



# **Course Companion for GCSE Edexcel B Paper 1 Sections 2 and 4 – Christianity**

Marriage and the Family

Matters of Life and Death

H Rich

[zigzageducation.co.uk](http://zigzageducation.co.uk)

**POD  
8417**

Follow us on Twitter **@ZigZagRS**

Publish your own work... Write to a brief...  
Register at **[publishmenow.co.uk](http://publishmenow.co.uk)**

# Contents

Thank You for Choosing ZigZag Education.....	
Teacher Feedback Opportunity.....	
Terms and Conditions of Use .....	
Teacher's Introduction.....	
Introduction to the Course and How to Answer Examination Questions .....	
Marriage and the Family .....	
Marriage .....	
Sexual Relations .....	
Families .....	
Support for the Family in the Local Parish .....	
Family Planning, Regulation of Births and Contraception .....	
Divorce.....	
Equality of Men and Women in the Family .....	
Gender Prejudice and Discrimination.....	
Summary of Marriage and the Family .....	
Matters of Life and Death .....	
Origins and Value of the Universe .....	
Sanctity of Life .....	
Origins and Value of Human Life .....	
Abortion.....	
Life after Death.....	
Non-religious Arguments against Life after Death.....	
Euthanasia .....	
Issues in the Natural World .....	
Summary of Matters of Life and Death.....	
Answers .....	
Marriage and the Family .....	
Matters of Life and Death .....	

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



# Teacher's Introduction

This resource has been designed to support the learning and teaching of Edexcel B GCSE Religious Studies Area of Study 1: Section 2: Marriage and the Family, and Section 4: Matters of Life and Death – for study with the religion of Christianity. All areas of the specification are covered, and questions and activities are included to test knowledge and ability, and to help students to engage with the topics.

The information is comprehensive, and images help to illustrate concepts. There are included to help students to understand the material and to further their learning. A brief introduction to the course and answering exam questions is provided. Answers and a mark scheme are included at the end.

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

This topic involves studying a number of different arguments, ideas and opinions from both Christian and non-religious perspectives. This should both inform students and enable them to approach issues from different points of view.

Common and divergent Christian perspectives are covered, as are non-religious perspectives.

We have sought a balance between explaining relevant concepts in sufficient detail without oversimplification, whilst avoiding going beyond GCSE level and becoming too technical. We have tried to present the views in a neutral and informative way.

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

*Note: this theme covers several controversial and potentially upsetting issues such as homosexuality and euthanasia. It is advised that teachers review these sections before sharing them with their classes, as they may distress or offend.*

**Free Updates!**

Enter your email address to receive any future free updates made to this resource or other RS resources your school has purchased, and details of any promotions for your school.

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

**Go to [zzed.uk/freeupdates](http://zzed.uk/freeupdates)**

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



# Introduction to the Course and How to Answer

This course aims to cover Christian and non-religious beliefs, teachings and arguments, family and matters of life and death, as well as philosophical and ethical theory and understanding of these ideas.

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

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

For each of the two sections you will get a 3-mark, 4-mark, 5-mark, and 12-mark question in the exam.

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

For the **3-mark question** you will be asked to 'outline' three examples, such as the following. For 'outline' questions you can give three short, concise answers. You will get 1 mark for each, making up to a maximum of 3 marks.

For the **4-mark question** you will be asked to 'explain' two things, e.g. reasons for a belief. You need to give two different points, and, to get full marks, you must develop both; for example, with a quote or other evidence. So you can think of it as 2 marks per point and a mark for developing each point. This should show that you understand the information as well as being able to recall it. The developments must be relevant to the point they are justifying and to the question, and you will not get full marks if you give the same justification for both points you give in one answer.

The **5-mark question** is very similar to the 4-mark question. As well as making points, you should develop/justify both, you should refer to at least one source of wisdom or authority (Bible or Catholic teaching (as well as your development/justification)). Again, the points are as different as possible so that the person marking gives you credit for each 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 for and against the statement (so agreeing with the statement and an alternative view). Make sure you have good reasons for all the points you make and also need to reach a conclusion, picking the most convincing side of the argument (based on the given!) and stating why you think this is the case. You need to refer to Christian teaching, non-religious arguments and philosophical/ethical arguments, or different Christian points.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



# Marriage and the Family

Many Christians look to their religion to provide them with **moral** guidance. Teachings regarding **marriage**, sexual relationships and families within Christianity. **homosexuality**, **contraception** and **divorce** are controversial within the religion. Some Christians support local families, and some Christians see different roles for men and women, while others do not.

## Keywords:

- ❖ **contraception** – methods which aim to stop someone becoming pregnant. Includes sexual intercourse with contraception.
- ❖ **divorce** – the legal end of a marriage.
- ❖ **homosexuality** – a sexual orientation where people are attracted to people of the same sex.
- ❖ **marriage** – a legal joining of two people. In Christianity, this is normally a sacrament, which is seen as spiritual as well.
- ❖ **morality** – ideas about what is right and wrong.

## Marriage

The Bible contains teaching about **marriage**, and different Church **denominations** have different views about marriage, which may be due to different interpretations of the Bible.

## Keywords:

- ❖ **atheist** – someone who does not believe in God.
- ❖ **cohabitation** – living with a partner unmarried, often with a sexual relationship.
- ❖ **denomination** – a particular branch within a religion, e.g. Catholicism, Anglicanism.
- ❖ **humanist** – someone who aims to live a good life, without belief in God.
- ❖ **procreation** – making/having children.
- ❖ **sacrament** – a particularly important worship practice which has even higher status in some religions, like the Eucharist in Orthodox Churches.
- ❖ **sanc** – something that is considered holy or sacred.

## Christian Teachings about the Purpose and Importance of Marriage

Different Christians may think **marriage** has different purposes and is important for different reasons.

- A purpose of marriage for Christians is **procreation** and raising a family. Some Christians see being married as being a good thing *if* you want to have a family, to provide a stable environment for children. Other Christians think that once married you *should* have a family and should actively try to have children. This is based on Bible verses such as 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...' (Genesis 1:28 NRSV), which tells humans to have children. This is taught by the Catholic Church, and some more conservative Orthodox Christians or Protestant **denominations** of Christianity).
  - ↳ So marriage can be important for Christians if they believe it provides a stable environment for children. Those who see having a family as being an important part of God's plan, see marriage as significant in their Christian life in that it allows them to raise children in the faith.

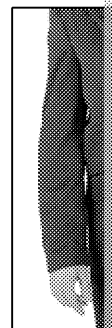
*'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...' (Genesis 1:28 NRSV)*

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



- A purpose of marriage for Christians is to allow couples to express love and friendship; to care for and support each other through life.
  - ↳ This makes marriage important because a married couple's love and friendship may play a very large part in their lives. Because of the amount of time a Christian will spend with their spouse, trying to love and support them, marriage will be significant in their Christian life as Jesus taught to love and treat them well.



A girl



*'The first shall be last and the last shall be first; for this is the law of love. (Matthew 7:12 NRSV) [The Golden Rule]*

- A purpose of marriage for many Christians is being able to have sex. Many Christians believe that sex should not have sex outside of marriage, or at least that long-term sex should be within marriage, to make them official. The Catholic Church teaches that sex is a person's dignity, so marriage is important for allowing sex which they consider 'good'.
  - ↳ This makes marriage important for Christians as it allows them to have a commitment to their partner through sex.

*'But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female." For this reason the man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' (Mark 10:6-8 NRSV)*

*'Fornication is carnal union between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman. It is a sin against the dignity of persons and of the institution of marriage which is naturally ordered to the good of spouses and the education of children.' (Catholic Catechism 2353)*



- Many Christians also think a purpose of marriage is to symbolise the relationship between Jesus (represented by the husband) and his Church (represented by the wife) because of this; this is indicated in Ephesians 5.
  - ↳ So marriage represents an even more important relationship of love and commitment. Some feminist Christians may not like this comparison, as it may make the female partner. However, for those who do make this comparison, it reflects the relationship between Jesus and Christians.

*'For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church...' (Ephesians 5:22-23)*

- Some Christians believe that marriage is important because it is a **sacrament**, a sacred practice, which they believe is how God's grace is received. It is significant in Christianity as a way of receiving God's grace and fulfilling his purpose. This is believed by some Christians as a central part of Christianity. For those who believe this, marriage is a sacrament. Those who believe this believe it is especially important not to divorce. Christians who do not believe marriage is a sacrament still think it is an important part of life.

*'So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.' (Mark 10:8-9 NRSV)*

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



- Many Christians think that marriage is important because it has been a good idea for people to get married, and Jesus appears to have approved of marriage. He had intended for marriage, and joined people together in marriage (in the Bible).
- Many Christians see marriage as important in helping to maintain a stable society. Marriage helps with break-ups and changing relationships.

## Atheist and Humanist Approaches to Marriage and Cohabitation

Some non-religious people (including **atheists** and **humanists**) see no need for marriage. They think that **cohabitation** – living together unmarried – is perfectly acceptable, because there is no God to decree that marriage is the only way and people can live together in just the same way without making public promises on a piece of paper. They would not feel that marriage has **sanctity**. They may feel that cohabiting couples still help to form a stable society, and provide stability for raising a family.

They may also feel that there is no point to marriage and/or that cohabiting is more sensible than marriage because many couples split up, and having to go through a **divorce** is messy and expensive, and does not help with stability for any children involved.

However, some atheists and humanists may still think that marriage is a good idea, not for religious reasons, but for stability, and because it requires couples to make a commitment to each other, which may make them happy and help them to lead good lives. Many humanists have humanist weddings, so that they can have a ceremony which suits them, but is not religious. In some places in the world, humanist marriages are legally recognised, and in others humanists may have a humanist celebration after an ordinary civil ceremony. The fact that Humanists have ceremonies shows that many humanists do value marriage, even without religious significance.

## Christian Responses

Some Christians object to cohabitation due to believing that sex should only be for marriage (e.g. Catholics). Some may feel that there are valid objections to **cohabitation** if you do not take God's will and religious factors into account:

- Being comfortable with cohabitation may mean that couples move forward with a relationship – this can cause problems if they decide to split up and one of them has to move out of their shared accommodation.
- Cohabitation and sex before marriage may be a bad idea if children are born from an unstable cohabiting relationship.

However, tolerant Protestants may accept cohabiting couples – the Church of England, for example, accept cohabiting couples working towards marriage. Some modern Christians think it is fine even if the couple are not sure they will get married, because they think that the teaching in Christianity, such as the Golden Rule (see above).

## Quick Questions

1. Outline **three** reasons why a Christian may feel marriage is important.
2. Outline **three** reasons why a non-religious person may feel that marriage is important.
3. Explain **two** purposes of marriage for Christians.

## Sexual Relationships

As seen above, part of the importance of **marriage** for Christians is the intimate relationship. Different Christians have different views on different types of sexual relationships.

### Keywords:

- ❖ **celibacy** – the state of not engaging in romantic relationships or sexual activity
- ❖ **contraception** – methods which aim to stop someone becoming pregnant or prevent sexually transmitted infections
- ❖ **extramarital sex** – sex where at least one of the participants is married to someone else
- ❖ **fornication** – sex outside of marriage
- ❖ **homosexuality** – a sexual orientation where people are attracted to people of the same sex
- ❖ **nuclear family** – a unit of parents living together with their biological children
- ❖ **open marriage** – a marriage where the partners agree they can have sex with other people
- ❖ **premarital sex** – sex before being married

### Nature and Importance of Sexual Relationships for Christians

Most Christians see sexual relationships as important, and not something to be avoided, because they see them as something which conveys love and commitment. Some Christians indicate that sex forms a bond between a couple, so sex is significant.

*'But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female." For this reason the father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' (Mark 10:6-8 NRSV)*

Some Christians believe that sex is only for **procreation** (the teaching of the Church that the only form of artificial contraception should be used). Moreover, some Christians believe that sexual acts other than vaginal sexual intercourse, as other sexual acts are not acts of procreation. Some Christians will not engage in other types of sexual activity, though many Christians see sex as designed as an enjoyable activity, and will engage in other types of sexual activity with their partner/spouse.

One important early Christian, St Paul, believed that it was better to be **celibate** than to marry, and remain more focused on God. Some Christians have agreed with this, and have dedicated their lives more fully to God. Some join religious orders and become monks or nuns. In the Catholic Church, priests must remain unmarried and celibate, as they are seen to be more focused on God.

*'...he who marries his fiancée does well; and he who refrains from marriage does better.' (1 Corinthians 7:38 NRSV)*

St Paul recommended that married couples should have sex with each other regularly, but if they decided to refrain from sex for a time to focus on their relationship with God, that was also acceptable.

*'Do not let anyone make you an ascetic, or abstinent, or celibate, or single, or without marriage, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven and the world, for these things are a human invention. But if you agree with each other, and the Lord will, come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of control.' (1 Corinthians 7:5 NRSV)*

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED





## Attitudes to Sex Outside of Marriage

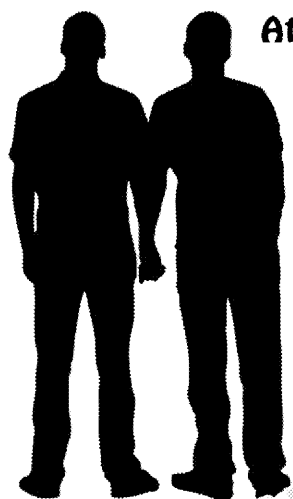
Many Christians believe that sexual relationships should take place only with the teaching of the Catholic Church, and a more conservative Christian view. However, other Christians have a more relaxed view to **premarital sex**, sex before being married in a committed relationship.

However, most Christians disapprove of **adultery**, also called **extramarital sex**, where someone who is married has sex with someone other than their spouse (husband or wife). This is against the Ten Commandments, important laws in the **Old Testament** which many Christians believe are generally seen to be the opposite of being loving. Most people would not want to do anything to them, so Christians believe it is wrong to do something they would not want done to them (see the Rule in the **Marriage** above).

*'You shall not commit adultery.'* (Exodus 20:14 NRSV)

Non-religious people such as **humanists** and **atheists** are likely not to have a problem with sex so long as it is consensual. Some will feel that sex should only take place in a committed relationship, though others feel that sex is a personal decision and if someone wants to have sex, then that is their choice. Some Christians do agree, and accept some premarital sex (see the **Marriage** above). However, this is not the case with many Christians – see Christian objections to premarital sex.

Humanists and atheists are likely to disapprove of adultery in the sense that cheating on your partner is wrong. This is especially true for humanists, as they believe in treating others with respect and dignity. However, humanists and atheists may not see adultery as a problem if a couple has already split up, as they are going through the process of ending their relationship. They may see the cheating as the problem, rather than the breaking of marriage. Atheists may also accept **polyamorous marriages**, where a couple is married, but they can have sex with other people; because both partners agree on this, it may be seen as acceptable. However, most Christians will not see this as acceptable because they believe in a monogamous relationship and married partners should only have sex with each other.



## Attitudes to Homosexuality

There are various different attitudes to **homosexuality**.

Some Christians, such as Evangelical Christians, believe that homosexuality is wrong in itself, and that if people **pray** to God, he will help them control their homosexual feelings. This is based on teaching in the Bible about homosexuality.

*'You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.'* (Leviticus 18:22 NRSV)

*'You must not indulge in sexual immorality...'* (1 Corinthians 6:18 NRSV)

Some other Christians believe that homosexual activity is a sin, but that it is not sinful if people control them and do not act on them, because their feelings are not sinful. This is taught by the Catholic Church, and also believed by some conservative Orthodox Christians. They believe homosexual activity is sinful because it is prohibited in the Bible.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



example in Leviticus, and sexual immorality is prohibited in some **New Testament**. Some Christians interpret these references to include homosexual sex. The Catholic Church opposes homosexual sex because its position is that all sexual activity should be open to the possibility of procreation; this is not possible with homosexual sex. They may also feel that homosexuality is a sin because of the role of the traditional **nuclear family** as a foundation for society.

However, some Christians, such as more liberal Protestants, are not opposed to homosexual relationships. One reason for this is that they may feel that the commandments in the Old Testament do not need to be followed any more because Christians are not bound by the **Jewish law**. For example, Christians do not keep many Jewish dietary laws, such as which Jews eat, or purity, or cleanliness, as Christians feel that they have moved on since Jesus' death. They may see commandments against homosexuality as relating to **morality**, and so they would also be redundant in this way. Christians may believe that loving is more important than following rules, and that loving homosexual relationships has not stopped. Further, there is no record of Jesus condemning homosexuality, and he did not judge others, and did not always condemn those who had committed sins. Jesus forgave a woman in John 8. Some Christians may feel that homosexuality is sinful, but since everyone is made by God, so it is unfair to treat homosexuals badly when no one is perfect.

*'Or how can you say to your neighbour, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," while you do not see the log in your own eye?' (Matthew 7:4 NRSV) [Jesus on not judging others, when you are not perfect]*

*'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone...' (John 8:7 NRSV) [Jesus on not judging others, when you are not perfect]*

However, not all Christians who accept homosexual couples and homosexuals believe that homosexuals should be allowed to be **married**. They may believe this because marriage is between a man and a woman, and Jesus taught that marriage was between a man and a woman (in Matthew 19:4-6). Some also feel that if Christian **denominations** accept homosexual marriage, vicars who do not agree with homosexual marriage will be forced to perform it or will face legal challenges.

*'But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female." For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' (Mark 10:6-8 NRSV)*

Some non-religious people will discriminate against **homosexual** people or think it is wrong. However, many **humanists** and **atheists** do not have a problem with homosexuality. If it is not seen as a sin against God, then they see no reason to treat homosexuals differently from heterosexual ones. Humanists campaign for equality in general, including for sexual equality. They support homosexual couples. Those non-religious people who feel that homosexuality is acceptable in a loving relationship support homosexual couples, and those that feel that any consensual sex is acceptable support both homosexuals and heterosexuals who have a one sexual sex, or more partners.

Christians who do not accept homosexuality may have very similar views to humanists. Christians who do not accept homosexuality, or homosexual sexual activity, may feel that while allowing homosexuality may seem fair, it is not part of God's plan. If something does not make sense to humans, it should still be followed.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Interpretations of 1 Corinthians 6:7–20 – Sexual Relationships and Homosexuality

One reason that there are different views within Christianity on sexual relationships outside of marriage and homosexuality is that some quotes can be interpreted in different ways. On first glance, 1 Corinthians 6:7–20 clearly condemns sexual relationships outside of marriage and homosexuality – it claims that **fornicators** (those who have sex outside of marriage), **male prostitutes** (who would have had sex with other men) and **sodomites** (people who have anal sex) will not inherit the kingdom of God. It also claims that sexual sin is a sin against the body and the Spirit of God should live in a Christian's body as the proper use of the body. However, it can also be interpreted in other ways.

*'Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For you will be one flesh.'... Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body except fornication, against the body itself. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who has been given to you from God, and that you are not your own?'*  
(1 Corinthians 6:16, 18–19 NRSV)

- It is possible that fornication was regarded as such a sin because it often involved sex with prostitutes and sex with prostitutes was seen as polluting. This is very different from a committed relationship, especially one which leads to marriage. So some Christians regard 'fornication' within relationships as bad because it is in a different context and not emphasised in biblical passages such as this.
- If fornication (sex outside of marriage) is such a sin, then if homosexuality is a sin, then in the UK and many other countries, they would not be committing this sin.

*'Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be idolaters, as some of the people are, who sacrifice to idols. Do not become prostitutes, sodomites, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, and idolaters. All these will not inherit the kingdom of God.'* (1 Corinthians 6:9–10 NRSV)

- Male prostitution is also condemned because of the type of relationship involved – sex for money for sexual acts, or engaging in ritualistic sex as part of worship – which is not within Christianity. Condemning male prostitutes does not automatically condemn homosexual relationships.
- There is also debate about how the word 'sodomite' is used in the Bible. Some claim it refers to someone from the place Sodom, which God condemned in the Old Testament for its sin with anal sex, as the male inhabitants of Sodom wanted to rape two (male) angels. However, other places in the Bible claim that Sodom's sin was not homosexuality but refusal to help others. So some argue that 'sodomite', when used negatively, refers to these 'sins' and not to homosexuality.

*'This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, they were not hungry, they refused to help the poor and needy.'* (Ezekiel 16:49 NRSV)

### Quick Questions

4. Outline **three** reasons why a Christian may refrain from having sex.
5. Explain **two** reasons why Christians may oppose sex outside of marriage.
6. Explain **two** attitudes to homosexuality in Christianity. Refer to a source of authority.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Families

Christians and non-religious people may have different views on families, and there are many different types of families.

### Keywords:

- ❖ **baptism** – a sacrament which involves immersion in water, or, for younger children, pouring water over the head. The baptism of small children is sometimes called a Christening.
- ❖ **contraception** – methods which aim to stop someone becoming pregnant or to prevent sexually transmitted infections.
- ❖ **faith** – belief and trust in something, here, in Jesus and God.
- ❖ **moral** – ideas about what is right and wrong.
- ❖ **procreation** – making/having children.
- ❖ **sacrament** – a particularly important worship practice which has even higher status in religions like the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

## The Purpose and Importance of Family

### Procreation

Many Christians feel that they should have a family because, in Genesis, God told Adam and Eve to 'be fruitful and multiply'. Therefore, the purpose of having a family is to fulfil God's plan and having a family is important because the family is part of God's plan for the world.

*'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...' (Genesis 1:28 NRSV)*

As seen above, some Christians, such as Catholics, believe that all sexual acts should be open to the possibility of procreation. Some Christians take this even further – some Christian movements, such as Quiverfull, do not use any forms of **contraception** or family planning (including natural family planning such as the rhythm method), as they believe all children are a blessing from God. They feel that they should not do anything to stand in the way of God giving them children, and often have very large families.



Some people, including Christians, believe in **marriage**, but do not feel that they should have a family. So not all married Christians feel called to procreation.

Additionally, some couples cannot have children even if they want to due to infertility (in either or both members of the couple). They may accept remain infertile, use fertility treatment, adoption or fostering. Those who adopt or foster a child do so for the purpose is to have children, just not through procreation. Note: while the Church teaches that all sexual acts *should* be open to the possibility of procreation, it also accepts that some couples are infertile through no fault of their own. It does not condemn such couples, but teaches that if they are infertile, and they are married, married couples to have a sexual relationship. The Church does not allow fertility treatment such as IVF, but encourages adoption.

### Security

Many people feel that one purpose of a family is to provide security – stable homes for children, who can grow up in a loving and safe environment; parents should provide for their children. Many religious and some non-religious people feel that **marriage** is the best way to provide this security.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



for a stable family for children, as this shows the commitment of a couple to each other without disrupting their children's family unit. Others will disagree, and feel that children should be married to provide security for children. They may also feel that different to single-parent families, or separated parents who share custody of their children, a family provides a safe environment for their children.

### Education of Children

Christians may also feel that part of the purpose of a family unit is to raise children. The Catholic Church makes the **marriage** promise to raise their children in the faith. The family is therefore seen as a place for learning about God and Christianity. Christians feel that it is their responsibility to educate their children in other respects as well. Some people also see the family as important in the **moral** education and general upbringing of children without the focus on religious education.

Many Christian families get their children **baptised**, to show that they are raising them as Christians and educating them in the **faith**. Baptism also symbolises a child's entry into the family of God. As an alternative, they may dedicate their child(ren) to God; holding a ceremony similar to baptism, but without the **sacrament** taking place, so the child(ren) can choose to be baptised later, if they wish.

Christians want their children to follow the right path in life, and believe that this can be achieved by raising them correctly. The Bible teaches that raising children correctly will set them on the right path.

*'Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.'* (Proverbs 22:6)

Christians not only believe that teaching children to believe in God will allow them to have a good relationship with him, but also that it will help them to develop good morals. The Bible teaches that children should be kind and not to anger their parents – a Christian upbringing should include teaching children to be good and it should encourage someone to be a good person while growing up.

*'And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.'* (Ephesians 6:4 NRSV)

Christianity places an emphasis on children respecting the instruction of their parents and learning from their education, which it inherits from Judaism.

*'Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.'* (Exodus 20:12 – the 5<sup>th</sup> of the Ten Commandments)

*'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honour your father and mother" is the first commandment with a promise: "so that it may be well with you and you may live."'* (Ephesians 6:1-3 NRSV)

### Other

Some people may feel that the purpose of having a family is so that you have someone to rely on in your old age and that families are important for this reason. Others may feel that it is important to have a family, but they may agree that families are important because they can support each other.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Importance of Family

Christians may see the family as important because the human family reflects the family of all Christians throughout the world. Also, Jesus took part in family life at the start of Luke's Gospel, and appeared to approve of family life in the Gospels. This shows that family is definitely important to God.

Christians, and those who are not religious, may feel that it is a personal choice that the family is important in fulfilling the desire of parents to have children, as well as providing security and care for them. Both Christians and non-Christians may feel that families are important in making up a stable society.

## Differences of Family

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century there are many different types of family.

Type of Family	Description	Different Christians' Views
<b>Nuclear</b>	A family unit where two parents live with their biological children, or adopted children. Some think of this as the traditional family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most Christians approve of nuclear families.</li> <li>Some Christians will not have children if they cannot have a stable family.</li> </ul>
<b>Single-Parent</b>	A family unit where just one parent looks after their child or children. This can be due to the death of one parent, the end of a relationship between parents, or (in recent times) where a woman has become pregnant with donated sperm or a single man has adopted a child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians may respect single-parent families on all the responsibilities that would normally be shared by two parents.</li> <li>Some Christians disapprove of single-parent families if they resulted from a relationship breakdown, or a single parent feels that children should be in a stable family, and not with a single parent if they cannot have a stable family.</li> </ul>
<b>Same-Sex Parents</b>	A family unit where both the parents are the same gender. They could have adopted a child; one member of a lesbian relationship could have become pregnant with donated sperm; or one member of a male gay relationship could have fertilised a donor egg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians may disapprove of same-sex couples wish to provide a stable family for their children.</li> <li>Christians who disapprove of homosexuality may disapprove of homosexual relationships because they are bad. Equally, they may feel that same-sex couples are good examples of both genders working together.</li> </ul>
<b>Extended</b>	A family unit where extra members of the family live with parents and their children, for example grandparents or aunts, uncles and cousins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians may approve of extended families together and support each other.</li> <li>Christians may not approve of extended families if members are taking advantage of the family's hospitality.</li> </ul>
<b>Blended</b>	A family unit where at least one member of the couple has children from a previous relationship. The children therefore live with one parent and one step-parent, or children of the new couple live with their half-sibling(s).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians may approve of blended families if a partner has children from a previous relationship because they are providing a stable family for their children.</li> <li>Christians may disapprove of blended families if parents of their children are not committed to their relationships.</li> </ul>

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Quick Questions

---

7. Outline three different types of family.
8. Explain **two** ways in which Christians may respond to a single-parent family.
9. Explain **two** reasons why families are important to Christians. Refer to a biblical text for wisdom and authority.



INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Support for the Family in the Local Parish

The family is not just important for members of the family itself. Other members of the community often try to help because the family is important to the Church.

### Keywords:

- ❖ **confirmation** – where a Christian affirms their faith, often where they have a child and want to make promises to God themselves
- ❖ **counselling** – helping people to discuss their problems and suggesting solutions
- ❖ **parish** – the area in which the local church works

### How and Why the Local Church Community Tries to Support Families

Local churches often provide forms of worship for all the family. This may include classes for children, often called Sunday school, which aim to teach children about Christianity in an age-appropriate, and often fun, way. There are various approaches to Sunday school in churches and for different ages. Often this is down to those who organise it. For young children may be heavily focused on colouring pictures from Bible stories, which may or may not be linked to the Bible. As children get older, the focus may shift to spending longer telling the children Bible stories and, while there may still be fun activities, less time will be spent on activities which do not particularly help children to learn about Christianity.

Teenagers may study passages directly from the Bible, rather than hearing the stories re-told, and will do more age-appropriate activities. They may also focus more on more complex Bible passages, not necessarily stories, but passages of teaching. Some Sunday schools will try to incorporate modern technology, e.g. showing animations / live-action films of Bible stories, or other relevant television clips. They might also ask teenagers to research Bible passages or relevant ideas on the Internet. Many churches run separate Sunday-school activities during services, but the children may return for the end of the service (some or all weeks), and may share what they have done and learnt.

Many churches will also hold family-worship services, where talks are more appropriate for a younger audience, and where there may be more lively music, for example. Some churches also hold alternative types of worship (usually at a time when other Church services are not happening, such as Saturday afternoon), such as Messy Church, where fun activities are provided for children before a short time of worship.

Churches do this to help parents educate their children about the Christian faith, and where parents and children can celebrate their Christian faith together.

Additionally, churches may provide other groups for children, such as youth groups or Boys'/Girls' Brigade. These groups may teach about God and Christianity, but children help each other. Churches provide this to help parents teach their children about Christianity in other ways, such as through teaching them practical skills associated with church will make children want to attend church, and keep their faith in Christianity.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED







help families because they believe that children should be nurtured the right way in humble Christianity, and because they want adults to live out Christianity in their families.

Also, Jesus is not presumed to mean that people must become Christians with no hope for them. Following on from before, he may mean that those who are on God, as children rely on their parents; if they feel that they can enter the Kingdom of God's help, then they will not be able to. Churches exist to support families.

It may also be that Matthew shows Jesus' disapproval of the disciples' counselling Christians not to claim Jesus as their Lord and deny him to others – God calls whom Church leaders choose, but to those who will gladly accept it – church support because Jesus' help could be available for everyone.

## The Importance for Family Support for Christians

Such family support can be very important for Christians.

Church-provided religious education for children, such as through Sunday schools, can help parents with teaching their children about their **faith**, especially if parents do not know much about Christianity, or do not know how to explain it to children. Further, family worship allows parents a space to express their faith with their children, which they might not otherwise have.

What is the importance of local church support to families?

Parents may also be grateful for activity groups which build a positive relationship between the family and the Church by making Christianity enjoyable; the support is important to families connected with Christianity.

Rites of passage, such as Christening, are important in helping parents focus on the Christian faith, and churches can help them with finding support for this, as they often approach parents with giving their children a Christian upbringing. Churches also help Christians with their faith.

Other support from the Church and church members can be important to parents practically; they may need help with childcare, or with knowing how to be a parent. They may need help resolving issues between family members.

## Quick Questions

10. Outline **three** services/facilities which the local church may provide for families.
11. Outline **three** reasons why the local church supports families.
12. Explain **two** ways in which the local church community may help to support families.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Family Planning, Regulation of Births and Contraception

Different Christians have different attitudes to **contraception** and family planning (choosing when and how many children to have) in general, and to different

### Keywords:

- ❖ **consequentialist** – a type of ethical theory concerned with the morality of actions
- ❖ **contraception** – methods which aim to stop someone becoming pregnant or sexually transmitted infections
- ❖ **emergency contraception** – contraception used after sex which may prevent pregnancy
- ❖ **encyclical** – an open letter from the Pope to Catholics, instructing them
- ❖ **ethical theory** – something which suggests how people should act, and suggests what is right or wrong
- ❖ **Humanae Vitae** – an encyclical about the importance of life and not using contraception
- ❖ **natural law** – rules about morality drawn from nature and reason
- ❖ **procreation** – making/having children
- ❖ **situation ethics** – ethical theory which suggests decisions should evaluate what the consequences in each situation
- ❖ **utilitarianism** – ethical theory which believes actions should try to produce the greatest number

## Christian Attitudes to and Teachings about Contraception and Family Planning

Some Christians, such as some Catholics, and conservative Christians (e.g. some churches), are opposed to all forms of artificial **contraception**, as they believe the purpose of **procreation**. The Catholic Church teaches that all sexual activity has the possibility of new life and Pope Paul VI continued the Church's stance on contraception in his encyclical **Humanae Vitae** (1968).



*'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...' (Genesis 1:28 NRSV)*

*"every action which, whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible or intrinsically evil." (Catholic Catechism 2370, quoting Humanae Vitae)*

The Catholic Church also disagrees with contraception because of **natural law**. Natural law is that God has shown humans what is right through nature and reason, and how to act. Because sex naturally carries the possibility of producing children, contraception goes against nature, and disobeys natural law.

However, many Christians from other **denominations**, such as many Protestant denominations, are not opposed to contraception and family planning in general, but may approve of some methods but not others. They allow artificial contraception because *there is nothing in the Bible which expressly forbids contraception* and because they believe people should be able to plan the size of their families without having to stop having sex if they do not want more children.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



Among other things, contraception and family planning are likely to:

- improve the health of women, as they do not have to constantly have children (especially in developing countries, where there is often sub-standard health care);
- improve women's social position because they can have other roles than mothering to choose;
- improve the health of children, because parents will be able to provide better care for them;
- and improve the quality of life for children and parents because people can plan when they are able to look after them, provide for them, and when they are ready to have them.

Further, in the modern world, many people believe that overpopulation can be a problem. If people have fewer, or no, children this means there is more to go round. Some forms of contraception, like condoms, can also prevent the spread of some diseases.

However, while many traditional and liberal Protestants (not all evangelical) accept artificial contraception today, it is relatively modern that the church has accepted it. The Church has only officially allowed contraception since 1930.

One method of contraception which some Catholics accept is the **rhythm method**, where couples try to have sex when they believe the woman is less fertile, lowering the chance of becoming pregnant. Because this still allows the possibility of procreation, it is seen as a natural family better while allowing that they may conceive at any time, if God wills. Some Christians who approve of artificial contraception are much more likely to use artificial contraception in addition, as it is more reliable.

One type of contraception which Christians (e.g. many Protestants) who approve of artificial contraception are likely to approve of is the **barrier method** of contraception, such as condoms. This is seen as more acceptable because it stops sperm from reaching the egg, preventing fertilisation occurring. The barrier method is seen as safe because if it fails, it in no way risks harming an embryo.

Some Christians also approve of **sterilisation**, where someone has a procedure that makes them unable to conceive in the future. Christians may feel this is sensible if someone wants no more children, and does not want to have to worry about contraception. However, many object on the basis that Christians could feel called by God to have more children. Some types of sterilisation can be reversed if necessary. The Catholic Church disapproves of sterilisation for the same reasons it disapproves of artificial contraception, though it accepts sterilisation as a medical treatment for other reasons, for example removing the uterus (women's health).

Many Christians are happy to use **hormonal methods** of contraception such as the pill. Hormonal methods involve using chemicals to convince the female body not to release an egg, stopping it releasing an egg. Some Christians, however, will not use such methods, if there is the small chance that if conception takes place, the hormones could cause an early miscarriage – some Christians see this as murder, and not in line with the Ten Commandments (see below).

Some Christians will not use the **withdrawal method** of contraception, where the man withdraws from the woman's vagina before ejaculating semen (containing sperm), because of teaching against this in the Bible. In Genesis 38, a man called Onan uses the withdrawal method. The Bible records that God was displeased and killed him. However, some other Christians believe that it was the withdrawal method which displeased God, but that Onan did not want to fulfil his duty to have children with his dead brother's wife to raise children for him.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



most Christians would probably not use this method as a main method of contraception, but it is an unreliable method.

While many Christians agree with artificial contraception, many are opposed to **emergency contraception**. This method of contraception is used after sex, and is designed to delay the ovary releasing an egg, therefore preventing conception. Some people argue that certain types of emergency contraception also have the potential to change the conditions of the uterine lining, which might mean that an embryo (fertilised egg) cannot be implanted – so the embryo would be destroyed. Many Christians believe that life begins at fertilisation, when the sperm meets the egg and becomes an embryo. These people are likely to oppose emergency contraception in the embryo, which they think should be treated as any other human life. The Bible has given embryos souls from the moment of conception. The Bible has given embryos souls from the moment of conception.



Pill

*'You shall not murder.' (Exodus 20:13 NRSV) [from the Ten Commandments]*

Some Christians will allow emergency contraception as being the most logical choice in certain circumstances; for example, if a woman was raped.

### **Atheist and Humanist Attitudes to Family Planning and Christianity**

Most **atheists** and **humanists** have no problem with artificial **contraception**, believing that sex is at least partly for pleasure, and that there are good reasons for having children. They may be in favour of being able to choose when it is best to have children (see the discussion of contraception above). They may have similar views to many Christians (see the discussion of contraception above).

Some may have problems with hormonal methods of contraception which work by preventing ovulation. However, many will accept all forms of contraception.

Christians who are against contraception might argue against more liberal attitudes to sex. They might argue that there would be no need for contraception to stop diseases or pregnancies if people only had sex with their lifelong marriage partner. However, this does not mean that all Christians do not want children at all, even with their spouse, or those who want a reliable method of contraception. They may also have concerns about the quality of children they have, and of choosing when to have them.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Application of Ethical Theories and Christian Responses

### Situation Ethics

**Situation ethics** is an **ethical theory** associated with many theologians and philosophers, such as Joseph Fletcher. It promotes evaluating individual situations by what is most loving, rather than by any other laws, teachings or considerations. It is a **consequentialist** ethical theory, as it cares about there being loving consequences, rather than about what actions are carried out to achieve this. However, it does care that the intention is also for loving consequences. Loving consequences are those which benefit the people involved.

Consider  
and the  
contradiction  
argument

Many would feel that situation ethics would allow the use of **contraception** in order to be loving to allow couples to be able to have sex for pleasure without the stress of having children. It is also loving to allow couples to plan the timing and number of children they are emotionally and financially able to look after them – this is loving to the children. Also, contraception can allow couples to have sex without passing on STDs, which is loving to those having sex without contraception and infecting others.

However, it might be argued that situation ethics would not allow the use of contraception in certain situations. If people use contraception to have many promiscuous relationships (which risk without contraception) which have the potential to emotionally hurt the people involved, then using contraception would not be loving – especially as contraception is not 100% effective. It could result within unstable relationships. However, it could be argued that using contraception is universally more loving than the alternative – many people would still have children without contraception these would be more likely to end in unwanted pregnancies and STDs.

Situation ethics is supported by many Christians as there are several places in the Bible which teaches that loving and treating others well, are the most important things. This is in line with the application of situation ethics to contraception – they feel that using contraception is a loving thing for people who desire to have sex without having children, and that it is loving to those created or not created. They may or may not feel that there are times situation ethics would allow the use of contraception.

*'[Jesus] said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'* (Matthew 22:37-40)

*'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law of love.'* (Matthew 7:12 NRSV)

However, many other Christians feel that it is important to follow other laws such as the Ten Commandments. They feel that judging actions by what seems to be a good way of making decisions. For example, the Catholic Church feels that the commandment to 'honour your father and mother' is broken by allowing the possibility of **procreation** in every sexual relationship. It is also unfair to create children who are not wanted. However, it is interesting to note that one reason why some Christians feel that sex should be open to the possibility of procreation is because they feel that people who are not loving, as they are using the person someone is having sex with as a means to an end, does not honour their dignity.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Utilitarianism

**Utilitarianism** is an **ethical theory** associated primarily with philosophers Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. It holds that an action should try to produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people – producing pleasure and not producing pain makes actions good. It is also a **consequentialist** ethical theory as it cares about consequences – pleasure and pain – not actions.

In many ways, utilitarianism and **situation ethics** are similar – what makes someone loving for them are often the same things. They can both be applied in similar situations such as family planning. However, there are important differences. Utilitarianism's motives (someone would create happiness without meaning to, and this would be a bad situation) means that people try to act in a loving way. (Some would argue that when being happy is not what is good for someone, or being in pain is not what is bad for someone). If contraception encourages promiscuous sex, those applying situation ethics would see it as less than utilitarians if they deem that promiscuous sex is not loving. However, if it makes people happy, and the happiness it brings may outweigh the distress caused by the risk, utilitarians would not condemn contraception for this reason.

Most people would feel that allowing contraception and family planning would be better than not allowing it. People would be happy being able to have sex without committed relationships, and those who are not); people would be happy having children they want, when they want them and children would be happy, brought up by loving parents who want them, and are able to care for them. If people have fewer unwanted pregnancies, this would benefit many people if the population is lower and so government resources would be better used.

It is doubtful that utilitarianism would be used to argue against allowing contraception. However, you could use the case of someone who has sex because they cannot have sex without it – because contraception is not certain to work, there is a risk they could experience an unwanted pregnancy or STD which would make them less happy than if they had sex in a committed place. Utilitarianism could be used to argue against having sex without a committed relationship.

One type of utilitarianism – qualitative utilitarianism – is concerned with the quality of happiness rather than the quantity. It would be possible to use this to argue against the use of contraception in committed relationships (if people would not otherwise have sex), because it is better to have sex with someone that you are committed to, even if you have a committed relationship, than to have lots of sex with people one is not committed to. This is a meaningful (possible argument – not fact).

Some Christians feel that increasing happiness is a good goal, and so might support arguments for (and against) contraception and family planning.

However, many will feel that there are things which are more important than increasing happiness. If Christians feel that teaching is to **procreate**, or that sexual activity should only be within a committed relationship, these may conflict with utilitarian arguments about contraception and family planning. Christians may support them.

## Quick Questions

- Outline **two** reasons why situation ethics may support the use of contraception.
- Explain **two** reasons why some Christians allow the use of contraception and family planning.
- Explain **two** reasons why some Christians oppose artificial contraception. What is a source of wisdom and authority.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Divorce

### Keywords:

- ❖ **annulment** – the cancelling of a marriage, saying it never existed
- ❖ **divorce** – the legal end of a marriage
- ❖ **remarriage** – where people who have been married, before marry other people (the same person again)
- ❖ **sacrament** – a particularly important worship practice which has even higher status than a sacrament like the Catholic and Anglican Churches
- ❖ **separated** – where a couple remain married legally, but do not live together

### Christian Teachings on and Attitudes towards Divorce and Remarriage

Some Christians have very strict views when it comes to **divorce**. The Catholic Church does not acknowledge legal divorce (so they would see a divorced person as **separated** from their spouse). This is because the Catholic Church sees marriage as a sacrament given by God, and Jesus taught that people should not separate what God has joined together. However, Catholics will allow **annulments** in some circumstances, which say that a marriage has not taken place. This is decided by a Catholic marriage tribunal, and reasons for an annulment include: if the marriage was never consummated (the couple never had sex), one of the parties was not fully committed, or that (at least) one of the parties was tricked or coerced into marriage. However, Catholics will allow **divorce** for **adultery** or desertion (when one partner leaves the other and refuses to return).

The Catholic Church will not **remarry** people who are divorced because they have been married in the first marriage, so they view it as adultery: entering into a new marriage while still married to the first spouse. They have to get a Catholic annulment or a legal divorce in order to be remarried in the Catholic Church. (Catholics will, however, **remarry** those whose spouses have died.)

*"...what God has joined together, let no one separate." They said to him, "Why then do you not give a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her?" He said to them, "It was because you Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." (Matthew 19:6-9)*

*"The Lord Jesus insisted on the original intention of the Creator who willed that marriage be indissoluble. He abrogates the accommodations that had slipped into the old Law." (Catholic Catechism 2382)*

*[Jesus believed that God's original intention should be honoured and insisted that marriage is something which cannot be cancelled or dissolved. Jesus (recognises the original intention and) removes the adjustments (to the original law from God) which had been made in Jewish law (allowing divorce).]*

While some non-Catholic Christians may also hold strict views on divorce, many others will allow divorce in some circumstances.

For example, many moderate Protestants may accept divorce in limited circumstances:

- if someone's spouse committed **adultery** against them;
- abused them; or
- deserted them.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED

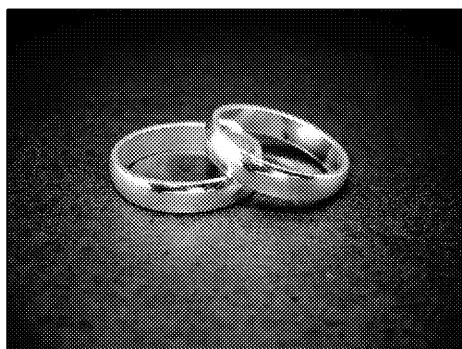




In these cases, they may feel that the other person broke the **marriage** vow. Their relationship with them is dangerous or practically impossible. Jesus appears in the case of unfaithfulness. Protestant churches and the Catholic Church interpret this differently here – Catholics follow verses 4–8 – that while Moses allowed divorce, God's plan for humans, and humans should not divorce. Protestants see verse 9 (below) as saying that if a spouse commits adultery, then it is acceptable to divorce them and remarry.

*'And I say to you, whoever divorces his or her spouse, except for unchastity, and marries another person commits adultery.' (Matthew 19:9 NRSV)*

*'...anyone who divorces his or her spouse, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery. If anyone marries a divorced woman commits adultery.' (Matthew 5:32 NRSV)*



Wedding rings, symbolising the promises made during a marriage ceremony, which are broken by divorce.

Matthew 19 goes on to discuss what Jesus said if they cannot divorce. While it may seem like Jesus was trying to tell Jesus that his teaching was too strict, Jesus responds that for some, it will be better to marry (however, this implies that most people will not do so for their whole lives, without divorce).

*'His disciples said to him, "If such is the case, it is better not to marry." But he said to them, "Who can accept this teaching, but only those who are called to it." (Matthew 19:10-11 NRSV)*

Moderate Protestants believe that God forgives sins and mistakes, and so will allow divorce, but will allow remarriage in Church, for those who have had good reasons (see above) for divorce. However, they may choose not to remarry someone who has committed adultery or abuse. All Churches will remarry someone who has committed adultery or abuse.

*'...for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. (Matthew 26:28 NRSV)*

Remarriage is up to the individual vicar or minister, and some may not marry someone who has been divorced; did not try sufficiently hard to save a marriage or have had more than one divorce.

More liberal Christians, such as liberal Protestants, may allow divorce for many reasons, such as if a couple decide that they are no longer in love. Some such **denominations** are happy to marry all those who have previously been divorced if they believe they are genuinely making this new commitment. They may remarry people who have abused previous spouses if they believe they have repented (made amends for their mistakes), and may choose to remarry those who have had several divorces, as long as they always deserve an opportunity for a new marriage, and Jesus taught that you should continue to love your spouse.

*'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, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven." (Matthew 18:21-22 NRSV)*



**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



Reasons for remarriage may include:

- A divorced person falls in love again.
- A divorced person desires to have a fulfilling sexual relationship and/or should marry their new partner in order for this to happen.
- Marrying a new partner may provide security for existing children.

## Non-religious Attitudes to Divorce and Remarriage, and Christian Responses

Non-religious people may feel that getting a **divorce** in any circumstances is longer wish to remain married. They may see no reason to stick to such a commitment if they are unhappy. But marriage being a commitment to God/gods, there are no

Non-religious people may also have no problem with divorced people **remarrying**, if they wish to make new promises.

This does not mean that all non-religious people are casual about divorce and remarriage, but they are unlikely to recommend that an unhappy couple stay married.

Divorce is higher than the two levelling partly

Christians might respond that marriage is not only a promise to God, but also to each other and allowing divorce at all, or allowing divorce for any old reason, makes promises casually, and creates an unstable society. However, while these may be real concerns, seriously, and not aiming to get a divorce, once a relationship has broken down, it is to want the chance for a fresh start.

Both religious and non-religious people may feel that there are negative side-effects of breaking promises to God and/or one's spouse. People who get divorced may find it difficult to afford living costs on their own. Children of divorce find break-up emotionally tough. However, some people may feel that unhappy parents are better for their children in the long run, as unhappy parents will also have a negative impact on their children.

Not all Christians have the same perspectives on marriage, as this can be a matter of interpretation. Catholics may have more liberal views on divorce than the Catholic Church. Some Christians think that their Churches are too lenient with accepting divorces and allowing remarriage. Opinions on divorce may change depending on the circumstances, and some people should break their marriage promises to God and their spouse may be allowed to remarry themselves if they feel that their marriage has failed.

## Application of Ethical Theories and Christian Responses

### Situation Ethics

Applying situation ethics is likely to mean that divorce and remarriage should be allowed if it is more loving to make someone who had cheated on their spouse marry them. Neither is it more loving to make a couple who have fallen out of love stay together.

It would be unlikely for someone to use situation ethics to argue against divorce. It is hard to think of a situation where it would be more loving to force someone to stay married if they wanted to divorce, or more loving to forbid someone marrying again. However, in the equation, but it is still likely to be more loving to the children for unhappy parents to be allowed to remarry and create new family units.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



As seen above, many Christians will agree that it is compassionate to allow people to divorce. However, many will feel that God would not want people to be unhappy.

However, many Catholics and some other Christians will feel that what is important is the will of God, Jesus, and the Church, and these teach against divorce (and hence more loving to allow unhappy couples to divorce, this is still a sin against God). Some Christians recommend unhappy couples separate instead of divorce, as they are not breaking the marriage bond.

## Utilitarianism

As with situation ethics, many utilitarians are likely to allow divorce and remarriage if this will produce more happiness and less pain than the alternative. (People can lead happier lives if they are divorced, and they have a new chance at happiness with someone else.)

It is possible to argue that divorce destabilises society, and means that many children do not have enough access to both parents, and so utilitarians might argue that it is best to stay in a marriage, even if they think it is likely to end in divorce, as this could reduce potential pain. However, if they are unhappy, it is likely that they will be happier divorced.

As with situation ethics, many Christians will agree that it is acceptable to divorce and to remarry if this will make people happy, while others will feel that it is God's law rather than happiness which matters. Most Christians would not suggest people abstain from marriage in order to avoid divorce, unless they feel called to celibacy, as they believe marriage is important.

## Quick Questions

16. Outline **three** reasons for divorce within Christianity.
17. Outline **three** reasons why the Catholic Church may allow an annulment.
18. Explain **two** reasons why some Christians disagree with divorce. Refer to the Bible and to the teaching of wisdom and authority.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Equality of Men and Women in the Family

There are different opinions within Christianity about whether men and women are equal in the family, and whether they are **equal**.

### Keywords:

- ❖ **equality** – not necessarily being the same, but being treated with the same level of authority
- ❖ **role** – a part or job carried out

### Christian Things About and Attitudes to the Role of Men and Women

Many Christian attitudes to the **role** of men and women in the family are based on the Bible. For example, in his letter to the Ephesians, St Paul writes that husbands are to love their wives in the same way that Jesus is the head of the church. This indicates to some Christians that wives are subordinate to, inferior to, or less important than men, and are under their charge. If the husband's role in the family is to lead, and the wife's role is to follow, then the husband's role is to lead, and the wife's role is to follow. Note: St Paul's teaching does not suggest that husbands can abuse their power. They are to love their wives as they love themselves.

*'Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Saviour. Just as the church is subject to him, ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives...'* (Ephesians 5:22-33)



A serpent. A serpent tempts woman to mislead man in Genesis 3.

Some Christians also justify different roles for men and women using the Bible. In Genesis chapters 2 and 3. They claim that when God created a woman, this shows men to be more important. As a 'helper' for man, wives should serve the husband. In Genesis chapter 3, the serpent tempts her husband. Some use this as an indicator that husbands should lead but lead them.

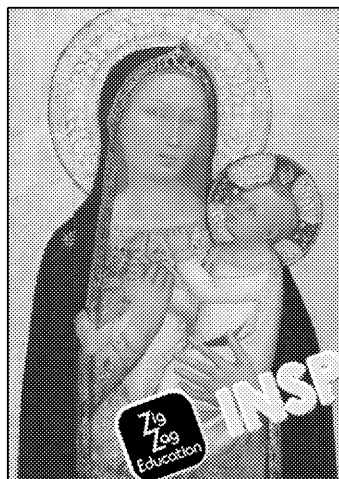
*'Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper as his partner..."'* (Genesis 2:18 NRSV)

Some Christians who believe that husbands should be in charge of their wives and help their husbands, do not think that this makes men and women **unequal**. They believe that they are different and have different roles. In the Bible, men are seen as the breadwinners and women as the mothers and mothers; it can be argued that Mary is one of the most important figures in Christianity because of her role as Jesus' mother. In the Catholic and Orthodox churches, women are not inferior to men.

However, many Christians believe in different roles where the husband is in charge of the wife, and women have **equal** status in the family. Liberal Christians are likely to expect different roles of men and women are treating them **unequally** by doing different things. They may believe that it is unfair to expect women to focus on motherhood and career, and to expect that men will take a lesser role in parenting and be the main breadwinners.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**





An image of Mary, Jesus' mother, with Jesus.

On the other hand, some Christians have argued that men and women should not have different roles in the family. This is based on the teaching of St Paul in Ephesians because it was written to a group of Christians; not intended to teach Christians in the future. Equally, they may claim that St Paul believed that humans make mistakes; what he believed man needs for the family. However, there is no record of Paul claiming that women should have different roles to men. The Bible shows that he had a female follower and treated them kindly, such as the Samaritan woman in Mark 7, with whom other Jews had no contact. In Luke 10:38–42, Jesus encourages Mary to choose to listen to him teaching rather than to do the traditional female role of doing the housework.

Further, it can be argued that the word for 'helper', in Genesis 2, is also used on several occasions in the **Old Testament** to describe God, and therefore if a wife is her husband's helper, this in no way makes her less important than him; it would actually indicate that the role of helper is more important. Also, in Genesis 1, there is no mention of man being created before woman, but of them both being created at the same time in the image of God. This suggests that they have different roles in the family, but that they are both equal.

*'So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.' (Genesis 1:26–27, NRSV)*

Christians have also argued that biblical teaching must be understood in the context in which it was written, and that it may have been good teaching at the time, in a male-dominated society, but is no longer relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They claim that the core teaching of the Bible is loving to treat men and women equally, as having equal roles in the family. If God created men and women equally, and if he sees them as no different (see Galatians 3:28), then Christians should not treat them differently either.

*'...there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.' (Galatians 3:28)*

Christians who do agree with gender roles will respond that Bible quotes about equality do not mean that men and women should not have different roles. They argue that all teachings in the Bible are there for a reason, and teachings about different roles are not out-of-date as they are from God.

### Quick Questions

- Outline **three** reasons why some Christians may feel men and women are spiritually equal.
- Explain **three** reasons why some Christians argue that men and women should have different roles in the family.
- Explain **two** reasons why some Christians argue that men and women should have different roles in the family. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Gender Prejudice and Discrimination

Gender **prejudice** is where someone thinks that women or men cannot or should not do certain things, or are different in an inferior way because of their gender. Gender **discrimination** is where gender prejudice is put into practice, and someone treats someone differently because of their gender – not allowing them to do certain things, or making them do certain things. Many Christians and people about gender often see women as inferior to men, and gender discrimination is often directed against women; however, it can also disadvantage men.

Women have been discriminated against for years – they could not vote in many countries in the 19th century, and were paid lower wages than men. In some countries, they can still be discriminated against. Gender equality has risen within the last hundred years, but many women still experience gender discrimination. Most Christians feel that such examples of gender discrimination are wrong, even if they agree with other types of gender discrimination (see below).

### Keywords:

- ❖ **discrimination** – treating someone differently or unfairly because of prejudice
- ❖ **prejudice** – a biased belief about someone or a group of people

## Christian Gender Prejudice and Discrimination – Teaching and Learning

It can be argued that some Christians are **prejudiced** based on gender, and **discriminate** based on gender. It can be argued that this is done by Christians who think there should be, and implement, different gender **roles** in the family – they may expect wives to submit to their husbands, and women to focus on motherhood (see the section above) – and by Christian **denominations** who will not allow women to perform church roles, such as becoming a priest in the Catholic Church or a rabbi in orthodox churches.

Such Christians and denominations may claim that the Bible provides reasons for performing different church roles; for example, Jesus' closest twelve disciples were all men. Other Bible quotes against women speaking in church and having authority. Christians should discriminate in the same way they believe God does. However, such treatment of women is not prejudiced, because prejudice implies that the treatment is without reason; they believe it is justified by God.

*'...women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be as the Lord's church, which he himself saves, as his body, of which he is the head, and he himself saves the church, cleansing it with the word of water by the word, that he might present to himself the church, without stain or wrinkle or anything of the kind, that he might present it to himself in glory, without stain or wrinkle or anything of the kind.'* (1 Corinthians 14:34 NRSV)

*'I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent, as the Lord's church, which he himself saves, as his body, of which he is the head, and he himself saves the church, cleansing it with the word of water by the word, that he might present to himself the church, without stain or wrinkle or anything of the kind.'* (1 Timothy 2:11-12 JRSV)

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Christian Responses to Christian Gender Prejudice and Discrimination

Many Christians who feel women should be able to lead in church, and have all the same opportunities as men, argue that Bible quotes which **discriminate** against women were written in a very different time when women were not educated, and therefore might not have been well-placed as church leaders. They also argue that Jesus' main disciples were men because of the society he lived in – he didn't have female disciples and treated them kindly, so the Church should not assume that women should not be church leaders from that.

### Christian Opposition to Gender Prejudice and Discrimination – Teaching and Examples

As seen above, many Christians believe that Jesus treated women well, and approved of **equal** treatment for men and women; dying to save everyone. As seen in Galatians 3, some early Christians believed that God does not view men and women differently, and many Christians believe this today. Galatians to the problem of teachings in the **Old Testament** which may suggest men are different, or that women are less important than men – it teaches that the law that Jesus has brought salvation, people do not need to follow the law.

*'Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would come; and faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian... There is no longer a Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.'* (Galatians 3:22-28 NRSV)

Examples of Christian opposition to gender **prejudice** and **discrimination** include the Quakers, who aim to treat men and women equally. They were at Quaker meetings from the beginning of the movement (in the 1600s), giving equal worship. Apart from arguments for female equality (see above), there are also examples from the early church there were female leaders (such as Phoebe), and female apostles (the gender and apostleship of Junia are debated), therefore female leadership.

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

Several other denominations have also allowed women to become vicars and priests, allowing that women can perform the same **roles** as men on an equal footing. Some should not, or not not allowing them to, because of their gender. In the Church of England, women have been able to become priests since 1993, and bishops since 2014.

Christians have also worked to combat gender prejudice and discrimination in the church. Many Christians have worked to help the (female) victims of domestic violence, and have tried to stop women being trafficked (moved) around the world by donating to existing charities, or working with charities; some Christians have campaigned against inequality against women. Some Christians have also campaigned about pay discrimination against women. This has become more common in recent decades. Some have political rights. A contemporary issue which Christian women have campaigned about is Tampon Tax – whether women should have to pay taxes on necessary sanitary products.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Gender Differences

Christians who think that men and women should have different roles might back this up. They might try to argue that differences between men and women have been designed to perform different roles.

However, those who disagree might argue that science and psychology suggest psychological differences between men and women, which they are born with. Differences between men and women can be explained environmentally; unequal social roles expecting them to perform different tasks.

Some Christians who think men and women should be **equal** in the family and have different **roles** as partners, may still accept that men and women are different in the upbringing of small children – for example, men cannot breast-feed, and women may see it as the couple's choice how they divide up parenting responsibilities. If men are trying to take equal responsibility, they may expect a father to do his fair share of tasks as well as the mother, even if not all tasks can be divided equally.

Many Christians will note that while there may be some differences between men and women, they should try to avoid making generalisations, or decisions based on generalisations. If a man wants something lifted, there may be a woman there who is stronger than the man. To promote an equal society.

Many of the arguments about and positions on gender equality and gender roles are relevant here.

### Quick Questions

22. Outline **three** examples of religious gender discrimination.
23. Explain **two** reasons why some Christians may support some forms of religious discrimination.
24. Explain **two** reasons why some Christians believe that women should be ordained. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED





## Summary of Marriage and the Family

- **Marriage** is important within Christianity for purposes such as **procreation**, expressing love within a couple, having sex and because Christians believe that God intended humans to marry. Non-religious people may also see marriage as important, or they might not and favour **cohabitation**. Some Christians disapprove of cohabitation, but others accept it as a step towards marriage, or have no problem with it.
- Different Christians have different attitudes to sexual relationships. Some think that all sexual relationships should take place within **marriage**, while others think that **premarital sex** may be acceptable. Some Christians believe that all sex is for the possibility of creating new life. Most Christians disapprove of **adultery**. There are different Christian opinions about whether **homosexuality** is acceptable. Some religious people are likely to have a more relaxed attitude to consensual sex, but many may still think that sex should take place within a committed relationship. Some think it is wrong, because it is hurtful to the spouse who is cheated on.
- Most Christians feel that families are important because God wanted humans to **procreate**. They may feel that it is their duty to educate their children (and pass on their **faith**), and that they should provide security and love for their children, and enjoy raising a family. There are many different types of families, such as **same-sex parents, extended** and **blended**.
- The local church and community may support a family in a number of ways, such as providing family worship, education, counselling, fun activities, rites of passage, classes for parents, and family **counselling**. They may do this because they believe in the importance of family and because Jesus taught love for children.
- Different Christians have different attitudes to **contraception**, family planning and births. Some Christians will not use any artificial contraception, feeling that sex should be open to the possibility of new life – the Catholic **encyclical, Humanae Vitae**. However, they might use the rhythm method as a way of limiting the likelihood of pregnancy. Others may be happy to use barrier methods or sterilisation. Some will use artificial contraception, while others may not if there is a chance that they could cause a miscarriage. Some are likely to be more open to contraception, though they may not approve of artificial methods. Applying **situation ethics** would suggest that using contraception and family planning – they are the most loving choices in many situations.
- There are also different Christian positions on **divorce** and **remarriage**. Some Christians allow divorce, but will allow an **annulment** in some circumstances. Those who are divorced, but may remarry those whose partners have died, or those whose marriages have been annulled. Other Christians may allow divorce in limited circumstances, such as **adultery**, as Jesus appeared to allow for divorce in this instance. Some Christians are more open to allowing divorce for other reasons. Churches which allow divorce may allow people to remarry. Non-religious people are likely to be more relaxed about divorce and remarriage. Applying **situation ethics** would suggest that many divorces are justified – this is the most loving thing to do.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



- Some Christians believe that men and women should have different **roles** due to passages in Ephesians and at the start of Genesis. They may still believe men and women are **equal** before God, but the roles they think they should have are not necessarily equal. Other Christians believe that men and women should not have different roles and find such teaching outdated, because they interpret biblical teaching in other passages in the Bible imply that God sees men and women equal and treat them differently.
- Different Christians have different positions on gender **prejudice** and **discrimination**. Some Christians believe that prejudice and discrimination are wrong, and that men and women should perform all the same **roles**. Christians have also campaigned for **equality** and the end of prejudice and discrimination. Some Christians discriminate against women in some ways, because they believe they should have the same roles as men. For example, women cannot become priests in churches.

## Now Try This...

25. 'All sexual relationships outside of heterosexual marriage are wrong.' Evaluate this statement.

Argue for and against this statement. You must give Christian teaching points of view. Reach a conclusion which follows from your argument.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



# Matters of Life and Death

There are different beliefs about the origins and value of the universe, religion and how these can impact on what humans believe about their rights over the world and the world. Conflicting ideas about these rights and duties often incorporate the environment and animals.

There are different beliefs about the origin of human life; whether it was created or naturally. These views can influence whether people think that **sanctity of life**, **quality of life**, and personal freedoms on **abortion** and **euthanasia**.

As well as valuing life now, Christians believe in life after death. There are views including their belief in the **resurrection** of Jesus. Christians also have responses who believe that there is no life after death.

## Keywords:

- ◆ **abortion** – terminating a pregnancy and ending the life of a foetus
- ◆ **euthanasia** – sometimes called mercy killing. Generally helping someone die the life of someone who is unable to make such a decision for themselves, for where it is believed they would wish this
- ◆ **resurrection** – coming back to life after dying; Christians believe Jesus was
- ◆ **sanctity of life** – a belief that life is sacred and/or special, implying that life is
- ◆ **quality of life** – how good one's life is; some argue that if life is 'not worth it' not preserving it

## Origins and Value of the Universe

### Keywords:

- ◆ **atheist** – someone who does not believe in God or gods
- ◆ **Big Bang** – a rapid expansion of matter from a tiny central point, which science the beginning of the universe
- ◆ **commodity** – something which has value; usually it can be bought and sold
- ◆ **creation** – a religious account of how the world and universe were made
- ◆ **dominion** – control over something
- ◆ **humanist** – someone who aims to live a good life, without belief in God or
- ◆ **judge** – [by God] evaluate someone's actions and reward or punish appropriately
- ◆ **literal** – something exact and factual
- ◆ **stewardship** – a state of managing resources in a responsible way
- ◆ **symbolic** – something which represents something else

## Christian Teachings about the Origins of the Universe

Christianity, like many religions, has a **creation story**. Christians believe that God created the world and entrusted it to humans.

The creation story is found in the biblical book of Genesis (at the beginning of the Bible) states that before creation there was nothing but God. On the first days, God created everything – the universe and the world and the creatures (including humans). On the seventh day, God rested.

God also commanded the first man and woman (Adam and Eve) not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. However, a serpent tempted woman to eat it.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



they lost their sense of innocence. God discovered their disobedience and of Eden, where they were living.

*'And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place and land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.'* (Genesis 1:9–10)

**Note:** Christianity shares the creation account given in Genesis with Judaism, but Jews may not interpret everything in the same way as Christians.

### **Different Interpretations**

Christians interpret the creation story in different ways.

- ◆ Some Christians believe that the biblical account is **literally** true; that God did create the world in six days (resting on the seventh).
- ◆ Some Christians believe that the creation story is **symbolic**; that God may be responsible for creation but that the Bible is not necessarily scientifically accurate. Note: this does not mean that they see the Bible as untrue, but rather that it holds symbolic truth.

### **Scientific Explanations for the Origins of the Universe and Christianity**

The standard scientific view of the origin of the universe is that the universe began at the **Big Bang** – a rapid expansion of matter from a tiny central point.

Christians who believe that the biblical account of **creation** is **literally** true conflict with scientific views about the origins of the universe. They believe that the **Big Bang** did not happen, because it was God who created the universe and he did it as it is described in the Bible and not through a naturally occurring process. This can create conflict between Christians who take the Bible literally and the scientific community.

However, many Christians believe that the biblical accounts of creation are not in conflict with science, and they have no problem believing that God may have started the Big Bang, or using other scientific methods – some may see the development of the universe and life on Earth. Therefore, there is a misunderstanding between such religious views and scientific views – compared to more literal religious views. People can be both Christians and scientists; they can believe in God and science.

In fact, the scientist who is credited with the first version of the Big Bang theory was also a Catholic priest, Georges Lemaître (1894–1966) was the first person to propose that the universe had expanded and was expanding. He developed the theory (around two years before Edwin Hubble). In other words, he was the first to suggest that the universe was expanding. Lemaître was partly responsible for the Catholic Church beginning to accept the Big Bang theory (still by God) rather than solely promoting a literal interpretation of the Bible. People who believe in the Big Bang are **atheists**, Lemaître did not believe that there was a conflict between science and religion.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Value of the Universe in Christian Teaching

Many Christians believe that the world is important because it was created by God. If it does the world provide conditions in which humans can live, it allows a good life. For many people believe it is beautiful.

Some Christians also feel awe and wonder when looking at the natural world. This is throughout the Bible, including in the Psalms. They may feel that God's glory is shown in his **creation**. They may also feel that the extent of creation shows his power.

### Christian Responses to the World – How that the Universe Can be Used as a Commodity

Some non-religious people will feel that humans are entitled to rule over the world because humans are intelligent and/or powerful – they see it as a **commodity**. Some may feel that humans have no more rights over the world than animals, as if you give humans special rights then humans are equal to other animals.

Many humans will feel that it is important to protect the world so that there are good generations. **Humanists** may stress that looking after the world is important for the good which benefits everyone. This is in line with a possible interpretation of the Bible. If God made creation and saw it as 'good' and gave it to humans, it is human's duty that it is in the same state to pass on to the next generation.

Christians believe that God gave the world to humans; they rule it, or have dominion over it.

*'God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every animal that moves upon the earth." God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed upon the earth, and every tree with seed in it; you shall have them for food.'* (Genesis 1:28)

Some Christians believe this means that the world is theirs, to exploit for their own benefit, and control animals. In this sense, they see it as a commodity.

### Case Study – Climate Change Deniers

Some Christians deny climate change, which is not an uncommon position. In the United States, for example. To a certain extent it could be seen as a commodity, and do not believe that humans using the world as a commodity is wrong because God gave humans dominion, as recorded in Genesis 1:28–29. Some believe that if humans use up the world's resources and pollute it, God will renew the earth at the end of this age (there is some teaching which implies this in the book of Revelation in the New Testament).

However, many Christians believe that dominion also comes with great responsibility. While God has given them authority over the earth, it is seen in Genesis 1:28–29 that humans are **stewards** of his creation; people who manage it and protect it.

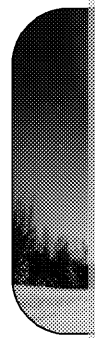
*'The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So the Lord God made out of the rib of the man a woman, and brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of my rib." The Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; now he must not reach out and take from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." So the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden. The Lord God said, "Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries." (1 Corinthians 4:1 NRSV)*

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



They believe that Genesis 2:15 and other biblical passages imply that humans must look after the world on God's behalf. Therefore, Christians may believe it is important to take care of the world; not to over-farm, or pollute; because it is humankind's responsibility if the world becomes uninhabitable (if it can no longer support life). Some Christians believe that God will **judge** humankind on how well they have cared for his **creation**.

Whether or not people feel it is important to look after the world will impact on whether the world is treated appropriately. This will influence which species, plants and animals survive, the level of pollution, the scale of damage which global warming causes the world.



The world people

### Quick Questions

26. Outline **three** Christian beliefs about the origin and value of the universe.
27. Outline **three** reasons Christians may feel that the universe can be used as a commodity.
28. Explain **two** Christian interpretations of the origin of the universe. Refer to the Bible for wisdom and authority.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Sanctity of Life

There are different views about whether life is sacred/holy, or particularly sacred.

### Keywords:

- ◆ **sanctity of life** – a belief that life is sacred/holy and/or special, implying that it should be protected
- ◆ **sin** – a thought or action against God, which he may choose to punish
- ◆ **soul** – a complex concept, often thought to be immaterial and distinct from the physical body; an entity which gives meaning to life and contains their personal identity

### Christian Teaching about the Sanctity of Life

Some people believe in the **sanctity of life** – that life is sacred, or very special. This usually involves the belief that life should be protected. It is often specifically applied to human life, and therefore implies that humans should never cause the deaths of other humans. The sanctity of life is generally associated with religious people. Some people may use the phrase to indicate that they believe life is very important.

Christianity is seen to promote the sanctity of life, with regard to human life. It is believed that human life should not be destroyed.

Christians have different feelings about the sanctity of human life.

- ◆ Some feel that all human life always has sanctity – this should be respected in all circumstances, including criminals, during war, and in all other circumstances.
- ◆ Some feel that there are times when the sanctity of life should be overridden:
  - Some find **abortion** acceptable in some circumstances.
  - Some feel that the death penalty for some criminals is acceptable.
  - Some feel that killing in war is acceptable in some circumstances.
  - Some feel that **euthanasia** is acceptable in some circumstances.

(Note: many Christians will agree with some of these points, but not necessarily all.)

**To summarise**, people who believe in the sanctity of life can still have a range of views. Some will feel that it is wrong to kill in all circumstances, whereas others will accept that there are some circumstances, such as compassion or defence – they will still feel that life is sacred, but that it is acceptable for some lives to be destroyed for the greater good.

### Why Human Life is Holy – How the Bible can be Interpreted to Support this

An argument for the sanctity of human life (based on Christian belief) might be:

- ◆ God created life and gave it to humans
  - ↳ Human life is sacred because it is given by God
- ◆ Humans are created in the image of God
  - ↳ Human life is sacred because it is created in God's image
- ◆ It is wrong to destroy what is sacred
  - ↳ Humans should not destroy human life (for any reason) – supported by the commandment against murder in the Ten Commandments



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

'You shall not murder.' (Exodus 20:13 NRSV)

Therefore, Christians who believe in the sanctity of life may believe that only human life is sacred, and people who take human life **sin** against God (as seen above). However, some Christians may believe this to be true in different circumstances).

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



To go into each point in more detail:

## 1) God created life and gave it to humans

✚ Human life is sacred because it is given by God

Genesis 1–3 clearly shows that God created life for humans. It teaches that God saw the whole of his creation as good. Therefore, everything which God created is set apart from animals, allowed to rule over them and nature. In this way, humans are superior to animals. It is also shown that God did not just create life for humans, but intended them to be fruitful, and to produce more life (in Hebrew, the word for 'living'). This implies that human life is sacred to God and also seen as superior to animals and plants – to destroy human life is to destroy something which he values highly.

*God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it. Over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth you have dominion. And the Lord God said, 'Behold, I have given you them, and every beast of the field and every bird of the air shall be in your hand, as you have been given the dominion over everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good...' (Genesis 1:28)*

*...the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7 NRSV)*

*The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all who live. (Genesis 3:20)*

The rest of the Bible also shows the importance of human life to God. God has a plan for humans. Human life has sanctity as a special gift from God. Human life is seen as wrong because it can be seen as a deviation from God's plan for that purpose.

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for disaster, so that you may have a future with hope. (Jeremiah 29:11 NRSV)*

## 2) Humans are created in the image of God

✚ Human life is sacred because it is created in God's image

This point is supported by the verses in Genesis 1 which claim that humans were created in the image of God. Genesis 3 shows how much more humans (compared to animals) are similar to God – when they eat the forbidden fruit, they know good and evil, as God does. The argument that human life has sanctity due to being created in God's image can be split into two parts:

- Humans being made in God's likeness means that they are special and different, and their life has sanctity because God has set it apart from the rest of creation. (This can be linked to another reason for the sanctity of human life: the Christian belief in a **soul**. Many Christians believe in a human soul: its life and personality given by God, which separates it from the body.)
- Being made in the likeness of God links humans in a special way to God. To destroy human life is to damage God's likeness. Therefore, to destroy human life can be seen as an act of blasphemy.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED





- It can also contribute further to the argument for not killing other humans:
- if humans are created in God's image, then they should not become something doing something wrong, e.g. (unjustifiably) destroying something

*Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:26-27)*

*But the serpent said to the woman, 'You need not die; for God knows that when you eat of this fruit you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' (Genesis 3:4-5)*



### 3) It is wrong to destroy what is sacred

- ↳ Humans should not destroy human life (for any reason) – supported by murder in the Ten Commandments

As highlighted in the two points above, Christians see it as wrong to do something sinning against God. The first murder was that of Abel by Cain in Genesis 4, by God, who curses Cain. Murder is formally forbidden in the Ten Commandments God gives to Moses for the Jewish people to live by. The Ten Commandments are seen by Christians and Jews as 10 of the most important moral rules to keep. For example, not to murder is the first of five commandments *forbidding* human action which is deemed to be about general morality – the others are adultery, theft, bearing false witness, and coveting. Many believe that murder is the most serious of these. If this is the case, a human being can be seen as the worst definitive action against another human being (and against God).

### Importance of Sanctity of Life for Christians Today

Sanctity of life has particular importance to many Christians today, often due to its importance in the Bible (as seen above). For many Christians, they will never be in a situation where they are faced with a wish to kill another human being, but this does not make the issue irrelevant.

Discuss the importance of sanctity of life for Christians today.

Many Christians campaign against abortion and/or euthanasia, believing that no one should ever be killed if it is still a human life and/or that, regardless of suffering, humans do not have the right to have life or have it ended on their request. This is because they feel that life is still a gift from God, and glory to him, even if the individual is in pain.

Many Christians work for peace, aiming to end war, and feeling that, whatever the cost, their death should not be a necessary price to fix the world's problems. Many are more opposed to the idea of the death penalty (though many conservative Christians support it).

Sanctity of life is particularly more of an issue in the modern world. Abortion is a controversial issue, as it means that there is the ability to keep many people who are unwanted alive. Furthermore, advanced weapons are able to kill many more people than was the case years ago – but also, with modern technology and advances, there is often more negotiation with opponents. There are also realistic options to imprison criminals instead of sending them to death. These modern realities mean that there are still ways Christians can act and their action – or inaction – can be very far-reaching.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



Christians want to put Jesus' teaching into practice – to love everyone, including honouring the sanctity of the lives of others, and seeking to protect rather than harm. An important part of this process.

*'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.'* (Matthew 7:12 NRSV)

*"You shall love your neighbour as yourself."* (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

*'I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...'* (Matthew 5:44 NRSV)



Jesus also demonstrated non-violence, even in the face of arrest and death, of not taking life. As Christians aim to follow his example as well as his teaching, respecting the sanctity of life is important for them.

*'Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, "Let him be." And he touched his ear and healed him.'* (Luke 22:50-51 NRSV)

## Quick Questions

29. Outline **three** issues for which sanctity of life is relevant, and why.
30. Outline **three** biblical teachings which support belief in sanctity of life.
31. Explain **two** reasons why Christians may believe in sanctity of life. Refer to the Bible and to the teachings of wisdom and authority.



**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Origins and Value of Human Life

There are different beliefs about the origins of human life held by the religions of the world.

### Keywords:

- ♦ **diocese** – a group containing Christians/churches in a particular denomination by geographical area – each diocese has a bishop / archbishop; a bishop has a diocese
- ♦ **evolution** – the widely accepted scientific theory that all organisms such as humans have evolved and adapted over time
- ♦ **quality of life** – how good one's life is; some argue that if life is 'not worth living' it is not preserving it
- ♦ **synod** – a group of clergy, and often laity (non-clergy), who are appointed by the members of a denomination
- ♦ **utilitarianism** – ethical theory which believes actions should try to produce the greatest number of good

### Christian Teachings about the Origins and Value of Human Life

As seen in the section on *Origins and Value of the Universe*, Christianity has a **creation** story. Indeed, there are actually two different accounts in the book of Genesis about how God created humans.

Genesis 1 states that God created humans after he had created the universe and everything else. It says that he created them in his image.

Genesis 2 states that God made man, out of dust, and before he made animals. Then God made woman, and then God made woman, out of one of man's ribs.

One of the two accounts of the Bible says that several people have developed over time.



*'In the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.'* (Genesis 2:7)

As seen in the section above on *Sanctity of Life*, human life has much value because it is holy – for example, because it is created in God's image.

*'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)

### Different Interpretations

Christians interpret the creation story in different ways.

- ♦ Some Christians believe that the biblical account is **literally** true; that God did create humans as they are, and in his image.
- ♦ Some Christians believe that the creation story is **symbolic**; that God is responsible for creating animals and humans, but that he may have set the process of **evolution** in motion, and that the Bible is not necessarily scientifically accurate. Note: this does *not* mean that they see the Bible as untrue, but rather that it holds symbolic truth.



Picture

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



INSPECTION COPY

## Scientific and Non-religious Explanations for the Origins of Human Responses

Science proposes that life was one result after the **Big Bang**. **Evolution** is a theory which offers an explanation for the increasing complexity of life – in life. The idea is widely attributed to Charles Darwin, a scientist who noticed related species. The theory of evolution by natural selection, formulated by advantageous genes are passed to offspring (because the fittest members reproduce – ‘survival of the fittest’) and over time, species develop and their environments, while those that are poorly adapted become extinct. This suggests that humans have evolved from apes, and were not created as they are. Between Christians who do not take the Bible literally and people who believe that explanation of the origins of human life.

Christians who believe that the biblical account of **creation** is **literally** true the origins of human life. They believe that the theory of **evolution** is incorrect humans as they are, and that humans did not develop from animals.

However, many Christians believe that the biblical accounts of creation are not exactly as it took place. They have no problem believing that God may have used evolution, and some may equate the six creating days as stages in the universe development, including animal/human evolution. Christians may even believe God is even more creative and powerful – if God could engineer a process which would create humans in his image. Such Christians may have a better relationship with the world.

However, **atheists** who believe scientific accounts of evolution do not believe in gods) who started this, and so they will not agree with Christian and other religious beliefs.

In the twenty-first century there has been an emphasis from many churches that creation/evolution should not be seen as incompatible, although natural creation/evolution will never be compatible with atheist models of evolution of God.

One particularly important occurrence was the motion from the **diocese** of England to recognise and promote the compatibility of science and Christianity the origins of the universe and human life. The diocese presented a motion to encourage the synod to:

- (a) *affirm the compatibility of belief in God and an understanding of science*
- (b) *urge the House of Bishops and all dioceses robustly to promote a better compatibility of science and Christian belief*<sup>1</sup>

The motion was due to there being concerns within the Church that science and Christianity were often presented in the media as incompatible, and there were feelings that ordinary Christians were unsure whether they could accept belief in science, such as the theory of evolution. Those behind the motion wanted the Church to provide better education and support so that people could be confident in believing in both Christianity and science.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/39118/gs1772a.pdf> The specification refers to this Diocesan Synod motions compatibility of science and Christian belief (Diocese of Manchester)

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



The motion asserts that science is very important, and that Christianity has often been anti-science – for example, there are many organisations for Christian scientists, such as the Christian Association for Science.

It makes the point that there have been previous scientific developments, such as the theory that the Earth orbits the Sun, rather than the other way around, which had originally been dismissed by the Christian community as conflicting with religious belief – however, few Christians would deny this now. The implication is that Christians should not deny scientific developments such as the theory of evolution either. They should not read the Bible literally, but use it as a metaphor, as symbolically true – correct, but compatible with science.

It implies that Christians should not ignore science, and should also make sure that they use accurate science; being aware that any science used to evidence a claim that the world is less than 10,000 years old or that God intervened in evolution (Intelligent Design) is scientifically questionable.

However, the motion also reacts against atheists who claim that science removes the need for religion by accepting that Christians need to defend their religion against this, and also that science can explain everything, and does explain away God, which the motion opposes.

Within the Christian community which has supported motions such as this one, there is a strong belief that both science and religion are important, and that neither is irrelevant to the other. This is a common question – science answers questions of fact, and religion answers questions of value.

## Scientific and Non-religious Exploration for the Value of Human Responses

Science does not necessarily provide information about what is valuable; it may use technology to help people understand their value.

In evolutionary terms, it could be argued that human life is valuable for producing more of the species, and evolving to become stronger and fitter. In terms of production, many people, Christians and non-Christians, would want to deny the parallel that people with disabilities or diseases, though in scientific terms it is healthy and fit people and fit offspring, who are the most valuable.

*'God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the ground."'*  
(Genesis 1:28-30, KJV)

Science could also be used to argue that life is valuable if it produces happiness. Happiness can be scientifically measured by a certain extent – either by monitoring brain activity or by self-reported responses (about well-being). Many philosophers who are not religious suggest that the value of life for human beings does lie in how much pleasure it brings.

Therefore, scientifically, people may assign human life value due to its quality. When considering when evaluating **quality of life**. The **quality of life** refers to how well people are living.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



life – for the person experiencing it. Many people in the modern, developed world have a good quality of life, but there are reasons why people may not have good lives:

- ◆ Poverty or other circumstances may deprive them of necessities such as food, shelter, and healthcare, meaning that life is very difficult.
- ◆ Illness or injury may reduce their quality of life:
  - ↳ Mental illness (including depression), or some injuries, may mean that people cannot perform their normal cognitive function.
  - ↳ Some illnesses or injuries leave people in a lot of pain, meaning that they cannot enjoy other things in life.
  - ↳ Illness or injury may leave people incapacitated meaning they cannot do things for themselves (or do these easily).
  - ↳ Some types of coma may mean little or no quality of life.

While many Christians do feel that quality of life is important, many will not see it as more important than **sanctity of life**. While science does not provide any reason why a life of better 'quality' would not agree that a life of better 'quality' is of more value to God – rather, they would see it as equal in this respect.

**Extension:** Some Christians also see women as inferior to men, and so may disagree with the principle that they were created second in Genesis 2. Most modern Christians do not agree with this. **Atheists** who believe in evolution would also disagree with the principle as they believe life would have evolved at the same time – especially **humanists**, who promote the value of human life.

### Significance of Responses to Scientific/Non-religious Explanations

Christian responses to scientific and non-religious explanations about the world can have different significance for different Christians today.

For Christians who reject science and take a **literal** interpretation of **creationism**, they may decide which science to accept, and in many ways they may reject science. It can have a knock-on effect for what they will accept. For example, they can result in a rejection of climate change, or other scientific theories accepted by the majority.

For many Christians who see science and religion as compatible, this may not affect their day-to-day lives, as it raises no conflict for them believing in creationism. However, how they interpret the Bible in other ways, as if they accept that it is scientific. They may want to evaluate every passage to see if they believe it is literally or **symbolic**.

Such Christians will use Christianity or science as they see appropriate – see science as significantly applicable to moral questions, while using science for more practical questions. They may view it as significant that they feel that they do not have to choose between the two.

For some Christians who accept science and religion as compatible, this is not a problem. They seek to engage in dialogue, both with **atheists** who see the two as incompatible and with **creationists** who dismiss science. They want their positions to be intellectually respected, and they do not need to choose between Christianity and science.

For many Christians it is important to reject a shift in focus towards valuing a good quality of life over **sanctity** – this can be seen in the heated opposition of some Christians to **euthanasia**. They reject any approach towards 'survival of the fittest', seeking to protect the vulnerable.

*'Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.'* (Psalm 82:3–4)

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Quick Questions

---

32. Outline **three** reasons for valuing human life.
33. Outline **three** reasons why many Christians see science to be compatible with Christianity.
34. Explain **two** ways in which Christians interpret or challenge biblical accounts of the beginning of human life.



# INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



# Abortion

## Keywords:

- ❖ **consequentialist** – a type of ethical theory concerned with the morality of actions
- ❖ **ethical theory** – something which suggests how people should act, and suggests what is right or wrong
- ❖ **Humanae Vitae** – an encyclical about the importance of life and not using contraception
- ❖ **person** – in philosophy, a being with certain qualities, not always the same as a human
- ❖ **situation ethics** – ethical theory which suggests decisions should evaluate what is loving in each situation



## Abortion – Nature, Reasons, Attitudes

**Abortion** involves ending a pregnancy and the life of a foetus. There are different reasons for abortion and different attitudes to abortion.

These are reasons why an abortion may be allowed in the UK:

Reason	Examples	
The woman's life is in danger, or her health is at risk	Some pregnancies make a woman very ill, such as ectopic pregnancies where the foetus grows in the wrong place.  Alternatively, someone may have a medical condition which needs treating, and the foetus would be killed by, or needs to be removed for, the treatment, e.g. chemotherapy for cancer.	For people who have a life-threatening condition, abortion is probably the best option because a life is in danger.  Some may consider it a serious and life-threatening condition.
The pregnancy or raising a child would be difficult for the woman to cope with mentally or physically (or might endanger the wellbeing of existing children)	If the pregnancy is the result of rape, the woman might find it very hard to carry her child.  Someone might have a mental illness, and would be placed under great strain to go through with a pregnancy.  Someone may have several children already and be unable to afford to raise another.  In the case of a teenage pregnancy it might be seen that the woman could not cope with pregnancy or raising a child.	Many people consider it unfair to put a woman through rape, or to put her through a financial burden.  Others feel that it is unfair to expect a woman to be unable to look after her child properly.
The foetus would be born with serious disabilities	This could be if the foetus will be born without a particular organ functioning properly.  The foetus might have a genetic condition, such as Down's Syndrome.	Some people believe that it is wrong to bring children into the world with a low quality of life and/or that it is a burden on parents.  Some people believe that it is wrong to bring disabled people into the world.  They might also believe that it is wrong to bring people into the world because they will be a burden on them.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED





The UK Abortion Act 1967 allows for abortions in such circumstances if two doctors agree that the conditions are met and the abortion is carried in an approved medical facility. In the case of mental or physical danger to the woman (or her children), it is evaluated whether continuing the pregnancy or having an abortion would be better or worse for the woman's (or her children's) health.

Normally abortions are *not* allowed up to 24 weeks into pregnancy, though they are allowed later in extreme circumstances where there is a risk to woman or great chance of severe disability for the foetus).

Some countries do not allow abortion for any reason. In the Republic of Ireland there is a risk to the woman's life. Other countries allow abortion for different reasons.

Other reasons some people may want an abortion include:

- ◆ They do not want children, or do not want children now.
  - ↳ Some people view abortion as an acceptable method of birth control, while others view it as selfish and that such pregnancies should continue and the child should be born.
- ◆ Some people wish to get abortions because they desire a baby of a different gender.
  - ↳ Many people feel that this is a bad reason to have an abortion and that people should be able to choose to have children on the basis of their gender, or other reasons.
  - Gender-motivated abortion may happen in any country, but more so in countries with laws limiting the number of children people can have, which has been the case in many years. It is also more likely to happen in areas where there are strong reasons to have male children. Some people are motivated to have male children for cultural or financial reasons (e.g. some people feel it is more likely to earn the family income), which has caused problems in some countries.

Abortion is not permitted for either of these reasons under UK law.

Different attitudes to **abortion** have led to campaigns supporting and opposing abortion. Laws to do with abortion are often debated – such as whether to reduce how far into pregnancy a woman can have an abortion.

Abortion carries less social stigma (negative public feeling) in the UK than it does in some other countries. Some people may wish to be private about abortions if they believe they will be judged negatively.

### Christian Teachings and Non-religious Arguments Related to Abortion

There are many different Christian teachings which can be used to argue for or against abortion. There are also varied non-religious arguments relating to abortion. (**Note:** There are many arguments used by both religious and non-religious people for or against abortion.)

Often arguments in favour of abortion are labelled 'pro-choice', while arguments against abortion are labelled 'pro-life'. These labels can be helpful for differentiation between ideas, but can also be unhelpful as abortion is a complex issue, and many people are not simply 'pro' or 'con'. You may wish to use these labels for the arguments below, but bear in mind that the issue is a grey area, and is not always black and white.



A young person

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Christian Teachings

Christians usually disapprove of abortion. The Bible tells Christians not to commit murder, and so abortion to be murder. Some Christians believe that a soul is present in a foetus from the moment of conception, which would mean that killing a foetus is spiritually equivalent to killing a human. The Catholic Church does not permit abortion (where an abortion procedure is used where an abortion occurs as a side effect to other medical treatment) in any circumstances.

*'You shall not murder.' (Exodus 20:13 NRSV)*

*'Therefore We base Our teaching on the first principles of a human and Christian doctrine which is obliged once more to affirm that the direct interruption of the generative process already begun by direct abortion, even for therapeutic reasons, are to be absolutely excluded as lawful means of avoiding childbirth. On the other hand, the Church does not consider at all illicit the use of medical means necessary to cure bodily diseases, even if a foreseeable impediment to procreation should result, such impediment is not directly intended for any motive whatsoever.'* (Humanae Vitae)

### Did you know?

**Humanae Vitae** is a Catholic encyclical (open letter to bishops and the Catholic faithful) that states that humans should not use any artificial means to stop sexual intercourse from resulting in pregnancy (contraception and abortion). This includes 'therapeutic reasons' – for example, to treat a medical condition. However, this relates to direct abortion – abortion for the purpose of terminating a pregnancy. The Catholic Church does allow medical treatment which might cause an abortion as an unintended side effect, such as removing a cancerous uterus which contained a foetus – this is completely acceptable if the treatment is desired. (This means that while the Catholic Church is strictly 'pro-life', it still permits some forms of medical treatment.)

However, some Christians, including more liberal Protestants, will accept (direct abortion) in certain circumstances, such as if the mother's life is in danger or the pregnancy is a severe risk to the mother's health. They believe that the woman should always be protected and treated with love and respect.

*'Love your neighbour as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.' (Matthew 7:12 NRSV)*

*""You shall love your neighbour as yourself."" (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)*

## Sanctity of Life

Many people, including Christians, who believe in **sanctity of life** also believe that human life is sacred. This is because if human life is sacred and no humans should destroy human life, then it follows that embryos and fetuses, because these are still believed to be created in the image of God, are also sacred. Such arguments are also likely to oppose forms of emergency contraception, such as the morning after pill, and extremely early termination of pregnancy, e.g. the morning after pill.

However, the sanctity of life could also be used to argue for the right to abortion in the case that the woman's life is at risk, because the woman's life is sacred and should be protected. This argument would be particularly strong in the case that allowing a pregnancy to continue would likely result in the death of the woman and/or the foetus, because in this case abortion would be preserving life rather than destroying it. For example, if a woman has a condition that could result in the death of both her and the foetus, then preserving her life would be preserving more life than would be preserved by not aborting.

Some Christians may feel that allowing abortion is a *slippery slope* – if humans accept that it is acceptable to kill a foetus, they may then also start to accept killing disabled people, the elderly, etc. These Christians feel that it is important to defend the sanctity of all human life, and that allowing abortion is part of this.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Quality of Life

Many people have used the concept of **quality of life** to argue for **abortion**. Some people might use quality of life to argue for abortion in different scenarios:

- ◆ If a foetus is severely disabled and will not have a good quality of life, it will suffer.
  - ↳ People might also argue that caring for a severely disabled child is a burden on the family of the child, reducing their quality of life.
- ◆ A pregnancy due to rape, or one which places extreme mental strain, may reduce a woman's quality of life, therefore abortion is kinder for her.
- ◆ If a woman does not have sufficient financial and other resources to care for another child, the world might severely diminish the quality of life for existing children and new child).
  - ↳ Some people also argue that a woman has a choice about what to do with a child at that moment is not part of her plan then this will damage the argument that a woman should have a choice about what to do with a child. This argument is kept separate from arguments about quality of life.

## Non-religious Arguments, Including Personhood

Non-religious people, such as **atheists** and **humanists**, are likely to have varied personal opinions about **abortion**. Most will allow it in the case of risk to the woman's life. Some will *not* see abortion as comparable to killing a child or adult, and believe that abortion is acceptable in any circumstance, where the woman does not want to have a child. Many will disapprove of abortion as a form of birth control but will accept a number of reasons, such as mental burden for the woman, or the quality of the foetus, as acceptable grounds for abortion.

Some people (both religious and non-religious) have argued that abortion is acceptable because a foetus is not a **person**. They do not see being a person as the same as being a human. They may believe that a foetus becomes a person at the moment of birth, for example.

Some may believe that you need to have other characteristics in order to be a person, such as being self-aware; having a right to life and a right not to be killed. For example: being self-aware; having a sense of past and future. Foetuses, especially at early stages of development, do not have such characteristics. Philosophically, however, this argument could lead to a position that most people would not support: newborn babies do not have many of these 'personhood' qualities either, and most people who wish to argue for abortion to be allowed do not wish to argue that it is acceptable to kill newborn babies. So where one draws the line regarding 'who is a person' is important.

Some Christians will support abortion in certain circumstances for compassionate reasons. However, they will generally dismiss arguments that foetus is more valuable than other human life. Much of the debate surrounding abortion is whether a foetus is recognised as valuable in the same way as other human life or not. This is a key point for anyone's position on abortion.



An image of a person's face.

Will a foetus be considered a person if it has DNA? This is a question that arises from the debate on personhood.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Further Considerations

Some people argue against abortion on the grounds that there are still small physical risks (in developed countries; there may be larger risks in less economically developed countries) associated with abortions, and abortion could endanger the life of a woman. Furthermore, some studies have shown that many people regret having abortions, and may experience mental pain and stress, even many years later. In such cases, it is a sensible decision for a woman's health.

However, it can be argued that the physical risks from abortion in countries like many developed countries have been proven to be minimal. Evidence proves that abortion damages women's mental health.

## Application of Ethical Theories and Christian Responses

### Situation Ethics

**Situation ethics** is an **ethical theory** associated with many theologians and Joseph Fletcher. It promotes evaluating individual situations by what is most loving, rather than other laws, teachings or considerations. It is a **consequentialist** ethical theory, being loving consequences, rather than about what actions are carried out. It does care that the intention is also for loving consequences. Loving consequences are those which are best for the people involved.

Situation ethics could be used to argue for or against **abortion**. In favour of abortion, it is loving to allow a woman to make choices about her body and her physical or mental health if necessary, and not to place the burden of a child on her to cope financially or mentally. It could be argued that for certain medical conditions, if a child is born with extremely low quality of life / low life expectancy, it is more loving to allow it to be aborted than to allow it to suffer.

However, it can be argued that in almost all, if not all, cases of abortion, the fetus is a human being with the right to life (this would not apply in cases where not aborting would be more loving to the woman and the fetus – here situation ethics would always support abortion). Therefore, that abortion is not actually loving to women (unless their health is in danger or the pregnancy is mentally traumatic – more traumatic than going through with a pregnancy and adoption).

Overall, situation ethics is likely to promote abortion in case of danger to a woman's life, and to argue for abortion in other situations, as being loving to the woman. However, if the consequence for the fetus, situation ethics can be used to argue strongly against it, as it always denies a human the chance of life.

Liberal Christians are likely to agree with situation ethics, seeing abortion as acceptable in the case of danger to a woman's life, and not initially acceptable in other circumstances, while seeing abortion as unloving to the fetus, and so they disapprove of it in other circumstances. More conservative Christians who put the **sanctity** of the fetus as a priority (because of biblical teachings, the belief in the fetus having a soul, and/or the teaching of the Church) are likely to disagree with any situational arguments for allowing abortion.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Utilitarianism

**Utilitarianism** is an **ethical theory** associated primarily with philosophers of Stuart Mill. It holds that an action should try to produce the greatest happiness of people – producing pleasure and not producing pain makes actions good. **Consequentialist** ethical theory as it cares about consequences – pleasure and pain.

In many ways, utilitarianism and **situation ethics** are similar – what makes an action right or wrong for them are often the same thing. They can both be applied in similar situations. Abortion will generally promote the greatest pleasure for the foetus (if future pleasure is considered). It will depend on the circumstances whether or not it will produce more pleasure for the woman than the foetus's future family). However, it depends greatly on the pain and pleasure involved.

Bentham's utilitarianism measures intensity, duration, certainty, purity, richness, nearness and extent of pleasure and pain. Abortion might not be intensely painful for a foetus, and could be intensely painful for a woman, or reduce the intensity of other pain (e.g. risk to her health). The pain from an abortion might be long- or short-lasting for a woman, and would cost a foetus the whole of their life – but they would only experience pain for a short amount of time, if at all. An abortion is almost certainly bad for a foetus, and may or may not bring more pain than pleasure for the woman. Abortion is not 'pure' as it brings suffering with any pleasure. Both the pain and pleasure from abortion may be 'rich' – **richness** means that foetuses cannot experience a full pleasure, so this is bad. A woman can experience much future pleasure which she would lose if she has an abortion. The pleasure may be immediate for a woman who is pregnant, but the loss of a foetus could affect its parents' friends negatively. However, an abortion may allow a higher quality of life for a woman. A way of calculating whether abortion is acceptable is complex, and not always on how each factor is weighted.



People can experience pain.

Mill's utilitarianism could be used to argue against abortion, at least in many cases. Abortion could be seen as producing 'lower pleasure' – whereas bringing a new life into the world is as bringing about 'higher pleasure' in allowing a new and intellectual life.

Peter Singer is a modern utilitarian who has argued for abortion on the grounds that foetuses are not valued in as much as they are persons, and does not believe that foetuses are persons. However, his arguments can also be used to permit infanticide, and conditions – e.g. severe Alzheimer's (in certain circumstances) – if this would increase the satisfaction of preferences. (Singer has generally been a preference utilitarian – should aim to fulfil preferences, rather than simply create pleasure.)

Some Christians may agree with utilitarian arguments that abortion is reasonable if it produces more pleasure and not if it produces more pain, and that a woman's desire not to have a foetus is a valid preference. However, others will disregard any arguments based on **sanctity** as more important. All Christians will disregard arguments that abortion should be considered as they do not fulfil certain 'personhood' characteristics – and this argument (that certain other humans may be better off dead) as evidence in its own position to take.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Quick Questions

---

35. Outline **three** utilitarian reasons for allowing abortion.
36. Explain **two** reasons why some Christians do accept abortion in some circumstances.
37. Explain **two** reasons why some Christians do not accept abortion. Refer to wisdom and authority.



INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Life after Death

Christianity holds that there is an afterlife; good people / believers will go to **heaven** and non-believers will go to **hell**. For more detailed information about life after death, refer to the Course Companion on Christian Beliefs and see the section on Christian Beliefs. This material will be recapped here for ease.

### Keywords:

- ◆ **evangelism** – spreading the message about Jesus and trying to convert people
- ◆ **heaven** – a realm where people may go after death and reside with God
- ◆ **hell** – a realm where people may go after death, away from God
- ◆ **immortality of the soul** – the belief that a spiritual part of a person lives on after death
- ◆ **Judgement** – in Christianity, when God will separate good and bad people at the end of time
- ◆ **purgatory** – a realm where people must make amends for their sins after death
- ◆ **resurrection of the body** – the belief that God will raise people's bodies at the end of time

## Christian Teachings and Beliefs that Support the Existence of a Life After Death

Within Christianity, **heaven** is believed to be a realm where people will reside after death. **hell** is believed to be a realm away from God, possibly involving pain and torture. Both are reinforced by the Bible, especially the New Testament.

*'Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven...'* (Matthew 5:12)

*'Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body and send them to hell.'* (Matthew 10:28)

Some Christians believe in **purgatory**, a realm between heaven and hell where people make amends for their sins before entering heaven. Purgatory is not referenced in the Bible. The Catholic Church teaches its existence and believes that it is referenced in the Bible (1 Peter 3:18-20), which implies that some sins can be forgiven after death, which the Catholic Church believes is a realm for the purification of sins).

*"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."* (Matthew 12:31-32)

Not all Christians agree on how life after death works. Some believe that God will raise humans' physical bodies at the end of time (**resurrection of the body**). Others believe that a spiritual part of a person, their soul, lives on after death and goes straight to heaven/hell/purgatory (**immortality of the soul**). Some Christians believe in both; that the soul will enter the afterlife straight away after death, but that there will be a bodily resurrection for everyone at **Judgement** at the end of time. This is based on different interpretations of different Bible verses – the Catholic Church does not want to discount any teaching, which is why it teaches belief in immortality of the soul *and* resurrection of the body.

*'Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out – those who have done good, to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.'* (John 5:28-29)

*'[Jesus] replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."'* (Luke 23:43)

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



Further, Christians are reassured of their belief in life after death because the resurrection was witnessed by his disciples – and then rose to heaven.

*'But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who has been raised from the dead. He is not here..." Later he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at table. For their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who said that Jesus would rise from the dead.'* (Mark 16:7-8, 41 RSV)

*'When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight as he went to heaven. While they were gazing upwards towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. "Galilees, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."*' (Acts 1:9-11)



Ephesians 2:1–10 teaches Christians that there will be life after death. It emphasises that sinning is death, and Christians now have new spiritual life, as well as having eternal life after death. It teaches that God has granted this life by his grace, and not through anything humans did to deserve it. It talks of future ages (it is implied that these are after death) where God will continue to be good to humanity.

*'But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show us the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.'* (Ephesians 2:4–7)

## Christian Arguments for Life after Death

There are many different Christian arguments for life after death:

### Remember Past Lives and the Paranormal

While science provides no evidence for life after death, some Christians argue that there is something beyond this life. Some people claim to remember past lives – as reincarnated. There are also many reports of paranormal phenomena, such as ghost sightings (and represent the souls of the dead) then they are somehow alive after death.

*'And he said, "Consult a spirit for me, and bring up for me the one whom I name to you." So he consulted mediums and spiritists, but they did not find out. Then he said to his servants, "I see a divine being coming up out of the ground." He said to her, "What is his appearance?" She said, "He is wrapped in a robe." So Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed down and did obeisance. Then Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?"'* (1 Samuel 28:8, 13-15 NRSV)

### Logic and Reward

Christians could also argue that science cannot fully explain consciousness because part of a human is immaterial and not explainable by science. If this is possible for the immaterial part of a person (the soul) to live on after the physical body dies, then life after death is logical.

For those who believe in God, life after death is logical, so that God can justly reward or punish them.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**





Christians recognise that the world is unfair – that many ‘good’ people are not punished and many ‘bad’ people are not punished. Life after death allows a mechanism for appropriate reward and punishment (see the parable of the sheep and the goats).

### Comfort and Meeting Loved Ones who Have Passed On

Life after death can also comfort Christians, as they believe that death is not the end. It also comforts them to believe that they will meet those they love who have previously died. This belief can reassure Christians when they lose a friend or family member, as they believe that they will see them again. They believe that it would be lovely to see them in the afterlife and to be reunited with them.



*‘... As for yourself, you shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in the land of Canaan.’*  
(Genesis 15:15 NRSV) – God speaking to Abraham

### Significance of Belief in Life after Death for Christians

Belief in life after death is significant for Christians in that it motivates them to live good lives, as many believe that their actions on Earth will influence whether they go to **heaven**, **purgatory**, or **hell** in the afterlife.

*“Come, you that are blessed by my Father, 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 drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me.”*  
(Matthew 25:34-40) (R)



For some, belief in life after death encourages them to **evangelise** others, as they want them to experience both a relationship with God and heaven. Some Christians believe that only Christians can go to heaven, because Jesus said that he was the way to God, though others just believe that people can only know God as ‘Father’ through others ways, and gain entry to heaven.



*‘Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”’* (John 14:6 NRSV)

Christians believe that Jesus died to save them, and to bring them eternal life. This belief is significant in influencing them to live life to the full, and not worry about death or the afterlife because of Jesus’ sacrifice for them.

*‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. 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 now I go to prepare a place for you, and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.’*



However, some people – for instance, some groups of Christian monks – have found it significant that they have tried to isolate themselves from normal human life and desires, as they value the afterlife much more than human life, and want to

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



The type of belief in life after death Christians hold can also be significant. For example, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christians pray to the saints, believing that they are alive and can pass on their prayers to God, or bless them. Catholics may pray for the dead, believing that this will help them in purgatory. Belief in life after death can also be important for the treatment of their body after death.

The Orthodox Church teaches that Christians must be buried, because of the **resurrection of the body**. The Catholic Church has also traditionally preferred this. However, Protestants are cremated, as they do not believe in **immortality of the soul**. For them, burying their body is not a requirement.

## Quick Question



38. Outline **three** Christian arguments for belief in life after death.
39. Outline **three** places where Christians may believe they could go after death.
40. Explain **two** reasons why belief in life after death is important to Christians. Also explain why it is a source of wisdom and authority.



**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Non-religious Arguments against Life after Death

Non-religious people argue against life after death; they claim that it is not real and that people who believe in it are mistaken in believing in it. (Here, 'non-religious people' refers to those who do not believe in anything as 'spiritual' in any way.)

### Examples of Non-religious Arguments against Life after Death

Below are some example arguments which non-religious people use to dispute life after death.

#### A Source of Comfort

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

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

#### Social Control

Further, some non-religious people have argued that religion in general is not good for society and that this is actually damaging. The sociologist Karl Marx is famous for referring to religion as the '*opium of the people*'. He believed that the rich and ruling classes encourage people to believe in life after death to keep them happy and give them hope. If life after death is just drugs, this was not good -- because it stops people taking action against the negative things in their life, such as oppressive governments. Life after death provides comfort, but it has also provided fear of punishment (e.g. for disobeying religious authority). The belief in life after death has, arguably, been used as a tool of control to stop people rising up against their rulers.

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

#### Lack of Evidence

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

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

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

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Fraudulent Accounts

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

As dealt with above, one explanation for Jesus rising from the dead is that many reported sightings of ghosts have been proven to be hoaxes. Some people who claim to have experienced the afterlife have later withdrawn. For example, the boy in *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven* later claimed that he had made up his story of heaven while in a coma.

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

## Christian Responses to Non-religious Arguments against Life after Death

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

Also, Christians can respond that the argument that just because one case is false, all cases are false, is a fallacy. Many humans are occasionally, or frequently, dishonest, but no one moves to doubt everything which everyone says is true. It is known from experience that if you ask a witness about an accident, you will get the basic details, you will get embellishments, and you will get 'witnesses' who did not witness the accident at all. This does not mean that the accident did not occur.

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

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

Christians also believe Jesus' teaching that there will be life after death – that people will be with him in heaven (John 14:2); that people will be with him in paradise (Luke 23:43); and that people will rise from their graves (John 5:28-29).

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



*“In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, 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)*

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

*“Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will come out...” (John 5:28–29 NRSV)*

For Christians, the Bible, the word of God, is enough evidence for there being life after death.

## Quick Questions

41. Outline **three** non-religious arguments against belief in life after death.
42. Outline **three** Christian responses to these arguments against belief in life after death.
43. Explain **two** reasons why non-religious arguments against life after death affect many Christians’ faith.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Euthanasia

### Nature of Euthanasia

**Euthanasia**, also known as mercy killing, is helping someone to die, or ending their life, because they wish this to be the case, or because it is believed that they would wish this.

Some people believe that there are some situations in which allowing someone to die is a compassionate thing to do. This may be because they are in great pain, or because they are unable to do anything for themselves, for example, if they are paralysed, or for other reasons.

The issue of euthanasia arises when someone is unable to end their own life and therefore, needs help in order to die. Normally, killing someone is classed as murder, but some people believe that euthanasia is different because it is in the best interests of the person.

Killing anyone for any reason, including euthanasia, is currently illegal in the UK. This has been debated. However, some countries such as Switzerland allow it in some circumstances. Some people from the UK have travelled there for this purpose.

### Types of Euthanasia and Associated Concepts

#### (When they may be carried out)

##### Assisted suicide

This is where someone wants to die but is unable to do so on their own. They might get a friend to help them, or a doctor, so that they can take an overdose. This is called **voluntary euthanasia**.

##### Voluntary euthanasia

This is where someone asks to die, but is unable to do so themselves, possibly because they are paralysed. Someone might ask a friend or medical professional to help.

##### Non-voluntary euthanasia

This is where someone is unable to ask for help, for example, if they are in a coma, but it is felt that they are suffering. Friends and family might decide to prolong this person's life, and ask medical professionals to help.

##### Involuntary euthanasia

This is where people are killed against their wishes. Some people believe it would be better if they were dead. The Nazis used this. Most people view this as murder.

#### (How they may be carried out)

##### Active euthanasia

This is where someone actually kills the person, possibly by administering a poison. This is illegal in many countries.

##### Passive euthanasia

This is where life support is removed; for example, if a person is in a normal state, or if someone gives a poison. However, breathing equipment may be removed, medicine and water may be withheld. This is legal in the UK, though there may be legal grey areas. It is acceptable to withhold food and treatment.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Double-effect

This is sometimes associated with euthanasia for a doctor to prescribe a high dosage of painkillers to a patient. These may ease pain but may also have the *additional effect* of killing the patient. So medicines which are used to treat pain are responsible for killing them.

**Do Not Resuscitate orders (DNR)** This is where someone who is seriously ill asks doctors not to save their life; for example after a heart attack or stroke.

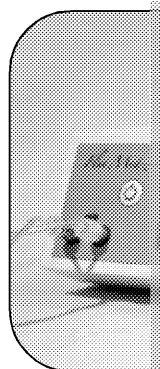
Changing laws on **euthanasia** are influencing legal decisions. Many people live where they have to die, but do not wish to see friends or relatives imprisoned. It is quite possible that laws regarding euthanasia will continue to change – **euthanasia** could be tightened, or **active euthanasia** could become legal.

## Arguments for and against Euthanasia

Arguments sometimes given in favour of **euthanasia**:

(Not all are relevant to both **voluntary and non-voluntary**)

- ◆ People deserve *dignity*; if their life is not dignified, they should be allowed to end it, or others should be allowed to end it on their behalf.
- ◆ People deserve **quality of life**; if they do not believe that their life is worth living, they should not be made to endure life because they are told they have to.
- ◆ People have a *right to die*; people should be able to make their own decisions, including if they wish to end their life.
- ◆ Keeping euthanasia illegal is *discriminatory* (in the UK – not necessarily in all countries) as people who are able to commit suicide are legally able to do so. However, it is most people who have the most reason to end their lives.



A person sitting at a desk, looking at a laptop screen, with a small object on the desk.

Arguments sometimes given in opposition to euthanasia:

- ◆ **Sanctity of life** – all life is sacred and humans do not have a right to take the life of another for any reason.
- ◆ Euthanasia is *murder* – it is wrong to kill someone.
- ◆ There is a problem with *conscience* – it is wrong to expect someone to kill another, especially medical professionals who have sworn to protect life.
- ◆ It is a *slippery slope* – if euthanasia becomes legal this will make it easier for relatives murdered and it will make disabled and old people feel like they are a burden.
- ◆ Some people might *recover* – it is possible that someone might recover from an illness which doctors thought was terminal, or that a treatment or cure might be found which could help the person who was going to die.

Consider the reasons why it is wrong to kill someone.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Christian Teachings about and Responses to Euthanasia

Many Christians oppose **euthanasia**, because they believe in **sanctity of life**. They believe that murder is wrong, and that euthanasia is murder. Even if someone is in pain, it does not make them any less the image of God and something sacred.

Some believe that they are called by God to protect those who are suffering that Christians should protect, rather than harm, those in need. The Catholics opposed to euthanasia. However, it may accept euthanasia via **double effect** killing drugs to ease their pain, but it also happen to shorten their life, to accept this as the motivation to relieve pain was pure. **Note:** many of these often to accept euthanasia. Some forms of **passive euthanasia** – such as withdrawing a machine from a person who has been declared brain-dead is switched off – is acceptable.

*'You shall not murder.'* (Exodus 20:13 NRSV)

*'... if you hold back from rescuing those taken away to death, those who go to slaughter... Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it? And will he not repay to their deeds?' (Proverbs 24:11-12 NRSV)*

However, some other Christians believe that euthanasia should be allowed because it is cruel to let people suffer unnecessarily. They believe that Jesus died for our sins, and that in some situations, the most loving thing to do is to allow someone to die. Even though Christians may still believe in the sanctity of life, they may also feel that someone has a right to life to God, and that allowing someone the dignity of death when they have a terminal illness respects them as a holy life, reflecting God's love.

shall love your neighbour as yourself.' (Matthew 22:39 N

## Interpretations of Job 2:1–10

The Book of Job in the Old Testament is also used to support the popular Christian view that suffering can be sent to test humans, including those who suffer physically and those who suffer mentally watching others suffer. Throughout the book, God allows Satan to test Job through hurting those around him and destroying his possessions, and also by making him suffer physically. In Job 2:1–10, God notes to Satan (though his property has been stolen and his children have died). Satan tells he hurts Job physically (previously he had not been harmed directly). God allows as long as he does not kill him – and Satan covers Job in sores. Even though Job should curse God, Job will not. Job says that they have been blessed by God and will accept the blessing without also accepting hardship. Job 1:21

'Then Satan answered the LORD, "Skin for skin! All that people have they will give to your hand now and tomorrow, but they will not give you their life. He will not give you his life and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." ... good and evil. He will not receive the good, and not receive the bad?" In all this Job did not sin with his

Many Christians feel that this passage shows that there is a meaning to suffering. For example, Jesus does not despair when he is in physical pain, but continues to be faithful. Christians interpret this passage to mean that Christians should never give up.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



they must go through. At the end of the Book of Job, Job is rewarded for everything he has suffered. Many Christians believe that they will be rewarded in heaven.

On the other hand, the Book of Job shows it to be significant that Job does not curse God, even if he may be internally angry with him. The Jewish tradition values actions and words, more so than thoughts. However, Jesus taught that thinking evil could be as sinful as committing the action. Furthermore, the New Testament does not test someone more than they can endure, without providing them a way out. Passages along with a reading of Job support **euthanasia** – God is not cruel, and does not suffer more than the people, and if they are at the stage where they need to be more compassionate, he allows them to die, so they are not in pain, and do not lose their relationship with God.

*'But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.'*  
(Matthew 5:28 NRSV)

*'No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you can endure it.'*  
(1 Corinthians 10:13 NRSV)

There are also different ways of interpreting the exchange between Job and God. Job's wife says, 'Curse God, and die' (Job 2:9 NRSV), which Job rebukes, and he calls her foolish. This implies that if Job does curse God, then God will strike Job down. However, another interpretation is that Job should curse God and add insult to injury, by dying. This could be suggesting that if God is going to torment Job, then Job should violate the covenant and destroy himself (and God's image) and not put up with anything further. If this is the case, then it is clear that the Bible (through Job's response) teaches that this is not suffering – that humans should indeed accept many blessings from God, and stop complaining when they are no longer blessed.

### Alternatives to Euthanasia

Many Christians feel that hospices are a better alternative than **euthanasia** or living in pain. Hospices are places which care for the terminally ill and seriously injured, and attempt to make them comfortable, and often provide them with spiritual support and visiting clergy. These Christians argue that those who are at the end of their lives are shown that they are still valued and given appropriate care – and that this is more important than helping to end their lives.

However, while all Christians support hospices for those who want them, so do those who oppose euthanasia. There are some conditions which are unbearable – some people cannot fully cope with life, even if they are not in pain, they may not be able to do the kind of life they want. Euthanasia is a necessary compassionate action, especially for those whose lives are unbearable to them, but which doctors cannot actually kill them, meaning they may live a miserable life.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



Passage  
What do you think?  
Should it ever be legal?  
which side are you on?

## Non-religious Arguments about Euthanasia

Non-religious people, such as **atheists** and **humanists**, have different views about euthanasia. Some people feel that it is wrong to kill others, or worry that allowing euthanasia is a slippery slope. **Humanists**, however, believe that allowing people to die treats them with respect and allows them to live the life they want. They support the legalisation of euthanasia. They may use any of the arguments for or against euthanasia.

Christians and non-religious people may have very different views for or against euthanasia. One of the issues likely to differ is their reasoning behind their views – non-religious people have different views on euthanasia because of the sanctity of life, or because suffering could be a test of faith.

## Application of Ethical Theories and Christian Response

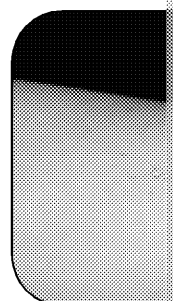
### Situation Ethics

**Situation Ethics** is likely to support **euthanasia** if it is seen as the most loving thing for the people involved. Generally people will only be considering euthanasia if it is believed to be the most loving thing for the person who is going to die, and often it will also be loving for their friends and family, as they no longer have to watch their loved one suffer.

Situation ethics does not have to consider arguments against euthanasia such as the sanctity of **life**, or prohibitions of murder, as these do not relate to the consequences of the action.

It is possible that situation ethics could be used to argue against euthanasia if it is seen as not being loving, for any reason. Situation ethics would certainly condemn **involuntary euthanasia**. It might argue against **euthanasia** where there is a chance of recovery, if it is believed that allowing current suffering in the hope of a happier future. It would have to be careful not to allow a particular case of euthanasia, based on the diagnosis and the general prognosis, to lead to a slippery slope or not. Most people who would use situation ethics to argue against euthanasia on these grounds, as the slippery slope is often seen as a problem in such cases. However, if allowing one compassionate death would lead to more compassionate deaths, then this might mean someone applying situation ethics would argue in favour of euthanasia.

Christians who see compassion and love for others as their priorities are likely to support situation ethics on euthanasia. Those who feel they should follow biblical teaching will oppose euthanasia – for example, the Ten Commandments, and perhaps Job – would oppose euthanasia.



Active euthanasia

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Utilitarianism

**Utilitarianism**, like **situation ethics**, is likely to argue in favour of **euthanasia** to spare the person dying, and their loved ones, pain, but this would also free up resources used elsewhere to create more pleasure.

As with situation ethics, if it was believed that allowing euthanasia would create a slippery slope, where people were killed against their will, or worried that this would not be taking up resources, then utilitarians might argue against euthanasia on the grounds that it could cause more pain than it would prevent.



Act utilitarians would be more likely to argue for euthanasia – seeing it as preventing pain in a particular situation – whereas rule utilitarians might be more inclined to argue against it if they thought a society which allowed euthanasia as a rule would cause more pain, e.g. old people worrying about being killed. It could also be factored into this, that it might cause doctors / medical professionals pain to have to carry out euthanasia, and if less people wanted to be doctors, or doctors felt less pleasure, then rule utilitarians might argue against it. However, if more people were willing to die, then rule utilitarians might argue for it. Fewer for this reason – if they felt that other pain within society would outweigh the pain of dying.

(The situation ethicist might agree with this rule utilitarian conclusion, or argue against it. Even if all doctors felt slightly less happy because they had to carry out euthanasia for the sake of being compassionate to those who have an extremely low quality of life.)

Some Christians are likely to be sympathetic to, and consider, utilitarian arguments. They will argue that euthanasia should / should not be carried out based on what will cause the most pleasure or pain. However, they will always be guided by their faith as what will cause the most pain or pleasure balanced against the value of life.



## Quick Questions

44. Outline **three** types of euthanasia.
45. Outline **three** arguments against euthanasia.
46. Explain **two** reasons why some Christians accept euthanasia in some circumstances. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority.



Act utilitarians judge actions as right or wrong based on whether they produce the most pleasure or the least pain. Rule utilitarians judge actions as right or wrong based on whether they would produce the most pleasure or the least pain if they were a rule which everyone followed. Rule utilitarians might argue that killing an evil person would produce more pleasure than pain. However, act utilitarians might reject this argument as it is not a rule, but a specific action.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Issues in the Natural World

The world has been used in many ways, and also damaged. Christians must care for the natural world.

### Keywords:

- ♦ **animal experimentation** – using animals to test chemicals or medicines to see if they are safe before using them on humans, or using animals in other research to learn things about the world
- ♦ **cloning** – creating identical copies of existing animals (or other things like plants or organs)
- ♦ **genetic modification** – changing an animal's genes to produce a difference in its characteristics
- ♦ **speciesism** – prejudice and discrimination in favour of one's species



## Threats to the World and Christian Responses

### Pollution and Global Warming

Pollution, causing an undesirable change in the environment, is a problem.

#### 1. A rise in greenhouse gases (such as carbon dioxide/CO<sub>2</sub> and methane) has led to global warming, which has contributed to climate change.

Human activity, including burning fossil fuels for energy/power (including cars and factories); deforestation (removing trees, which absorb CO<sub>2</sub>); and land use changes have contributed to a build-up of gases in the Earth's atmosphere which affect the climate. The gases can be thought to provide a kind of blanket around the Earth, trapping heat in the atmosphere and leading to a rise in average temperature (though some areas will experience a drop in temperature). This is generally upsetting the balance of conditions on Earth, which can have various effects on various areas of the ecosystem, and can lead to polar ice melting, mean sea level rising, and flooding. This can mean damage and suffering for humans and animals, and the loss of certain species of plants and animals.



Air pollution from a power station

#### 2. Chemicals have infected air, water and land, damaged the ozone layer, kills animals, and reduces the health of humans who come into contact with pollution.

Pollution, including emissions from factories and cars, has caused contamination in the world, which can harm animals and humans and destroy plant-life. Chemical emissions have created in the ozone layer a hole, which has led to an increased risk of skin cancer and other health problems. This has upset the balance of conditions on Earth.

#### 3. Littering and rubbish create hazards for animals.

Many people, including politicians, are concerned about pollution levels and have introduced initiatives which aim to cut pollution. Possible solutions include:

- ♦ Finding ways to use fewer resources which damage the environment
- ♦ Using renewable energy sources, and safer chemicals, which do not pollute the environment
- ♦ Planting more trees to absorb carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)



Some Christians and **humanists** believe it is their responsibility to try to reduce pollution and that humans and animals will have a better world to live in now, and so that their children will have a better world. One of the main reasons for concern about pollution and global warming for Christians is that they often affect the most disadvantaged the most. When pollution causes diseases, it is those who are most vulnerable who are affected.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



suffer. When global warming contributes to climate change and natural disasters, the most suffering and loss of life will be to those who are not well off and cannot rebuild afterwards.

### Natural resources

Humans have used many natural resources; they grow crops for food; use other natural materials to create things (e.g. cotton is used for clothing and wood to make paper); as well as using resources such as coal and oil for fuel.

Some Christians and other religious people feel that it is acceptable to use the environment in this way, either because God gave them the world, or because resources are there and should be used.

Why do some people have abused and damaged the environment? It is people's responsibility to use resources as personally possible, and to make sure that resources are not used up.

However, many people believe that the natural resources have been abused.

#### 1. Use of fossil fuels

Many resources which humans use for fuel are 'fossil fuels', fuels which are made from decomposed matter. Coal and oil are examples of these. Using fossil fuels is bad for a number of reasons. Because these fuels formed over many years, once they are used up, they will be gone – humans are using them much faster than new ones can be made. Furthermore, fossil fuels contain much carbon, and some contain other chemicals, and releasing these into the atmosphere can contribute to global warming.

#### 2. Overuse of land and animal resources

Much land has also been over-farmed, and creatures have been over-farmed. Over-farming land has been over-farmed, this can mean that it is no longer usable to grow crops, resulting in economic situations for farmers and large areas of wasteland. Over-farming can badly affect the environment. Forests may be cut down for farming, and the large amount of cows farmed has contributed to high levels of greenhouse gases (produced by cows), which contributes to global warming. Where too many animals are hunted/caught from the natural environment, such as in the case of some fish, this can lead to a decrease in the number of certain species, and in some cases can lead to them becoming extinct.

Some Christians feel that using natural resources in such ways is a misuse of what God has given and should be protected and cared for. Some Christians, people of other religions and other religious people feel that this is very bad **stewardship**/management, because of the damage to the world, abusing the environment may mean that there will be fewer resources for the future.

Not everyone believes that humans have damaged the environment as much as we think. Some people, called Climate Change Deniers in the section on Origins of the World, believe that producing high levels of pollution is a good thing. Some people see pollution as a 'necessary evil', as much pollution is caused by development and transport, and the meat market – it is a means to an end. Many people believe that convenient transport, technology, cheap products and steak, among other things, are worth the pollution.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Stewardship

As mentioned in the section on Origins and Value of the Universe, **stewardship** is a key concept for Christians. Most Christians feel that humans are supposed to protect the world and its animals. They should also protect their fellow humans, and not do anything that would harm them.

Pollution, global warming and use of natural resources are such tricky issues. Small actions such as littering, the actions of one person may not seem harmful – but extreme pollution, global warming, or the loss of natural resources. Rather than one person's actions, it is a combination of everyone's actions that cause these problems.

Christianity has traditionally dealt with specific actions, and given blame to the people who do them. It is not to murder, and if this does happen, it is seen as the person's fault in basic terms. It is harder to apply 'sin' to larger issues contributed to by everyone. Christians try to do this. One approach to Christianity, liberation theology, developed in the middle of the twentieth century, and arose in response to the political and social issues of the time. While liberation theology did not deal with issues such as pollution, it did deal with *structural sin* – wrong done by establishments, and society, for example, by oppression. The Catholic Church has argued that sin belongs to individuals, but in the 1980s, however, seeing pollution or abuse of natural resources as structural sin made it harder to place responsibility for the part they have played in not being good stewards of the world. Christians are encouraged to make changes to their lives to reduce their damage to the environment and to others.

Christianity took part in the *Declarations on Nature* in Assisi in 1986. This was when leaders from Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism met to talk about the environment and their faiths, and work out how they could work together to protect the planet. The talks were held in Assisi as it was named after St Francis of Assisi, the Christian saint associated with caring for nature and animals. The Declarations were influential in the setting up of the *Alliance of Religions and Conservation* in 1995. (This is an organisation which helps religions to set up plans for conservation.)

The *Christian Declaration on Nature* was made by Father Lanfranco Serrini, a Franciscan monk (a Catholic who dedicated his life to God, and followed the teaching of St Francis of Assisi) who also helped to bring Christianity back to Eastern Europe after communism.

In the Declaration he makes it clear that creation belongs to God, and that humans have dominion over it (dominion), it must look after it (stewardship). He claims that God created it to be, and this should not be ignored for human gain.

*'The Fathers of the Church understood the marvel of man's dual citizenship and the responsibility that flows from it... because of the responsibility that flows from his dual citizenship, man's dominion over the earth is not a licence to exploit, squander or destroy what God has made to man's benefit.'*  
(The Christian Declaration on Nature, Assisi 1986)

He claims that unjustified damage to nature is wrong, and part of humanity's duty is to look after it. This is a challenge to Christians believing that God will just come to repair the world, and preserving it.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



He speaks about St Francis, and how he saw God in nature, and so treated nature with respect, as playing the part God wants it to. He argues that Christians should do nothing which is not for the benefit of nature *and* humanity, as St Francis tried to do.

Some  
can

However, he includes positives about humanity, believing that with God's help

In order to combat issues in the natural world, some of his guidance for Christians

- Not using technology which was not renewable and only damaged the human
- Standing against war, and any similarly destructive activity which damaged humans.
- Not greedily using resources beyond what is necessary.
- Not urbanising (developing rural areas for cities and industry) without
- Not acting in the present without concern for the future.
- Discussion between all Christian denominations about what science can taking the environment into account.
- Doing the right thing – not abusing the world for personal gain.
- Working with others, for the good of all.

Father Lanfranco Serrini points out that damaging the environment is not only humans personally, as such actions disrespect themselves, as created in the

While Christians may not be able, on their own, to combat pollution, global natural resources in the same way that they now damage the world as a collective to protect it.

## Animal Rights

As well as using natural resources, humans have also made use of animals in different ways, including **animal experimentation**, as a food source, and for

### Animal Experimentation

**Animal experimentation** can take many forms of testing or research. Test products on animals before testing them on humans in order to spot harmful

Scientists have also **cloned** animals, and used them for **genetic modification**. Copies of existing cells/organisms, has been used, for example, for medical replicate stem cells (unspecialised cells) or other cells, they may be able to grow on, or use healthy cells to replace diseased ones. Scientists might genetically can study the effects of changing or adding genes to an organism.

Negative views on animal testing, the availability of alternatives, and situations produced misleading results, have led to regulations on animal testing to limit use and the harm caused to animals. Cosmetic testing on animals is currently

However, cases in which chemicals have harmed humans where they have been led to legislation to make sure that products are tested properly, which often

Some of those who object to animal testing have clashed with those who test animal testing, sometimes resulting in threats, or actual violence.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



There are a variety of responses to animal experimentation:

1

No animal experimentation is fair; animals have a right not to be experimented on by humans. Humans should do research in other ways, including using voluntary humans. Furthermore, animal research is not always helpful, as animals may respond in different ways to human psychologically or physically.



2

Animal experimentation is fully acceptable (if it has a purpose and is not unnecessarily cruel); human beings are more important than animals, and if we can help humans by using animals then this should be done.

Animal experimentation for important medicines or anything which is likely to significantly improve human lives is acceptable, but cosmetics testing is not, because cosmetics are not essential.

Animal experimentation which has a low risk of harming animals is acceptable, and more acceptable where it aims to minimise pain to animals involved.

Animal experimentation is acceptable if it is kept to a minimum; as few animals as possible are used to achieve desired results and humans are used where possible.

## Christian Responses to Animal Experimentation

Some Christians do not view animal experimentation negatively. They may view it as fully acceptable, or hold the view that it is acceptable in some circumstances (see the list above). They may believe that it is better to use animals, if they believe that humans are more important than animals because they have been created in God's image.

*'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)

A rat

However, others believe that animal experimentation is not acceptable, or acceptable only to a bare minimum. They may believe that it is unfair and unloving to treat animals in this way, and are taught that people should treat others as they themselves would want to be treated. They may apply this to animals as well.

*'In everything do to others as you would have them do to you...'* (Matthew 22:39)

## Activity

Make a note of your personal response to animal experimentation, bearing in mind the different views.



**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**





## The Use of Animals for Food

All countries in the world use animals in food, though there are some countries and religions which view meat-eating less favourably than others. There are many vegetarians (people who do not eat meat), and also vegans (people who do not eat meat, or animal produce; which primarily means milk and eggs, but also includes honey, or any other forms of animal produce). Some religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism, may have high levels of vegetarianism, and infrequently to a world-average.

India is a country where a large percentage of the population are vegetarians. Many Indian people are vegetarians.

## Christian Perspectives to the Use of Animals for Food

Many Christians believe that it is acceptable to eat meat and other animal products. They believe that humans are different from animals, and many believe that they are more important than animals because Genesis says that, unlike animals, humans were created in God's image.

Furthermore, many people in the Old Testament of the Bible were farmers and hunters. God gave the Jewish people commandments about animals which they could eat and which they could not eat. Some animals and combinations of animal produce which Jews do not eat (if they eat them) are often for reasons of religious cleanliness.)

*'...From among all the land animals, these are the creatures that you may eat: any animal that has divided hoofs and is cleft-footed and chews the cud – such you may eat.'* (Leviticus 11:3)

Most Christians do not follow rules which forbid them from eating certain types of animals or combinations of animal produce. This is for a range of (connected) reasons:

- ♦ Peter had a vision in which God told him to eat 'unclean' animals in Acts 10. This was taken as a sign that gentiles (non-Jews) were no longer unclean, and so Christians were permitted to eat other animals.
- ♦ Christians believe that Jesus' death has made them clean, and so many Christians do not follow Jewish dietary laws for cleanliness.
- ♦ Many gentiles (non-Jews) became Christians in the early Church, and this led to the belief that they need not follow Jewish dietary laws, but should not eat animals that were considered unclean.

*'Then he heard a voice saying, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "By no means! I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean." The voice said to him again, a second time, "What God has cleansed, do not call profane."' (Acts 10:13–15 NRSV)*

However, many modern Christians and people from other religions, as well as **humanists**, believe that they should be responsible about the amount of meat they eat.

- ♦ they should not be greedy; people should control the portion sizes they eat
- ♦ cows (and other animals) contribute to greenhouse gases, and if fewer animals are raised (in response to people eating less meat) there would be less demand for global warming.
- ♦ it takes a lot of energy and land to raise livestock for meat than to grow crops. If people ate less meat there would be the potential for more food in the world.
- ♦ reducing meat intake can be beneficial for health reasons

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



Many religious people – for example, Orthodox Christians – do not eat meat on certain days, to help them focus on God and to maintain control over their bodies. Non-religious (as well as religious) people may observe meat-free days, such as meat-free Monday, for reasons in the list above.

Some people, including Christians, also object to animals which are farmed or caught for food being treated poorly. For instance, they may object to battery-farming of chickens, or killing animals inhumanely. This is because many people who believe that it is acceptable to eat meat do not believe this means that it is acceptable to

On the other hand, some people, including Christians, see no problem with wanting, or treating animals badly if they are just going to be eaten; they do not see less meat or that animals deserve rights. Christians with such views may hold belief in **dominion** (from Genesis 1:28–29), and a belief that **stewardship** is required for consumption.

In addition to those who eat meat, responsibly or not, some Christians are vegetarians. It is more loving not to kill animals, either because they do not think that it is right to kill animals, or because they believe that vegetarianism benefits humanity by promoting health and combatting poverty (see the reasons listed above).

Reasons for vegetarianism also extend to reasons for veganism in some cases, for example if people believe that milk cows are harming the environment with greenhouse gases, or that it is inhumane to keep animals captive to produce milk or eggs etc. However, veganism is much rarer than vegetarianism.

Consider eating and intake benefits.

### Extension Issues Regarding the Use of Animals for Food

If more people eat less meat, this will result over time in lower levels of meat production. Campaigns for better rights for animals farmed for food have led to more humane treatment (in some cases) and the labelling of food so that people can see how the animal was treated. This allows people to choose if they wish to buy animals which have not been badly treated.

There are also laws about how animals must be killed, so that they are killed humanely. Judaism and Islam have special religious procedures for how animals must be killed, which are regulated by the government as non-religious methods of animal slaughter (the animal is first stunned – although it is stunned the majority of time with halal meat farmed in the UK). Within Islam, it must come from certain animals only (Muslims are not allowed to eat pork, for instance) and be killed in a certain way. This includes that the throat must be cut with a sharp knife, prayer is said, and that the animal does not see other animals die.

Some people argue that religious methods are inhumane, as in some cases the animal is not stunned before being killed. Conversely, many Jews and Muslims would argue that religious methods are as humane as non-religious methods, and that many animals killed in this way are killed humanely. Some are campaigning for there to be regulation of religious methods of killing animals.

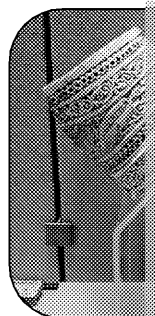
**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Other Issues for Animal Rights

Further to animal experimentation and the use of animals for food there are those who use the bodies of animals for other purposes, such as to make leather. Some people feel this is acceptable, because animals are resources. Others may feel that this is not acceptable, because there are other materials which could be used, and leather, unlike food, is not a necessity. Some people may justify killing something. Some people may feel it is acceptable to use animals for other purposes if the animal has been killed primarily for food, because this is sensible and is getting rid of the animal.

Christians generally do not see the use of animals being used for making materials such as leather, although Christians who are particularly concerned with animal rights may do. However, many Christians will oppose uses of animals which they see as completely unnecessary and cruel, such as animals being killed for furs or ivory.



Can som

## Application of Ethical Theories

## Situation Ethics

How **situation ethics** is applied to animal rights will depend on how animals are viewed. If animals are viewed as beings that are wanted to apply situation ethics to animal rights from a position that values animals as individuals, then they are likely to argue that it is wrong to experiment on animals as this is not compassionate to animals. If, however, they are viewed as mere resources, then they are likely to argue that the use of animals for food – potentially including animal products such as leather – is not wrong as this is not compassionate to animals.

However, if you start from a position where humans are valued more than a Situation ethics could be used to argue that **a clinical experimentation** which humans, such as some medical research is acceptable, as this is loving to the probably also argue that the pain should be minimised. However, any action is not necessarily for helping humans would probably be seen as wrong, as it without consideration without good reason.

Situation ethics might be used to argue against using animals for food (at least if there are alternatives, and not using animals for food would benefit the environment). Growing food to feed humans – this would be loving to humanity. If any beef products were deemed necessary, then situation ethics might be used to argue for their consumption.

Situation ethics is likely to argue against using animals for products where they are not used for meat – as humans have access to non-animal materials.

Christians are likely to agree with many of the views of situation ethics about animals. They may be concerned with compassion for animals while still (generally) having more of a utilitarian approach. However, Christians may not agree with (or be able to accept!) arguments about animal products, partly as this is seen as very acceptable in the Bible and tradition, and partly because it is so highly culturally accepted.

## Utilitarianism

If **utilitarianism** is applied to animal rights, but only human pleasure and pain are counted, utilitarianism, like situation ethics, is likely to suggest that it is acceptable to use animals if this will reduce human pain. It might, like situation ethics, argue against eating meat if the results could produce more pleasure overall; for example, if there were no other way to get the nutrients in meat. However, unlike situation ethics, it might suggest that any use of animals is acceptable if it reduces human pain.

pleasure, including for ivory and fur, etc. Forms of qualitative utilitarianism (pleasure/pain) may be less likely to value animals, on the assumption that a higher, more intellectual pleasures.

However, generally, utilitarianism does take animals into account because of the pain they experience. Forms of utilitarianism which just measure the quantity of pleasure and pain brought about by an action, such as **animal experimentation** and use of animals for food or other material purposes, may bring more pain to the animals than they bring in pleasure to humanity. Utilitarians argue that meat is not essential for human survival and so the pleasure brought by eating meat is weighed against animal suffering. They argue that if there are viable substitutes to eating meat, humans should be vegetarian. Some utilitarians may be accepted by utilitarians if it does bring more pleasure than pain. Much more data would be needed to evaluate this.

Peter Singer has argued that animals ought to be counted in utilitarian calculations. Singer is an atheist, and, as such, does not believe there to be a special God for humans and animals. Certainly, there are greater scientific similarities between mammals than between those mammals and insects. However, mammals are not the same as animals.

Singer argues that treating one's species as more important than another (or as more important than other species) is **speciesist**. In the same way that racism is considered to be unfair, he feels that humans should not assume superiority because they belong to a different species.

Belief that **speciesism** is wrong can lead to vegetarianism, veganism, and other ethical choices.

Christians are not likely to agree with utilitarian arguments regarding animal rights as they are likely to see animals as different to humans and feel that decisions should not be made based on pleasure and pain – though some may still feel compassion towards animals, and they may reach the same conclusion as utilitarians.

What do you think?  
Do you think it is fair to treat animals as different to humans?  
With as much respect as humans?

Many people, including many Christians, disagree with speciesism because, like race and gender, there are valid differences between humans and animals, and use of language. Christians are likely to argue that humans have **souls** of God, whereas animals are not. There are also many practical arguments against giving animals equal rights – to give animals equal rights would mean expecting them to have the same responsibilities – which animals would not understand, or be able to maintain. For example, if we allowed lions to roam freely around town, or they may eat people – animals do not follow laws.

## Quick Questions

47. Outline **three** reasons why Christians may believe that pollution needs to be reduced.
48. Outline **three** ways in which the Christian Declaration on Nature suggests Christians can be better stewards.
49. Explain **two** reasons why Christians may limit their meat consumption.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Summary for Matters of Life and Death

- ♦ Christians believe that God **created** the world and the universe. Some believe that creation in Genesis is **literally** true, and dispute scientific accounts. Others believe the story is **symbolic** and that religious accounts are compatible with science, such as the **Big Bang**. For example, the scientist who proposed the Big Bang theory was also a Catholic priest. **Atheists** disagree with the belief that there is a Creator of the world, and think that only scientific accounts of the origins of the world are valid. Christians view the world as a gift from God. Some feel that they can use it as a **commodity** because they have been given **dominion** over it, but others feel that they are responsible for looking after it (**stewardship**).
- ♦ **Sanctity of life** is the concept that human life is sacred and should not be taken. This is because they believe that life is a gift from God, and that humans are made in the image of God. They also believe that murder is wrong because God has forbidden it, so it is a sin. This is an important concept to Christians today and may influence their views on issues such as abortion and war.
- ♦ Christians believe that God **created** human life. Some believe that the Bible is **literally** true, and others believe that this is **symbolic** and God created humans through **evolution**. Confusion as to whether scientific and religious accounts are compatible prompted a motion to the Church of England and Diocesan Synod of Manchester about how science and Christian belief are compatible. **Atheists** (or gods) had any part in the creation of human life. Whether Christians believe in evolution is compatible will be significant in how they approve issues relating to some of the topics. This is an important dialogue between communities. Christians tend to value life because of the **sanctity of life**.
- ♦ **Abortion** is the termination of a pregnancy, ending the life of a foetus. There are many circumstances, for example if the woman's life is at risk; if there is mental health issues for the woman or her existing children; or if the foetus is likely to be born with a serious condition. Some people argue against **abortion** due to the **sanctity of life**, or argue for it on **quality of life**. There are other arguments for and against abortion, such as who qualifies as a **person**, and about bad effects to the health of the woman. Some Christian opinions to abortion, which are not usually that favourable, although some accept it in case of risk to the woman's life, and some accept it in other circumstances. Some people may be more relaxed about abortion, though not all will approve. **Theories** such as **situation ethics** and **utilitarianism** can be used to argue for or against abortion.
- ♦ Christians believe in life after death for various reasons, such as biblical accounts of the **resurrection** of Jesus. They may argue that there is evidence from the lives of the saints; that belief in life after death is logical, partly because it can be rewarded appropriately for their lives. Belief in life after death is an important part of Christianity. Christians believe that their death is not the end, and that they will be reunited with their loved ones after death. Life after death is significant to Christians in many ways, such as acting morally, **evangelising**, embracing life or removing themselves from the world.
- ♦ Non-religious people may argue that life after death does not exist as there have also been fraudulent accounts; and also that it is believed in



**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



comfort and social control, not because it is real. Christians reject these arguments. They argue that the Bible provides evidence for life after death, and none of the evidence that life after death does not exist.

- ◆ **Euthanasia** is mercy killing. There are different types, for example **voluntary** and **active** and **passive**. There are also important related concepts such as **DNRs**. Arguments in favour of euthanasia include arguments based on the idea that people have a right to be allowed to die. Arguments against euthanasia include the **sanctity of life** and the worry that legalising euthanasia is a slippery slope. Some denominations teach against passive euthanasia, though many Christians are more accepting of passive euthanasia in Christianity, though not in Islam. In the book of Job may be used by Christians to argue that suffering in hospital may be proposed as an alternative option to euthanasia. Arguments for euthanasia to be legalised. Opinions about euthanasia may influence people who are wishing to die have gone to court about the issue. **Ethical theories** such as **utilitarianism** are likely to argue in favour of euthanasia as being compatible with the principle unless it is felt that there would be a slippery slope, and this would have negative consequences.
- ◆ Many Christians feel that they need to work to reduce pollution, global warming and use of natural resources. This is to help the planet, other humans, and animals. *Nature from Assisi 1986* reinforces this, emphasising the responsibilities of humans, the rights of dominion and giving Christians practical ways to become more responsible. Christians have used animals in different ways, including for **experimentation** and for food. Christians have a variety of opinions about whether this is acceptable:
  - ✦ People may believe that animal experimentation is wrong, right, or acceptable in certain circumstances.
  - ✦ People may believe that using animals for food is wrong, right, or acceptable in certain circumstances if they are treated well.
 Christians hold a variety of positions on animal rights. These may conflict with utilitarianism, which are likely to propose more rights for animals. The use of animals has been traditional within Christianity.

## Now Try This...

50. 'There are some situations where euthanasia is the best option.'  
Evaluate this statement.

Argue for and against this statement. You must give Christian teaching and different Christian points of view. Refer to ethical theories such as situation ethics and utilitarianism. Reach a conclusion which follows from your argument.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



# Answers

## Marriage and the Family

Question Number	Answer / Mark Scheme
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a gift from God.</li> <li>It is a sacrament.</li> <li>It allows them to be a family.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
2	<p>A non-religious person may feel that marriage is not important because they do not believe that it has sanctity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They may feel that marriage is not important because people can have sexual relationships without marriage.</li> <li>They may feel that marriage is not important because people can provide for children without being married.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many Christians believe that a purpose of marriage is to procreate and have children.</li> <li>This is taught in the book of Genesis, and Catholics feel that all married couples aim to procreate and all sexual acts should be open to the possibility of procreation.</li> <li>Many Christians feel that a purpose of marriage is to symbolise the relationship between God and the Church.</li> <li>For some this implies that the husband is more important than the wife and his purpose is to have authority over her.</li> </ul> <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 repeated twice. Each development must be relevant to the question asked.</p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Christian may refrain from having sex because they are not married, and therefore it is wrong for them to have sex.</li> <li>A Christian may refrain from having sex because they are a monk/nun or a priest who has committed to being celibate and unmarried to focus better on their faith.</li> <li>A Christian may refrain from having sex for a certain period of time to focus on their faith.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many Christians feel that premarital sex is wrong, as Jesus taught that when a man and woman would be physically united (and so they should be united through sex before this).</li> <li>Many churches back this up – the Catholic Church teaches firmly against premarital sex.</li> <li>Christians disagree with adultery because it is often painful for the person who is cheated on, and because it breaks the sacrament of marriage.</li> <li>Adultery is forbidden in the Ten Commandments.</li> </ul> <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 repeated twice. Each development must be relevant to the question asked.</p>

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



Question Number	Answer / Mark Scheme	Number of Marks
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians oppose homosexuality because homosexuality is condemned in the Bible.</li> <li>'You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.' (Leviticus 18:2 NRSV)</li> <li>Not only is homosexuality forbidden, but the Bible says that marriage is between a man and a woman, implying that homosexuals cannot marry – as marriage is the ideal romantic relationship in Christianity, many Christians oppose homosexuality because they believe that it cannot lead to marriage.</li> <li>Other Christians do not oppose homosexuality. They feel that teaching against homosexuality in the Old Testament is out-dated.</li> <li>Further, they believe that Jesus' teachings mean that everyone should be treated with love and respect and not judged, as everyone sins, so homosexuals should not be treated badly or differently.</li> <li>'Or how can you say to your neighbor, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when the log is in your own eye?' (Matthew 7:4 NRSV)</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant reason, any relevant development, and any relevant source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>	(5 marks)
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A nuclear family is where a couple of heterosexual parents live with their own children.</li> <li>A single-parent family is where there is only one adult in the family, e.g. due to divorce or relationship break-up.</li> <li>An extended family is one where there are parents and children also living with other relatives, such as grandparents.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians will admire the single parent in a single-parent family.</li> <li>They will feel that looking after children on one's own is a really hard job, and it requires a lot of love and dedication, which are good traits.</li> <li>Some Christians will disapprove of single-parent families if they have resulted from divorce or casual sex.</li> <li>They may feel that people should only have sex with their marriage partner with whom they intend to spend the whole life, and should not have children in unstable relationships.</li> </ul> <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 it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>	
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families are important to Christians because having a family fulfils God's command to procreate and have children. Christians such as Catholics believe that all married couples should be open to having a family, and the Quiverfull movement believe they should use no forms of family planning, as all children are seen as a blessing from God.</li> <li>'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...' (Genesis 1:28 NRSV)</li> <li>Families are important to Christians because the family is a place where children are educated in the Christian faith. Many Christians believe that a Christian upbringing in the family can also help children to develop morally.</li> <li>'Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.' (Proverbs 22:6 NRSV)</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>	



Question Number	Answer / Mark Scheme	Number of Marks
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ The local church may provide family worship, so that families can worship together</li> <li>♦ The local church may provide toddler groups so that young children can play together and parents are supported.</li> <li>♦ The local church may provide youth groups where children / young people can socialise as well as learn about God.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	(3 marks)
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ The local church helps to support families practically because it wants to help parents with their children out of compassion.</li> <li>♦ The local church helps to support families because it wants families to be able to worship God, and facilities such as counselling may help families to live in harmony and be better able to serve God.</li> <li>♦ The local church helps to support families because Jesus taught his disciples to allow children to come to him, so local churches support children in doing this (spiritually) today.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ The local church can help to support families by providing family worship, and activities for children.</li> <li>♦ This means that parents are able to worship with their children, and also that their children can learn about Christianity in an age-appropriate way.</li> <li>♦ The local church can help to support families by providing counselling and groups for parents with young children.</li> <li>♦ These can provide parents with moral and practical support to make raising children easier.</li> </ul> <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 to the question it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>	
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Situation ethics may support the use of contraception because it is loving to allow couples to have sex to strengthen their relationship, even when they do not want children.</li> <li>♦ Also, it is loving to allow couples to plan the number and timing of their children so that they are able to look after them.</li> <li>♦ It may also support the use of contraception because having unprotected sex when there is a possibility of passing on STDs would not be loving.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Some Christians allow contraception and family planning because there is nothing expressly forbidding them in the Bible.</li> <li>♦ They feel that as God has not forbidden it, they should be free to use it – they may feel that sex was given for pleasure as well as procreation.</li> <li>♦ Some Christians allow contraception and family planning because they feel that this is best for the health, security and happiness of parents and children.</li> <li>♦ They feel that the health of women is improved if they can have fewer children, and children will be better supported if parents can have fewer, and have them at convenient times.</li> </ul> <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 to the question it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>	

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED

Question Number	Answer / Mark Scheme	Number of Marks
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians such as Catholics oppose artificial contraception because they believe that all sexual acts should be open to the possibility of new life.</li> <li>They believe this because God commanded humans to be fruitful and multiply in Genesis, and the Catholic Church has also produced official teachings against trying to artificially prevent pregnancy.</li> <li>'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth...' (Genesis 1:28 NRSV)</li> <li>"every action which, whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible" is intrinsically evil' (Catechism 2370, quoting Humanae Vitae)</li> <li>Some Christians, such as Catholics, oppose artificial contraception because they believe it goes against natural law.</li> <li>They feel that God has designed nature to show what is right and wrong, and so because sex is naturally for procreating children, nothing artificial should be used to try to stop this.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point, any relevant development, and any relevant source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>	(5 marks)
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adultery.</li> <li>Desertion.</li> <li>Physical abuse.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Catholic Church may allow an annulment if one of the couple is not baptised.</li> <li>It may also allow an annulment if someone was coerced into being married.</li> <li>It may also allow an annulment if the marriage was never consummated.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians disagree with divorce because Jesus taught that God did not want divorce and divorce had only been allowed because people had hard hearts. He taught that because God had made a married couple, no one could dissolve this union.</li> <li>"...what God has joined together, let no one separate." They said to him, "Why then did you command us to give a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her?" He said to them, "It was because you were so hard-hearted that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." (Matthew 19:6-8 NRSV)</li> <li>Some Christians disagree with divorce because they believe that people should not break their marriage vows. Not only may they believe this because some believe marriage is a sacrament and so the vows are sacred to God, but because they believe that it is wrong to break one's marriage vows to one's spouse as this is unfair on the other person.</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>	
19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians may feel that men and women are spiritually equal because Genesis 1 teaches that they were both created in God's image.</li> <li>They may also feel this because Galatians 3 teaches that gender does not matter in Christianity / to God.</li> <li>Also, Jesus treated both men and women equally, well, which some Christians believe implies that men and women are equal to God.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point, any relevant development, and any relevant source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>	

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED

Question Number	Answer / Mark Scheme	Number of Marks
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians argue that men and women should have different roles in the family because of teaching in the New Testament letters.</li> <li>For example, St Paul taught that the husband should be the head of the wife, and authority over her.</li> <li>Some Christians argue that men and women should have different roles in the family because of biblical teaching about Adam and Eve.</li> <li>They argue that God made Eve as a 'helper' for Adam, so women should be there to help men, and that women should not lead their husbands, because Eve directing Adam to eat the forbidden fruit was what made God throw them out of the Garden of Eden.</li> </ul> <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 it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>	(4 marks)
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians argue that men and women should not have different roles in the family because they are spiritually equal. They feel that if they have been created in the image of God, then they should be treated equally in practice.</li> <li>'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)</li> <li>'...there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.' (Galatians 3:28 NRSV)</li> <li>Some Christians argue that men and women should not have different roles in the family because this is just a human tradition, rather than something which God wants. In Luke 10:38–42, Jesus encouraged a woman called Mary to listen to him rather than do housework, and this can be seen to support the view that gender roles are not from God.</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p> <p>One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant to the question it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>	
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women cannot become priests in the Catholic Church.</li> <li>Some Christians expect wives to submit to their husbands' authority.</li> <li>Some Christians expect women to prioritise their family and see their place as in the home (while men should work).</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point</p> <p>1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>	
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians may support some forms of gender discrimination because they believe that men and women have been given different roles by God. For example, they believe that women should not have authority over men because of biblical teaching about the family, or in other situations – and enforcing this can be seen as discrimination.</li> <li>Some Christians do not believe that women should be ordained, meaning that they do not support this form of gender discrimination. This can be for various reasons, including that priests are supposed to represent Jesus at the Eucharist, and he was a man; or that the Catholic Church believes in apostolic succession – that the priesthood can trace its roots back directly to Jesus' male disciples/apostles, and that St Paul teaches against female ordination in the New Testament.</li> </ul> <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 it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>	

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED

Question Number	Answer / Mark Scheme	Number of Marks
24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians believe that women should be allowed to be ordained because they believe that unequal treatment of women in this respect is unfair if men and women are spiritually equal. Quakers have always allowed women to lead in church for this reason as they see no difference between women and men before God.</li> <li>Some Christians believe that women should be allowed to be ordained, because they believe that women were leaders in the early church so female ordination cannot be seen as against any of the teachings of Christianity. The New Testament mentions a female deacon, and appears to mention a female apostle, indicating that actually it goes against early Christianity not to ordain women.</li> <li>'I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae... Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.' (Romans 16:1, 7 NRSV)</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for a reference to a source of wisdom and authority. One development cannot be repeated twice. Each development must be relevant to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>	(5 marks)

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED

Question Number	Answer / Mark Scheme			Number of
25	You must fulfil the criteria for connections AND judgements to get top marks in each band			
	Connections	Judgements	Marks	
	A few shallow links between <u>little</u> material relevant to question. <u>Very</u> narrow understanding of religion and philosophy/ethics.	Points not well supported and conclusion does not follow from arguments.	1-3 marks	
	<u>Many</u> shallow links between material relevant to question. Narrow understanding of religion and philosophy/ethics.	Some attempt at supporting argument and evaluation, though conclusion does not <u>completely</u> follow.	4-6 marks	
	Good reasoning and different positions considered – many links made. <u>Partial</u> answers question. Good understanding of religion and philosophy/ethics.	<u>Most</u> points are well supported with a reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is <u>somewhat</u> supported.	7-9 marks	
	Good critical reasoning and different positions considered – substantial links made. <u>Fully</u> answers question. <u>Consistently</u> good understanding of religion and philosophy/ethics.	<u>All</u> points are well supported with thorough evaluation leading to a conclusion which is <u>completely</u> supported.	10-12 marks	
	Points and Justification For: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ God instituted marriage for heterosexual couples to have sex within.</li><li>♦ ‘But from the beginning of creation, “God made them male and female.” For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ (Mark 10:6–8 NRSV)</li><li>♦ Jesus implied that sex should take place within heterosexual marriage.</li><li>♦ The Catholic Church teaches that all sex should be open to the possibility of procreation and homosexual sex is not; and it may not be a good idea to have children outside of marriage, as this is a less stable environment for them.</li><li>♦ The Bible teaches against sexual immorality, and sexual relationships outside of heterosexual marriage may be believed to be sexually immoral.</li></ul>		Points and Justification Against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Jesus never said anything explicit against homosexuality or premarital sex.</li><li>♦ Teaching against homosexuality in the Bible is outdated.</li><li>♦ Jesus taught to treat people as one would like to be treated and to love others, and saying that certain relationships are wrong is not treating people well / loving them.</li><li>♦ Jesus taught not to judge others, so it is wrong to make such a judgement.</li><li>♦ ‘O and can you say to your neighbour, “Take the speck out of your eye, when the log is in your own eye?”’ (Matthew 7:4) [Jesus on not judging others, when you are not perfect yourself.]</li><li>♦ Some liberal Protestants feel that if couples have sex before they get married, this can help couples to know if they want to be together forever before getting married, meaning people can take marriage more seriously / may be less likely to divorce.</li></ul>	
Accept any relevant point or justification.				

COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED

## Matters of Life and Death

Question No.	Answer / Mark Scheme
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians believe that God created the universe in six days.</li> <li>Some Christians believe that God created the universe through the Holy Spirit.</li> <li>Christians believe that the universe is valuable because it has been created by God.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians do not feel that the universe can be used as a commodity because God has dominion over the world in Genesis 1.</li> <li>Some Christians feel that God has made humanity stewards of the earth and feel that this means that they can use it as a commodity to a certain extent, but they must look after it as well.</li> <li>Some Christians feel that the world can be used as a commodity because they believe that Jesus will come back before the world becomes uninhabitable.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians believe that the universe was created in six days (seven days). They take a literal interpretation of the account in Genesis 1.</li> <li>'And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into seas, and the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. (NRSV)</li> <li>Some Christians believe that God created the universe, but that he created it through the process of the Big Bang. They take a symbolic interpretation of the account, believing that it is true that God created the universe, but that he did not do it in six days.</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point for each development (maximum 4), 1 mark for source of wisdom and authority. One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be supported by a reference and to the question asked. There must be the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.</p>
29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sanctity of life is relevant for abortion, because if the life of a foetus is sacred, it is wrong to destroy it.</li> <li>Sanctity of life is relevant for the issue of euthanasia because if human life has sanctity, it is always wrong to kill people even if they want to die.</li> <li>It is relevant for the issue of war, because if Christians want to treat people as enemies, it seems hypocritical to kill others in war.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genesis 1:27 supports sanctity of life because it teaches that human beings are made in the image of God, and therefore, are special and should not destroy each other.</li> <li>Exodus 20:13 supports belief in sanctity of life because it teaches not to commit adultery, indicating that human life is important – or it would be OK to destroy it.</li> <li>Jeremiah 29 also supports belief in sanctity of life because it indicates a plan for humans, and destroying humans would violate this plan.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



Question No.	Answer / Mark Scheme
31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians may believe in the sanctity of life because they believe that humans were created in the image of God. This means that human life is sacred because it is set apart from the rest of creation; and because humans are in God's image, they have a special way to God.</li> <li>'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)</li> <li>Christians may believe in the sanctity of life because murder is strongly condemned in the Bible. God condemned the first murder, Abel by Cain, and forbade murder in the Ten Commandments.</li> <li>'You shall not murder.' (Exodus 20:13 NRSV)</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for source, authority and form and authority. One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of authority.</p>
32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human life may be valued for its sanctity.</li> <li>Human life may be valued because it is enjoyable / worth living.</li> <li>Human life may be valued for its ability to reproduce and further the human race.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many Christians see science as compatible with Christianity because some parts of the Bible are symbolic, so are not in conflict with science.</li> <li>Many also believe that science is compatible with Christianity, because it shows how powerful, creative and awesome God is.</li> <li>Many Christians also see science and Christianity as compatible because science asks questions of fact, but religion answers questions of meaning – and science and religion do not clash in what they are trying to do.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians may interpret biblical accounts of the origins of human life in different ways. Some may believe that God created humanity in a day and/or that he created humanity through the process of evolution.</li> <li>Some Christians may interpret biblical accounts of the origins of human life in different ways. Some may believe that God created human life through the process of evolution.</li> <li>The England Diocese of Manchester has argued that the Church needs to accept the compatibility of Christianity and science.</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4) One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be relevant and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>
35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilitarianism may allow abortion if a foetus is not considered to be a human being (as utilitarians such as Singer would argue). Therefore, it is only the happiness of the pregnant woman which should be considered, meaning abortion might be justified if it brings her more pleasure.</li> <li>Utilitarianism might allow abortion because the pain would only last a short time for a foetus, but a woman's pleasure in life might be increased for a long time if she is able to have an abortion.</li> <li>Utilitarianism might allow abortion because if a foetus is aborted, it might be seen as a positive thing for the foetus negatively, but if this means that a poor family has more money, it might bring more pleasure to a larger number of people.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



Question No.	Answer / Mark Scheme
36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians accept abortion when they believe this is the most loving way to help a woman. For example, if a woman has suffered a traumatic rape it would be wrong to force her to go through with an unwanted pregnancy, and Jesus taught that we should treat others with love.</li> <li>Some Christians accept abortion in the case that the woman's life is in danger due to belief in sanctity of life, and they believe that it is important to protect life, especially if the foetus is likely to die anyway.</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per development (1 point (maximum 4)) One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be a point and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.</p>
37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians believe abortion is wrong because it violates sanctity of life. They believe that foetuses are also the image of God, and many believe that life begins at fertilisation, which is why it is murder. 'You shall not murder.' (Exodus 20:13 NRSV)</li> <li>The Catholic Church teaches that direct abortion is wrong because it is something artificial to stop sexual intercourse from leading to the birth of a child.</li> <li>'Therefore We base Our words on the first principles of a human and Christian marriage when We are obliged once more to declare that the direct generative process already begun and, above all, all direct abortion, for any reasons, are to be absolutely excluded as lawful means of regulating children...' (Humanae Vitae, 14)</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for source of wisdom and authority. One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be a point and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of authority.</p>
38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People report paranormal experiences, which suggest the existence of a life after death.</li> <li>Life after death is necessary to make life fair so that people can be punished.</li> <li>Life after death is necessary because science cannot explain consciousness, so something immaterial, which would not perish at physical death.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many Christians believe they will go to heaven after death, to be with God.</li> <li>Many Christians believe that those who do not accept God will be sent to hell after death.</li> <li>Some Christians believe that many people go to purgatory after death to purify their sin before going to heaven.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Belief in life after death is important to Christians because it motivates them to live so that they go to heaven when they die. Some Christians also believe in life after death for others, in the hope that they too will be able to go to heaven.</li> <li>'"Come, you that are blessed by my Father, 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 welcomed me..." (Matthew 25:34-35 NRSV)</li> <li>Belief in life after death is also important to Christians in influencing their lives. Some Christians live more fully, not worried that death will be the end, and they renounce worldly comforts because they want to focus on God and their relationship with him.</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for source of wisdom and authority. One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be a point and it is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of authority.</p>

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**





Question No.	Answer / Mark Scheme
41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no evidence for life after death – no one has ever been able to bring the dead to tell us about it.</li> <li>People only believe in life after death because it comforts them and they don't want to believe that death is the end.</li> <li>People who have claimed to come back from an afterlife have often lied, so it makes the concept less believable.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christians may respond that Jesus has provided evidence for life after death, but there is no evidence that he did not life after death.</li> <li>Christians may respond that even if life after death comforts people, it does not exist.</li> <li>Christians may respond that just because there have been fraudulent claims of coming back from the afterlife, this does not mean that all accounts of an afterlife does not exist.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-religious arguments against life after death do not affect many people because they find Christian accounts more convincing. They believe that Jesus witnessed him risen from the dead, and if this is the case, then non-religious arguments that there is no evidence for life after death are weak.</li> <li>Non-religious arguments against life after death do not affect many people because they trust in the Bible and the teachings in it as being the word of God. Jesus promised his disciples that there would be an afterlife, and if Christians believe his teachings, they would not follow the religion.</li> </ul> <p>1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per developed point (maximum 4) One development cannot be credited twice. Each 'development' must be a new point that is supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked</p>
44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voluntary euthanasia is when someone asks to be killed.</li> <li>Non-voluntary euthanasia is when someone cannot ask to die, but someone else decides for them, such as when someone is brain-dead.</li> <li>Involuntary euthanasia is when someone is killed against their will, but they believe that they would be better off dead – this is generally considered as passive euthanasia.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One argument against euthanasia is sanctity of life – if life is sacred, it should not be destroyed, no matter what.</li> <li>Another argument is the slippery slope argument – that allowing euthanasia for some vulnerable people think that they are a burden on society and that it could lead to others.</li> <li>Another argument is that someone might want to die, but there is a chance they could recover – and if they are killed then they would be robbed of that chance.</li> </ul> <p>Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3</p>
46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Christians accept euthanasia when someone is in great pain and suffering, and that it is more compassionate to allow them to end their life, and Jesus taught that we should love our neighbour as ourselves.</li> <li>'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)</li> <li>Some Christians accept euthanasia if someone has a low quality of life and is suffering, which will not kill them, because they believe that God will not let them suffer more than they can endure. The Bible teaches that God will provide a way out beyond what someone can cope with without providing a way out. Euthanasia can be seen as that way out.</li> <li>'No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing the way out so that you may be able to endure it.' (1 Corinthians 10:13)</li> </ul>

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



Question No.	Answer / Mark Scheme		
	1 mark per simple point, 1 mark per development (maximum 4), 1 mark for source of wisdom and authority. One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked, as must the reference to a source of wisdom and authority.		
47	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Pollution is harmful to the environment and Christians believe that this is harmful to the planet.</li><li>♦ Pollution is harmful to animals and many Christians feel that they should be more compassionate to animals and all God's creatures.</li><li>♦ Pollution is harmful to humans, causing disease and contributing to global warming which is hazardous for humans. Christians believe that they should help their neighbour.</li></ul> Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3		
48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ The Christian Declaration on Nature says that Christians could be better stewards of the earth using technology which is not renewable,</li><li>♦ The Christian Declaration on Nature says that Christians could be better stewards of the earth using resources unnecessarily.</li><li>♦ The Christian Declaration on Nature says that Christians could be better stewards of the earth by opposing war, as this causes great environmental damage.</li></ul> Accept any relevant point 1 mark per point, maximum 3		
49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Christians may limit their meat consumption for religious reasons. Christians may not eat meat on certain days of the week to help them to focus on God.</li><li>♦ Christians may limit their meat consumption for ethical reasons – for example, out of compassion for animals, or the belief that with less meat production there would be more resources to provide food for humanity.</li></ul> 1 mark per simple point, 2 marks per development (maximum 4) One development cannot be credited twice. Each development must be supporting <i>and</i> to the question asked.		
50	You must fulfil the criteria for <b>Connections</b> AND judgements to get top marks. You do not need to include different Christian views and relevant ethical arguments to get 6 marks.		
	<b>Connections</b>	<b>Judgements</b>	
	<u>Few</u> shallow links between religion and philosophy/ethics. <u>Very</u> little material relevant to question. <u>Very</u> narrow understanding of religion and philosophy/ethics.	Points not well supported and conclusion does not follow from arguments.	1–3 marks
	<u>Many</u> shallow links between religion and philosophy/ethics. <u>Narrow</u> understanding of religion and philosophy/ethics.	Some attempt at supporting argument and evaluation, though conclusion does not <u>completely</u> follow.	4–6 marks
	Good reasoning and different positions considered – many links made. <u>Partially</u> answers question. Good understanding of religion and philosophy/ethics.	<u>Most</u> points are well supported with reasonable evaluation, leading to a conclusion which is <u>somewhat</u> supported.	7–9 marks
	Good critical reasoning and different positions considered – substantial links made. <u>Fully</u> answers question. <u>Excellent</u> understanding of religion and philosophy/ethics.	<u>All</u> points are well supported with thorough evaluation leading to a conclusion which is <u>completely</u> supported.	10–12 marks

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



Question No.	Answer / Mark Scheme	
	<p>Points and Justification for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some people are brain-dead and will never recover; there is no point prolonging the suffering of relatives.</li> <li>People have a right to dignity; people may prefer to die than be unable to do anything.</li> <li>People may feel they have no quality of life and prefer not to live in pain.</li> <li>Liberal Christians may feel that it is more loving to kill a method, let someone die than let them suffer. This is also justified by situation ethics.</li> <li><i>'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'</i> (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)</li> <li>Even hospice care cannot always make people pain free or give them a quality of life which they can endure.</li> </ul>	<p>Points and Justification for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It violates the sanctity of life (from God, humans as image).</li> <li>The Ten Commandments: <i>'You shall not murder.'</i> (NRSV)</li> <li>Christians should prefer suffering, not kill the innocent.</li> <li><i>'... if you hold back your hand, the wicked will be taken away to death; it is a staggering to the sinners who keeps watch over the righteous. And will he not repay their deeds?' (Proverbs 11:1-5)</i></li> <li>The Book of Job suggests that suffering has a purpose.</li> <li>If you allow euthanasia in certain circumstances, this is not necessarily the case overall, e.g. for old people who must carry out their duties might argue against it.</li> <li>Unless someone is in unbearable pain, the possibility they will recover.</li> </ul>
	Accept any relevant point or justification.	

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**

