

GCSE AQA Topic on a Page for Section A

Christianity: Beliefs and Teachings (Short Course)

H Dixon

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Teacher's Introduction

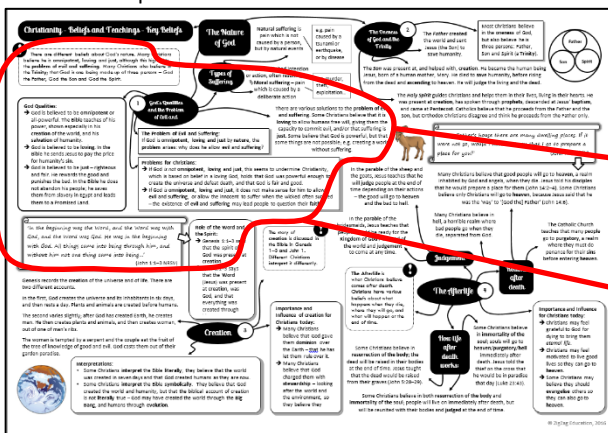
This resource covers the Religious Studies GCSE AQA specification for Section A: The Study of Religions: Beliefs and Teachings, for the religion of Christianity.

Theme content is split into five sections as follows:

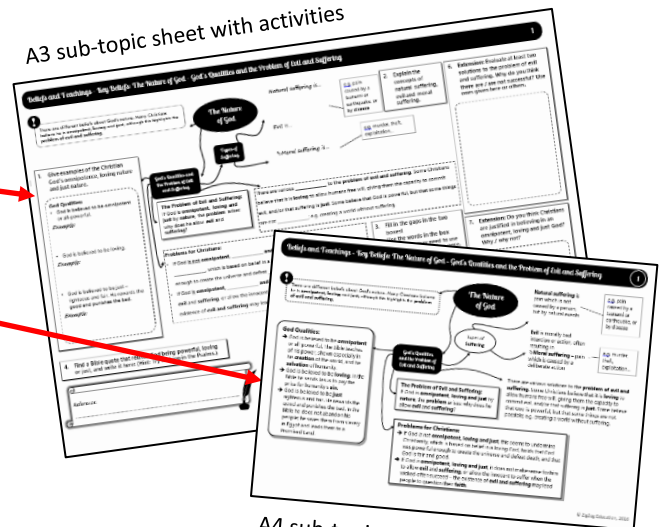
- A4 teacher information pages.**
- Two A3 revision posters**, between them covering the 8 subtopics. These are labelled: **1** and **2**. These posters are intended as a summary of all Christianity material, focusing on the main points rather than the detail, so that all important areas are covered without going into too much depth.
- Eight A3 subtopic sheets with activities.** Each of these sheets covers one subtopic and provides write-on activities for students to complete. Answers are provided in the A4 subtopic revision posters and the A4 extension question answer pages. These are labelled with numbers inside white circles: **8**. Exam-style questions in the activity sheets are marked by a pencil icon: .
- Eight A4 subtopic revision posters.** These provide answers for the main activities given in the A3 subtopic activity sheets. As revision posters, these can be used as a summary for each area, and have enough space for teacher or student annotation. These are labelled with numbers inside black circles: **8**.
- A4 answers to extension questions.** These pages provide answers to the extension questions not covered on the A4 subtopic revision posters.

All posters can be displayed on classroom walls, or given to students to learn in lessons or at home.

A3 revision poster



A3 sub-topic sheet with activities



A4 sub-topic revision poster

As a whole, the resource can be used to help students to revise at the end of a topic/subtopic, or before a test or an exam. Different styles and layouts are used to make the information interesting and to help the students engage with the information in a productive way.

H Dixon, October 2016

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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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Christianity - Beliefs and Teachings - Key Beliefs

There are different beliefs about God's nature. Many Christians believe he is **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just**, although this highlights the **problem of evil and suffering**. Many Christians also believe in the **Trinity**; that God is one being made up of three persons – God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit.

The Nature of God

Natural suffering is pain which is not caused by a person, but by natural events

e.g. pain caused by a tsunami or earthquake, or by disease

Types of Suffering

Evil is morally bad intention or action, often resulting in

Moral suffering is pain which is caused by a person's bad intention or action

e.g. murder, theft, exploitation...

God's Qualities and the Problem of Evil and Suffering

God Qualities:

- God is believed to be **omnipotent** or all-powerful. The Bible teaches of his power, shown especially in his **creation** of the world, and his **salvation** of humanity.
- God is believed to be **loving**. In the Bible he sends Jesus to die for humanity's **sin**.
- God is believed to be **just**. He rewards the good and punishes the bad. In the Bible he does not abandon his people; he saves them from slavery in Egypt and leads them to a Promised Land.

Problem of Evil and Suffering:

If God is **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just** by nature, the problem arises: why does he allow **evil** and **suffering**?

Problems for Christians:

- If God is **not** **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just**, this seems to undermine Christianity, which is based on belief in a loving God, holds that God was powerful enough to create the universe and defeat death, and that God is fair and good.
- If God is **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just**, it does not make sense for him to allow **evil** and **suffering**, or allow the innocent to suffer when the wicked often succeed – the existence of **evil** and **suffering** may lead people to question their **faith**.

There are various solutions to the **problem of evil and suffering**. Some Christians believe that God is **loving** to allow humans free will, giving them the capacity to commit evil, and/or that suffering is necessary for **justice**. Some believe that God is powerful, but some things are not possible; e.g. creating a world without suffering.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being...'

(John 1:1–3 NRSV)

Genesis records the **creation** of the universe and of life. There are two different accounts.

In the first, God creates the universe and its inhabitants in six days, and then rests a day. Plants and animals are created before humans.

The second varies slightly; after God has created Earth, he creates man. He then creates plants and animals, and then creates woman out of one of man's ribs.

The woman is tempted by a serpent and then eats the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God punishes them by driving them out of their garden paradise.

Role of the Word and the Spirit:

- Genesis 1:1–3 says that the spirit of God was present at **creation**.
- John 1:1–3 says that the **Word** (Jesus) was present at **creation**, was God, and that everything was created through him.

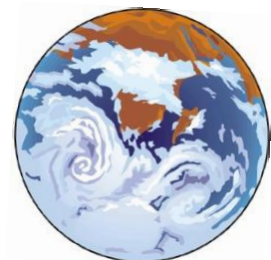
The story of **creation** is discussed in the Bible in Genesis 1–3 and John 1. Different Christians **interpret** it differently.

Importance and Influence of creation for Christians today:

- Many Christians believe that God gave them **dominion** over the Earth – that he has let them rule over it.
- Many Christians believe that God charged them with **stewardship** – looking after the world and the environment, so they believe they

Interpretation:

- Some Christians **interpret** the Bible **literally**; they believe that the world was created in seven days and that God created humans as they are now.
- Some Christians **interpret** the Bible **symbolically**. They believe that God created the world and humanity, but that the biblical account of creation is not **literally** true – God may have created the world through the **Big Bang**, and humans through **evolution**.



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Christianity - Beliefs and Teachings - Jesus Christ and Salvation

Many Christians believe that Jesus was the **incarnation** of God; God in the flesh. Most Christians believe he was fully human and fully God. He is also referred to as the **Son of God**.

Biblical Basis for the Incarnation and Jesus Being the Son of God:

- God spoke approval at Jesus' baptism and at the **Transfiguration**.
- Jesus showed his glory at the **Transfiguration**.
- Jesus is spoken of as God in the flesh in the New Testament.
- Jesus had **divine** qualities:
 - ↳ he could **heal**
 - ↳ he performed **miracles**
 - ↳ he claimed **authority**
 - ↳ he came back from the dead

The Incarnation

Reasons for the Incarnation today:

Understandings of the term 'Son of God':
Some Christians believe/believed that the term '**Son of God**' indicates that Jesus was a special human chosen by God, with a special relationship with God. Humans are often referred to as God's children. Some early believers felt that Jesus was a **divine** being, but not equal to God the Father. Many Christians believe that Jesus is as much God as the Father, but a separate person of the **Trinity**.

Many Christians believe Jesus was the Son of God:

- He is referred to as the **Son of God** in the Gospels, including by God.
- Jesus' early followers believed him to be the **Son of God** (shown in the Acts of the Apostles and the letters in the New Testament).
- Many churches teach that he is the **Son of God**.



'And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."' (Matthew 3:17 NRSV)

Shows that God is **compassionate** and cares enough about humans to live with them and die for them

Shows that there can be life after death

Many Christians believe that Jesus fulfilled the Jewish **Law**, so they do not need to follow it

Shows that God wants to have a relationship with humans, and makes it easier to relate to him

Shows that God is **powerful**

Sin is an interesting concept, which often means acting against God's will, but can also refer to a state of separation from God.



Salvation within Christianity refers to being **saved** from sin and death. Christians believe Jesus brought them **salvation**, through **atonement**. Other **means of salvation** include **law, grace and the Spirit**.

Personal Sin:
Most Christians believe in **personal sin** – when someone acts/thinks against God's will, damaging their relationship with God.

Original Sin:
Some Christians (especially the Catholic Church) believe in **original sin**, which is believed to be inherited from birth. The concept is generally credited to St Augustine, who believed that when Adam and Eve (the first people) **sinned** against God, their nature became damaged (fallen), and all future humans inherited sin when created through sexual reproduction. Only Mary (Jesus' mother) and Jesus are believed to have been born without sin.

Christians believe that they need **salvation** from **sin**, so that they can have a relationship with God, and not go to hell. The consequence of sin is believed to be death; those who are saved receive eternal life.

Most Christians believe that they are saved from their sin through Jesus, and that if they believe in him, confess their sins and ask for forgiveness, then they will be saved.

Law:
Christians believe they no longer need to follow all of this, as they receive **salvation** through following Jesus instead.

Grace and the Spirit:
Many Christians believe that **grace** is a gift from God, which can **save** them. Jesus coming to **save** humanity was an expression of God's **grace**. Many Christians also believe that they receive God's **grace** through the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and **sacraments**.

Means of Salvation, and Role of Christ in Salvation

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There are different beliefs about God's nature. Many Christians believe he is **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just**, although this highlights the **problem of evil and suffering**.

1. Give examples of the Christian God's omnipotence, loving nature and just nature.

God Qualities:

→ God is believed to be **omnipotent** or all-powerful.

Example:

→ God is believed to be **loving**.

Example:

→ God is believed to be **just** – righteous and fair. He rewards the good and punishes the bad.

Example:

The Problem of Evil and Suffering:
If God is **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just** by **nature**, the **problem** arises: why does he allow **evil** and **suffering**?

Problems for Christians:

- If God is not **omnipotent**, _____ and **just**, this seems to undermine _____, which is based on belief in a loving God, holds that God was powerful enough to create the universe and defeat _____, and that God is fair and good.
- If God is **omnipotent**, _____ and **just**, it does not make sense for him to allow **evil** and **suffering**, or allow the innocent to suffer when the wicked often succeed – the existence of **evil and suffering** may lead people to question their _____.

4. Find a Bible quote that relates God being **omnipotent**, **loving** or **just**, and write it here: (Hint: Try _____ with _____ Psalms.)

Reference: _____

Natural suffering is...

Evil is...

Moral suffering is...

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The Nature of God

The Oneness of God and the Trinity

1. Explain the concept of the Trinity and who it contains.



Many Christians believe in the Trinity...



The **Father** created the world and sent **a** _____ (the **Son**) to **save** humanity.

Most Christians believe in the **oneness** of God, but he is three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit (a **Trinity**).

The **Son** was born of a virgin, and helped with, **b** _____. He became the human being through the birth of a human mother, Mary. He died to **save** humanity, before rising from the dead and **ascending** to heaven. He will **c** _____ the living and the dead.

The **Holy Spirit** guides Christians and helps them in their lives, living in their hearts. He is present at **creation**, has spoken through prophets, descended at Jesus' **d** _____. He came at **e** _____. Catholics believe that he proceeds from the **Father** and the **Son**.

2. Write the correct multiple-choice answers in the gaps above.

- | | | | |
|------------|-----------|-------------|----------------------|
| a – | Spirit | Jesus | Moses |
| b – | Creation | Judgement | the Ten Commandments |
| c – | destroy | create | judge |
| d – | baptism | crucifixion | resurrection |
| e – | Christmas | Easter | Pentecost |

3. Find a Bible quote that mentions a member of the Trinity and write it here: (Hint: Find one which will be useful for answering question 6 – the Gospels are a good place to look.)



Reference:

4. Give a short summary of where the Bible notes the involvement of all three members of the Trinity, and a quote / quotes to back this up.



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1. Fill in the Bible quote.

In the beginning...

(John 1:1-3 NRSV)

Role of the Word and
→ Genesis 1:1-3 says th
present at **creation**.
→ John 1:1-3 says that
at **creation**, was God
created through him

2. Fill in the gaps! Use the words in the box to the left

animals two woman universe

Genesis records the _____ of the _____ and of life. There are _____ different accounts.

In the first, God creates the universe and its inhabitants in _____ days, and then rests a day. Plants and _____ are created before humans.

The second varies slightly; after God has created Earth, he creates man. He then creates plants and animals, and then creates _____, out of one of man's ribs.

The woman is tempted by a serpent and the couple eat the fruit of the _____ of knowledge of good and evil. God casts them out of their garden paradise.

Creation



3. What or who caused man and woman to fall from God's favour and be thrown from the garden? (1 mark)

- a) Killing animals
- b) Cursing God
- c) St Augustine
- d) Eating forbidden fruit

Importance and Influence on Christians today:

→ Many Christians believe that God gave them **dominion** over the Earth, that is, to let them rule over it.
Many Christians believe that God charged them with **stewardship** – looking after the world and the environment, so they believe they should do this.

4. Write A or B next to the correct term to complete the text. Also fill in the gaps.

- ☐ literally
- ☐ symbolically

Interpretations:

→ Some Christians **interpret** the Bible **A** _____; they believe in six days and that God created humans as they are now.
→ Some Christians **interpret** the Bible **B** _____. They believe in the evolution of humanity, but that the biblical account of creation is not **A** _____ world through the **Big Bang**, and humans through **evolution**.

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Beliefs and Teachings - Key Beliefs: The Afterlife

1. Write the correct multiple-choice answer in the gaps.

- A** – sheep cows pigs
B – tenants sower bridesmaids
C – resurrection reincarnation immortality
D – buried judged praised
E – nirvana Hades purgatory



In the **parable** of the **A** _____ and the goats, Jesus teaches that he will **judge** people at the end of time depending on their actions – the good will go to **heaven** and the bad to **hell**.

In the **parable** of the **B** _____, Jesus teaches that _____ people should _____ at the end of the world a **Judgement** to come at any time.

Some Christians believe in **C** _____ of the body; the dead will be raised in their bodies at the end of time. Jesus taught that the dead would be raised from their graves (John 5:28–29).

Some Christians believe in both **resurrection of the body** and **immortality of the soul**; people will live on immediately after death, but will be reunited with their bodies and **D** _____ at the end of time.

Some Christians believe in **immortality of the soul**; souls will go to **heaven/E** _____/hell immediately after death. Jesus told the thief on the cross that he would be in paradise that day (Luke 23:43).

2. Fill in the gaps with places Christians believe people go to after death. You may need to use some more than once.

Many Christians believe in _____, a horrible realm where bad people go when they die, separated from God.

'In my Father's house there are many rooms; if I were not so, would I have come here to place for you?'

Many Christians believe in _____, a place where they die. Jesus taught that _____ place for them (John 14:1–3). Christians will go to _____ he was the '_____ of _____'.

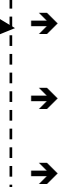
Realms after death

Judgement

The Afterlife

How life after death works:

Importance and Influence



4. Find a Bible quote about the afterlife. You can use one which is _____ to a _____ write it here:

Reference:

5. Find another parable or teaching about judgement (Hint: Try Matthew 24 or 25) – what does it teach?

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Beliefs and Teachings - Jesus Christ and Salvation: The Incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God

Biblical Basis for the Incarnation and Jesus Being the Son of God:

- God spoke approval at Jesus' **baptism** and at the **Transfiguration**.
- Jesus showed his glory at the **Transfiguration**.
- Jesus is spoken of as God in the flesh in the New Testament.
- Jesus had **divine** qualities:
 - ✦ he could **heal**
 - ✦ he performed **miracles**
 - ✦ he claimed **authority** to forgive **sins**
 - ✦ he came back from the dead



Many Christians believe that Jesus was the **incarnation** of God; God in the flesh. Most Christians believe he was fully human and fully God. He is also referred to as the **Son of God**.



3. Give three different understandings of the term 'Son of God', when referring to Jesus. (Include modern beliefs, and Jesus' status in the Bible)

Understandings of the term 'Son of God':

The Incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God

Importance of the incarnation for Christians today:

1. Fill in the gaps! Use the words in the box below.

Shows that God is _____ and cares enough about humans to live with them and die for them

Shows that there can be _____ after death

Many Christians believe that Jesus fulfilled the Jewish _____, so they do not need to follow it

Shows that God wants to have a _____ with humans, and makes it easier to relate to him

Shows that God is _____

law **life** **compassionate**
relationship **powerful**



2. Fill in the Bible quotation

'And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."'

4. Find examples in the Gospels of Jesus' relationship with his community. Make a few notes.



5. If there is a God, do you think that it makes sense for God to come down to Earth in human form? Why or why not?

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Beliefs and Teachings - Jesus Christ and Salvation: Jesus' Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension



The Gospels record the last days of Jesus' life, including:

- ➔ his **crucifixion** and death;
- ➔ his **resurrection**; and
- ➔ his **ascension**

The suffering and death of Jesus are known as the **Passion**.



Synopsis:

The **Gospels** record that after eating a last meal with his _____, and being betrayed, Jesus was crucified by the _____ High Priest and the _____ Council; the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate; and in _____ Herod. The Jews convinced Pilate to kill Jesus, and he was _____ crucifixion. When he died, the _____ two. After he died on the _____ afternoon, _____ going to Jesus' tomb on the _____ empty. Jesus appeared, _____ the dead, to his **disciples** on several occasions. After the

As Jesus **E** _____ to heaven after his death, he is believed

to be alive, and able to help Christians in their daily lives.

Jesus' **resurrection** and **ascension**
 show his **D** _____ and reassure
 Christians of his power and **authority**.

Many Christians believe Jesus came to reunite God with the **gentiles** as well as the Jews, meaning that anyone can come to God through Jesus, because of his **crucifixion** and **resurrection**.

The **temple** (certainly the **temple**) is a symbol of the **temple** to the bottom is a symbol of the **temple** thought to symbolise that humans are no longer separated from **C** _____ and that Jesus came so that humans and God could be **reconciled** and have a relationship.

4. Find another Bible quote that mentions the crucifixion or resurrection and

Reference:

2. Write the correct multiple-choice answer in the gaps.

The **Gospels** show that
Jesus' death (**crucifixion**)
and **resurrection** fulfilled

A _____

Testament prophecy,
and so the purpose of
Jesus' life was to achieve
God's long-term plan for
humanity.

Jesus came to die as a sacrifice,
to **save** humanity – he told his
disciples that the forgiveness of
sins is possible because of him,
then died to pay the price for
human **sin**, and was
resurrected, showing that he
had also defeated **B**

_____ ; the punishment

A – New Jewish

B – hate Fall death

C – sin God gentiles

D – divinity humanity forgiveness

E – ascended resurrected crucified

3. Fill in the

Reference:

2. Explain personal sin.

Personal Sin:

3. Which people/Church should be mentioned? Research if necessary.

Original Sin:

Some Christians (notably the ? Church) believe in **original sin**, which is believed to be inherited from birth.

The concept is generally credited to St ? , who believed that when Adam and Eve ? (the first people) **sinned** against God, their nature became damaged and all future humans inherited sin when created through sexual reproduction.

Only ? (Jesus' mother) and Jesus are believed to have been born without sin.

1. Find a Bible quote which supports one of these ideas and write it here: (Hint: Try Romans 6.)

Reference:

4. How do you think beliefs about sin influence Christians today?

5. Find out the teachings about sin in the Bible. (Hint: Look at Matthew 23 and 9, Mark 16, and Luke 11.)

Sin is an interesting concept, which often means acting against God's will, but can also refer to a state of separation from God.

Sin

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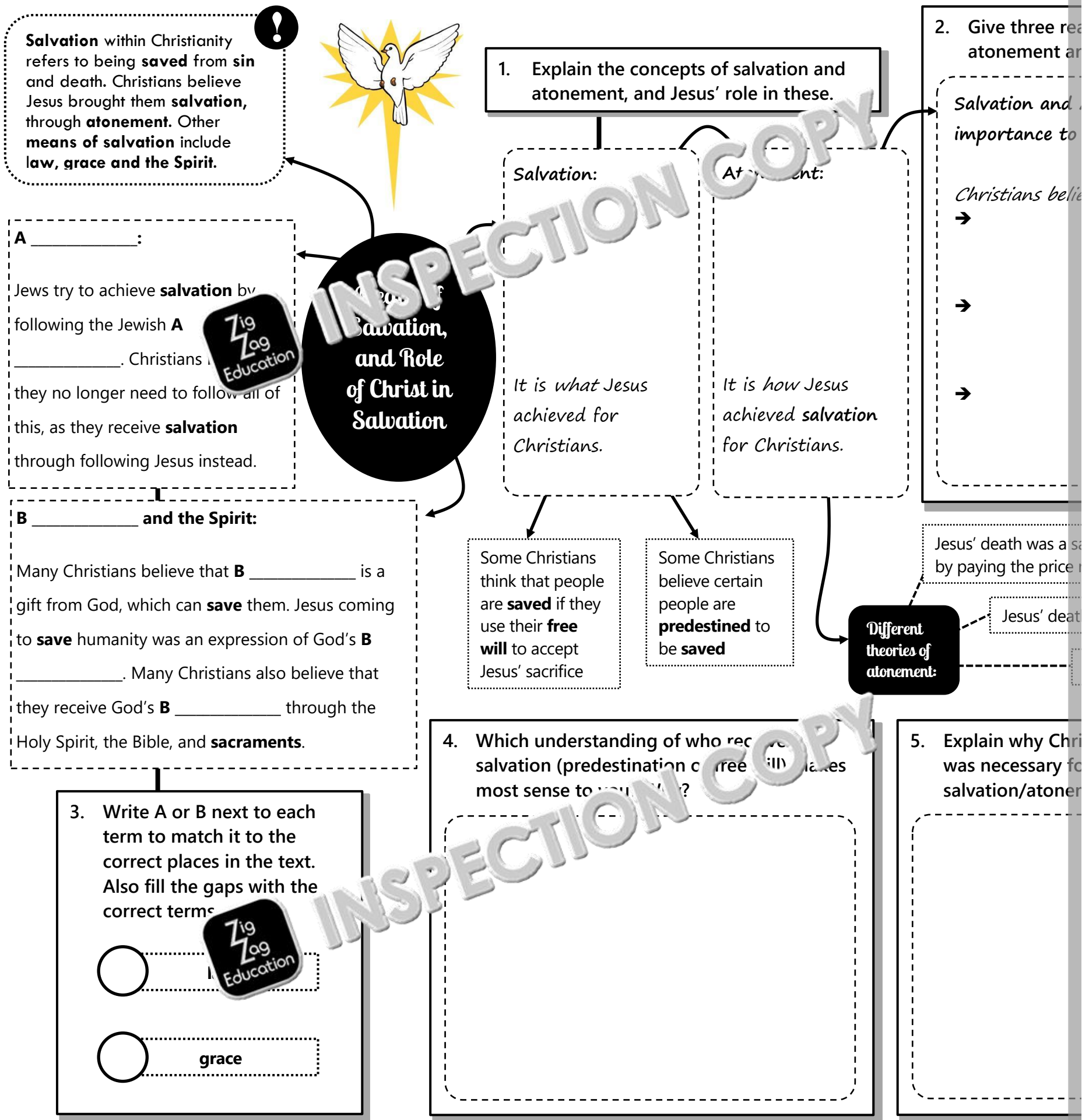


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Beliefs and Teachings - Key Beliefs: The Nature of God - God's Qualities and

The Nature of God

There are different beliefs about God's nature. Many Christians believe he is **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just**, although this highlights the **problem of evil and suffering**.

God Qualities

- God is believed to be **omnipotent** or all-powerful. The Bible teaches of his power, shown especially in his **creation** of the world, and his **salvation** of humanity.
- God is believed to be **loving**. In the Bible he sends Jesus to pay the price for humanity's **sin**.
- God is believed to be **just** – righteous and fair. He rewards the good and punishes the bad. In the Bible he does not abandon his people; he saves them from slavery in Egypt and leads them to a Promised Land.

God's Qualities and the Problem of Evil and Suffering

Types of Suffering

The Problem of Evil and Suffering:

If God is **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just** by **nature**, the **problem** arises: why does he allow **evil** and **suffering**?

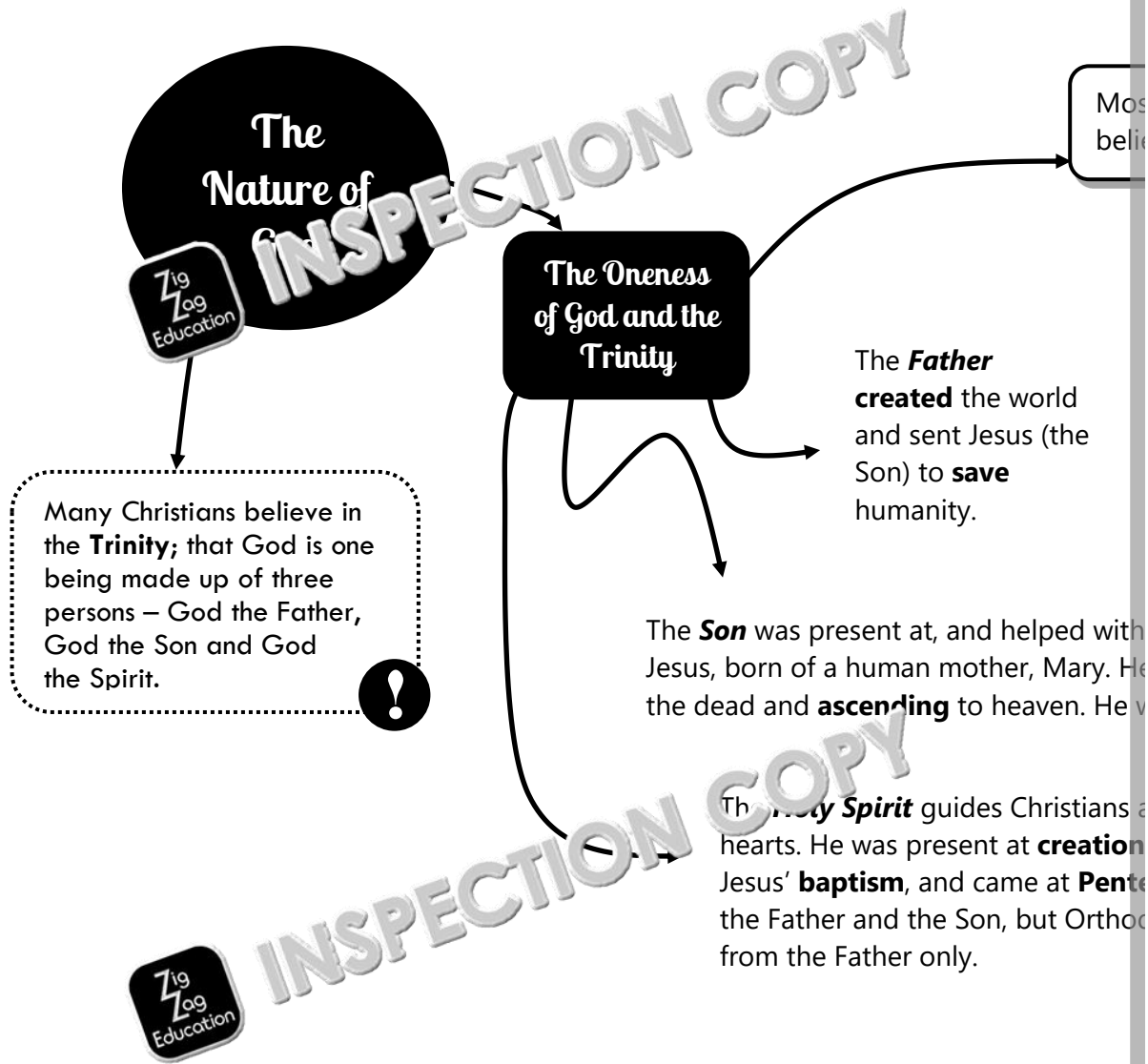
Problems for Christians:

- If God is *not* **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just**, Christianity, which is based on belief in God, is challenged. It was powerful enough to create the universe, but not that God is fair and good.
- If God is **omnipotent**, **loving** and **just**, why does he allow **evil** and **suffering**, or allow the wicked to often succeed – the existence of evil and suffering lead people to question their **faith**.

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Beliefs and Teachings - Key Beliefs: Creation

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being...'

(John 1:1-3 NRSV)

Role of the Word and Spirit:

- Genesis 1:1-3 says that the **spirit of God** was involved in **creation**.
- John 1:1-3 says that the **Word** (Jesus) was involved in **creation**, and that everything came into being through him.

Genesis records the **creation** of the universe and of life. There are two different accounts.

In the first, God creates the universe and its inhabitants in six days, and then rests a day. Plants and animals are created before humans.

The second varies slightly; after God has created Earth, he creates man. He then creates plants and animals, and then creates woman, out of one of man's ribs.

The woman is tempted by a serpent and the couple eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God casts them out of their garden paradise.

Creation

Interpretation

Some Christians **interpret** the Bible **literally**; they believe the world was created in seven days and that God created humans as we are now.

- Some Christians **interpret** the Bible **symbolically**. They believe that God created the world and humanity, but that the biblical creation is not **literally** true – God may have created the world through the **Big Bang**, and humans through **evolution**.



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Beliefs and Teachings - Key Beliefs: The Afterlife



In the **parable** of the sheep and the goats, Jesus teaches that he will **judge** people at the end of time depending on their actions – the good will go to **heaven** and the bad to **hell**.

'In my Father's
so, would I h

In the **parable** of the brides, Jesus teaches that people must be ready for the **Kingdom of God** at the end of the world and **judgement** will come at any time.

Many Christians believe in **hell**, a horrible realm where bad people go when they die, separated from God.

Judgement

The Afterlife

Some Christians believe in **resurrection of the body**; the dead will be raised in their bodies at the end of time. Jesus taught that the dead would be raised from their graves (John 5:28–29).

Some Christians believe in both **resurrection of the body** and **immortality of the soul**; people will live on immediately after death, but will be reunited with their bodies and **judged** at the end of time.

How life
after death
works

Some Christians believe in the **immortality of the soul**; souls will go to **paradise/heaven** or **hell** immediately after death. Jesus told the thief on the cross that he would be in **paradise** that day (Luke 23:43).

The **Afterlife** is what Christians believe comes after death. Christians have various beliefs about what happens when people die, where they will go, and what will happen at the end of time.

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Beliefs and Teachings - Jesus Christ and Salvation: The Incarnation and Jesus

Biblical Basis for the Incarnation and Jesus Being the Son of God:

- God spoke approval at Jesus' **baptism** and at the **Transfiguration**.
- Jesus showed his glory at the **Transfiguration**.
- Jesus is spoken of as God in the New Testament.
- Jesus had **divine** abilities:
 - ↳ he could **heal**
 - ↳ he performed **miracles**
 - ↳ he claimed **authority** to forgive **sins**
 - ↳ he came back from the dead

Many Christians believe that Jesus was the **incarnation** of God in the flesh. Most Christians believe he was fully human and fully God. He is often referred to as the **Son of God**.

The Incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God

Why

- He
- Je
- M

Shows that God is **compassionate** and cares enough about humans to live with them and die for them

Shows that there can be life after death

Importance of the Incarnation for Christians today:

Many Christians believe that Jesus fulfilled the Jewish **Law**, so they do not need to follow it

Shows that God wants to have a relationship with humans, and makes it easier to relate to him

Shows that God is **powerful**

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Beliefs and Teachings - Jesus Christ and Salvation: Jesus' Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension

The Gospels record the last days of Jesus' life, including:

- his **crucifixion** and death;
- his **resurrection**; and
- his **ascension**

The suffering and death of Jesus are known as the **Passion**

Synopsis:

The **Gospels** record that after eating a last supper, Jesus was tried before the High Priest and the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, who took account by King Herod. The Jews were surprised when he died, the **temple** curtain tore in two. On the Sunday morning, Jesus' tomb was found empty, and he appeared to his **disciples** on several occasions. After 40 days, he ascended to heaven.

As Jesus **ascended** to heaven, he was thought to be alive, and able to return.

Many with faith in Jesus' resurrection and ascension.



Jesus' Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension

The **Gospels** show that Jesus' death (**crucifixion**) and **resurrection** fulfilled **Old Testament prophecy**, and so the purpose of Jesus' life was to achieve God's long-term plan for humanity.

The importance of these events for Christians

Jesus died as a sacrifice, to **save** humanity – he told his **disciples** that the forgiveness of **sins** is possible because of him, then died to pay the price for human **sin**, and was **resurrected**, showing that he had also defeated death; the punishment of **sin**.

The **temple** curtain tearing from top to bottom is thought to symbolize that humans are no longer separated from God and that Jesus came to show that humans and God could be reconciled and have a relationship.

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Beliefs and Teachings - Jesus Christ and Salvation: Sin

Sin is an interesting concept, which often means acting against God's will, but can also refer to a state of separation from God.

Personal Sin:
Most Christians believe that personal sin is acting against God's will.



Sin

Christians believe that they need **saving** from **sin**, so that they can have a good relationship with God, and so they do not go to hell. The consequence of sin is believed to be death: those who are saved receive eternal life.

Most Christians believe that they are saved from their sin through Jesus. They believe in him, confess their sins, and ask for forgiveness, then they will be saved.



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Beliefs and Teachings - Jesus Christ and Salvation: Means of Salvation and

! **Salvation** within Christianity refers to being **saved** from **sin** and death. Christians believe Jesus brought them **salvation**, through **atonement**. Other **means of salvation** include **law**, **grace and the Spirit**.



Law:
Jews try to achieve **salvation** by following the Jewish **Law**. Christians believe they no longer need to follow all of this, as they receive **salvation** through following Jesus instead.

Means of Salvation, and Role of Christ in Salvation

Salvation:
Christians believe that Jesus **saved** them from **sin** and death through his death and **resurrection**. This is known as **salvation**.
It is *what* Jesus achieved for Christians.

Grace and the Spirit:
Many Christians believe that **grace** is a gift from God, which can **save** them. According to **save** humanity, God's **grace**. Many Christians also believe that they receive God's **grace** through the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and **sacraments**.

Some Christians believe that people are **saved** if they use their **free will** to accept Jesus' sacrifice

Some Christians believe certain people are **predestined** to be **saved**

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Christianity Topic on a Page Activities

Some questions ask for comparison between religions. This is not expected in the exam, but activities involving comparison should help students to remember points about Christianity and broaden their understanding of similarities and differences between religions.

Always check information, in specification a

1. The Nature of God – God’s Qualities and the Problem of Evil

- 1) See summary sheet
- 2) See summary sheet
- 3) See summary sheet
- 4) For example:
'God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world to save us from sin.' (1 John 4:9 NRSV)
- 5) For example:
 - Moral suffering
 - Natural suffering1 mark per point (maximum 2)
- 6) For example:
 - Free will is a fairly good solution to the problem of evil and suffering because we prefer to have free will, and there be a possibility that some will use this for evil to make real choices. Therefore I think it is successful in explaining moral suffering but it does not provide an explanation for natural suffering.
 - I do not think that evil and suffering are just, so this is not a successful solution. For example, many bad people do not suffer, while good people do. Also, if Jesus came to earth, he no longer need to be punished.
- 7) For example: I do not think that Christians are justified in believing in an omnipotent God because there do not seem to be satisfactory solutions for there being the amount of evil in the world, if God is loving and all-powerful. Either God does not exist, or he is not loving, or because a loving God could not want humans to suffer as much as they do.

2. The Nature of God – The Oneness of God and the Trinity

- 1) See summary sheet
- 2) See summary sheet
- 3) For example:
'Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."' (Matthew 16:16)
- 4) For example: Jesus' baptism, creation (Father and Spirit mentioned in Genesis, John 1:1-3)
'In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As he came up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove and alighting upon him. Suddenly a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."'
'In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.' (Genesis 1:1-2)
'The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God, but the one who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.' (John 1:17-18)
- 5) For example:
 - Christians believe that God the Father is powerful. They believe that he created the world, and by helping his people (the Jewish people in the Old Testament, and Christians in the New Testament). Some believe that he is in charge of the other persons of the Trinity.
 - Christians believe that the second person of the Trinity has existed both in the past and the future. They believe that he was present at the creation of the world, but also that he came to earth as Jesus. The person of Jesus is known as God the Son.
 - 'Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."' (Matthew 16:16)Accept any relevant points and reference to scripture.
1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4), 1 mark for scripture.
If *only* one religious belief is mentioned, maximum 2 marks + 1 mark for scripture.

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- 6) For example:
- Jesus comes from the Father, but is one being with him.
 - Jesus' mother was a virgin.
 - Jesus will come to judge those alive and those dead.

3. Creation

- 1) See summary sheet
- 2) See summary sheet
- 3) d) Eating forbidden fruit
- 4) See summary sheet
- 5) For example:
'Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.' (Genesis 1:3 NRSV)
- 6) For example:
- Literal pro: You do not need to justify believing parts of the Bible and not others.
 - Literal con: Literalism disagrees with the biblical accounts of creation.
 - Symbolic pro: Christians can believe in religion and science without them conflicting.
 - Symbolic con: Believing that God created the world / life through the Big Bang seem less powerful and involved.
- (Note: cons for the literal view may be pros for the symbolic view, and vice versa)
- 7) For example: The doctrine of the Fall is the idea that humans fell from God's grace. This corrupted all of humanity, not just Adam and Eve. This led to original sin being reproduced (the first, original sin of Adam and Eve was passed on to their children). Humans really need saving as they are very separated from God. It also makes sex

4. The Afterlife

- 1) See summary sheet
- 2) See summary sheet
- 3) See summary sheet
- 4) For example:
'Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will come out...' (John 5:28-29 NRSV)
- 5) For example: The parable of the talents teaches that people will be rewarded for what they have and given more, but those who do not use what God has given them will be punished.
- 6) For example:
- Some Christians believe that after death the soul will live on immediately – good people to heaven and bad people to hell (some believe that some people will go to purgatory to do penance before going to heaven). This begins immediately after death and the soul is immortal. This is reinforced by Jesus talking about life immediately after death.
 - [to the thief on the cross] 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'
 - Some Christians believe that life after death does not begin immediately after death but is raised at the end of time and is known as resurrection of the body, and it is their bodies, and then everyone will be judged before being sent to heaven or hell.
 - 'Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will come out...' (John 5:28-29 NRSV)

Accept all relevant points and reference to scripture.

1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4), 1 mark for scriptural reference.

If *only* one religious belief is mentioned, maximum 2 marks + 1 mark for scriptural reference.

- 7) For example: I do not think some Christians are justified in interpreting John 14:6 as 'I am the way to the Father' and 'no one comes to the Father except through me' to mean that people can only know God as Jesus the Son, and as Christians believe in a loving God, this seems a better interpretation. If God would condemn people to hell for not worshipping him and following another

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5. The Incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God

- 1) See summary sheet
- 2) See summary sheet
- 3) See summary sheet
- 4) For example: Jesus cried when his friend Lazarus died (John 11:35); Jesus was not afraid of death (John 11:12); Jesus slept (e.g. Mark 4:38); Jesus died in agony (Jesus' Passion in any of the Gospels)
- 5) For example: I think it makes sense for God / a God to come down to Earth in human form so that they are following his teaching, and they will respect him for living among them and making things better.
- 6) For example:
 - One argument with justification
 - Different arguments for and against with justification
OR Several linked, justified arguments for one position
 - Good, well-justified arguments for and against, linked together
 - Very well argued, well-justified arguments for and against, linked together and leading to a reasonable conclusion.

Points and Justification for

- Jesus showed divine qualities such as healing and rising from the dead.
- Jesus is spoken of as God in the flesh in the New Testament.
- Christianity has taught this for years – if Jesus was not God, God would have been angry with them.

Points and Justification against

- Jesus' followers may not have thought he was God incarnate during early Christianity; evidence of Jesus being thought to be God in the Gospels.
- References to Jesus as God's son may not mean that he is divine – they could be metaphorical – many Christians have believed this.
- Other prophets in the Bible have been able to heal and perform miracles, but they were not divine.

Accept any relevant point or justification.

- 7) For example:
 - Docetism claims that Jesus was fully divine and just appeared to be human and suffer.
 - Adoptionism holds that Jesus was a sinless human who God adopted at some point. Some forms of Adoptionism hold that after Jesus' adoption, he became divine and the Father.

6. Jesus' Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension

- 1) See summary sheet
- 2) See summary sheet
- 3) See summary sheet
- 4) For example: 'While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. Terrified and bowed to the ground, they said to them, "Why do you stand here? He is not here." (Luke 24:4-5 NRSV)
- 5) For example:
 - Reconciliation between people and God, so that they can have a relationship with God.
 - Overcoming sin and death, so there can be eternal life for humans.

Accept any relevant point, 1 mark per point (maximum 2)
- 6) For example: I think they vary because they are compiled from different witnesses, Jesus, and because the Gospel authors want to emphasise different points.
- 7) For example: I think Jesus' crucifixion should be more important for Christians, as it shows his sacrifice for humanity and atoned for man's sin.

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7. Sin

- 1) For example:
'For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus'
- 2) See summary sheet
- 3) See summary sheet
- 4) For example: Because Christians believe they are sinful, they are likely to want to repent and be sure to ask God for forgiveness when they sin again. Those that believe in God's grace to save their fallen nature.
- 5) For example:
 - Jesus taught that people should try very hard to avoid sin.
 - Jesus taught that disabilities were not due to sin.
- 6) For example:
 - Christians believe that if sin is not remedied, they deserve to be punished by ultimate punishment which is death. However, they believe that Jesus paid the price for sin and saved from sin and will live on after death.
 - 'For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus'
 - So Christians believe in original sin. The Catholic Church teaches that the eating the forbidden fruit has been passed on through sexual intercourse so all humans are born with a sinful nature. Jesus can be seen as a second Adam who came to save fallen humans

Accept any relevant points and reference to scripture.

1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4), 1 mark for scripture

If *only* one religious belief is mentioned, maximum 2 marks + 1 mark for scripture

- 7) For example:
 - Similarities with Judaism: Jews, like Christians, believe that breaking God's law is sinful. They believe that sin will be punished by God.
 - Differences between Judaism and Christianity: Christians do not believe that the law still need to be kept – breaking some of these is not sinful because Jesus fulfilled the law that Jesus saved humanity from sin – Jews do not believe this.

8. Means of Salvation and Role of Christ in Salvation

- 1) See summary sheet
- 2) See summary sheet
- 3) See summary sheet
- 4) For example: I think it makes most sense that people can be saved if they come to Christ. This means people can choose to accept Jesus, and need to make an effort to come to Christ. If people are predestined to be saved this seems unfair on those who cannot achieve salvation through their own efforts. Humans if God has already chosen to save them.
- 5) For example: Some Christians believe that it was necessary for Jesus to die for salvation. God is loving and just – he wanted to save humans but something had to make up for the sin. Jesus himself had to die as only he was able to die for all sin, and this achieved salvation for all who are not punished.
- 6) For example:
 - Because Christians believe they have received salvation in Jesus, this influences how they live. Christians want to thank him for freeing them from the law of sin and death.
 - Because Christians believe that they have been saved through Jesus, they no longer need to be saved by the law. They believe that Jesus fulfilled this, and so following Jesus and accepting his teachings is the way to salvation.

Accept any relevant points

1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4)

- 7) For example: Predestination is associated with John Calvin, an important Christian theologian of the Protestant Reformation, and held in Calvinism. Calvin believed that God had chosen some people to be saved and some to be condemned. In this belief, it is God who guides those he has chosen to save to believe in him, and just in condemning others.

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