

## Key Words

**Abortion** – deliberate expulsion of foetus from womb with the intention to destroy it.

**Afterlife** – beliefs about what happens after we die to self/soul  
**Animal rights** – the idea that animals should have rights because of respect for life.

**Awe** - the 'wow' feeling we experience when we see or feel something special

**Big Bang theory** – scientific view of the beginning of the universe

**Conception** – when the sperm fertilises the female egg

**Conservation** – to repair and protect animals and areas of natural beauty

**Creation** – the idea that God created the universe from nothing

**Dominion** – idea that humans have the right to control creation

**Euthanasia** – mercy killing; ending a life for someone who is terminally ill, or has a degenerative disease

**Evolution** – change in inherited traits in a species

**Fossil fuels** – Earth's natural and non-renewable resources (coal, gas, oil)

**Hospice** – a place that cares for the dying usually form an incurable disease

**Natural selection** – basic mechanism of evolution (survival of the fittest)

**Pesticide** - chemicals used to kill pests and insects on crops

**Pro-choice** – pressure groups which campaign for the right of a woman to choose.

**Pro-life** – pressure groups which campaign against abortion

**Quality of life** – how good/comfortable life is

**Right to die** – belief that a human being should be able to control their own death

**Sanctity of life**- life is sacred because it is God-given

**Stewardship** – duty to look after the world on behalf of God

**Sustainable energy** – resources that are renewable

# Knowledge Organiser: Theme B - Religion and Life

## Origins of the Universe - Science

Cosmological Theories - The Big Bang theory is a scientific theory about how the universe began. Scientists say the universe began about 20 billion years ago. It started from nothing, then there was a huge explosion. It took a long time for the explosion to cool down and form the universe we know of today.

Evolution Theories – Charles Darwin put forward the theory of evolution in his book *Origin of the Species*. He suggested that the huge variety of species and creatures in existence on planet Earth are due to natural selection. The different species have adapted to their surroundings in or order to survive. This has happened over a period of thousands of years.

## Origins of the Universe - Religion

The Creation story from Genesis describes how God created the world and the universe.

**Some Christians** believe the story of Creation to be a literal account of what happened

**Some Christians** believe the story is symbolic, it is more a demonstration and reminder of God's power and reminding humans they have a purpose on earth (to be stewards of the planet)

**Some Christians** believe the story of Creation is symbolic and also believe in scientific theories.

**Some Muslims** see the Creation story found in the Qur'an as agreeing with scientific theories. They do not have to be separate or contradictory.

## 5 mark Exam Question

Explain two religious beliefs about animal experimentation.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer.

(5 marks)

## The Value of Planet Earth

Religious believers look at the beauty of planet Earth and believe it is evidence of God's existence. However, humans have damaged the environment by producing greenhouse gases leading to global warming. Humans are using up Earth's natural resources and fertile land for growing crops is declining. Humans have polluted the air, water and land which not only leads to environmental problems but can also lead to health problems.

Religious people feel it is their duty as stewards to look after the environment. Many religious and non-religious people are aware of the problems humans have created on planet earth and are now trying to do something about it such as recycling, taking public transport, using sustainable energy sources and campaigning to better inform others about the damage being done to the environment.

**Christians** believe God said humans have dominion (control) over the planet. We can treat the planet however we want but we have no right to abuse God's creation. We are stewards and have a responsibility to take care of the planet on behalf of God. Christian charity organisations such as CAFOD, Christian Aid and Tearfund put pressure on governments and industry to think about the damage they are doing to planet Earth.

*The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and take care of it (Genesis 2:15)*

**Muslims** believe the Earth is the work of Allah. We are khalifahs (stewards) of the earth and we should look after it. To do so is to show respect to Allah.

*The world is green and beautiful and Allah has appointed you his stewards over it. (Qur'an )*

## Animal Rights

Religious people believe that animals are part of God's creation. All life including that of animals is sacred. Many of the ways humans use animals can be justified, however there are some instances when it is difficult to justify.

Testing on animals can be seen as cruel by some people but necessary by others if the testing could help many people.

Using animals for food can be seen as a good way for humans to get the necessary proteins but cruel and an unnecessary part of a healthy diet by others.

**Christians believe** that having dominion gives humans the right to do what they want with the animals. Others would say stewardship suggests we should take care of them. By testing on animals and eating them we are not taking care of them.

Christianity has no specific food laws so it is left to the individual believer to decide what is right or wrong when it comes to eating meat.

*The righteous care for the needs of their animals (Proverbs 12:10)*

**Muslims believe** animals are part of Allah's creation which humans have been entrusted to look after.

Cruelty to animals is forbidden as is their use simply for pleasure. There are specific guidelines for the slaughter of animals when used for food.

*Whoever keeps a dog, one Qirat of the reward of his good deeds is deducted daily , unless the dog is used for guarding a farm or cattle (Qur'an 39:515)*

## Euthanasia

Euthanasia is mercy killing. It is helping someone to die who is suffering from a terminal illness or whose quality of life is poor, often because of a degenerative disease. It is illegal in the UK.

**Voluntary euthanasia** is when the person asks for euthanasia to end their suffering. Voluntary euthanasia can be *active*, by giving a lethal dose of a drug or *passive*, by choosing to stop taking medication.

**Involuntary euthanasia** is when the patient is unable to say what they want to happen and it is left to family to decide.

Hospices are homes for people who have terminal illnesses. People may go there to die or to give their families respite from looking after them. Many religious people support the hospice movement because if the care is good enough euthanasia would not even be considered.

**Some Christians** are strongly against euthanasia. They believe it is going against God's commandment 'You shall not murder'. **Some Christians** support passive euthanasia. For example the switching off of a life support machine. They view it as a way of demonstrating compassion because it is ending a person's suffering.

**Muslims** are usually against euthanasia. They believe Allah has a plan for everyone. However if there is no hope of improvement Islam allows doctors to stop 'unnecessary' treatment.

## Abortion

There are varying views on when life begins.

- Conception
- Heartbeat
- Backbone
- Viability
- Birth

The Law in the UK states that abortion CAN be carried out up until the 24<sup>th</sup> week (viability)

2 doctors must agree that:

- Health of the mother is at risk
- Existing children are at risk
- Life of the mother is at risk
- Foetus will be born with a disability

Pro-life is the term given to those who are against abortion. They support the view that all life is important and should be protected.

Pro-choice is the term given to those who support the view that women should have the right to choose what happens to their body.

**Many Christians** are against abortion. Roman Catholics forbid abortion and view it as murder. The Church of England allows abortion in some circumstances such as the mother's life being at risk.

**Muslims** believe all life is sacred because it is God-given. Islam teaches that ensoulment occurs at 120 days. Up until this point the mother's life is more important. After ensoulment only if the mother's life is in danger would abortion be allowed .

## Afterlife

Religious people believe in some form of afterlife. At death the soul/spirit/self leaves the physical body and continues to some other kind of life.

Some people claim to have experienced 'near-death experiences' where they have been pronounced clinically dead but come back to life and give details of their experience.

**Christians believe** in the physical resurrection of the body after death. At judgement each person faces God and Jesus to evaluate their deeds. Good people go to heaven, bad people go to hell for eternity.

**Muslims believe** in resurrection. On judgement day people are sorted according to their beliefs and actions. Wicked people are cast into hell. Truly good people go straight to paradise.

## 2 mark question

Give two examples of what religious believers might do to carry out the act of stewardship. (2 marks)

## Key Words

**Capital punishment** – the death penalty  
**Community service order** – criminal has to do a set number of hours' work in the community  
**Conscience** – sense of right and wrong (voice in our head)  
**Corporal punishment** – physically hurting a criminal as punishment  
**Crime** – breaking the state law  
**Deterrence** – aim of punishment to put people off committing a crime.  
**Duty** – something we are bound to do  
**Evil** – something considered morally wrong, often linked to the devil  
**Forgiveness** – letting go of anger towards someone for a wrong they have done  
**Hate crime** – a crime committed because of prejudice; it can mean the doubling of a sentence of found guilty  
**Imprisonment** – locking someone up as a punishment  
**Justice** – making things fair  
**Law** – rules which govern a country to keep us safe  
**Order** – the enforcement of rules  
**Parole** – release of a criminal from prison, but continuing to monitor their behaviour  
**Probation order** – punishment; monitoring of behaviour with the threat of greater punishment for offending again.  
**Protection** – aim of punishment; to keep people safe  
**Reformation** – aim of punishment; helping the person see how and why they should behave better  
**Reparation** – aim of punishment; making up for things done wrong  
**Victim** – the one against whom a crime is committed  
**Vindication** – aim of punishment; the punishment exist because the law does  
**Young offenders** – persons under the age of 18 who commit crime

# Knowledge Organiser: Theme E – Religion, Crime and Punishment

## Rules and Laws

All religions have their own rules and laws that believers must follow. They give guidance to help them live their lives correctly. In the UK laws are made by Parliament and enforced by the courts. Religion also instructs it's followers to keep the laws of the country in which they live. Religion recognises that rules and laws are for our own and society's safety.

## Types of Crime

There are three key types of crime:

- **Crimes against the person** (e.g. murder rape, GBH & hate crimes)
- **Crimes against property** (e.g. arson, burglary, trespassing)
- **Crimes against the state** (e.g. terrorism, selling state secrets)

## Causes of crime

- **Upbringing** – people are more likely to commit crime if they have been brought up surrounded by crime.
- **Poverty** – people who are poor may turn to crime out of desperation
- **Mental illness** – people may not fully understand the result of their actions
- **Addiction** – being dependent on drugs or alcohol can lead to people doing illegal acts to fund their habit
- **Greed** – someone might steal or earn money illegally because they can't afford the things they want
- **Hate** – a person might be prejudice or want to get back at someone who treated them badly
- **Opposition to existing laws** – law might be broken as a protest if it's seen as unfair.

## 5 mark Exam Question

Explain two religious beliefs about the treatment of offenders.  
Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer.

(5 marks)

## Good versus Evil

Religion teaches that people should live good lives and avoid evil. Religious people believe they will be judged when an individual dies.  
In **Christianity** the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46) says that everyone will be judged and separated into the good (sheep) and bad (goats). Many **Christians believe** that evil is caused by free will. Humans are born with original sin and this makes all humans capable of sin. Some say Satan tempts people to sin.  
Islam teaches that Allah is merciful. If you are good you will be rewarded, if you do bad things God will punish you. Many **Muslims believe** that Iblis (devil) tries to make humans turn to evil.

## Suffering

Suffering happens when people cause pain, hardship or distress to themselves or others. It can be emotional or physical. Religion condemns suffering caused by human action towards others. Crimes can cause suffering. Religious teachings tell us it is wrong to cause suffering. We should follow the Golden Rule to prevent suffering '*Treat others as you wish to be treated*'.

## Aims of Punishment

Society has rules for us to obey or we face the consequences. There are six main aims of punishment. It is important you know and understand the first three (Deterrence, Reformation, Retribution):  
**Deterrence** – if punishment is bad enough it will put others off committing the crime because they understand the consequences. Some say deterrence doesn't work because often criminals don't think about punishment before committing a crime  
**Retribution** – punishment is a way of taking 'revenge' on the criminal, making them pay for what they have done wrong. Some say retribution does not work because it does not 'right the wrong' committed in the first place.  
**Reformation** – Punishment should aim to change criminals so they do not reoffend. Programmes to reform criminals include counselling and finding job opportunities in the community. Many religious people believe offenders should be given the opportunity to repent and seek forgiveness.  
**Protection** – Society should be protected if a criminal is considered dangerous. By imprisoning a criminal the rest of society is protected. Some argue that society would be better protected if offenders were reformed.  
**Vindication** – the law has to impose proper punishments for crimes committed, so that the law is respected. If there are no penalties then people will not keep to the law. Rules are rules and have to be justly applied to the crime committed.  
**Reparation** – this is a more modern aim, designed to make up for any damage caused so the victim or society is compensated.

## Forgiveness

Forgiveness is when you stop being angry with someone who has done something wrong. Many religious people believe it is important to forgive criminals so they can be reconciled with the community otherwise they are likely to reoffend and continue in a life of crime.  
Restorative justice is when an offender meets people who have suffered because of a crime they have committed. It can often help the offender realise the damage they have done and prevent them from reoffending.  
**Christians believe** that God is always ready to forgive and Christians must be prepared to forgive others. The Lord's Prayer includes a verse about forgiveness '*Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us*'.  
Christians believe forgiveness from God can only come if we repent and are truly sorry for our sins.  
**Muslims believe** they must be merciful so that Allah will do the same to them on the Day of Judgement. Muslims can seek retribution for injuries but are encouraged to forgive instead. '*But if you pardon and overlook and forgive – then indeed Allah is Forgiving and Merciful*'. *Qur'an 64:14*

## 2 mark question

Give two examples of religious moral laws which some criminals break. (2 marks)

## Punishment

In the UK there is a range of punishments including custodial sentences (prison or high security mental health institutions, young offenders institutions) and non-custodial sentences (ASBO, community service, tagging, fines, probation, curfew).

**Christians believe** the law has a responsibility to punish and care for the criminal whilst trying to reform them.  
**Muslims believe** that Allah is just and the law should also be just. Victims should be compensated equitably. Prison is used as a punishment so that society feels safe from dangerous people. However there are concerns about how they are run, the cost and the levels of reoffending.

Corporal punishment is using physical pain as a punishment for a criminal act. This form of punishment does not exist in the UK anymore but it still in use in parts of Africa, Middle East, Asia and South America.

Arguments for corporal punishment:

- It can fulfil the aim of retribution
- It could be more effective than prison as people fear pain
- Some see it as a deterrent

Arguments against corporal punishment:

- It is barbaric and inhumane
- To purposely inflict pain is unacceptable
- Revenge is wrong

## Capital Punishment

The death penalty is usually reserved for the most extreme offences such as murder.

Arguments in support of the death penalty:

- It is a deterrent that puts others off committing crimes
- It is the only way to totally protect society from those criminals who cannot be reformed
- It is a waste of resources to house a criminal for their entire life

Arguments against the death penalty:

- Many murders are done spur of the moment so capital punishment would not deter
- Victims families still grieve, killing the murderer does not end the pain of loss
- All life is sacred and criminals should be given the chance to reform.

Amnesty International is a human rights organisation that completely disagrees with the death penalty and campaigns against the use of it as well as other human rights abuses.

## Key Words

**Civil war** – armed conflict between factions within the same country  
**Conflict** – disagreement which escalates  
**Conscientious objector** – a person who refuses to do something, here fight in war, because of their conscience  
**Conventional warfare** – war using conventional weapons  
**Forgiveness** – willingness to not blame a person for the wrongs they have done  
**Holy war** – rules around fighting a war acceptable to Islam  
**Justice** – making things fair again  
**Just war** – rules around fighting a war acceptable to Christianity and Sikhism  
**Nuclear proliferation** – the spread of nuclear weapons to countries not recognised as ‘nuclear weapon states’  
**Nuclear weapons/war** – a weapon/war of mass destruction  
**Pacifism** – belief that all violence is wrong  
**Peace** – the opposite of war; harmony  
**Protest** – voicing disagreement with something  
**Reconciliation** – making up between two groups after disagreement  
**Retaliation** – to pay back for harmful action  
**Terrorism** – use of violence and threats to intimidate, especially for political purposes to create a state of fear in a population  
**Violence** – causing harm to someone  
**War** – armed conflict between two or more sides  
**WMD** – Weapons of mass destruction cause uncontrollable and untold damage, e.g. nuclear weapons

## Key concepts

**Justice** – this means fairness. Many wars are about, or include the abuse of justice so many religious people feel duty bound to fight against that.

**Peace** – this should be the goal of all people as it means to live in harmony and without fear

**Reconciliation** – most religious people will be involved in reconciliation after war because religion teaches humans to live in peace

**Forgiveness** – the belief that we should be able to move a relationship forward with someone who has done wrong to us. It is a central teaching in Christianity and important in Islam

**Conflict** – conflict is disagreement, armed conflict is the actual fighting. Religious people might have been involved in trying to resolve disagreements but may have to then get involved in the actual conflict as they feel there is no other option.

## Causes of war & religious views

- **Self-defence** – the Bible and Qur’an both suggest war may be necessary in self-defence however it is only acceptable if the response is proportionate
- **Greed** – a war to gain more land would not be supported by religious believers. Greed comes from selfishness which is not approved of in any religion
- **Retaliation** – there may be times when a country is attacked and retaliates. Islam and Christianity both teach that peaceful negotiations would be a better response. Retaliation can sometimes increase the problems.

## 5 mark exam question

Explain two religious beliefs about forgiveness. Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer.

# Knowledge Organiser: Theme D – Religion, Peace and Conflict

## Just War

A just war is one that is fought in the interest of justice and to improve things for the greater good.

Christian just war rules:

- War must be started by a proper authority
- There must be a just cause
- There must be a clear aim to overcome evil and promote good.
- War must be a last resort
- There must be a reasonable chance of success
- War must be conducted fairly, only reasonable force can be used and civilian casualties should be minimised
- There must be a good outcome and peace restored.

## Holy War

Holy war is a war fought in the name of God or religion.

There are many examples of holy wars being fought in the Old Testament. The Crusades were a series of battles fought by Christians who believed God was with them and they were fighting for a sacred and noble cause against the Muslims.

Jihad means ‘struggle’. The greater jihad is the daily struggle to lead a good life as a Muslim. The lesser jihad is the ‘struggle’ to improve the world and war can be an example of this. There are clear rules to follow for a war to be classed as holy war in the Qur’an:

- It can only begin when the enemy attacks and must end when the enemy shows they want peace
- Civilians must not be harmed, attacked or mistreated
- Crops should be left alone. Holy buildings especially must not be damaged
- Prisoners of war should be treated well. Money collected from zakat can be used to pay for food for them.

War must end:

- When people regain their rights
- When the enemy calls for peace

## Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Forgiveness and reconciliation are two of the most difficult challenges we have, both as individuals and nations, especially after a war or period of conflict. Nations rarely apologise for the atrocities committed during war but reconciliation does happen and countries that were once at war can work together.

There are stories of individuals being able to forgive and this has led to reconciliation.

**Corrie Ten Boom** was a Dutch girl who saved Jewish lives during WW2. She was caught and sent to a concentration camp. She survived and after the war ended she came face to face with one of the guards from the camp. She eventually forgave this man. She looked to her Christian faith for guidance and this led to her forgiving the guard, despite most of her family dying in the concentration camp.

**Eric Lomax** was a British soldier who captured and tortured by Japanese soldiers during WW2. He met one of his torturers after the war had ended and was able to forgive. His story is published on the Forgiveness Project website. (Forgiveness Project is a British group that brings together victims and the perpetrators of the crime)

## 12 mark exam question

‘War is never right.’

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you:

- should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
- should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- should refer to religious arguments
- may refer to non-religious arguments
- should reach a justified conclusion.

## 1 mark exam question

Which **one** of the following best expresses the religious ideal that there should be no violence in the world?

**A Defence.**

**B Justice.**

**C Peace.**

**D Terrorism.**

## Weapons of Mass Destruction

WMD are part of modern warfare. They are capable of killing and maiming large numbers of people. There are several types of these weapons:

- Nuclear weapons – cause immediate destruction and has long-term effects
- Biological warfare – aka germ warfare uses living diseases to bring about death or serious illness
- Chemical warfare – uses non-living toxins such as nerve agents
- Radiological weapons – uses conventional explosives to create bombs that can disperse radioactive material which contaminates land and kills people.

## Terrorism

Terrorism is an act of violence which is intended to create fear. A terrorist is anyone who plans or carries out such an act. Terrorist acts are often directed at innocent civilians and because of this many consider them to be unlawful acts of war and violence.

Terrorists often claim they have legitimate reasons for carrying out their acts, such as:

- Fighting against political or social injustice
- Fighting against poverty
- Fighting to assert their religious belief

There are examples of people who were deemed terrorists were later seen as a legitimate leader (Martin McGuinness in Northern Ireland and Nelson Mandela in South Africa)

## Peace and Pacifism

Peace is a state of harmony where justice exists for all and freedoms are respected.

All religions teach the importance of peace on Earth and encourage followers to live peacefully.

**Christians** believe Jesus told his followers ‘Blessed are the peacemakers’.

**Muslims** greet each other with ‘Salaam’ - ‘Peace.

**Pacifists** believe that all violence is morally wrong. They will not participate in any war, regardless of the reasons for that war.

**Conscientious objectors** are people who refuse to fight on the grounds of conscience. They will assist in non-military ways such as working as medics or relief workers. Quakers are a Christian group who are committed to pacifism. They totally oppose war and conflict in any form and believe all relationships should be loving ones.

# Knowledge Organiser: Theme F – Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice

## Key Words

**Ageism** – discrimination on the grounds of a person's age  
**Community** – a group of people who share something in common  
**Compassion** – loving kindness; helping because help is needed  
**Discrimination** – actions based on prejudice, often negative  
**Equality** – the idea that everyone is equal, of equal value and worth  
**Fair pay** – payment which is appropriate for the work done  
**Gender** – the state of being male or female  
**Harmony** – living together without argument and conflict  
**Homophobia** – prejudice against someone on the grounds of sexuality  
**Human rights** – the rights a person is entitled to simply because they are human  
**Human Rights Act** – a law which protects the rights of all human beings and allows us to challenge when these are violated.  
**Interest** – the money paid to a lender from a borrower on top of the initial sum borrowed  
**Justice** – getting fairness  
**Loan** – borrowed money, that has to be paid back, usually with interest  
**Minimum wage** – the legal minimum a person can be paid in the UK  
**People trafficking** – the illegal trade of humans for slavery  
**Positive discrimination** – discriminating in favour of a person with a protected characteristic  
**Poverty** – having less than the basic needs of life  
**Prejudice** – prejudging someone based on a characteristic they have  
**Racism** – prejudice based on race or ethnic origin  
**Social justice** – justice in terms of wealth and opportunities  
**Stewardship** – a duty to look after others  
**Tolerance** – acceptance of difference  
**UNDHR** – United Declaration of Human Rights

## UNDHR & HRA

*'All humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reasons and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.'*

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights was implemented in 1948 following the end of WW2. There is no binding requirement for countries to keep this as there is no over-riding authority to ensure it is implemented.

In the UK the Human Rights Act is a law that is based on the UNDHR. It makes it illegal for public authorities to act against a person's human rights.

## Social Justice

Social justice is putting into practice the principles of human rights.

Working for social justice includes:

- Trying to ensure different groups of people are not discriminated against
- Trying to redistribute wealth so everyone can afford to live comfortably

For social justice to exist, society must be fair to all regardless of race, age, gender, sexuality and disability. Society has to be organised so that it is open to all in terms of education, health care, social welfare and housing.

Jesus taught his followers that those who help others will go to heaven.

The Qur'an says that those who 'give zakah...will be the successful'. (Qur'an 7:156)

## 5 mark Exam Question

Explain two religious beliefs about racial prejudice.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer.

(5 marks)

## Freedom of religion and belief

In the UK today, the right to religious freedom is protected.

**Freedom of religious expression** – in the UK people are able to follow the religion of their choice and this is protected by law. This was not always the case, during the 16th century Christians were executed if they were not following the 'correct' denomination.

**Freedom from persecution because of religion** – this is the right to be legally protected if someone targets you because of the religion you follow. If a person attacked another person simply because they followed a particular religion they could be arrested for hate crime.

## Prejudice – types

**Prejudice** means to pre-judge something or someone usually without any real evidence to base that judgement on.

**Discrimination** is when we put these prejudiced ideas into action.

Prejudice and discrimination break people's human rights, because they stop them having the same chances as others and lead to harm

**Positive discrimination** – Positive discrimination is used to promote opportunities for minority groups in society. E.g. disabled parking spaces, job opportunities being available for ethnic minorities to ensure all groups are represented and reflect society better.

## Reasons for prejudice

- Bad experience
- Upbringing
- Media
- Ignorance
- Scapegoating

## Types of prejudice

- Racism
- Sexism
- Disability discrimination
- Homophobia

## Religious attitudes prejudice

Christians believe all forms of prejudice is wrong. The story of the Good Samaritan tells Christians to treat others the way they want to be treated.

Muslims believe Allah created everybody to be equal but different. Therefore discrimination is not justified.

## Status of women

Discrimination against a person because of their gender is called sexism and historically it has been women who have suffered most. In the last 100 years the status of women in society and in religion has changed.

Christianity teaches that discrimination is wrong however, in the Roman Catholic church women may not hold positions of authority.

The Church of England has moved with the times to some extent and women do hold positions of authority. The first female bishop was appointed in 2015. Islam also teaches that discrimination is wrong but again a woman may not lead prayers in the mosque and men have the final word. Religions would argue that men and women have roles that are equal but different.

## Poverty

Poverty is not having enough resources to meet your basic needs.

**Causes of poverty in the UK** – low wages, debt, loans lack of education, illness/disability, lack of effort, upbringing

**Causes of poverty worldwide** – war, population growth, natural disasters, climate, exploitation

Fairtrade Foundation aims for people in developing countries to be paid a fair price and have decent working conditions

Religious teachings tell us we have a duty to tackle poverty.

**Christians believe** 'if anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need how can the love of God be in him?' 1 John 3:17

**Muslims believe** 'He who eats or drinks whilst his brother goes hungry is not one of us'. Hadith

## Who should help the poor?

**The Government** – collect taxes. Taxes should be used to finance the running of public services and to help the poor

**Charities** – are set up to help those in need. They should help the poor because that is why they exist (e.g. CAFOD and, Muslim Aid are both charity organisations that have their roots in religion)

**Religions** – religious communities should help because their holy books tell them it is their duty. God rewards good deeds

**Poor** – the poor need to help themselves to get out of the poverty trap.

## Exploitation of poor

**Fair pay** Being paid at a rate appropriate for the work done. The minimum wage in the UK protects the very low paid but many say this is not enough.

**Excessive interest on loans** – people sometimes need extra money at short notice to pay for an item they were not expecting or just to afford food. One way of covering this extra expense is to take out a loan. These loans have massive interest rates and resulted in some people paying back twice the amount they had borrowed. In 2015 the government issued new rules regarding this however it is not enough and people are still ending up in debt and continue to live in poverty.

**People trafficking** this is a version of modern day slave trade.

Poor people in developing countries are offered the chance of a better life in a wealthier country but only if they can pay the price to a trafficker. Families will often save up thousands of pounds to give a family member a chance at a better life. Often people find themselves in slavery or prostitution and can be required to pay more so are forced to work hard and live their lives in fear because they are essentially illegal immigrants.

In recent years there has been a new type of people trafficking with people fleeing war torn countries and paying for the right to journey on a boat to get to Europe. Many of the boats were inadequate and they sank killing men, women and children.

**Christians and Muslims believe** it is wrong to exploit the poor and vulnerable because it goes against every kind of moral principle and religious teaching about our treatment of each other.

## Wealth

**How do people become wealthy?** Lottery win, working hard, inheritance, gambling, investments, savings, crime.

**Christians believe** being wealthy in itself is acceptable but it is how we use it that matters. Wealth is seen as a gift from God and having the wrong attitude to money can lead people away from God 'The love of money is the root of all evil'.

**Muslims believe** wealth is a gift from God and humans will be judged by Allah by their use of it. 'Riches are a source of blessing to those who acquire them by the way. But those who seek it out of greed are like people who eat but are never full'. One of the five pillars, the basic belief of all Muslims, is zakah. It instructs all Muslims to give 2.5% of their wealth to charity to help others

## Sawm

Sawm is the fourth pillar of Islam. It involves fasting during daylight hours in the month of Ramadan. As well as food and drink, adults must also give up smoking and sexual intercourse in daylight hours. There are a number of people who are excused from taking part in sawm, including: the elderly; people with diabetes or other health conditions which would make fasting dangerous; children under 12; people who are pregnant, breastfeeding or menstruating; people who are travelling. If an adult has been excused from sawm for any of those reasons, they should aim to fast at another point or make a donation to charity instead.

During Ramadan, Muslims who are fasting will eat a large meal just before dawn, in order to set them up for a day without food and water. At the setting of the sun, they will break their fast with dates or water, before having a larger meal later. These evening meals during Ramadan are often events where family and communities get together.

The Night of Power, or Lailat al Qadr, falls in the month of Ramadan. This marks the night when the Qur'an was first revealed by the angel Jibril to the prophet Muhammad. It is regarded as a very special and holy time:

the Qur'an 97:3 says it is "better than a thousand months",

and it is an especially good time for Muslims to pray and recite the Qur'an.

Ramadan ends with Eid ul-Fitr, which involves celebrating with prayers at the mosque and meals with family and friends.

Fasting during Ramadan promotes lots of things that are beneficial to the individual, such as:

- \* obedience and submission to God
- \* self-discipline
- \* a renewed appreciation of God's gifts
- \* empathy for the suffering of the poor
- \* a new understanding of the values of charity and generosity
- \* a way of giving thanks for the Qur'an which was revealed to Muhammad in the month of Ramadan
- \* a way of feeling connected to other Muslims



## Festivals and Commemorations

Eid-ul-Adha, also called the Greater Eid, is the Festival of Sacrifice. This is a celebration and commemoration of the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his own son when God commanded him to. The devil tried to tempt Abraham into disobeying God, but Abraham was faithful and, just before he was going to slaughter his son, God intervened and gave him a lamb to kill as a sacrifice instead.

The celebrations for Eid-ul-Adha involve sacrificing a sheep (in the UK, this must be done at a slaughterhouse). The meat is shared out among family and friends, as well as given to the poor. Prayers of thanks are given, and Muslims give each other presents. In Muslim countries, Eid-ul-Adha is a national holiday and people celebrate with their family and friends. Money has to be given to the poor at Eid as part of the celebrations.

Id-ul-Fitr is the Feast of Breaking the Fast, and it occurs at the end of Ramadan. In this festival, Muslims are celebrating the end of the fast, but also giving thanks to God for the strength and self-control that they have developed during the fast. The festival begins with the sighting of the new moon after Ramadan. On this day, Muslims wake before dawn and offer prayers. They put on their best clothes, decorate their homes, and attend special services at mosque. Meals are shared between families and friends, and money is given to the poor.

Ashura is a day commemorated by Muslims, but it has a different significance to the Sunnis than it does to the Shi'as. For Shi'a Muslims, Ashura marks the killing and martyrdom of Hussein, the grandson of Muhammad. Shi'a Muslims perform rituals of mourning on this day, such as dressing in black and walking the streets chanting and slapping their chests. The death of Hussein is very important to Shi'a Muslims because they recognise him as an Imam from the Ahl al-bayt, or successors of the Prophet Muhammad.

Sunni Muslims celebrate Ashura as the day that Moses and the Israelites were saved from the Egyptians. Sunni Muslims mark this day with a voluntary fast. Ashura falls on the tenth day of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar.

## Zakat

Zakat is the act of paying 2.5% of income and savings to poor people or needy causes. Zakat is considered as a compulsory tax rather than a charitable donation. Zakat is collected by the state in some countries such as Pakistan, Libya and Saudi Arabia, but in many other countries, it is down to the individual or groups to sort out. Shi'a Muslims give a higher amount of zakat, called Khums, to Imams, who then decide how the money will be distributed.

Zakat literally means 'that which purifies', and it is taught that giving zakat purifies the giver and the receiver. It purifies the receiver because it stops them from being jealous of the rich and it is an acceptance of God's will. It purifies the giver because it is allowing them to gain true riches from God.

There is guidance in the Qur'an about who should receive zakat. The Qur'an 9:60 states that,

""Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to Truth); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of Allah; and for the wayfarer: (thus is it) ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom."

Zakat therefore acts as a kind of social security, ensuring that the poor are looked after and that relations between rich and poor Muslims are harmonious.

## Hajj



# DUTIES + FESTIVALS

## ISLAM AQA GCSE SPEC A

The Hajj is a pilgrimage to Mecca, which every adult and able-bodied Muslim who can afford to is instructed to do at least once in their lifetime. Hajj occurs in the month of Dhul Hijja, the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar.

The tradition of Hajj is said to date back to the time of Abraham, (or Ibrahim) when God instructed Abraham to leave his wife and son alone in the desert of Mecca. God miraculously created a spring of water in the desert to sustain Abraham's wife and son. Abraham built the Kaaba, a house of worship, dedicated to the glory of God, and was ordered by God to invite pilgrims to visit it.

Hajj is one of the pillars of Islam. It promotes equality and fellowship amongst Muslims and shows worshippers that all believers are equal in the eyes of God.

A pilgrim on Hajj has to wear special white clothes called Ihram. They are forbidden from shaving, using oils or cologne, having sex, killing or hunting animals, fighting or arguing while on Hajj. Men are not allowed to wear clothing with stitching and women are required to cover their faces.

On arrival in Mecca, pilgrims head to Mina, where they spend the day praying in tents. The next day, they go to Mount Arafat, and spend the day repenting sins that they have committed in the past. They spend the night in Muzdalifa, where they pray and gather pebbles to be used on the next day in the pilgrimage.

This day is called Jamarat, and it involves throwing pebbles collected in Muzdalifa at three different pillars (small, medium and large). It is a symbolic stoning of the devil, which goes back to the story of the devil's attempts to tempt the prophet Abraham away from obeying God. Pilgrims then return to Mina for Eid al-Adha, or the Feast of the Sacrifice.

This celebrates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice everything for God, and it is typical for Muslims to sacrifice an animal on this day and give some of its meat to the poor. Pilgrims will also cut their hair on this day (men often shave their heads, but women only need to cut a lock of their hair).

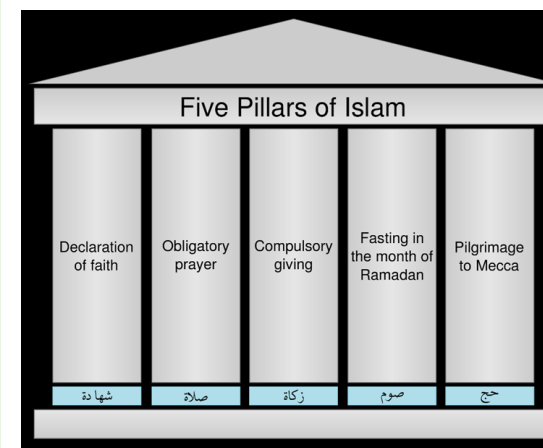
Finally, pilgrims return to Mecca in order to circle the Kaaba, in a ritual called tawaf. This involves circling the holy stone structure built by Abraham mentioned above. The Kaaba is the most sacred structure in Islam; when Muslims pray, they are instructed to face Mecca in honour of this building. Pilgrims walk around the structure seven times in an anti-clockwise direction.

## Jihad

As mentioned above, there are numerous interpretations of the word jihad. Jihad can refer to the internal struggle to live a Godly life as a good Muslim; the struggle to create a true Muslim society; or the struggle to defend Islam by military force if necessary.

The Prophet Muhammad referred to the internal struggle as the 'greater jihad'; this means that the battle within oneself to live a Godly and righteous life is the hardest struggle. However, there is some justification for 'lesser jihad', or holy war.

There are very strict rules for when this kind of jihad is permitted. For example, it must always be in self-defense; it must be started by a religious leader; its cause must be noble and something that God would approve of; wounded enemies must be treated in the same way as one's own soldiers; women, children and old people should not be harmed. The Qur'an also says that the war must stop as soon as the enemy asks for peace (Qur'an 8:61).



AREA	RAG	Retest 1	Retest 2	Retest 3
Hajj				
Jihad				
Sawm				
Zakat				
Festivals				

# Christianity AQA SPEC A Knowledge Organiser — KEY BELIEFS AND TEACHINGS

## The nature of God

The Christian God is **omnipotent** (all powerful) **Omniscient** (all knowing), **Omnipresent** (present everywhere), **Omnibenevolent** (all loving):

*"The Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Revelation 19:6).*

Omnipotent means having unlimited power, or the ability to do everything. This means that nothing is impossible for God. Indeed,

*Genesis 18:14 shows God asking, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?"*

as a reproach to Sarah, who did not believe she would have a child at her advanced age.

But there would appear to be a problem here. If God is omnipotent, which the Bible says He is, then why do we have pain and suffering in the world? If He is omniscient he must know about it, omnibenevolent and he must care. God's omnipotence means that He could stop the pain and suffering, since nothing is impossible for Him. We must therefore conclude that He chooses not to.

## The problem of suffering

A God that can stop human suffering but chooses not to doesn't sound like a very loving God. That's a problem, because the Bible says that God is love: *(1 John 4:8)*. So if God is love and God is omnipotent - why is there so much neglect, suffering, pain and evil in the world? This is known as the problem of evil.

Christians respond to the problem of evil in several ways. One response that a Christian might give is that God has given people **free will**. This means that, even though God could make everyone do the right thing all the time, He has chosen to allow people the power to choose how they act. He has given plenty of instruction and guidance in the form of Jesus and the Bible, and it is up to people to follow that.

One more response that a Christian might give is that God has a **plan** for people, which might involve them having to suffer a lot. The reasons for this may not be clear to us as human beings, but God has His own reasons and we just have to trust Him. Other Christians might say that, because Jesus suffered the worst pain (being cut off from God when He was crucified on the cross), suffering is not something to be avoided.

Yet another response might be that suffering is a way to help Christians to become better people, either by helping those who are **suffering**, or by being rewarded for their suffering in Heaven.



Prayer is also considered by Christians to be both a way of helping people who are suffering, and a way of helping the person praying to endure their suffering

## The Problem of Evil

When considering the problem of evil, we also need to understand the Christian concept of original sin. This is the idea that humans are born sinful. Think of it like an inherited disease: we're all born with the defect of not being perfect creatures and there's nothing we can do to remove it. The problem with original sin is that, because we're all sinful, we are cut off from God and therefore in need of saving.

Some Christians, especially Catholics, would use the concept of **original sin** to explain the problem of evil: there is so much suffering in the world because we are imperfect and sinful creatures, who can only be saved through God's grace in the form of Jesus Christ. Catholics believe we were all tainted by Adam and Eve's original sin: disobeying God and eating an apple from the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden.

Some Christians would use the idea of original sin to express the idea that evil does not come from God, but from the Devil, sometimes called Satan, who was believed to be one of God's angels who rebelled against God



## The Creation of the World

The Bible begins with the statement, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).*



It then goes on to give an account of how God created the world in six days: fish and plants were created on the fifth day, with humans and animals all being created on day six. On the seventh day, God rested. **Genesis 2** gives a more detailed account of the creation of Adam, the first human, and Eve, who was formed from Adam's rib.

*"The Lord God took soil and formed the animals and birds; the man named them, but none was a suitable companion for him. The Lord God put the man into a deep sleep, and while he slept he took one of the man's ribs and formed a woman out of it" (Genesis 2:20-24).*

It's also in **Genesis 2** that we also get the account of how Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden for eating forbidden fruit: *"You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do you will die that same day" (Genesis 2:16-17).*

**John's Gospel** states that:

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made" (John 1:1-3).*

The Word referred to here is usually interpreted as Jesus Christ (John later refers to the Word becoming flesh and living among us). This shows us how important Jesus has been ever since the beginning of time. **Genesis 1** tells us that the Holy Spirit also had an active role in creating the world:

*"Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light" (Genesis 1: 2-3).*

There are different opinions and beliefs within Christianity about how God made the world. For some Christians, the details in the Bible are literally true and they believe that God made the world exactly as described in the Bible. People who believe in the literal truth of the creation story are called **Creationists**.

However, some Christians interpret the details in the Bible as a parable or a story, which isn't literally true, but helps people to understand that the world was created by God. So, while Creationists would have a problem accepting a contrasting theory of how the universe began, other Christians can happily accept that science might have a different explanation for our origins.

For example, many Christians accept the **Big Bang** theory of the universe, but they also believe that the massive explosion, or 'big bang', that started the universe 15 billion years ago was caused by God.

Another challenge to the literal interpretation of human origin in the Bible is the theory of evolution. This is most famously associated with Charles Darwin, who wrote a book called '**On The Origin of Species**' in 1859.

This book argued that human life evolved from much simpler organisms, and that a process called natural selection was responsible for the development of our species from apes.

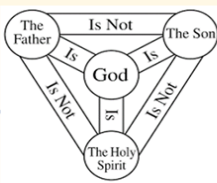


Today, there is conflict about whether to teach **Creationism** or **evolution** in some schools, particularly in the USA. However, many Christians don't have a problem with the theory of evolution: they see the Bible story as a parable, or a simplified version to help people understand the idea that God made humans.

## The oneness of God and the Trinity

Christians believe in one God. However, they also believe in the Trinity, which is the concept of the three persons of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The **Nicene Creed**, which is the Christian statement of faith, expresses these ideas of belief in God.

**God the Father** is the God of the Old Testament: creator, ruler, judge and Lord of the universe. **God the Son** is Jesus, who lived on Earth amongst humans and who died as a sacrifice to save humanity from eternal damnation. **God the Spirit** is the giver of life, who is active in the hearts of believers:



*Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?" (1 Corinthians 6:19)*

Each of the persons of God is God: Christians believe that God is simultaneously **Three and One**. While this may seem impossible, the point is that nothing is impossible for God, and that God cannot be understood by mere human logic. The concept of the Trinity is important because it highlights the mystery of God, but also helps Christians to relate better to God: they may be encouraged to worship the Father, follow the example of the Son, and ask to be filled with the Spirit.

The relationships between the Father, the Son and the Spirit can help Christians to understand how their own relationships should be conducted: for example, with mutual love, respect, generosity, tolerance of difference and so on.

*We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father...*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified."*

## The Afterlife

Christians believe that there is life after death, even though the body dies. A very famous line from the Bible is, *John 3:16*, states that *"God so loved the world, that He gave His only son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life"*.

Christians believe that Jesus was resurrected after His death on the cross, and that He ascended to Heaven to be with God the Father. Christians believe that Jesus has bought them new life after death through His sacrifice: *"Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies" (John 11:25-26).*

However, Christians also believe that everyone will face judgement from God on Judgement Day: *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).*

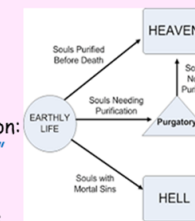
According to Christian belief, God will judge everybody by what they have done in their lives. Those who have accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ will be **redeemed**, but those who have not accepted the gift of salvation will be **damned**. *"Anyone not written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelations 20:15).*

Some Christians believe that this judgement will happen when Christ returns to Earth (this is called the **Second Coming**), in order to resurrect the dead and establish the Kingdom of God on Earth. Christians believe in **Heaven**; many Christians believe in **Hell**, and some Christians believe in **Purgatory** (a place where souls wait after death, to be cleansed of sin and prepare for Heaven).

There isn't a clear agreement about what Heaven and Hell look like; some Christians think of them as being physical places, whereas other Christians think of Heaven and Hell as more like states (Heaven is the state of being connected with God, and Hell is the state of being cut off from God).

However, there are several references to Heaven in the Bible as if it was a physical location: *"In my Father's house are many rooms" (John 14:2); "Listen in Heaven, your dwelling place" (1 Kings 8:30); "Our citizenship is in Heaven" (Philippians 3:20).*

As with any belief system, some followers take these ideas more literally than others.



## Jesus Christ and Salvation

As mentioned above, Jesus is believed to be one of the persons of God in the Trinity. *John 1:14* states that *"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us"*.

This refers to Jesus being born as a baby to a virgin mother and living as a man on Earth. You'll sometimes hear this referred to as the **Incarnation**. The **Incarnation** is the idea that Jesus is both fully God and fully human at the same time. A key belief for all Christians is the **Resurrection**. This is the belief that Jesus was crucified, died, was buried in a tomb with a sealed entrance, and rose from the dead three days after His death. This is such an important belief for Christians because it proves to them that Jesus has power over life and death and that He died for their sins: they believe that, through Jesus' sacrifice, they will be spiritually resurrected to new life with God.

Jesus was crucified by the Roman authorities, who considered him a troublemaker. His claim to be King of the Jews was also seen as highly blasphemous to the Jewish council. According to Luke's Gospel, when Jesus was being crucified, He said, *"Forgive them, Father, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34)*. Christians believe that Jesus ascended to Heaven to sit at the right hand of God the Father. The **Ascension** is the name given to the story of how Jesus appeared to various people, including some of the disciples, but people didn't believe the messages that they passed on about Jesus being alive again. So, Jesus appeared to eleven disciples as they were sat together, and told them to go forth and spread the good news:

*"So then the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into Heaven and sat down at the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19).*



## Sin

The role of Jesus is so important in the Christian worldview because of the concept of sin. As mentioned above, original sin is the idea that humanity is born in a state of imperfection and disconnection from God. When Christians talk about **sin**, they are referring to two things: going against God's law and falling short of the standard that God requires. Because of original sin, humans fail to meet God's standards, both in their actions and their thoughts, and will therefore go against God's law time and time again.

The law given by God exposes everybody as sinners: *"No one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin" (Romans 3:20).*

However, God gave the world a new law through Jesus: *"This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (Luke 22:20).*

So even though nobody meets God's law well enough, through Jesus, there is still a chance for humanity to know and connect with God. Here we come to the idea of grace: Jesus fulfilled the law on behalf of humanity - not because humanity deserved it, but out of love for humanity. Once a Christian has accepted the covenant offered by Jesus, the Holy Spirit is then believed to give them strength: *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8).*

**Atonement** is the name given to the reconciliation between God and humanity through Jesus Christ. Through the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus (who is fully God as well as fully human), the sins or wrongdoings of humanity can be pardoned. In this way, Christians believe that God has found a way to maintain His perfect law, whilst also saving humanity, even though they are not up to His perfect standard.

Topic	RAG RATE	RETEST 1	RETEST 2	RETEST 3	Comments
Nature of God					
Suffering					
Evil					
Creation					
Trinity					
Afterlife					
Salvation					
Sin					

# Christianity AQA SPEC A Knowledge Organiser — PRACTICES



## Worship and festivals

Worship is a key part of Christianity. Christians use worship to praise God, thank God for everything that they have been given, ask God for forgiveness for their sins, and generally to communicate and try to understand what God wants them to do. Many use this as a chance to bond with other Christians and feel the 'Holy Spirit' which they may experience when singing, praying or being around other worshippers in church.

### Liturgical worship

Liturgical worship is worship that follows a set order. It is a formal ritual that involves Holy Communion (also known as the **Eucharist**), in which worshippers eat a small symbolic piece of bread and drink a small symbolic sip of wine as a way of commemorating and celebrating Jesus' life and sacrifice on the Cross. Liturgical worship is observed by Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians.

### Non-liturgical worship

Non-liturgical worship is worship that doesn't have a fixed form and doesn't usually involve **Holy Communion**. The structure will often involve readings from the Bible and a sermon from the person who is leading the worship, as well as music and prayers. In non-liturgical worship, some or all of the service may not be scripted. Non-liturgical worship is often practiced by Quakers, Pentecostals, Evangelicals and Baptists.

### Informal worship

Informal worship is the name given to worship in which small groups of worshippers meet in a house or other typically non-religious setting in order to praise God. They will read from the Bible and perhaps have other readings and songs. There doesn't need to be an official leader in this kind of worship, and the order of service may be very loose, if it exists at all. Some say that the earliest groups of Christians would have worshipped in this non-prescriptive way and therefore it is the closest to the original disciples' way of Christianity.

### Private worship

Private worship is the name given to a worshipper's individual worship of God. This is often done in the individual's house, or in the houses of other worshippers. Private worship will often focus around prayer and Bible reading, as well as meditation and hymns. Worshippers may study the Bible, often reading the interpretation of Bible scholars, and praying to God to be granted understanding of how the particular passage relates to their lives. **The Psalms** are often used in prayer and private worship. Some denominations use aids to help them pray; for example, Roman Catholics use rosary beads to help them count their prayers.

### The significance of prayer

Prayer is a vital element of Christianity; it is thought of as a means of communicating with God and deepening one's own faith. Prayer can be formal or informal; it can be silent or said out loud; it can be pre-planned or spontaneous. There are various purposes of prayer, including: praising God, confession of sins, giving thanks to God, and asking God for something. There are set prayers within Christianity. These are prayers whose words are already written out, and which are used regularly by more than one person. The most common set prayer in Christianity is the Lord's Prayer, which is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. The Lord's Prayer, which begins 'Our Father, who art in Heaven', gives a model to Christians for how to pray: it involves adoration of God, confession of sins, and petition, which means asking God for something. In the Lord's Prayer, Christians are asking God for their food ('give us this day our daily bread'), and for forgiveness and the strength to live according to God's law ('forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil').

## Pilgrimages and Celebrations

Although pilgrimage isn't given as much significance in Christianity as it is in Islam, pilgrimage is still important to many Christians. Places of spiritual significance for Christians include Bethlehem, where they believe Jesus was born, and Nazareth, which is described in the Bible as the place where Jesus spent his childhood. Christians sometimes choose to travel to these places in order to feel closer to Jesus; for some Christians, the chance to pray in the **Church of the Annunciation** (located on the spot where it's believed the Angel Gabriel gave Mary the news that she would give birth to Jesus) is an important chance to show their devotion to God.

Two contrasting examples of Christian pilgrimage are **Lourdes** and **Iona**. Lourdes is a site located near the Pyrenees mountain range in France. It's believed that the Virgin Mary appeared many times to a young woman called Bernadette Soubiros at Lourdes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Virgin Mary told Bernadette to drink water from the muddy stream at her feet, which became clear the next day. The Virgin Mary also told Bernadette to have a chapel built at the spot where the vision had appeared. Millions of pilgrims, especially Roman Catholics, visit this chapel every year. It's believed that the spring water of Lourdes can cleanse pilgrims of sin and even cure illnesses in some cases (the International Medical Committee of Lourdes has recorded 69 'miracle cures' since it was established in 1947).

**Iona** is an island off the west coast of Scotland. Saint Columba established a monastic community on Iona in 563 AD; the work he did there went on to establish Christianity throughout Scotland and eventually Europe. The monastery that Saint Columba built on Iona became an important site of pilgrimage, as did the abbey built on Iona in the thirteenth century. Today, the Iona Community, a group of Christians from various denominations, conducts services and leads tours for pilgrims visiting the island. The importance of Iona is more focused on Columba's great success in spreading Christianity, rather than the celebration of miracles as at Lourdes. Both sites are very significant to those who believe.

Another site of great importance to some Christians, especially Roman Catholics, is **Rome**. This is where Saint Peter, appointed by Jesus as the head of his disciples, went after Jesus' death and eventually became Bishop. Today, the Vatican is the home of the Pope, who is believed by many Roman Catholics to be the direct successor of Peter, and God's representative on Earth.

## Celebrations

Christmas and Easter are both very important celebrations in the Christian calendar. Christmas is celebrated by Christians in order to commemorate the birth of Jesus, who they believe is the Son of God and saviour of humankind. The word 'Christmas' comes from the Mass of Christ, which is a Eucharist or Holy Communion service, held at midnight, commemorating the sacrifice made by Jesus on the cross. It's celebrated by many Christians on December 25<sup>th</sup>, or on January 7<sup>th</sup> by Orthodox Christians. **Christmas** is a highly significant festival for Christians, but many non-Christians enjoy celebrating Christmas as a secular occasion, on which to exchange presents and spend time with loved ones. Indeed, many popular Christmas celebrations actually come from pagan traditions and have nothing to do with Christianity, for example Father Christmas and his reindeer. In modern times, Christians and non-Christians alike have criticised the secular celebration of Christmas for being far too focused on the commercial side (i.e. people spend way too much money on presents and other things at Christmas). This is seen as very far away from the 'true' meaning of Christmas, which is about love and Jesus Christ.

**Easter** is usually described as the most significant festival for Christians. This is the commemoration of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus was crucified on the day known as Good Friday, and his body was left in a sealed tomb. Three days later, on the Sunday, a group of women visited the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus with spices, only to find that the tomb was empty. "As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him" (Mark 16:5-6).

Christians have celebrated Easter and the 40 days leading up to Easter Sunday, known as Lent, ever since. During the period of Lent, many Christians give up certain luxuries in honour of Christ's journey into the desert, where he fasted for 40 days. Easter Sunday is a day of great celebration for Christians, as it is a symbol of their faith that Jesus was raised from the dead to be the saviour of humankind. As with Christmas, there are many pagan influences on the way Easter is celebrated in Britain today, including the Easter Bunny and Easter Eggs, which don't have any reference to the Christian story of Easter.

Topic	RAG RATE	RETEST 1	RETEST 2	RETEST 3	Comments
Worship and Festivals					
Pilgrimages + Celebrations					
Role of Church					
Work of Church					

## The role of the church in the local and worldwide community

The Church has historically played a key role in the local community in Great Britain. Churches used to be the focal point of people's lives; the seven sacraments used to be key parts of a person's life, from baptism at birth to the last rites and anointing the body at death. The Church used to be responsible for the education of children, looking after the sick, giving money to the poor, and even making laws (Bishops had seats in the House of Lords - and some still do).

Today, while lots of aspects of Great Britain's culture are still highly influenced by Christian practices and traditions, the Church doesn't play the same key role for everybody as it once did. However, churches are still important for many people, and many churches do a lot of work in their local community, not just with their congregations, but with anybody in need. For example, at least 63% of the UK's food banks are run by a Christian organisation; food banks have become an increasingly important service for feeding poor people as unemployment has grown. As well as being central to the feeding of poor people, churches serve their community in other ways. For example, an organisation called 'Street Pastors' trains and sends volunteers to patrol the streets in towns and cities in order to listen to and help people who may be living rough on the streets.

For many churches, the outreach work that they do in helping the poor is a form of **evangelism**. The term 'evangelism' means the spreading of the Gospel or word of Jesus Christ. For many Christians and churches, an effective way of letting people know about Jesus is to do good works. However, many churches and Christians also use other means of engaging with people and persuading them to accept Christianity. Many Christian organisations take part in what is known as 'mission work', which means sending out groups of people to spread the word of the Bible. This can be to places far across the globe, as well as within the local community.

Evangelism has always been important to churches, but church attendance seems to be falling. In the UK, church membership has decreased from 10.6 million in 1930 to 5.4 million in 2010, or from about 30% of the population to 10.3% of the population. If this trend carries on, church membership will fall to 8.4% of the population by 2025.

## The importance of the worldwide Church

The worldwide Church can be described as the global community of people who identify as Christians, regardless of nationality, race, age, culture or location. For Christians, the Church on Earth is an agent of reconciliation through which Christians believe humanity will be redeemed and brought under the rule of Christ. Roman Catholics believe that the Pope has authority over the Church on Earth. As God's representative on Earth, they believe that the Pope is the universal pastor and overall head of the Church in legal, practical and official matters. The Christian Church has a long history of persecution. Within the first few centuries of Christianity, Christians were persecuted by Romans (even fed to lions), as well as Jews. Many Christian missionaries have been persecuted and martyred for their attempts to spread their faith; for example, 11 Christian missionaries were crucified and beheaded in Syria in 2015.

In countries where Christianity is not the dominant religion, Christians still face persecution today, with North Korea being named as the most dangerous place to be a Christian in 2017. Christians have also been guilty of persecuting each other (for example, during the Protestant Reformation, when 2000 French Protestants were murdered in just one day).

**The Bible contains some comment on suffering persecution: "If you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name" (1 Peter 4:16).**

## The sacraments

A sacrament is a specific rite or practice which Jesus gave to Christians as a symbol of God's grace. Different denominations of Christianity recognise different sacraments. The Catholic Church recognises seven sacraments: **baptism; confession; the Eucharist (Holy Communion); confirmation; marriage; holy orders; anointing of the sick**. **Anglican and Methodist Christians usually recognise two sacraments: the Eucharist and baptism.**

The sacrament of baptism is significant for all Christians; Jesus himself was baptised by John the Baptist. Baptism, sometimes called Christening, involves the candidate being either immersed in water or having water poured on them. It is a ceremony which symbolises the cleansing of a candidate's original sin and their initiation into life as a believer and child of God. Many denominations of Christianity regard baptism as necessary to be saved.

Some faith traditions practice 'believer's baptism'. This is the religious practice of only baptising people who have already declared their faith in Jesus Christ, as opposed to young children, who don't have the capability to understand what faith means, or to declare it. However, most denominations do baptise children and infants. The sacrament of Holy Communion, also called the Eucharist, is also very significant for Christians. It is based on the words and actions of Jesus at the Last Supper (the celebration of Passover and final meal that Jesus shared with his disciples before the crucifixion). According to:

**Matthew 26:26-28, 'While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."**

The Eucharist is important for Christians because it is a commemoration or way of remembering the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross. It's a way not only of deepening an individual's faith in Jesus and God, but also a way of developing the relationships and connections between different people of the same faith community.

However, there are some key differences between denominations when it comes to the Eucharist. Some Protestants use grape juice or water instead of wine and more importantly, Protestants see the act as symbolic - they don't actually believe in literal **transubstantiation** (the idea that the bread and wine actually transform into the blood and body of Christ) - this is a key Catholic belief. Some denominations, e.g. Baptists, will only allow adults who have been baptised to receive the Eucharist, whereas other denominations will allow all Christians, including children, to receive the sacrament. Other denominations, e.g. Quakers, don't use the Eucharist at all as they see it as restrictive.

Some denominations, e.g. Mormons, observe the Eucharist every Sunday; however, Jehovah's Witnesses observe the Eucharist once a year on the occasion of **Passover** (and even then, only members of the 144,000 'anointed class' can have it). Roman Catholics believe that the bread and wine literally become the body and blood of Jesus Christ, even though they still appear as bread and wine. They believe in the literal presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, whereas many other denominations believe in the spiritual but not literal presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

So, you can see that something which is supposed to unite Christians still has quite a lot of diversity when it comes to the methods, practices and people who take part.

## The work of the Church World Wide

**The Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD)** is an organisation consisting of over 160 Catholic agencies across the world. It is an international aid agency, working to help reduce poverty in developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. For example, CAFOD has instituted an Urban Programme in Sao Paulo, Brazil, which has trained people to help themselves out of poverty through better access to land, water, sanitation, electricity and other essential resources. It has also recently campaigned for, and helped to achieve, more clean water in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**Christian Aid** is a UK Christian charity which formed in 1945 to help refugees after the Second World War. Working in over 60 countries, Christian Aid helps people to fight discrimination and poverty whilst empowering people to develop their businesses and guard against the effects of climate change. Christian Aid supports refugees by sending food parcels and other essential supplies to refugee camps. Through Christian Aid Week, it organises the largest door-to-door collection in the UK.

**Tearfund** is a Christian organisation working in over 50 of the world's poorest countries. A lot of Tearfund's work involves responding to disasters like earthquakes, floods, and other catastrophes. Tearfund are also committed to relieving poverty through development work and advocacy and have changed 300 policies and laws. Tearfund have also been active in caring for people affected by conflicts in areas such as Syria, Afghanistan, Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo, providing basic supplies like food and shelter, but also helping to reconstruct buildings.