

Course Companion for GCSE Edexcel B

Section 1: Christian Beliefs

Section 3: Living the Christian Life

For Full Course: Papers 1, 2 and 3

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Teacher's Introduction

This resource has been designed to support the learning and teaching of Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies B. It includes material on Christian Beliefs and Living the Christian Life – half the content for Paper 1, Paper 2 or Paper 3 when studied from a Christian perspective. (Note: you cannot sit more than one paper on the same religion.) 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. Key Qur'an quotes are included to help students to understand the material and subjects. A brief introduction to the course and answering exam questions is 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 textbook or for independent learning or revision. Alternatively, teachers might use it 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 encourage and develop their thinking, enabling them to approach issues from different perspectives.

Where students need to know contrasting religious views on specific topics, we have included views from several other religions.

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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Introduction to the Course and How to Answer Questions

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; and Christian life, including which practices Christians may take part in. There will be references to aspects of Christianity to Christians, and to different points of view from within Christianity included throughout to show how the Bible informs Christian belief and practice and worship also contain views from other religions so that you can compare Christianity in your exam. The sections covered here (Christian Beliefs and Living the Christian Life) are sections 1 and 3 in your exam.

This course companion is designed to equip you with the information you need to gain the knowledge and ability to answer related questions. Note that the questions and answers are in exam-style, but those which are should be answered in particular ways.

The exam board will ask you to give reasons for 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 clearly, using a style that is easy to follow and using correct spelling 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 answer in the exam you will get a 3-mark, 4-mark, 5-mark and 12-mark question – a few extra marks are given for spelling, punctuation and grammar – and also terminology – based on the 12-mark questions in sections 1 (Christian Beliefs) and 3 (Living the Christian Life) – coincidentally the two sections covered here!

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' or 'outline three' examples. For 'state' questions, you 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 to show why something is important. You need to give two different points, and, to get full marks, you need to justify both; for example, with a quote or other evidence. So you can think of it as two marks for stating each point and a mark for developing each point. This should show that you understand information and can 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 question.

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 the other religion, and you will get two points about Christianity, and contrast each (in a different way) with your other religion.

The **5-mark question** is similar to the 4-mark question, but you could be asked to give three reasons or ways. If you are asked to make two points and developing/justifying both, you will get two marks for stating each point and a mark for developing/justifying each point. You can use a source of authority, such as the Bible or the Catholic Catechism (as well as your own knowledge and 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 to give arguments and justifications **for** and **against** the statement (so agreeing with the statement and an alternative point of view). Make sure you have good reasons for all the points you make and you also need to come to a conclusion; picking the most convincing side of the argument (based on the given!) and saying why you think this is the case. You need to refer to Christian teaching, and to Christianity (not on other religions or from non-religious points of view). If specified, you need to refer to Christian points of view – this could be specified on any of the 12-mark questions, but is usually on the 12-mark question.

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Christian Beliefs

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 **Credo**s; 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** – Christian Scriptures, made up of the Old and New Testaments
- ◆ **creed** – 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 ex
- ◆ **Old Testament** – section of the Bible concerning the time before the birth of
- ◆ **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, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. However, there is unity within God – there are not three separate gods. This can be confusing, and it has caused much controversy and debate within Christianity. Most Christians believe in the Trinity, but not all 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 for God and/or can predict the future
- ◆ **resurrection** – coming back to life after dying; Christians believe Jesus was resurrected
- ◆ **sin** – anything 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 who contained three different persons – this granted Jesus full **divine** status.

Importance
The persons of the Trinity are not seen as 'he'. Some Christians believe God is male, but others believe God is gendered, or that gender attributes are not applicable to God's nature. Also, some Christians say that both Father and Son are in God's image.

The Creed contains what Christians believe about the three Persons of the Trinity, 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 Son of God.
- ◆ 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**.

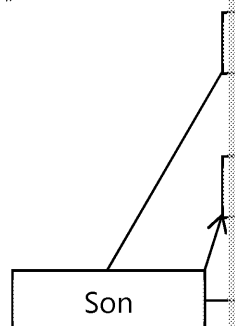
The Emperor Charlemagne, alive in the eighth and ninth centuries, made an addition to the Nicene Creed, based on **theology** from St. Augustine. Previously, the Creed had claimed that the Holy Spirit 'proceeds from the Father', but this was changed to 'the Father and the Son'. The Orthodox Church disagreed 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 in Christianity.

Some Christians think different Persons of the Trinity have different importance. Some think the Father is more important than the Spirit. Others see no reason for this belief and view the Trinity as a whole.

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 part 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 Jesus).
- ◆ Christians see the different Persons of God in different ways – they perceive the Father as the creator, the Son as the savior, and the Holy Spirit as the comforter.



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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 oneness 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 in the earth, beneath the earth or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down or worship them...' (Exodus 20:4-5 NRSV)

- ♦ If Jesus (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 a hope of heaven. The Father is seen as powerful, and the God who was in contact with the prophets 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 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 is 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."

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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.

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'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 28:19–20). 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 in the Trinity.
2. Explain **three** 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 not literal
- ♦ **original sin** – sin all humans inherit because of the Fall
- ♦ **personal sin** – sin committed by an individual
- ♦ **reason** – the 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 and the sky; land and plants; the sun, moon and stars; fish and birds; animals; and humans in his own image. God gives the world to humans to look after, is pleased with his creation, and rests 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 dark and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God 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. In this account, God created Adam first, then Eve, and then animals. Adam and Eve were created 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 not to eat from 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 makes them realise that they are naked and hiding from God. God discovers that they have eaten the fruit and casts them out of the Garden of Eden.

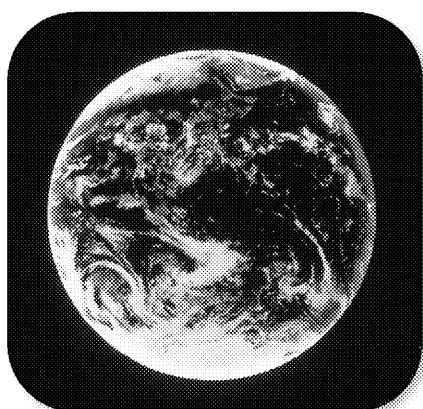
Note: Christianity shares the Creation account given in Genesis with Judaism, and everything in the same way as Christians.

John 1: 1–18:

God's **Word** is with God at Creation, and God created through him. It then became flesh, which was unrecognised, but grants humans God's **grace**. This passage supports Christianity by stating that God was embodied in the person of Jesus. God the Son pre-existed Jesus, and Jesus was God. It claims that the Word, Jesus, was present at Creation, so existed before the world. This 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 described as the Word 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 the world was created within seven days, and that the first people were called Adam and Eve.
- ◆ Some believe that the Creation story is a metaphor for the process of evolution, and that the Bible is scientifically inaccurate. Note: this does not mean that the Bible is untrue, but rather that the Creation story is a metaphor. One interpretation of creation leads to the concept of evolution, largely associated with **St. Augustine**. This 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. Such an account emphasises God's power – if he was able to create everything, then such literal interpretations are more of a modern phenomenon (developing with science), becoming popular around 100 years ago, rather than an older view displayed in the Bible.

A more **metaphorical** interpretation will not conflict with Christians learning about scientific interpretations of the world, and Creation may be important to them in religious terms – if they believe that God created everything, but through the process of evolution.

Creation is important for many Christians because they believe that God gave them dominion over the world, 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, whatever they want, and control animals.

However, many Christians believe that dominion also comes with great responsibility. God has made them **stewards** of his creation; people who manage it and protect it. This 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 and sin of Adam and Eve were passed on through sex – this is called **original sin**. If Christians believe in original sin, they may 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 the added burden of original sin. Christians view the Creation story positively; if humans were once so close to God, they can draw closer to him again if Christians try to follow his teachings and try not to sin.

St. Thomas Aquinas, a Christian priest, wrote several books on the nature of God and the human condition.

The account of Creation in John 1 is important because it reinforces to Christians that God is love, as has the Trinity, and that God cared enough about his creation to become human.

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. Christians also believe that Jesus is the Son of God (part of the *Trinity*).

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 followed the law, but that Christians do not have to follow it anymore
- ◆ **miracle** – in Christianity, something which appears to be done by God and is beyond human nature
- ◆ **Transfiguration** – when Jesus was transformed, and began to shine, in front of his disciples, and Moses and Elijah appeared

Nature 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 claimed that Jesus was a **divine** being, but not on the same level as God.
- ◆ Some Christians have believed, and still believe today, that Jesus was fully human, but had a special relationship with God. All humans can be referred to as God's children, so 'Son of God' does not necessarily indicate divine status, but rather that Jesus was a special human chosen by God to have a special relationship with him.
- ◆ 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 was fully human, but he had the power of God. Some Christians believe that Jesus was completely aware of God's plan all of the time. Jesus, as the Son of God, is a member of the **Trinity**, as much God as God the Father.

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

- Jesus being the **incarnate** Son of God / the Incarnation is important to Christians because:
- ◆ 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 their lives.
 - ◆ This shows that God has power – to become human, raise the dead, people can believe that God has the power to grant life after death, meaning that they can look forward to the afterlife.
 - ◆ It helps Christians to have a personal relationship with God, because they can see a relationship with them. Some Christians feel that by following Jesus' teachings, they can come closer to God, and having an incarnated God makes it easier to understand.
 - ◆ 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.

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- ♦ 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.

Biblical basis for the teaching of the incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God

The word '**incarnation**' originates in Latin; as such, it does not occur in the Bible (which was written in Greek). The belief in the Incarnation is not universally held, and indeed some of the **Gospel** writers and other writers of the **New Testament** did not believe in it. 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 that he is the **incarnation** of God.



'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... 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 invisible, vindicated in spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among Gentiles, believed on throughout the world, taken up in glory.' (1 Timothy 3:16 NRSV)

References to Jesus as the Son of God:

- ♦ At Jesus' baptism in the River Jordan, he received the Holy Spirit from God, and God was heard saying:

""This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."" (Matthew 3:17)

- ♦ At the **Transfiguration**, Jesus was changed, and 'his face shone like the sun' and 'his clothes became dazzling white'; again God was heard saying:

""This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" (Matthew 17:5)

- ♦ Others also referred to him as the Son of God in the New Testament:

'Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. From now on, you will be called Peter, for the rock. And I will build my church upon this rock, and the gates of the underworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:16–19 NRSV)

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

- ♦ Jesus performed many miracles, 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).

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

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- ♦ Jesus claimed the authority to forgive **sins** and cast out demons, typical of which he backed up with his healing abilities (Mark 2 and 5, Matthew 9 and 12).
- ♦ Even though he was killed, he was **resurrected**, confirming his power over death (Mark 14–16, Luke 22–24, John 18–21).

Jesus' Humanity

The Bible also references Jesus' human nature – he is reported to:

- ♦ have eaten (e.g. Mark 3)
- ♦ have felt tired (e.g. John 4) and slept (e.g. Mark 4)
- ♦ have cried when his friend died (John 11:35)
- ♦ have suffered leading up to his death (e.g. Luke 22), and
- ♦ he died a painful death on the cross (e.g. Matt. 27).

Christians do not believe that Jesus, being the **incarnation** of God made him human. Christians also use Jesus' humanity to explain times in the Gospels where he had knowledge of things that were only God and not human, then this might not make sense.

Significance of the biblical basis for the incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God today

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

Quick questions

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

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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 to Christianity. The events surrounding Jesus' death are often referred to as his '**Passion**', because of the suffering involved. Jesus' Passion is remembered especially at Easter, as it is crucial to the whole religion.

Keywords:

- ◆ **baptism** – here, a sacrament which involves being anointed with, or immersed in, water, symbolising 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** – 40 days of preparation before Easter. Christians remember Jesus' sacrifice 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 first-born, and 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 (Luke 22–24), while also providing some extra details from the other three gospels where they 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 his memory of him.

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

He shares wine with them, and says 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**).

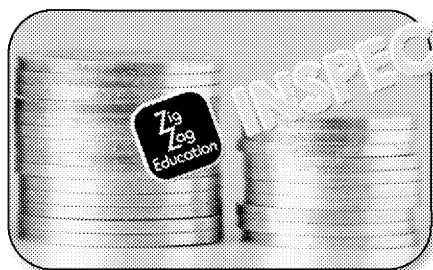
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At the meal, Jesus tells the disciples that he will be betrayed and that his be discuss who will do this.

There is also a debate about who will be greatest among the disciples. Jesus great, the disciples must serve others. Jesus predicts that Peter will deny him not. Jesus tells his disciples that in the future, when they set out preaching, had previously sent them taking nothing with them).

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



Jesus was betrayed for money.

Betrayal and Arrest:

Judas agrees to betray Jesus to the Jew **Supper**, and they promise him money a place called the Mount of Olives, and **pray**. He prays to God not to have to wakes the disciples who he wanted to

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 was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; but Jesus said to him, you are betraying the Son of Man?’ (Luke 22:47-48 N

Trial:

Jesus is mocked and tried before the Jewish Council. Jesus **prophecies** and disputes with the elders and they condemn him. The Jews 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. The Gospel is the only account in which Pilate sends Jesus to Herod (because Jesus is from Galilee, which Herod rules straight back to him). Herod asks Jesus if he is the Messiah, but 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, “I 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 Golgotha, they crucified Jesus there with his right and one on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." They cast lots to divide his clothing.' (Luke 23:32-36)

The sky got 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.

Mary Magdalene is often called 'the woman who wept' because of her grief for Jesus, and she is often mentioned as a female disciple in several reports that Jesus was ill, which she cared for. She is often mentioned as the first to see him after he is raised, and there is no doubt that she was a very important figure in the early church.

- ◆ 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. 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, preaching and teaching them. He tells them to wait in Jerusalem [for the Holy Spirit] and then go to all the world and 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 dark 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. Then 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 called ‘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 them 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. 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 from the Egyptians. Now, for Christians, Jesus was the sacrifice. |
| Jesus washed his disciples’ feet | Jesus showed humility and servanthood; he was not a lord over others above them. This shows that Jesus, and the Church, are to serve others. |
| Jesus gave his disciples bread and wine | All Christian denominations remember Jesus’ sacrifice through the sacrament of the Eucharist ; sharing bread and wine. This is 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 crucified, trying to acquit himself. He did not appeal to Pilate to free him, as he knew Pilate was in control and wanted to follow God’s plan – he chose to die. |

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| Aspect of Jesus' last days | Significance |
|----------------------------|---|
| | Many Christians believe that various aspects of Jesus' last days correspond to Old Testament prophecy . Some believe that he is the 'suffering servant' mentioned in Isaiah 53. Some believe that Judas' betrayal and soldiers gambling for Jesus' clothing both correspond with prophecies, and that Jesus being mocked was also foretold (among other things). If Jesus fulfilled prophecy, this shows that sending Jesus to redeem humankind had been part of God's plan for a long time. (Note: Jews do not believe these prophecies were fulfilled, and do not believe that all are prophecies in the first place.) |
| | When Jesus had spoken about destroying the Temple and rebuilding it (he does this in his trial in front of the Jewish Council in some gospels), the Jews had assumed he meant the Temple in Jerusalem where they worshipped. After his death it was interpreted that he meant himself; that God dwelt within him. Especially when the Jewish Temple was destroyed, less than 50 years after Jesus' death, Christians saw Jesus as replacing the physical Temple – that they should worship God through Jesus, not through animal sacrifices, when Jesus was the final sacrifice. |
| | The Temple curtain separated the Holy of Holies (the 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 people and God. |
| | Christians believe that Jesus overcame sin and death. |

Pause for thought:

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



things Jesus told his disciples at the Last Supper.

(3 marks)



asons why Jesus' last days/death may be significant to Christians.

(4 marks)

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 could lead to death. However, Jesus died instead – he paid the price which they should have paid. This allows them to have a relationship with God, a clean slate. Also, when they die, this will be seen as a reward for their faith 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 who does not believe that he has come from heaven, so that those who believe in him can have eternal life (John 3:16). Those who believe will be saved, but those who do not believe will not be saved.

“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 faith in Christ. **disciple** Peter proclaimed this in Acts 4:8–12 – that everyone must be saved through Christ.

“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. Why couldn't he just click his fingers and make everything ok if he wanted to? One Christian belief is that God is both just and merciful. If God had been doing so, a just God *has* to punish sin. However, God is also merciful and wants to forgive. The solution: he accepts the punishment for sin on behalf of humanity. This is like paying a debt for a friend – the debt needs to be paid, but God pays it instead of them.

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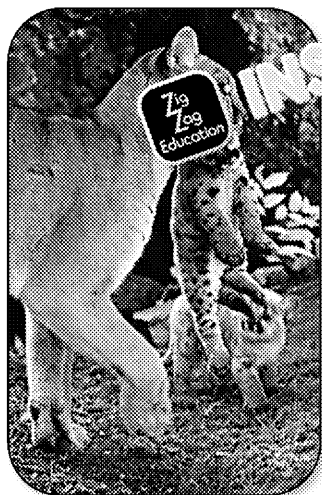


Extension – Different ideas about salvation:

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 someone has 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. People must receive God's grace and follow Jesus. This seems positive because it means people are not automatically excluded from salvation. There is no 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 salvation

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 humans. Without atonement, 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 because he was **divine**. Some think Jesus achieved atonement through sacrifice. Sacrifice is necessary for sin – death (this view is held throughout because it is a popular idea that 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 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 inherited (original sin). They also believe in **personal sin**. Others only believe in personal sin; they are not inherently sinful, but 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 to people in order to save them. For example, Christians believe that sending Jesus to save the world was an act of God's grace.

'From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.' (John 1:16)

The Holy Spirit; the third Person of God in the **Trinity**, is also believed to be God. God can 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 grace, or that anyone can receive grace and the Holy Spirit in their lives if they choose to accept it. Christians feel that they can also receive God's grace through his teaching in the **sacraments**; for example, remembering 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 destiny. 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 have 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 a deeper 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, survives death and goes straight to **heaven/hell/purgatory** (see the section on these below). Some believe both; that the soul will enter the afterlife immediately after death, but that there will be a **resurrection** for everyone at **judgment** at the end of time, where souls and bodies, people will enter a spiritual realm after death based on their actions. Some believe people 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 people will be resurrected while some believe that it will not be, and that in heaven there will be 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 beliefs about resurrection.

Some Christians believe in the **resurrection of the body** because Jesus was raised from the dead bodily. Some Christians raised others from the dead physically; for example, Jesus raised his daughter (Mark 5:21-24). Also, Jesus taught that the dead will be raised from their graves (John 5:28-29).

“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 he 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:

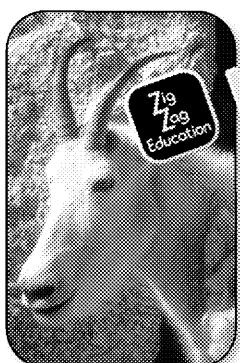
- ♦ Christians believe that there will be life after death.
 - This can comfort people because they know death will not be the end.
 - This can encourage them to live good lives because they know God will reward them.
- ♦ The event of resurrection illuminates the character of God.
 - God is powerful 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 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 **Note**: If Christians, such as Catholics, believe in **immortality of the soul** and that they believe that people are judged twice – when they die *and* at the end of time).

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

Jesus taught that after death people would be judged depending on how they were prepared for God and his Kingdom. He told **parables**, or stories like Aesop's fables, to explain what **judgment** and the end of time would be like. 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 tell 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 them 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: the Parable of the Talents – where Jesus says that those who are judged favourably and those who are not.

‘For all 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

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 wrote about 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 you know 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 in heaven, eternal in the heavens.’ (2 Corinthians 5:1)

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 of hell and judgment, were common on the walls of churches, to remind Christians that they would be judged and not be condemned to the eternal fire of hell.

Some Christians believe in a place called **purgatory**, where Christians can go to be purified of their sins before being allowed to enter heaven. Belief in purgatory is taught by Catholics who **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 in the 39 Articles of Faith in the Church of England Book of Common Prayer (also known as the 1500s), Article 22 states that the Church does not hold the Catholic belief in purgatory. Purgatory is not supported in the Bible, and has therefore been created by the Church of England.

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 **Old Testament** people was based on the belief that if people were already in heaven or hell forever after death, it made 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 religious groups. Different beliefs about purgatory held by the Church of England and Catholicism.

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

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

“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 the 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. The teachings portray the teachings about life after death as not reassuring, but scary – in order to know what will happen if you are not good.

Because some Christians believe that they should focus on the afterlife, belief in life after death 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.

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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 conversion.

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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, and those who hold it will feel that people of other religions can also experience God, and it may encourage them to work with people of other religions for common goals. Ultimately, however, they may still believe 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 afterlife and its significance from Christianity and one other religion practiced in Great Britain (e.g. 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 called **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 NKJV)

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

For many Jews there will be an equivalent of the Christian heaven where the righteous will live with God and friends again. Some believe in an equivalent of the Christian hell where the wicked will be punished 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 believe is the word of God (Allah) revealed through the Prophet Muhammad

Muslims, like Christians, believe in **heaven (Jannah)** and **hell (Jahannam)**, and **Akhirah**. Unlike some Christians who believe in **immortality of the soul**, all Muslims believe in **resurrection** of the body and **judgment** – that everyone 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 can 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 dwell beneath which rivers flow: they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of gold, and shall drink therein from vessels of gold, and 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 from suffering.
- ◆ **reincarnation** – the belief some continuation of a person is reborn in another body or state after death. (Buddhists do not believe in a soul.)
- ◆ **samsara** – the cycle of birth and rebirth



Image of a person in a state of suffering or pain, possibly representing the concept of dukkha.

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).

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This belief can be significant because it gives people a motivation to be good. Actions in this life are believed to affect whether someone will have a good or bad rebirth; as an insect could have a fortunate human rebirth, or a less desirable rebirth; as an insect would 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 and 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 the achievement of nirvana is dependent on their actions. Christians believe that everyone is guaranteed 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. In Buddhism, 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.

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. *Refer to different 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 the central question:

'If God is all-loving, **righteous**, and all-powerful, then why does he allow evil and suffering?' (1976)

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 and God 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. An all-powerful God 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 repayed, the Lord, who does not have a shadow of turning.' (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 (he has steadfast love).

'The LORD is a God of vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. He has acted for 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 Christianity, because its portrayal of God is (in their opinion) not accurate, and so it is not Christian faith.

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 question Christianity, because its portrayal of God is (in their opinion) not accurate, and so it is not 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 co

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 119:135 says that God is being **righteous** in allowing evil and suffering to be a **punishment** for their **sins**, and are already lucky that Jesus died to bring the world back to God. God punishes the wicked, and also that he treats those who worship him well.

'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 [Psalm 119](#) and [Psalm 138](#). See also [the Book of Job](#) and [Prayer](#).

'This is my comfort in my distress, that your promise gives me life... True promises come upon me, but your commandments are my delight.' (Psalm 119:105-110)

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 would still worship God if bad things had happened to him.

The Book of Job also explores the idea that evil and suffering are a *test of faith*. This passage states that without obstacles in a Christian's life they would not see any reason to doubt God's existence. The Book of Job shows that Job had a much deeper understanding of God after his trials. They made him think and really consider his relationship with God. Through his suffering Job never lost faith in God, but he could have – having a relationship with God after experiencing suffering shows that faith is more genuine.

There is a tension between having high standards and vice versa. If you have high standards, there is less need for God's grace. If you have less standards, there is less need for God's grace. If you have high standards, there is less need for God's grace. If you have less standards, there is less need for God's grace.

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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 sands of the sea.' (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 not be tested in everyday life.

Maybe God is not omnipotent

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

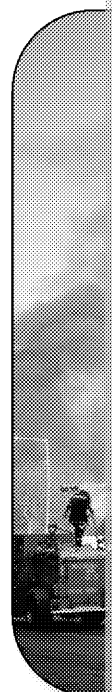
This could theoretically go for the world too – it might be impossible to create a planet which supported life which would not have bacteria and viruses which cause illness, and which would not have earthquakes and volcanoes which cause destruction.

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 good if they have not been tested by suffering, or have not overcome evil. If God wanted to create 'good' creatures, then this would be a problem because it was not a one-off event in the past, but that creation is ongoing – God tries to give them the chance to be good in the face of evil and suffering. This way, souls are created through overcoming difficulties and can actually be said to be good.



Some other

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Practical solutions

Some Christians give practical solutions to the problem – why **evil and suffering** 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 God to help them, which they wouldn't if they never suffered / had problems. They may also feel angry with God when they experience evil as in the **Book of Job**, but if they realise that evil and suffering are part of God's plan, they may have a stronger relationship with him in the end.



‘...he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; he did not turn away from me, 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 you through suffering? Have you ever had a good thing happen to you because of a bad thing?

Would you ever pray to God to stop 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 in order for Christians to feel that they should help those who are suffering, because Jesus taught that.

‘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 good if they did not help people in need, but they could not help people if there were no people in need.



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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 are good and do good things ♦ Jesus is suffering as a Christian because he punishes evil |
| 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 close relationship, e.g. speaking to them, 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, people could be opportunistic and solve basic issues, e.g. a student with no friends could get someone to help with their homework, without needing 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, e.g. they might have faith in God because they do not believe in other gods/evil/suffering |
| Beyond human understanding | This is impossible to disprove. | Many people believe in things that are beyond human understanding as it does not make sense |
|  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 have both good and bad sides are seen to have a purpose, the consequences of evil are not hard to see. If 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 think that the problem is that God could have created a world where it would be possible to have a world without evil/impossibility |
| 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 have been murdered because they have a life without freedom, no free will, and they commit crimes ♦ This does not seem like a natural solution, e.g. cancer |

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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 believe that suffering is necessary for soul-making. They think that without suffering, humans would not be able to develop morally and spiritually. |
| Prayer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who are not particularly religious sometimes say that “if I only pray when in trouble, my suffering may prompt the religious to pray more often for me. 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"> Christianity teaches that God answers prayer. However, many people who are not religious say that if God answers prayer, then why does evil and suffering exist? Many Christians believe that evil and suffering are necessary for soul-making, and that God allows them to stop all suffering. |
| 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 is a lot of charity in the world, but it is not enough to help all the suffering in the world. Charity is not a solution to evil and suffering because there are many people who are not charitable. |

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

For others, these solutions do solve the problem of evil and suffering and a world with no suffering is just, or is good for humans in some sense, and/or free will with freedom.

Pause for thought:

You could imagine whether you accept the free will solution by asking yourself what you would do if you were offered the ability to plug into a miraculous machine and experience a virtual life that is perfect and happy. But none of your ‘friends’ in the machine would be real and none of the things you would experience would be real either. Or, you could remain in real life, with struggles and hardships, but you would have to make your 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 the ‘trolley problem’ thought experiment. The Machine, created by the philosopher Robert Nozick, is a machine that can simulate a perfect life for anyone who plugs into it.)

Quick questions

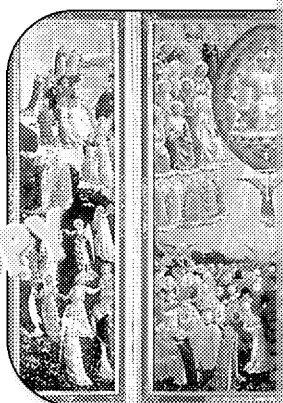
13. Outline **three** solutions to the problem of evil/suffering.

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Summary for Christian Beliefs

- 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 New Testament.
- 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 therefore they should look after themselves.
- 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, and that they are saved through his sacrifice.
- After celebrating a Jewish **Passover** meal, the **Last Supper**, with his **disciples**, Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot. 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**, he 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 a few, or to all who seek it and the Holy Spirit in their lives.
- Christians have various understandings concerning **eschatology**, the study of the end of the world. People would be **judged** after death and that they should be prepared for it. Christians believe in **heaven** and **hell** and some believe in **purgatory**, a place between heaven and hell. Some Christians believe that God will **resurrect** people's physical bodies and some believe that the **soul** lives on immediately after death and is immortal. Some Christians believe that only Christians will go to heaven, but others believe that 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**, **merciful** and **powerful**, he allows **evil and suffering** to exist. Believers may question their **faith**, if they feel that God does not allow **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; God's will being beyond human understanding; evil and suffering being necessary for **soul-making**; evil and suffering being a test of faith with God through **prayer**; and evil and suffering allowing opportunities for growth. There are pros and cons of all of these – some people consider some solutions successful.



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Living the Christian Life

Living a Christian life, including taking part in religious practices, is very important to Christians. Christians **worship** God through many methods and speak to him through prayer. Practices called **sacraments** are common in most **denominations**. Christians have seen **pilgrimages**. The **Church** and its work 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 broad term covering acts of devotion to God. This often includes prayer. 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, in the name of 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 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** has general responses, prayers, or to take part in **creeds**.

When – A **liturgy** where everything is set may be used when the service involves a sacrament. 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 of liturgy for the Church of England, first published in 1549 which contains liturgy for many occasions. It is the official prayer book for the Church of England, and has been revised many times over the years. It provides a framework which the Church of England deemed appropriate for all its churches to be accessed by all its 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 able to follow 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. Liturgical services can be divided into **liturgies**.

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 of 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 as one wants to.

Some people will class Quaker worship as non-liturgical because no hymns 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. Churches follow a lectionary; a set list of which Bible passages are to be read, and 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 wish, in formal and informal settings.

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 feel that sacraments are a way for Christians to commit to God, and some feel that God does things for them. These are associated with more formal worship, and often take place in a formal service.

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, as they feel these help them to get closer to the divine; this can be during worship, or at other times.

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

Christians from Churches such as the Catholic Church are likely to feel that **sacraments** and liturgical **worship** are particularly important. The Catholic Church should take part in sacraments and **liturgies** help to explain the purpose of worship, and the 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 substitute for liturgical worship. The Protestant 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 the Methodist Church have strong feelings in favour of liturgical worship, like the Catholic Church. Some feel that liturgical worship is important because it helps Christians to connect with God. Some feel that different individual practices are significant – Christians should not forget to pray, sing, read the Bible, for example, and so liturgical worship is significant because it allows Christians to do these things in different ways, and Christians attending liturgical services do not have to be creative. They can rely on God – the worship is prepared for them. Some such Protestants will also prefer to do liturgical worship – feeling that it is significant because it allows a more personal connection with God. Personal prayer with God is meaningful because Christians see themselves as individuals.

Some Christians do not see liturgical worship as significant at all. Some feel that other practices (other than prayer) which need to be carried out in order to have a connection with God, that formally-structured worship does not help Christians to reach God. Some feel that liturgical worship is not significant, because if they wait for God the Holy Spirit to come, they will be worshipping authentically – they will see any practice as significant to do (such as singing) as significant because they are called by God to do it. Some feel that 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 significance of 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 forefinger and thumb
- ◆ **Torah** – first five books of the Tanakh

Worship can take place in the synagogue, the Jewish holy building. **Prayer** is an important 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 at if they are able to. These take place in the evening, the morning and the afternoon. The Sabbath is from Friday evening until evening, as this is how they are described in the Genesis account of creation (the first day of the 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

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 the 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 for themselves tassels throughout their generations and to put a blue cord on 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)

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

Some synagogue services contain music, though the type of music and who leads it 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 is not practiced in modern Judaism.

Worship is significant to Jews because Jews believe that they should serve God by serving God. Worshipping God is also significant because Jews believe that God is present with them. Trying to understand God is important to Jews, as they feel that God’s commandments to them are of great importance. Worship centered on prayer has become particularly important to Jews because worship in the Temple; they have developed their worship of prayer more fully since the Temple 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 made towards Makkah (Mecca) in Saudi Arabia – special black, cube-shaped building inside the holiest mosque (**Al-Masjid al-Haram**). Prayers must be clean before praying, and must ritually wash their face, hands and feet (known as **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. 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 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** reasons why liturgical worship is important to Christians.

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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
- ♦ **sacrament** – a religiously important worship practice which has even higher status in some churches, such as 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 beliefs about the number of sacraments in Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant traditions

Sacraments are a few really important practices within Christianity. Christians view them as an important part of their Christian life and help them to commit to God and worship him. The word 'sacrament' comes from a Latin word meaning a soldier's oath, and so, basically, a sacrament is something a Christian does as a commitment to God.

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

Christians feel that such practices (sacraments and ordinances) are an important part of their Christian 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 Christians 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 thought of differently.

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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 – they will still have shown God's grace. Article 34 implies that sacraments, if 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 practice Penance, whereas Quakers and the Salvation Army do not. Some Protestant Churches do not have baptism or practice the Eucharist at all, as they do not see them as sacraments. Christians 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 commitment to God, rather than God's grace given to humanity. So sacraments are symbolic 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 confer grace.

List of Sacraments

- ◆ Confirmation is an affirmation of faith; in those churches which practice it, it is done when the Christian is old enough to confirm their faith for themselves. If 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> (see this reference for other references to the 39 Articles in this section.)

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

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 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, the latter if an adult is being baptised. Baptism is important because it shows the parents on their behalf, wishes to commit the faith and begin a new life in the Church. Churches, such as the Methodist Church, allow people to choose to have their infants, or to wait until they can choose adult baptism for themselves when they are old enough.

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 child. 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 of children into the Church, and follow this with confirmation when a Christian is older. In 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 the child three times, as the priest/vicar mentions each Person of God. (Some Catholics use the font.) 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 promise to raise the child in the Christian faith. A candle may be presented to the child to symbolise Jesus' light.

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

In the past, people who did not believe in Jesus were not allowed to enter heaven. Today, however, anyone who believes in Jesus can enter heaven today.

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Nature and importance of the meaning and celebration of the Eucharist in different denominations

The **Eucharist** is the sharing of bread and wine which represent Jesus' body and blood, given 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 is important to Christians because it reminds them that they are saved through Jesus' **crucifixion**. Jesus' 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 when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, my brothers, for the 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 given to someone **ordained**; by priests and deacons (and bishops).

The Eucharist may take place within a set **liturgy**. In Catholicism, this is the Mass, which includes words with congregational responses, and set prayers. **Credo**s are also included, as well as hymns, or words to music. There will also be a sermon, Bible readings and prayers. 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 drink 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 it is consecrated. This is one reason why it needs to be consumed immediately. The Eucharist is particularly important to Catholics as it is a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice and 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 have made a special First Communion service. The first time they receive the Eucharist is as part of this service.

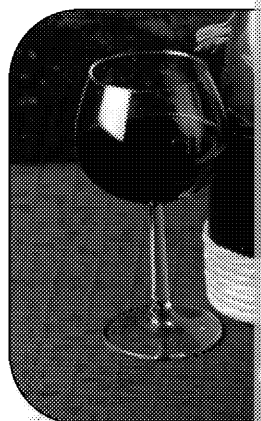
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Anglican Eucharist Details

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**.



Bread and wine. The

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 states that **transubstantiation** has no basis in the Bible and is wrong, and should not be reserved for the dead or worshipped. Article 31 states that Jesus' sacrifice for sins, and not people who claim that Jesus is resacrificed in the Mass are that those who are wicked do not really receive sacraments, even if they take the Eucharist should not be denied to ordinary people, as Jesus' sacrifice is denied to those excommunicated (cut off from the Church) until they are re (Article 33).

Some Anglican churches expect those receiving the Eucharist to be confirmed, and allow those of other denominations who receive the Eucharist in their own churches to do so 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 service, and they all eat and drink at the same time, to show unity in Jesus. (Small individual glasses are used.)
- ◆ The Church of Scotland passes the bread and wine of the Eucharist from the minister to 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 consecrated element.
- ◆ Many Christians see the bread and wine as symbolic, but not actually, the body and blood of Jesus – unlike strict Catholics or Anglicans. In many denominations, the Eucharist is not necessary for salvation, and confirmation is not necessary for receiving the Eucharist.

Quick questions

16. State **three** practices which may be considered as 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.

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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 at 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 how 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, examples, when, why

There are two main 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 and know a prayer which expresses this well. They are often used in church services because Christians believe they ought to pray these prayers. Christians pray in the way he taught them to in the Lord's Prayer. Different **denominations** have their own set prayers which express the things they feel it important to express to God, and how they should pray.

However, Christians can pray anything to God, and may choose to mix up different prayers 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 is used 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 feel more comfortable, 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 because of his salvation. 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 pray to let God know that they are grateful.

Confession – telling God that one is sorry, and what for, and asking for forgiveness. Christians believe that 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. For an individual, they are highly changeable and personal. Christians may often pray for other Christians in the world and to guide politicians, because they believe he can hear them. Many prayers of intercession will be very individual; for example, ‘Please God, help my father in hospital’, or ‘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 pray 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 among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus Christ, Son of God.
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 all Christians can use to pray. What is usually used today has been slightly modified, but it is very similar to the original. The Lord's Prayer includes adoration and confession. It also features supplication, asking God for help the person praying. These are also features of many Christian prayers. Christians want to ask God for strength and guidance. Christians pray this at 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. They have been taught by Jesus in sections of the Bible, and the Church. They feel that praying set prayers is a way of communicating with God. Set prayers can also be important because they show 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 particularly important. They feel that a relationship with God should be personal – some see praying set 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 reflect on their faith and develop their faith, and this is what many aim to do while on pilgrimage.

Christians 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 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.

Jews used to travel to the Jerusalem **Temple** for the important celebration of the Passover, and the wider Jewish community when celebrating, and because it was more spiritually significant in the Jewish holy place (Jews believed that God resided within the Temple). Many Jews sacrificed at the Temple as part of the celebration. Not all Jews were able to go to Jerusalem for Passover or celebration, but they might make the effort to go once, or even more often. 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, and at the festival of booths.’ (Deuteronomy 16:16 NRSV)

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

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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 fulfil the law of scripture, and to teach. Some Christians will take this as a purpose for their 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. Some feel that **faith** has been strengthened by visiting a special place. Some feel better able to connect with Jesus who are also seeking him at pilgrimage sites. Some communities are able to grow in faith and can deepen their **faith** as a result. Some religious communities are able to grow in faith on God because of money that is received from being visited by pilgrims (people who go on pilgrimage).

Catholics are 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.

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Not all Christians believe places are important in themselves; many Protestants believe that 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. The point of spending time and money worshipping somewhere else when they can do it at home is not clear.

Significance of places people go on pilgrimage

There are different things that are special about different pilgrimage sites. The things that are 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 past. 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, the River Jordan where he was **baptised**, among other places of interest. Pilgrims in Jerusalem 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 that 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 community of monks who helped to evangelise the surrounding area. Situated here now is a centre where people can 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 monks from several different denominations and come from many different countries – making it ecumenical. It is famous for a particular style of music and for popularising spirituality among young people. Many young people are young and come to join in religious activities with the monks, including living in the community.

Walsingham

Walsingham is in Norfolk in England. It is important to Christians who place particular importance on Jesus' mother, Mary. A vision 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 show devotion to her at the shrines.

Quick questions

19. State three places where Christians may go on pilgrimage.

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Christian Religious Celebrations

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

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 tell others in his name, they may see the future
- ♦ **saints** – Christians who have died, especially those recognised by the Church as good people, living close to God and doing his work
- ♦ **vigil** – staying awake for a reason, such as meditation or prayer
- ♦ **virgin birth** – the belief that Mary was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus, conceived naturally, but by the Holy Spirit

Nature and history of Christian festivals in the Church year

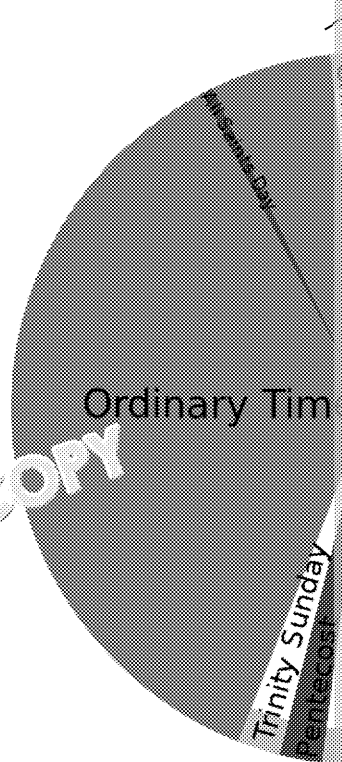
Much of the Church year is classed as 'ordinary time' – no festivals are being celebrated.

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 Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 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 more festivals).

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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, 'God with us'. While Easter, which celebrates Jesus' death and **resurrection**, is important, there would be no Easter without Christmas, and so Christmas is about Jesus coming to Earth, he could not have died for Christians' sins. Not only **incarnate**, could give Christians an example to follow and pass on **God's Word**. Christmas gives Christians a special time to focus on this, and to aim to imitate God. Christmas is also a time when Christians hope and pray for peace in the world, celebrated on different days in different countries and traditions. In England it is on 25th December, but this was probably not Jesus' birth date.

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 for most Christians not on the first of December. This means that sometimes it begins at the end of November, sometimes in early December. Historically, it was more like Lent, a time of reflection and repentance, emphasised by fasting. It is significant because it allows Christians to prepare spiritually 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 candles is part of Christians' meditations on the events leading up to Christmas, and its meaning.

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 **Eucharist** on Christmas, and Jesus into the new year.

History of Christmas – synopsis of biblical accounts of Christmas and teaching

Both the Gospels of Matthew and Luke contain birth narratives and they describe how it happened 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 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 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 the wise men if they had found the Messiah. The wise men also visited Jesus and his parents, but refused to go back to Herod. The visit of the wise men is celebrated at Epiphany, traditionally on 6 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 should not be confused with the immaculate conception, which is believed in 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 also linked to the Jewish **Passover**, which does not fall on the same date every year. Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon in March or April.

1 Corinthians 15:12–34 can be interpreted as showing that Easter provides *hope* 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 him. 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 one of the first persecuted Christians. Christianity was a new experience when Jesus speaking to the blind by a sign. An important apostle who wrote many of the letters.

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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 king in a conventional sense.

Also often remembered during Holy Week is the turning over 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). The people in the Temple 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 trial 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 lives, 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 the church is decorated with stations to meditate; and symbols, such as a cross, a whip, a crown of thorns, are placed in prominent positions.

Quick questions

20. Explain **two** reasons why Christmas is important to Christians.
21. 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 declined in many countries which had traditionally been strongly Christian, and **agnosticism** and **atheism** are on the rise. However, Christianity does appear to be on the rise in the Southern hemisphere. As Christianity continues to flourish, Christians should learn lessons from the past, and work to improve the future.

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 Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Churches in 1054
- ♦ **missionary work** – converting people to evangelism and helping people practice their faith
- ♦ **Reformation** – the split between the Catholic Church and Protestant Churches in the 1500s
- ♦ **St Paul** – a key figure for Christians; he helped to spread early Christianity and helped to establish churches
- ♦ **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 help with 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 spread the news about Jesus' mission – God the Father sent Jesus, and then Jesus sent his disciples to spread the news about him. The Holy Spirit helps from the Holy Spirit.

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

History of Church growth, missionary work and evangelical work

Christian **evangelism** and **missionary work** began with Jesus. He reached out, taught, and converted people. The number of Christians grew rapidly after his death. The number of Christians grew rapidly after his death.

To begin with, after Jesus' death, evangelism took place very locally. Jesus' 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, and communities kept in touch via letter writing.

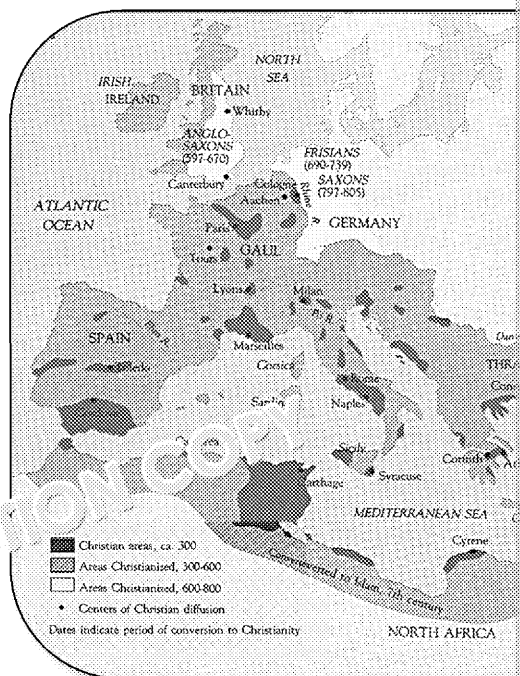
'And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.'
(Acts 1:8 NRSV)

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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.

After the **Great Schism**, the split between the **Eastern Orthodox** and **Western Catholic Churches**, both branches of Christianity spread separately. Christianity became widespread in much of Europe.



Map showing the spread of Christianity

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

Slightly later missionaries were sent by Churches, rather than state powers. This led to 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. A large majority of people (who did not belong to another religion) attended church in the past. Globalisation has made it easier for missionary organisations to send people abroad.

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. toddler groups, youth groups, 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 communities to benefit the community. (missionary and evangelism)
- Street pastors** (volunteers who do not have to be **ordained**) provide practical support for members of the community, providing support for vulnerable people, and social support. (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 made more disciples after he rose from the dead, in the **Great Commission**. **Peter the apostle** who was active shortly after Jesus' death, was highly regarded by many and spent much of his time evangelising (as recorded in the historical 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 incentivised to evangelise out of conviction. They know God, and especially those who believe that Christianity is the only way to God. It is important to help other people to know God. In the Great Commission, those who do 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

22. 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 offer regular 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 Christians by offering support to those who attend and those who do not – and also to help the community in general. It is important because it provides a place where Christians can worship and receive sacraments.

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



It will provide services, usually once or twice on a Sunday, but within some churches, services are held 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 experience religion 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 can visit them, 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 who have a problem that has happened in their lives and they need support. Sometimes, this is something that is difficult for them. These visits are important, and they make sure that everyone is provided with support 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. Many church activities are not necessarily worship-focused, such as youth groups or weekly meetings for discussion and support with each other. Friendship and community are also an important part of many churches.

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. It is important because it helps to unite the Christian community, and can also help to 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 large scale, such as building a house in a poor country, or running another type of charity project. Local churches often have links with charities and good causes, and may also support local issues and raise money for them. Some churches have **food banks** which provide food for the hungry. Some support **street pastors** – putting volunteers on the streets to help vulnerable people. Such community involvement can be very effective. If 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 providing what 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 Christian leaders that they should look after their **congregation** for God, and that they will be rewarded for it. It also tells them to be good examples to their members.

'... 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 to do. Do not lord it over the flock, but 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 many 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. This means that churches help people in many ways – helping those in need and doing good by helping them.

Quick questions

23. Explain **two** reasons why a local church may help local Christians and the wider community.

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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. It is not used to refer to an individual Christian **denomination** globally; for example, the Catholic Church is not 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 main Christian denominations. The Catholic Church is not a member, but does work with them. 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 **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.

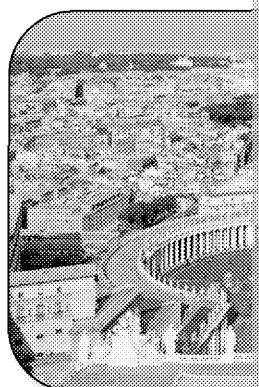
On a global scale, denominations can try to set guidelines for worship practices and particular beliefs. If they did not do this, then there might not be unity within the same denomination.

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, or someone who can answer their questions or help with their problems locally. Another Christian to help them with a religious or practical problem further.

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

How and why the Church 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 smallest country in the world

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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 and create a better world. They also work for reconciliation because Jesus stressed that Jesus taught to treat enemies well, to forgive others, and to treat people with kindness.

‘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 say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...’ (Matthew 5:43–44)

‘Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often 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 be able to read or 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 Christians have persecuted **atheists** and members of non-Christian religions as well.

The Church has tried to support persecuted Christians, but this is not always successful. 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 it can help members of other religions for a more tolerant society.

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

Divergent Christian views on teachings about charity

Many Christians believe 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 that those who give food and shelter, will be the ones to inherit the kingdom – 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 shelter, 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 members of my body, so you will do it to 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 one has, is more important than giving a lot if it does not make a dent in one's personal wealth – he praised the poor widow for giving a small amount to the Temple because she could not afford it.

St Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 13 that love is more important than giving. He said that Christians need to love each other, but giving charity and give benevolently; just going through the motions is meaningless. This implies that he felt Christians would be rewarded for what they were 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 this is what is taught in the parable of the sheep and the goats – if they give, they will go to heaven. Others take what St Paul said seriously, and feel that they must give out of love. Some argue that as loving people is more important than giving charity, charity is not as important and will disagree.

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.

‘You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and 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). The word ‘tithe’ derives from, because this was commanded in the Old Testament. Some Christians use it for expenses such as taxes; others calculate it in different ways, or try to give a percentage of their income.

‘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

There are many charities which exist worldwide to help others, for example Christian Aid. Christian Aid aims primarily to support the poor (Christians and non-Christians) practically in the poorest, least-developed countries, responding to natural disasters; helping with medical care, shelter and education; and helping refugees.

One of the main projects which Christian Aid has been working on in recent years is the Syrian people need food, shelter and medical supplies, as well as education.

Christian Aid often works with small, local organisations in the places it helps. It often tries to use sustainable development, for example, by giving a family a chicken – when the chicken lays eggs, they can eat them and/or income.

Christian Aid also campaigns for change, hoping that governments will work to improve the lives of the poor.

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Christian Aid campaigns in various ways, including television and Internet as fundraising. In May every year they hold Christian Aid week, where volunteers go through people's doors and then go back to collect them. Many churches support Christian Aid.

Christian Aid carries out its work because of the biblical teachings to help the poor and for those who do not have what they need to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives. Everyone deserves the chance to have a fulfilling life, without living in poverty. This is a reality.

Quick questions

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

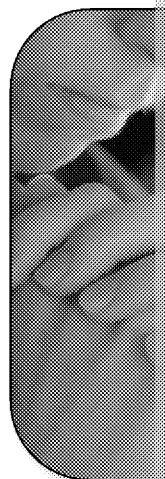


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Summary for Living the Christian Life

- ♦ **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 in Jerusalem. The Muslims' holy day is Friday. The Jews' holy day is the **Sabbath** (Friday evening until Saturday evening). The mosque and their holy day is Friday.
- ♦ Some **denominations** practice up to seven **sacraments**, special **worship**. All accept **baptism** and the **Eucharist** as sacraments. Baptism is where a person is accepted into the Church through being anointed with, or immersed in, water. The **Last Supper**, where bread and wine are shared to remember Jesus' 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 through **missionary** work – has always been important to Christians because Christians to make more **disciples**. Evangelism happens in many different ways: through national church outreach and through travelling missionaries, among others.
- ♦ The local church is important for different reasons. It provides services for Christians and the local community, in order to help Christians' spiritual **evangelism**.
- ♦ The Church does many things in the worldwide community – including addressing social inequality, and **evangelising** – and individual **denominations** try to express their belief. Some Christians are **persecuted**, and this is a problem for the Church. Worldwide support charity, including charitable organisations such as Christian Aid.



Candle

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Answers

Christian Beliefs



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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, broke ♦ He told them that the wine he was sharing was his blood, given as a new ♦ He said that one of his disciples would betray him. <p>Accept any relevant point 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 w ♦ The tearing of the curtain in the Temple showed that the boundary betwe ♦ humans had been removed. ♦ Christians may believe that Jesus' last days and death fulfilled Old Testam ♦ that Jesus was a suffering servant. ♦ This is important because it shows that Jesus was part of God's long-term ♦ planned to save humanity. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development 1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4) One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant, supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Paul taught that Jesus had saved Christians from sin and death. ♦ This means that Christians do not have to worry when they do something ♦ 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 ♦ death' (Romans 8:2 NRSV) ♦ St Augustine taught that salvation was predestined – God has chosen who ♦ advance, before they are born. ♦ This means that salvation is granted due to God's grace only, and is not ♦ good actions that an individual does. <p>Accept any relevant teaching, any relevant development, and any relevant source of wisdom and authority. 1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a source of wisdom and authority. One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant, 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 in</p> <table> <tr> <th>Connections</th><th>Judgments</th></tr> <tr> <td>A few 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>Many shallow connections between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion.</td><td>Some attempt at supporting arguments and evaluation, though conclusion does not fully follow.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Good reasoning and different points considered. <i>Partially</i> answers question. Good understanding of religion.</td><td>Most points are well-supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is <i>somewhat</i> supported.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Critical reasoning and different points considered. <i>Fully</i> answers question. <i>Consistently</i> good understanding of religion.</td><td>All points are well-supported with comprehensive evaluation leading to a conclusion which is <i>fully</i> supported.</td></tr> </table> | Connections | Judgments | A few 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. | Many shallow connections between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion. | Some attempt at supporting arguments and evaluation, though conclusion does not fully follow. | Good reasoning and different points considered. <i>Partially</i> answers question. Good understanding of religion. | Most points are well-supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is <i>somewhat</i> supported. | Critical reasoning and different points considered. <i>Fully</i> answers question. <i>Consistently</i> good understanding of religion. | All 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. 'the dead will rise' – their graves will rise. This implies they will not go immediately to heaven or hell. ♦ Many Christians believe in purgatory at the end of time – it is a place for people to enter heaven after they have been judged. Many Protestant Christians do not believe in purgatory, but in hell. Purgatory is not mentioned in the Bible. <p>Accept any relevant reason and justification.</p> <p>Answers that do not refer to different Christian points of view can score a maximum of 1 mark.</p> |
| 11 | <p>♦ benevolent/loving</p> <p>♦ righteous</p> <p>♦ omnipotent/powerful</p> <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-powerful and powerful God. ♦ They may feel that it does not make sense to allow evil and suffering if God is all-powerful 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 powerful, so 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 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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Living the Christian Life

| Question Number | Answer/mark Scheme | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------|-----------|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| 14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Bible reading ♦ Singing hymns ♦ Sermon <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per practice, maximum 3</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Liturgical worship is important to Christians as worship with a familiar structure allows Christians to feel comfortable during the practice of worship. ♦ If Christians are familiar with the structure of worship then they are free to focus on God, rather than thinking about what might be coming next, or how to carry out the practice. ♦ Liturgical worship is important to Christians because it provides a setting for prayer. ♦ For Christians, such as many Catholics, liturgical worship is vital as they believe they receive God's grace through the sacraments, and without liturgical worship they are unable to receive God's grace in this way. <p>Accept any relevant reason, and any relevant development 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, and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</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 border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Connections</th><th>Judgments</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <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> </tbody> </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 |
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| 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, which could imply that those who are not baptised will not be saved. ♦ 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 has two sacraments; all are important, but churches celebrate baptism and the Eucharist as sacraments that are clearly more important than the others. ♦ Quakers and the Salvation Army do not celebrate baptism or the Eucharist; for them baptism is not a sacrament, so for them baptism is not as important. ♦ 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 who have not been baptised. <p>Accept any relevant point or justification.</p> |
| 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"> ♦ Christmas is important to Christians because it is when they celebrate Jesus' birth into 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 and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p> |
| 21 | <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 humanity by dying and rising triumphant. ♦ Christians believe that because of this, they can have a relationship with God and are 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 to the question and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p> |

| Question Number | Answer/mark Scheme |
|-----------------|--|
| 22 | <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> |
| 23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many Christians believe that they should help others, because they would like to be helped themselves – therefore the local church wants to help local Christians and non-Christians 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 and non-Christians because the Bible teaches that Christians 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 to the question asked, and supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p> |
| 24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christians give charity because Jesus taught that those who helped others would inherit life in heaven. Christians give charity because Jesus taught that people should love others, and the Bible shows this love. Christians may give charity because the Old Testament teaches that people should love their neighbour as themselves, and this love is shown to God. <p>Accept any relevant reason</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p> |
| 25 | <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 world where everyone is treated equally and with respect. "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 those who treated them badly, 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) '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 say to 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 developed point (maximum 4), 1 mark for a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question asked, 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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