cross with a figure on it) reminds Christians of Jesus' sacrifice for them, which **atoned** for their sins. The cross also reminds Christians of Jesus' **resurrection**, conquering death. Traditionally, the cross is particularly important within the Catholic Church, and plain crosses have been used in many churches.

There are many portrayals of Jesus on the cross, and also the empty cross, in Christian art. Some portrayals of Jesus on the cross show Jesus' humanity, showing him frail and bloody, emphasising the pain he would have suffered. Others emphasise his divinity, showing him radiant, sometimes with a halo, emphasising the fact that it was God who died



Contrast these two very different pictures of Jesus on the cross: the one by Michelangelo and the other by Carl Heinrich Bloch.

for humanity, and showing his control. Many pictures show Jesus' followers in devotion to him, and pictures highlight different areas of the crucifixion narrative and biblical details. Many pictures of the empty cross highlight the emptiness of the cross, and imply that as the cross cannot hold him, death can no longer hold him. These pictures show the artist's belief in Jesus dying and rising from the dead to save the world. These pictures are very varied and convey many different interpretations of Jesus' death. Viewers can help Christians to get a more rounded perspective of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.

Wearing a cross/crucifix, such as on a necklace, has been a way for Christians to show Jesus; showing that they are Christians. Churches often have a cross/crucifix as a reminder of the events of Jesus' **crucifixion** and resurrection and their fundamental beliefs. There are various different versions of the cross symbol within different cultures and religions.

Ephesians 2:10–19 explains the Christian belief that Christians have been saved by the resurrection, and so the cross is a sign of this salvation, and their relationship with God.

'He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, so that he might create for himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through the cross.'

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Fish

This symbol was developed in the early church. Fish played important parts in the New Testament. These include Jesus telling his disciples that he would make them fishers of men; the feeding of the five thousand people with five rolls of bread and two fish; and in John's Gospel, Jesus appearing to his disciples after his resurrection whilst they are fishing.

'And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people."'

Much Christian art which incorporates fish shows these stories – the fish that Jesus will draw to him (the fish in the fishermen's nets), and of his provision for the feeding of the five thousand).

It has been suggested that when Christians were being persecuted after Jesus' death, if they met a stranger, they would draw half a fish, and if the other completed it, they would know that they were also a Christian. The letters in the Greek word for fish, Ichthus, spell the first letters of the Greek words for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.

Much Christian art also incorporates the Ichthus symbol due to this meaning; the fish is symbolic for what Christians believe in (that Jesus is God's son and saved them). In modern times, the fish has been particularly used as a car bumper sticker to indicate Christian belief.

Symbols of the four evangelists

The writers of the **Gospels**, also known as the four **evangelists**, have all been allocated symbols.

- ◆ Matthew's symbol is an angel, symbolising that his Gospel is a message from God.
- ◆ Mark's symbol is a lion; lions represent majesty, reminding Christians that Jesus is the King of Kings, also associated with bravery, reminding Christians not to fear because of Jesus.
- ◆ Luke's symbol is an ox; oxen were said to be present when Jesus was born, and they were also used for sacrifices reminding Christians of Jesus' sacrifice. Christians also may need to make sacrifices for their faith.
- ◆ John's symbol is an eagle; eagles fly above everything, and remind Christians that Jesus is God. Eagles are often represented on lecterns in churches (the stand from which the priest reads).



From left to right, pictures showing the symbols of Matthew, Mark, Luke

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Other Imagery in Christian Art

As seen previously, Christian **symbols** can be used within Christian art, as a religious meaning, or as a way of portraying several religious ideas concisely.

Portrayals of Jesus often have him holding objects which carry significance, for example a globe to show that he rules the world and has saved the Earth, or scrolls of the **Jewish law** to show that he fulfilled the Jewish law.

Jesus is often portrayed as a lamb, reminding Christians that he resembles the sacrifice of the Jewish Passover lamb, but that he is the final and only sacrifice necessary. This is quite a popular image for stained glass windows in churches.

As the Holy Spirit is difficult to portray, this is often represented in Christian art as a dove, or as fire, because the New Testament compares it to a dove in the account of Jesus' **baptism**, and to fire in the account of **Pentecost**.

Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. **Prophecy** in the book of Revelation associates Jesus with these, because it is believed he was present at the **creation** of the world, and will return at the end of time. Sometimes he is depicted as the letters Alpha and Omega in religious art.

Quick Question

43. Outline **three** ways in which Christians may use the symbol of the fish.

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The Meaning and Significance of Christian Drama

Drama is yet another form of art which Christians have used to portray the Bible. Drama based on Bible passages can convey the meaning of the Bible. Drama can be a very direct way of getting people to connect with a story or message, by watching events through real people, as though they were really happening in front of them.

Like with Orthodox **icons**, religious plays can be viewed as a way of linking people to God, of coming to experience God through the drama. Such plays can be performed in indoor venues like theatres, and sometimes outside. Plays may form part of church services if used in church, and performing them in other settings brings them to a wider audience. People who would not attend church may experience religious plays, and therefore religion. Sometimes the play is performed in the open air. Sometimes plays are performed in the open air, involving travelling between venues, for example, following the person acting as Jesus through the high street (in a passion play). Such plays can draw in crowds of shoppers, people expecting to see them, and are sometimes televised, bringing them to an even wider audience.

Mystery Plays and Passion Plays – the way Drama is used to Express Faith

Mystery plays are often plays which show Biblical events, either through live action or in painted frames. Mystery plays originated in Europe and have been performed for hundreds of years. Several are performed in quick succession, with different plays being performed on different days. Mystery plays were originally performed in Latin, but over time switched to the vernacular. They tend to focus on popular Bible stories, such as Adam and Eve, rather than the more obscure, and can be performed in a variety of theatrical styles.

Passion plays are plays which show the last days of Jesus, including his **crucifixion** and **resurrection**. These tend to be performed during Lent and around Easter, to remember the sacrifice for them, and to bring the events to life.

One good example of both of these (mystery play and passion play) is the Oberammergau Passion Play which tells the story of Jesus' passion, his last days, and intersperses scenes with stills of other Biblical events. This is done as a duty and devotion to God, like much religious drama. By showing biblical events, the participants, both those who perform and facilitate the performance, and the audience, can express their belief in what God has done, and his plan for humanity.

The Oberammergau Passion Play

The Oberammergau Passion Play is performed in Oberammergau, Germany, every ten years. It was first performed in 1634, because the village was spared the plague, and the people made a promise to perform the play every ten years, and after ten years, more people were allowed to return to the village.

This play, like other passion plays, prompts reflection on the events of Jesus' life, and to revisit what they believe Jesus did for them. It covers many events found in the Bible, including the **Last Supper**, Jesus in Gethsemane, Jesus' arrest and trials, and his **resurrection**, which can all be found in Matthew 26–28, and also Judas' repentance, only found in Matthew's Gospel.

An example of an act is Act 10, the despair of Judas. Before the scene where Judas betrays Jesus and commits suicide, tableaux show Judas being linked to Adam and Eve, who killed his brother Abel – this puts the events into context, showing that Judas caused the death of someone loved by God, and he will be punished accordingly.

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Portrayal of the crucifixion during a passion play

The dramatic aspect also allows for an emotional connection and empathy for them; to imagine through. It may be easier to connect with Jesus, and characters in this way through drama, and even artwork might help themselves in the characters enacted can also help Christians more fully, such as the man Pilate, which may not always in the brief accounts given. Plays can explore details alongside main events in

Divergent Ways in which Drama can be used in Church and Other Settings

Religious drama, as a witness to biblical events, can be used to **evangelise**, to spread Christian faith in an engaging way, and to renew the faith of existing Christians.

Another common form of religious drama today is the nativity play, a play that is often acted in schools, churches, and theatres, at Christmas. This serves to retell the Christmas story, and provides one way of allowing them to **meditate** on what it means for them. Nativity plays also often involve children directly in the story, and this helps them to understand the story than would listening to it being read from the Bible.

Pause for thought:

Do you think dramatic portrayals of Bible stories will help to deepen the faith of those who watch, or do Bible stories become merely a source of entertainment? Consider religious drama alongside more mainstream theatre like *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*.

Quick Questions

44. State **three** types of religious drama.
45. Explain **two** reasons why Christians may perform passion plays.

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The Purpose of Literature in Christian Life

Another way Christians have expressed ideas about their faith is through literature with religious themes, such as novels. Others have written non-fiction about real life events, or written **theological** works. Poetry has also been widely used to express events and themes.

Keywords:

- ◆ **theology** – the study of God and religious ideas
- ◆ **allegory** – a way of using a story to symbolise something else, to represent
- ◆ **encyclical** – an open letter from the Pope to teach about Catholic positions

Fiction – the Ways it is used to Express Belief, and Divergent Ways it is used in Church

Many writers have written about religious themes and ideas within fiction.

- ◆ *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan is a particularly famous story. It is an **allegory**; it represents, through the fictional journey of the central character, the journey of all Christians to **heaven**.
- ◆ More recently, C.S. Lewis has written much Christian fiction. For example, *The Great Divorce* is an allegory telling the story of a man travelling from hell to heaven, similar in many ways to *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Through symbolism and the feelings of the narrator, it conveys Lewis' beliefs about the burdens which hold humans back from **faith**, and his belief that heaven is the ultimate goal, worth all sacrifices.
- ◆ Lewis also wrote much fiction for children – his *Chronicles of Narnia*, including *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, also contain allegory. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe tells of Edmund betraying his siblings to the White Witch, but the lion Aslan pays the price for his betrayal, allowing the witch to kill him instead. However, Aslan rises from the dead and defeats the witch, **atonement** for Christians' **sins** and overcoming death. Lewis explores his beliefs about **faith**, and also introduces Christian ideas, in a book aimed at children.



A picture from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

Not all Christian fiction involves allegory and inner meanings. Some Christian fiction is similar to those in secular fiction, but have the characters dealing with religious themes to help them through traumatic life events. Novels by the author Dee Henderson are an example of this type of Christian fiction. Such works help Christians to understand the world around them.

Fictional stories can be used to illustrate Christian themes in church, e.g. as part of a service. Christians read Christian fiction for enjoyment, and to explore Christian themes in a new context. Religious themes expressed in Christian fiction may also be more accessible. It is a good way to explore Christianity for those who find more complicated texts difficult. It can also be a good way of introducing children, or those new to Christianity. Christian fiction may help to **evangelise** non-Christians, who read them for entertainment rather than for a religious message.

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Non-fiction – the Ways it is used to Express Belief, and Divergent Ways of Church

Christian non-fiction falls into many different categories. Some is historical, biographical, and some deals with abstract themes without dealing with real life. Some is meant to guide, some is meant to teach, some is meant to be humorous.

One important type of non-fiction is that written by important religious figures in the past and present. The teachings of churches such as the Catholic Church would fall under this heading. The Catholic Church has published material about what Catholics should believe, and how they should participate in religious practices. Sometimes, the Pope writes open letters, called **encyclicals**, which express his positions on events. There are also **theological** writings by other prominent individuals. Church teaching or understanding, or help ordinary Christians with their faith. **St Augustine's** writings contributed to Christians believing in **doctrines** like **Aquinas** provided Christians with philosophical arguments for the existence of God. Julian of Norwich wrote of **visions** which they had experienced, and religious experiences, to teach others about the God they had experienced. She detailed these in her book, *Revelations of Divine Love*.

Julian of Norwich wrote of *visions* which they had experienced, and religious experiences, to teach others about the God they had experienced. She detailed these in her book, *Revelations of Divine Love*.

Christian non-fiction is also written by ordinary Christians. Deeper religious ideas, or experiences, such as by the **monk** Brother Lawrence in his *Presence of God*. Many other Christians have written books designed to guide in their life and faith. Christians write about **miracles** which they feel have taken place. **conversion** experiences, such as Bilquis Sheikh in *I Dared To Call Him Father* from Islam to Christianity. Other books are more objective, such as books by religious commentators and historians, teaching Christians about the history of the church, even humorous Christian books containing amusing Christian anecdotes.

Christian writings may be used in church to teach, if they discuss important themes. Anecdotes may be used to illustrate Christian themes. Some Christians like to read teachings and ideas to help them know what to believe and what to do in their lives. They may also wish to learn more about the history of their religion, or to read Christian life experiences which entertain.

Poetry – the Ways it is used to Express Belief, and Divergent Ways of Church

Poetry can explore religious themes or the poet's life experiences.

Poets may wish to explore their feelings about issues such as forgiveness, or a poem to glorify God, by presenting a poem which inspires adoration. William Shakespeare wrote religious poems, and some of his explore religious themes through poetic form.

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A popular Christian poem, of disputed authorship, is 'Footprints in the Sand'. The poem describes a dream where the narrator is looking back at their life as though it were a walk on the beach with Jesus. They notice that at times of trouble there is only one set of footprints, and ask why Jesus deserted them. Jesus responds that where there is only one set of footprints, they were his, when he was carrying the Christian on his shoulders. The poem reassures Christians that God is always with them, and forces them to consider their approach to difficult times in their lives.

Poetry can be read in church to prompt **meditation** – poetry is especially useful for this as it is designed to sound good read aloud, and there are many short poems, so a whole poem can be read, covering a theme (most other fiction is longer, so it would be necessary to take an extract). Poetry may also be featured in church displays provided for contemplation. Christians may meditate on the messages contained in Christian poetry, or read it for enjoyment in their own time, at home, or while commuting. Christians may choose to read poetry over fiction as it can be quick and easy to read.

Quick Questions

46. State **three** types of Christian literature.

Now Try This...

47. 'The main purpose of literature in Christian life is to strengthen someone's faith'. Evaluate this statement.

Argue for **and** against this statement. You must refer to Christian teaching which follows from your argument.

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The Nature and Use of Traditional Styles of Music in Worship

Music has often been a popular means of worshipping God within Christianity. It includes that music was used within Judaism to praise and thank God, and the New Testament records Jesus and his **disciples** praising God with **hymns**, for example before he was crucified. Jesus encouraged religious music. Traditionally, music has been an important feature of **worship**, with many churches having choirs, as well as songs for other forms of **worship**.

‘It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in the song of thanksgiving to the Lord, and... the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other instruments, in praise to the Lord...’ (2 Chronicles 5:13 NRSV)

Nature of Traditional Hymns, Psalms and Worship Songs in Worship

Keywords:

- ♦ **hymn** – a traditional type of worship song, praising God
- ♦ **Psalms** – book of poetic writings in the Bible

Traditional types of music used in **worship** have included:

- ♦ **Psalms** – passages taken from the book of Psalms in the Bible. Psalms are regarded as scripture. Psalms may be sung/chanted with or without music.
- ♦ **Hymns** – songs of devotion to God. Hymns have been popular because of their themes which are specifically Christian, rather than the Psalms which are from Judaism. They often refer to Jesus and humanity's **salvation**, or the difficulty of living a Christian life.
- ♦ **Worship Songs** – some traditional songs are not necessarily classed as hymns. It is not always easy to differentiate between hymns and worship songs. Different criteria can be used, but one way of separating them is to see if the language and structure as hymns and more informal songs as worship songs.

The Way Traditional Styles of Music are used to Express Belief

Singing traditional **psalms**, **hymns** and worship songs is a way for Christians to express what they believe he has done for them. They are normally to praise and thank God, or used to confess, or to ask for guidance, to affirm **faith**, or for various other purposes.

‘...with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, as you sing to the Lord...’ (Colossians 3:16 NRSV)

Other traditional forms of music include chants, and also pieces of classical music.

- ♦ Chants may repeat a key phrase several times to reinforce a message and upon it. They are usually unaccompanied by instruments, with all voices singing. They are often sung in Latin. One such chant is the Gregorian Chant which is used in the Catholic **Eucharist liturgy**. It praises God and asks him to grant **salvation**. The Mass allows Christians to remember that they believe God has granted them **salvation**. Chanting can be a contemplative practice, freeing the mind to focus on what is being sung. Some have even claimed that Gregorian chanting releases a complex harmony. Many classical composers have created longer pieces to express God's love for humanity. The *Messiah*, which sets text from the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, is performed regularly in concert halls, and recorded, to be listened to. The expressive musical qualities of such compositions can help Christians to feel emotionally, and are also appreciated by non-religious people.

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Why Traditional Styles of Worship have been used

Psalms are predominantly used because of their biblical status, and because of their declarations of praise or requests for salvation.

One prolific hymn writer was Charles Wesley in the 1700s, who wrote thousands of hymns. As well as writing hymns to **worship** God, his hymns also spread his personal beliefs about God and Jesus. Spreading beliefs through hymns was effective, as many Christians sang hymns in worship. These Christians may not necessarily have absorbed Wesley's ideas if they had been presented in other ways, for example, they might not necessarily have read religious literature.

Important
'Amazing Grace' is a hymn that was written by John Newton, who was converted to Christianity and became a vicar. He wrote about his own experience; that God can change a person's life.

Many worship songs were written during the slave trade, by Christian slaves even though they were enslaved.

Criticisms of Traditional Worship Music – Extension

Some criticisms of **Psalms** and older **hymns** and worship songs are that they are out of date or that they include outdated language, either because they use words which are not in everyday English, or because they are not politically correct, for example because they are not inclusive rather than using language which promotes gender equality.

Quick Questions

48. State **three** styles of traditional music used in worship.
49. Explain **two** reasons why Christians use various traditional styles of music in worship. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

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The Nature and Use of Contemporary Music in Worship

Nature of Contemporary Hymns and Worship Songs in Worship

Hymns and worship songs have also been written in more modern times. Contemporary worship songs are similar to traditional ones, with contemporary hymns still having a similar structure than contemporary worship songs. However, both tend to have more modern imagery than traditional ones, which can make them easier to understand. They also use more English words and phrases which many people do not understand. They also use more inclusive language (e.g. referring to humans as 'children' rather than 'sons' of God). Worship songs may be even more colloquial. Generally they are written for piano and for other instruments/a band, rather than for voice only.

The Way Contemporary Styles of Music are used to Express Belief

One prominent Christian **hymn**/songwriter today is Graham Kendrick, who has written contemporary **worship** music, including 'Lord the Light of your Love is Shining, Jesus, Shine', which is a well-known, modern hymn.

There are also many modern worship bands which sing contemporary hymns and worship songs, for example Casting Crowns, an American worship band. The band has released several albums and singles, regularly leads worship at their home church, and also tours. They aim to **evangelise** and strengthen the **faith** of others.

Many modern hymns and worship songs focus on praising and thanking God, expressing the singers' belief in and gratitude to God. As well as accessible lyrics which can be used to declare faith, many Christians also feel that the lively music and atmosphere it can create helps them to express themselves in worship.



The Divergent Ways in which Contemporary Styles of Music may be used in Church Settings, and when it might be used and why

Some of these contemporary **hymns/worship** songs are used interchangeably with traditional hymns, being sung in church worship as part of an ordinary service. However, contemporary **worship** music is not just used in standard church services as it is also used in youth worship services, specially tailored to young people, and in musical worship over other aspects of worship such as sermons and Bible studies. Many Christians feel that music is a particularly effective method of worship.

Sometimes Christian bands combine the genres of service and concert – blending music with talks and prayers – to combine entertainment with worship. This has been broadcast on television, including on programs such as *Songs of Praise*.

Many bands have created popular Christian music, selling copies (for example, CD and DVD). Some contemporary worship songs are designed more to be listened to than sung. The availability of recorded music, popular media, and long-distance travel has helped the spread of Christian music. Christians can now listen to their favourite Christian singer without having to travel to Christian concerts. Thinking back to the section on *pilgrimage*, travelling to meet with other Christians and worship God through music. Christian music of many different genres, including rock and pop, rap and ska – the variety means that it can appeal to a larger audience.

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Criticisms of Contemporary Worship Music – Extension

Some Christians prefer modern Christian music, preferring the styles of music, or the modern language used in the lyrics. However, some others feel that modern Christian music is becoming too commercialised, and that the focus is shifting away from God, either because the bands performing the music are becoming the centre of attention, or because Christians are enjoying singing more than they are concentrated on **worshipping** God. Some Christians like the fact that (some) worship songs involve concepts which are simple to grasp, making them more accessible to children and **converts**, and an understanding of **theology**. Others feel that they are not deep enough. Many mix of traditional and modern hymns and worship songs into their worship.

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Quick Question

50. Explain **two** reasons why contemporary music may be used over tradition in worship.

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Summary for Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

- ♦ Christian art, in forms such as painting and drawing, has been used to illustrate religious themes. It is significant because it has been used to spread Christianity through pictures, in churches and elsewhere, and because it helps people experience God's majesty and encourages them to **worship** him.
- ♦ Within some forms of Christianity, especially Orthodox Christianity, **icons** are images of Jesus and **saints** which are **venerated** (treated in a special way and **worshipping** God). Icons have been particularly criticised for leading to idolatry as icons claim that they are a medium through which to worship God, connect to the divine, and are not worshipped in their own right.
- ♦ Christian sculpture is important for similar reasons to other forms of Christian art, and also because it mirrors God's creativity. It has been used within and on the outsides of churches, to promote Christianity in public places, and to decorate burial places. It has sometimes been criticised as **idolatry**.
- ♦ There are many different **symbols** within Christianity, including the cross, the fish and symbols for the four **evangelists** (**Gospel** writers). These remind Christians of religious themes and displaying them can help Christians to express their belief in Christianity. Religious symbols have been used in art to portray Christian ideas, and also to show things which are not easy to portray **literally**, like the Holy Spirit, often shown as a dove, or the Virgin Mary.
- ♦ Another artistic way of exploring Christianity is drama. Particularly important are passion plays, showing the last days of Jesus and his **resurrection**, and other plays that show biblical scenes. These can be performed out of devotion to God and to connect to the people and themes portrayed in the drama. Other common plays include nativity plays showing the birth of Jesus.
- ♦ Christian literature is important to many Christians. Non-fiction writing about religious experiences can also help to strengthen the **faith** of others and help people wish to learn about their faith. Historical accounts of Christianity have also helped people wish to learn about their faith. Christian fiction and poetry have allowed people to explore their beliefs, and allowed Christian readers to look at their faith in new ways and to **meditate** on their faith. Christian fiction and poetry have been used to introduce Christianity to children and non-Christians or **converts**.
- ♦ Music has been an important **worship** practice for many Christians. Traditional worship songs are often sung during church services to praise God. They convey Christian messages. Much contemporary Christian music has also been produced in modern language, and often set to more lively music. As well as being sung in church by Christian bands in concert and can be bought and listened to whenever.



Stained glass

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Answers

Beliefs and Teachings

Question Number	Answer/mark Scheme
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Father ♦ Son (accept Jesus) ♦ Holy Spirit (accept Spirit or Holy Ghost) <p>1 mark per Person, maximum 3</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The Nicene Creed teaches that God is three persons and one being. ♦ It says that God the Father created the Earth, God the Son came to save h the Spirit spoke through the prophets. ♦ The Bible presents the three people of the Trinity. ♦ At Jesus' baptism God the Father speaks from heaven and the Holy Spirit <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ A Christian may interpret the Bible and its account of the creation of the v may believe that it is exactly true. ♦ They may believe that the world was created in a week and that God creat as the first people. ♦ A Christian may interpret the Bible and its account of Creation metaphorically believe that it is symbolic and not literally true. ♦ They may believe that God created the universe through the Big Bang and evolution, and that Genesis is a poetic account of Creation, not factual. <p>Accept any relevant way, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The Creation narrative may be important to Christians today because it su Christians have dominion over creation, that they have control/ownership ♦ This can be used to justify Christians using natural resources as they like and ♦ 'God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fil subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds c every living thing that moves upon the earth." God said, "See, I have giv yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with see shall have them for food.' (Genesis 1:28–29 NRSV) ♦ The Creation narratives may be important to Christians today because Joh Jesus was present at the creation of the world, and so the Trinity has alwa ♦ 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Wo was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, a not one thing came into being...' (John 1:1–3 NRSV) ♦ Christians can feel that it is important that the God who created them can <p>Accept any relevant reason, any relevant development, and any relevant source and authority</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ If Jesus was God then this shows how much God loved humanity because ♦ If Jesus was God then this means that his teachings have authority. ♦ God becoming human can help Christians relate to a God who experienced w experience. <p>Accept any relevant reason</p> <p>1 mark per reason, maximum 3</p>

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Question Number	Answer/mark Scheme										
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Jesus told his disciples that the bread he was sharing was his body, blood ♦ He told them that the wine he was sharing was his blood, given as a new covenant ♦ He said that one of his disciples would betray him. <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>										
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Christians believe that Jesus' death enabled them to have a relationship with God ♦ The tearing of the curtain in the Temple showed that the boundary between God and humans had been removed. ♦ Christians may believe that Jesus' last days and death fulfilled Old Testament prophecies that Jesus was a suffering servant. ♦ This is important because it shows that Jesus was part of God's long-term plan to save humanity. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant <i>and</i> supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>										
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ St Paul taught that Jesus had saved Christians from sin and death. ♦ This means that Christians do not have to worry when they do something wrong, as Jesus has saved them, they will still go to heaven. ♦ 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.' (Romans 8:2 NRSV) ♦ St Augustine taught that salvation was predestined – God has chosen you for salvation in advance, before they are born. ♦ This means that salvation is granted due to God's grace only, and is not earned by good actions that an individual does. <p>Accept any relevant teaching, any relevant development, and any relevant source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant <i>and</i> supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>										
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ heaven ♦ hell ♦ purgatory <p>1 mark per place, maximum 3</p>										
10	<p>You must fulfil the criteria for connections AND judgments to get top marks</p> <table> <tr> <th>Connections</th><th>Judgments</th></tr> <tr> <td><i>A few</i> shallow connections between material relevant to question. <i>Very</i> narrow understanding of religion.</td><td>Points not well-supported and conclusion does not follow from arguments.</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>Many</i> shallow connections between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion.</td><td>Some attempt at supporting argument and evaluation, though conclusion does not fully follow</td></tr> <tr> <td>Good reasoning and different viewpoints considered. <i>Partially</i> answers question. Good understanding of religion.</td><td><i>Most</i> points are well-supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is <i>some</i> supported.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Good critical reasoning and different viewpoints considered. <i>Fully</i> answers question. <i>Consistently</i> good understanding of religion.</td><td><i>All</i> points are well-supported with comprehensive evaluation leading to a conclusion which is <i>fully</i> supported.</td></tr> </table>	Connections	Judgments	<i>A few</i> shallow connections between material relevant to question. <i>Very</i> narrow understanding of religion.	Points not well-supported and conclusion does not follow from arguments.	<i>Many</i> shallow connections between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion.	Some attempt at supporting argument and evaluation, though conclusion does not fully follow	Good reasoning and different viewpoints considered. <i>Partially</i> answers question. Good understanding of religion.	<i>Most</i> points are well-supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is <i>some</i> supported.	Good critical reasoning and different viewpoints considered. <i>Fully</i> answers question. <i>Consistently</i> good understanding of religion.	<i>All</i> points are well-supported with comprehensive evaluation leading to a conclusion which is <i>fully</i> supported.
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Question Number	Answer/mark Scheme	
10 (cont.)	<p>Points and Justification For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Jesus tells the thief on the cross next to him that he will be in paradise with him today – this implies that he will be in heaven immediately after death. ♦ Jesus told his followers that they would inherit eternal life, not life that stops and starts again, so Christians must live on in heaven or purgatory after death. ♦ Churches such as the Catholic Church teach that this is the case – that people will go to one of these realms. 	<p>Points and Justification For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Many verses in the Bible support the idea of the resurrection at the end of time, e.g. 'all the dead will rise'. ♦ Many Christians believe that at the end of time – it does not matter for people to enter heaven or hell as they have been judged. ♦ Many Protestant Christians believe in purgatory, but not hell. Purgatory is not mentioned in the Bible.
	<p>Accept any relevant point or justification.</p> <p>Answers which do not refer to different Christian points of view can score a maximum of 1 mark.</p>	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ benevolent/loving ♦ righteous ♦ omnipotent/powerful <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Christians may question their faith if they cannot reconcile evil and suffering with an all-knowing and powerful God. ♦ They may feel that it does not make sense to allow evil and suffering if God is all-knowing enough to stop it, and cares about humans. ♦ Christians may question the existence of God if they believe that God cannot be all-powerful because of the problem of evil/suffering. ♦ They may feel that God does not exist because the Christian God is loving and merciful; there cannot be a loving and powerful God if there is evil and suffering. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question and is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>	
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Some Christians believe that there is evil and suffering because people have sinned. ♦ Some Christians believe that there is evil and suffering because God is not all-powerful and cannot stop it. ♦ Some Christians believe that there is evil and suffering because this is a just punishment for humans' sins. <p>Accept any relevant solution</p> <p>1 mark per solution, maximum 3</p>	

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Practices

Question Number	Answer/mark Scheme										
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Bible reading ♦ Singing hymns ♦ Sermon <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per practice, maximum 3</p>										
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ In Christianity, Church services often take place on Sundays, and Christians can worship at any time they want to – there are no set times for worship. ♦ Whereas in Islam, it is especially important to worship in the mosque on a Friday, and Muslims must worship by praying five times a day at set times. ♦ In most churches within Christianity, men are not separated from women. ♦ While in Islam, women are separated, either praying in the home or in a separate section separated from the section the men pray in. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>Accept other non-Christian religions compared with Christianity</p> <p>1 mark per point from Christianity, 1 mark per contrasting point from another religion (maximum 4)</p> <p>One point/contrast cannot be credited twice. Each contrasting point must be a contrast to a Christian point <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p> <p>Do not accept contrasts between two different branches of Christianity. An answer that gives details about the practice of worship in Christianity <i>only</i>, can score a maximum of 2 marks.</p>										
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Eucharist ♦ Baptism ♦ Matrimony ♦ Confirmation ♦ Holy Orders ♦ Penance ♦ Anointing of the sick <p>1 mark per sacrament, maximum 3</p>										
17	<p>You must fulfil the criteria for connections AND judgments to get top marks in this question.</p> <table> <tr> <th>Connections</th><th>Judgments</th></tr> <tr> <td><i>A few</i> shallow connections between material relevant to question. <i>Very</i> narrow understanding of religion.</td><td>Points not well-supported and conclusion does not follow from arguments.</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>Many</i> shallow connections between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion.</td><td>Some attempt at supporting argument and evaluation, though conclusion does not fully follow.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Good reasoning and different viewpoints considered. <i>Partially</i> answers question. Good understanding of religion.</td><td><i>Most</i> points are well-supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is <i>somewhat</i> supported.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Good critical reasoning and different viewpoints considered. <i>Fully</i> answers question. <i>Consistently</i> good understanding of religion.</td><td><i>All</i> points are well-supported with comprehensive evaluation leading to a conclusion which is <i>fully</i> supported.</td></tr> </table>	Connections	Judgments	<i>A few</i> shallow connections between material relevant to question. <i>Very</i> narrow understanding of religion.	Points not well-supported and conclusion does not follow from arguments.	<i>Many</i> shallow connections between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion.	Some attempt at supporting argument and evaluation, though conclusion does not fully follow.	Good reasoning and different viewpoints considered. <i>Partially</i> answers question. Good understanding of religion.	<i>Most</i> points are well-supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is <i>somewhat</i> supported.	Good critical reasoning and different viewpoints considered. <i>Fully</i> answers question. <i>Consistently</i> good understanding of religion.	<i>All</i> points are well-supported with comprehensive evaluation leading to a conclusion which is <i>fully</i> supported.
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Question Number	Answer/mark Scheme	
17 (cont.)	<p>Points and Justification For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Jesus told his disciples in the Great Commission (Matthew 28) that those who were baptised would be saved and those who were not would not be. ♦ Baptism welcomes Christians into the Body of Christ and the Christian family. Some people do not consider people who are not baptised to be proper Christians. ♦ The two sacraments which most churches carry out are baptism and the Eucharist – and some churches do not let people take the Eucharist if they are not baptised, so baptism is important in welcoming Christians into the Church and allowing them to access the Eucharist. 	<p>Points and Justification For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The Catholic Church celebrates both sacraments; all are important, but the Eucharist is clearly more important. ♦ Quakers and the Salvation Army do not celebrate baptism or the Eucharist; for them baptism is not a sacrament. ♦ Even for Christians for whom baptism is important, many believe it is more important to have a good relationship with God – to pray regularly, read the Bible and help others, than to have been baptised.
	Accept any relevant point or justification.	
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ One purpose of prayer is adoration; to praise God for being amazing. ♦ One purpose of prayer is thanksgiving; to thank God for the good things he has done for Christians and for helping them. ♦ One purpose of prayer is confession; to apologise to God for sinning, and to ask for forgiveness. <p>Accept any relevant purpose</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Jerusalem ♦ Iona ♦ Taizé ♦ Walsingham <p>Accept any relevant place</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Pilgrimage was a religious tradition in the time of Judaism, and was common in the Bible. ♦ Some Christians feel they should continue this tradition, especially as Jesus went on pilgrimage. ♦ 'Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was over and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it.' (Luke 2:41–43 NRSV) ♦ Some Christians think that pilgrimage is important because it enables them to experience worshipping God. ♦ Many pilgrimage sites, such as Iona and Taizé, host communities of Christians who can go on pilgrimage to worship God with others. <p>Accept any relevant reason, any relevant development, and any relevant source of authority.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question asked, supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>	
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Christmas is important to Christians because it is when they celebrate Jesus' birth in the world. ♦ They are grateful that God came to live among them, to have a relationship with them. ♦ Christmas is also important to Christians because it is a time to celebrate peace and goodwill. ♦ Christians feel that God wants to unite humanity – the angels sang about this, and God cares for them all. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question asked, supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>	

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Question Number	Answer/mark Scheme
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Easter is important to Christians because it celebrates Jesus rising from the dead. ♦ Christians find this important because it shows them that Jesus conquered death, so they can hope for eternal life. ♦ Easter is important to Christians because it celebrates Jesus saving humankind by paying the price for sin by dying and rising triumphant. ♦ Christians believe that because of this, they can have a relationship with God that is no longer separated from him by sin. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Churches can evangelise through running Alpha courses to introduce people to Christianity. ♦ Vicars and priests can go into schools to introduce children to Christianity. ♦ Missionaries can travel abroad to introduce people to Christianity in countries where Christianity is not the main religion. <p>Accept any relevant way</p> <p>1 mark per solution, maximum 3</p>
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Many Christians believe that they should help others, because they would want to be helped themselves – therefore the local church wants to help local Christians and the world. ♦ Jesus taught Christians to treat others as they would like to be treated. ♦ The local church also feels that it has a responsibility to help local Christians because the Bible teaches that church elders should help the poor and needy. ♦ It may also feel that it has a responsibility to help evangelise the local community. Christians see all of humanity as God's flock, and want to bring non-believers to God. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Christians give charity because Jesus taught that those who helped others would enter heaven. ♦ Christians give charity because Jesus taught that people should love others, and this shows this love. ♦ Christians may give charity because the Old Testament teaches that people should love God and their neighbours. <p>Accept any relevant reason</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The Church works for reconciliation out of compassion. ♦ Jesus taught people to love their neighbours, and trying to create a workable practical way of showing this love and consideration for others. ♦ "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." (Matthew 22:39 NRSV) ♦ The Church also works for reconciliation because Jesus taught that people should love their enemies. ♦ For example, those treated badly in the apartheid should not resent the whites, but should forgive them because Jesus taught that people should love their enemies. ♦ 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...' (Matthew 5:43-48 NRSV) ♦ 'Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against you, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I tell you, not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times."' (Matthew 18:21-22 NRSV) <p>Accept any relevant reason, any relevant development, and any relevant source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>

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Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Question Number	Answer/Mark Scheme
27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some Christians believe that the Bible is the literal word of God – it is exact to say to humans. Therefore they feel that it has the utmost authority, as it comes straight from God and communicates his will. Some Christians think that the Bible is the inspired word of God; that God is writing it. Therefore they feel that it has authority because important points which God wants to be found in it. 'All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness' (2 Timothy 3:16 NRSV) <i>Dei Verbum</i> Chapter 3 says that the Bible is the inspired word of God, so Catholics should work to interpret the meaning of what has been written, not just human language. <p>Accept any relevant way, any relevant development, and any relevant source of authority</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a relevant source of wisdom and authority</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>
28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bible can be used in formal worship, where passages are taken from it and sermons are preached on the Bible passages used. The Bible can be used in informal worship when Christians spontaneously pray or sing to improve their relationship with God. The Bible can be used as a source of guidance, to help Christians to know what is right and wrong. <p>Accept any relevant way</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bible Reason Conscience <p>Accept any relevant source</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some Christians use conscience in decision-making because they believe in God. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1777–1781) teaches that God's voice is heard through conscience and so it can be trusted in making decisions. Some Christians use conscience in decision-making because the Bible does provide guidance for all situations. Conscience can be used in all situations to evaluate the most loving thing to do, to love others and treat them as you would want to be treated. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>
31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Love for others Forgiveness Servanthood Reconciliation Social Justice <p>Accept any relevant example</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>

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Question Number	Answer/Mark Scheme										
32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is helpful for Christians to refer to the Church as the Body of Christ because all Christians have unity in Christ like unity within a human body. Like a body is joined together by muscles, Christians are joined together. 'For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all made – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit' (1 Corinthians 12:12–13 NRSV) It is helpful for Christians to refer to the Church as the Body of Christ because like different parts of a body, all Christians have different roles. It reminds Christians that having certain gifts does not make them any more important than others as all parts of a body are equal. 'For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members of it. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, teaching, etc.' (Romans 12:4–6 NRSV) <p>Accept any relevant reason, any relevant development, and any relevant source.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a relevant source, wisdom and authority</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of authority.</p>										
33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roman Catholicism Orthodox Christianity Anglicanism / The Church of England <p>Accept any relevant example</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>										
34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Orthodox Church disagreed with the Catholic Church adding the Filioque to the Nicene Creed. They did not think that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Son as well as the Father as there was nothing in Scripture to support this. The Orthodox Church disagreed with the Bishop of Rome assuming extra authority. They also did not agree with changes he felt he had the authority to make, such as unleavened bread in the Eucharist. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>										
35	<p>You must fulfil the criteria for connections AND judgements to get top marks</p> <table> <tr> <th>Connections</th><th>Judgements</th></tr> <tr> <td>A few shallow connections between material relevant to question. Very narrow understanding of religion.</td><td>Points not well-supported and conclusion does not follow from arguments.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Many shallow connections between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion.</td><td>Some attempt at supporting argument and evaluation, though conclusion does not fully follow.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Good reasoning and different viewpoints considered. Partially answers question. Good understanding of religion.</td><td>Most points are well supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is some supported.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Good critical reasoning and different viewpoints considered. Fully answers question. Consistently good understanding of religion.</td><td>All points are well-supported with comprehensive evaluation leading to a conclusion which is fully supported.</td></tr> </table>	Connections	Judgements	A few shallow connections between material relevant to question. Very narrow understanding of religion.	Points not well-supported and conclusion does not follow from arguments.	Many shallow connections between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion.	Some attempt at supporting argument and evaluation, though conclusion does not fully follow.	Good reasoning and different viewpoints considered. Partially answers question. Good understanding of religion.	Most points are well supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is some supported.	Good critical reasoning and different viewpoints considered. Fully answers question. Consistently good understanding of religion.	All points are well-supported with comprehensive evaluation leading to a conclusion which is fully supported.
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Question Number	Answer/Mark Scheme	
	<p>Points and Justification For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There are still many similarities between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches – both have male-only priests, both have a strong tradition of monasticism and both use imagery in church and worship. ◆ Some of the first branches of Protestantism worship in very similar ways to Catholics e.g. the liturgies may not be in Latin, but they are still there. ◆ The majority of Christian denominations hold the same key beliefs – in the Trinity and in Jesus saving humanity. 	<p>Points and Justification For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There are lots of similarities between similar churches. The Orthodox and Catholic Churches have a different way to worship, but both have married priests. ◆ There are many similarities in beliefs and practice between different branches of Orthodox Christianity. For example, Protestants believe in saint worship, but they do not practise sacraments. ◆ There are large differences in views on authority between different denominations. The Catholic Church sees the Pope as the highest authority, while Protestants see the Bible as the highest authority, and Pentecostals see the Holy Spirit as the highest authority.
	Accept any relevant point or justification	
36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Priest ◆ Bishop ◆ Pope <p>Accept any relevant type</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The laity are important because they are everyday Christians who can do God's will in ordinary society. ◆ They are particularly important because they interact in the world in order to do God's will in ordinary society. ◆ <i>Lumen Gentium</i> chapter 4 says that the laity are important because they can bring God's love to secular occasions, family and live out God's will in this way. ◆ The laity are important because they can help the clergy with their roles. ◆ Many Churches allow the laity to read Bible readings in church or lead prayers, and so this takes pressure off the clergy. <p>Accept any relevant way, any relevant development, and any relevant source</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for wisdom and authority</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority</p>	
38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Christians may not allow female leaders in church because there are Bible verses that suggest that females should not lead men. ◆ Some of these explain that this is because Eve was created after Adam and she misled him that humans sinned against God. ◆ 'I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent as the Lord's Church was formed first, then Eve' (1 Timothy 2:12 NRSV) ◆ The Catholic Church does not allow female leaders in church because it believes in apostolic succession. ◆ It believes there were no female apostles, Jesus' disciples were male, and so it does not start to allow female leaders now. <p>Accept any relevant reason, any relevant development, and any relevant source</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for wisdom and authority</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority</p>	

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Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Question Number	Answer/Mark Scheme
39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Religious art can be used to convey Biblical stories to those who cannot read. ◆ This was particularly important when services and Bibles were in Latin and many people could not understand Latin. ◆ Christian art can help Christians to feel connection to God and deepen their faith. ◆ The Catholic Catechism (2502–2503) teaches that religious art can show God's love and encourage Christians to worship him. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant, supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>
40	<p>Example for The Light of the World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Jesus wears a crown which shows his kingship and divinity. ◆ The lantern symbolises that Jesus can save people from the darkness of sin. ◆ The lack of handle on the door symbolises that Christians must choose to open the door to him. <p>Accept any relevant example</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ They kiss them. ◆ They light candles in front of them. ◆ They pray to them. <p>Accept any relevant example</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It is used to decorate churches, and draw people in. ◆ It is used as witness to Christianity in the wider world like the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Rio. ◆ It is used to decorate tombs. <p>Accept any relevant example</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Christians use the symbol of the fish as a bumper sticker to show that they are Christians. ◆ Early Christians may have drawn the symbol of the fish to see if others were Christians. ◆ Christians use the symbol of the fish to summarise their beliefs – they use the Greek word for fish, Ichthus, to form the acrostic – Jesus Christ, Son of God. <p>Accept any relevant type</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mystery play ◆ Passion play ◆ Nativity play <p>Accept any relevant way</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Christians may perform passion plays as a way of expressing and deepening their faith. ◆ The people in Oberammergau perform a passion play to show thanks to God for the plague – showing that they believe he saved them. ◆ Christians may perform passion plays to help the faith of others. ◆ Portraying Jesus' last days in the form of drama can help Christians to connect with their faith and seeing themselves in the disciples' shoes. <p>Accept any relevant way, and any relevant development</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant, supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>

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Question Number	Answer/Mark Scheme	
46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Non-fiction ◆ Fiction ◆ Poetry Accept any relevant type 1 mark per point, maximum 3	
47	You must fulfil the criteria for connections AND judgements to get top marks in	
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	Good reasoning and different viewpoints considered. Partially answers question. Good understanding of religion.	Most points are well supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is somewhat supported.
	Good critical reasoning and different viewpoints considered. Fully answers question. Consistently good understanding of religion.	All points are well-supported with comprehensive evaluation leading to conclusion which is fully supported.
	Points and Justification For: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Much Christian poetry helps to strengthen Christians' faith, e.g. the poem 'Footsteps' reassures Christians that God is always with them, and many poems praise God, encouraging Christians to worship him and deepen their faith. ◆ Much fiction uses allegory to discuss Christian themes – it may help to strengthen Christians' faith by showing God's power and love through characters such as Aslan in <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i>, or by reminding them that they want to have enough faith to enter heaven, as in <i>The Great Divorce</i>. ◆ Many non-fiction Christian writings are written to encourage faith – e.g. because the writer wants to share their experience of God, or with philosophical arguments for God's existence. 	Points and Justification Against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There is much literature which is written to inform about Christianity's history, or its teachings, rather than to strengthen faith. ◆ Much Christian literature is for entertainment, e.g. book club anecdotes or jokes, and does not explore Christian themes like <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i>. ◆ Much Christian literature is written for Christians to explore the world, rather than to strengthen faith. Many poems help Christians to explore the world, rather than to strengthen their faith, as do novels and non-fiction. However, they do not necessarily strengthen faith – C S Lewis did not expect <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> to make many Christians, even if it helped his own faith.
	Accept any relevant point or justification	
48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hymn ◆ Psalm ◆ Worship song Accept any relevant style 1 mark per point, maximum 3	

Question Number	Answer/Mark Scheme
49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Christians use Psalms in worship because they are biblical, and so have authority. ♦ Psalms demonstrate to Christians how to praise and thank God in an appropriate way. ♦ Christians use hymns and worship songs to deepen their relationship with God. ♦ Singing hymns has been an important way of learning about God for those who cannot read religious literature or grasp complicated sermons. ♦ Musicam Sacram says that music (often traditional) should be used in worship to help people to worship, focusing them on God. <p>Accept any relevant reason, any relevant development, and any relevant source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>
50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Contemporary music may be used over traditional music in worship if it is more relevant to some Christians think this improves worship. ♦ This can allow a band to accompany the music and often appeals more to young people. ♦ Contemporary music may be used over traditional music in worship because it is in modern language. ♦ This may be easier to understand and connect with, and also more politically correct, though potentially offensive. <p>Accept any relevant way, and any relevant development.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4).</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question asked.</p>

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