

St. Mary's Catholic School – Religious Education Department

Unit 8: Religion and Society
(Year 10 Course)
Revision Overview

1. Rights & Responsibilities

How do Christians make moral decisions?

Why some Christians only use the Bible

- the Bible is the word of God and so is God's guidance on making decisions.
- the Bible contains the Decalogue: guidance on adultery, stealing, murder, lying etc.
- the Bible contains Jesus's teachings on how to live, which Christians should follow as they believe He is the Son of God
- the Bible contains letters from the disciples on how to live

Some Christians believe we shouldn't use only the bible...

- we need the Church to teach us what the Bible means
- some believe the Bible is only inspired by God and must be interpreted for the modern world
- some Christians believe their conscience is the voice of God so can be trusted along with the Bible

How do Christians make moral decisions?

Most Christians also look to the Church for guidance...

- the Church is the **Body of Christ** (Jesus working in today's world) so it has the same authority as the Bible
- God speaks to the world today through the Church
- the Church is guided by God in making moral decisions on moral issues of today's modern world
- Catholic Christians believe the **Magisterium** (the Pope & bishops interpretation of the Bible) gives perfect guidance on moral behaviour

How do Christians make moral decisions?

Why some Christians use their conscience...

- some Christians believe their conscience is the voice of God speaking directly to them (many Churches also believe and teach this)
- St Paul taught that our conscience should be the final part of making a moral decision
- some believe the conscience is better than listening to the Church as it comes **directly from God** without other people's interpretation

Some Christians will not use their conscience...

- as in the past people have used their conscience to justify doing bad things
- some believe the Church and the Bible have more authority than one person's conscience
- if everyone followed their conscience not laws the world would be chaos

How do Christians make moral decisions?

Situation Ethics = moral decisions are based on what **the most loving thing to do in any situation**

- Jesus seemed to follow SE because he overruled what the Old Testament said when he thought it was unloving (e.g. he healed people on the Sabbath (Sunday) which was against the OT law)
- Jesus said the **greatest commandment** = to love God & your neighbor so we should do what has the most loving results
- Christianity is a religion based on love not laws
- it is wrong to ignore the consequences of your actions

Some think following SE is wrong because...

- the Bible is God's word & should be followed exactly so we should follow the Decalogue & Jesus' teachings not our own ideas of what is most loving
- we cannot be sure of what is the most loving outcome

How do Christians make moral decisions?

Using a Variety of authorities...

- **Catholics** would usually follow the Church as the **Magisterium** applies the teachings of the Bible and the apostles to modern life.
- Some Christians who follow SE may go to the Church or the Bible if they have a difficult moral decision to make & cannot figure out what the most loving thing to do is. - Protestants tend to use the Bible but this is difficult for modern issues not in the Bible (e.g. contraception) so they may then seek guidance from the Church or their conscience.

Human Rights in the UK

1998 the Human Rights Act was passed UK citizens the right to...

- life, liberty & a fair trial - freedom of conscience, religion & to express your own views - freedom to take part in free elections etc.,

HR are important because...

- without HR (e.g. life & liberty) you could find yourself living in a dictatorship
- without the right to freedom of thought & expression minority religious groups may be banned, imprisoned or killed
- without the right to free elections there would be no democracy

BUT people abuse HR (e.g. prisoners claiming their HR are abused) **SOME** believe not everyone has the right to basic HR e.g. we should be able to torture terrorists to get information that could save lives

Why human rights are important for Christians

- God created life so it is **sacred & holy** therefore it should be protected with HR
- Everyone is made in the **image of God** so we should treat everyone fairly & equally which HR ensures
- **Freedom of thought, conscience, religion & expression are part of being a Christian** – Christians must have the right to believe what they want & tell others about it – as the Bible tells them to
- HR ensure Christians are not disadvantaged in job applications because of what they believe

HRs can cause a problem for Christians because...

- some Christians believe no one has the right to form a civil partnership or for homosexuals to raise children because it goes against God's will
- some are against the right to marry someone of another religion so children will always be brought up as one Christians
- HR laws can be used to suggest women should be allowed to be priests or priests should be allowed to have children but this goes against the Catholic Churches teachings

Why Christians should take part in electoral & democratic processes

Every UK citizen (18+) has the right to change government policy by: joining a pressure group, political party, contacting an MP & voting.

People should take part because...

- we pay Taxes & VAT voting gives you control over how much we pay & how the government's money is spent
 - gives you a chance to effect new laws
 - gives you a say in how armed forces, schools, the NHS, maintenance of roads etc., are run
- BUT some think** one vote makes no difference & all politicians make promises they don't keep

Christians must take part to ensure...

- the government upholds the right of equality, fair treatment & other rights in line with Christianity
- to ensure the right follow one's own religion & freedom of expression is maintained

Christian teachings on moral duties and responsibilities

The Golden Rule: 'Do to others as you would have them do to you' Christians should use this rule when deciding which political party to vote for. E.g. if a party wanted to send all asylum seekers back where they came from Christians would not think this is how they would like to be treated if they were in that situation & so should not follow this political party

Jesus's Parable of the Sheep & the Goats teaches that at the end of the world the Son of Man will judge everyone. Those who are like sheep (who helped the poor & suffering) will go to heaven and those who are like the goats (who did not help others) will go to hell.

Thus it is the duty of a Christian to help the poor & suffering and they should help parties who also aim to do this (for example, political parties which help protect benefits, help the jobless & look after others who suffer).

The Story of Cain & Abel teaches that anyone who has material possessions and sees his brother in need but does not pity him does not love God. So Christians have a duty to look after everyone in need & work for social change so society becomes truly Christian.

The nature of Genetic Engineering

GE is using techniques of gene development to find cure/prevent diseases & disabilities. Most genetic research means changing the cell from one generation to the next (germline gene therapy) & removing defective genes from embryos. Recently **cloning** has been used to create healthy cells to replace diseased ones (often from embryos produced during IVF but not used).

- +ive** offers chance for a cure to diseases
- +ive** cloning using animal eggs doesn't include loss of human life (embryo)
- +ive** GE is monitored by the law & can be very beneficial

- ive** we don't know the long term consequences
- ive** places too much power in hands of scientists
- ive** if it goes wrong the effects are permanent

Different Christian attitudes to Genetic Engineering

Catholics: life begins at conception so ending life, even in a test tube after scientific research is done, is wrong Killing an embryo is killing a human being. The embryos used are produced by un-Christian means (e.g. male masturbation)

Liberal Protestants: Jesus showed that Christians should try to cure diseases, using genetic cures are also no different from finding drug cures. Embryos do not become a foetus until they are fourteen days old.

Evangelical Protestants: God creates genetic make-up of each person we have right to interfere, playing God is a great sin & it is wrong to try & make Earth perfect, as only heaven is perfect.

2. Environment & Medical Issues

Global Warming: Causes & Possible Solutions

Global warming means the Earth is warmer than it has been for thousands of years, which could lead to negative environmental effects.

- Most scientist believe it is down to the **green-house effect** = burning fossil fuels produce CO₂ which creates a barrier in the atmosphere so the sun's heat cannot pass though into the atmosphere but not back out rising the Earth's temperature.

- Some scientists believe global warming is part of **natural changes** in the climate of the world

- Some believe when **solar activity** is high; fewer clouds form so more of the sun's heat reaches the Earth

Solution 1: wind/sea/hydroelectric power = no CO₂ produced

Solution 2: Use bio-diesel or electric batteries to power cars = no/little CO₂

Forms of Pollution & their Solutions

Carbon Dioxide levels (CO₂) are set to double by 2016

Acid rain: fossil fuels release chemicals into the atmosphere making rain water change pH destroying things it rains on.

Eutrophication: fertilisers being washed into streams polluting rivers making water plants grow rapidly and use all the oxygen in the water = fish die & water poisoned

Waste: litter, sewage, rubbish causes water pollution & eutrophication & bring diseased rats

Radioactive pollution: no CO₂ but radioactive waste causes cancer, death and genetic mutations

Solutions – electricity from renewable energy such as wind farms or hydroelectric plants. Don't drop litter & have better rubbish / sewage / fertiliser systems.

The Scarcity of Natural Resources

NR = materials which occur naturally e.g. oil, fertile land, water / wind / solar power. Some are non-renewal such as oil which when used up will take thousands of years to form naturally again.

Solution: recycling plans, alternative lifestyle e.g. use natural products, recycle, walk rather than drive

Problem = expensive, using plants for biodiesel means less food in world,

Christian Teachings on Stewardship

Christians believe **God gave humans the stewardship of the earth and its resources**. The Bible teaches that Christians were given the right to rule over God's creation as God's stewards – so they must treat the animals & land.

Jesus taught: humans will be **judged** on whether they have been good stewards of God's earth.

Jesus also taught: humans have a **responsibility** to leave the earth a better place

These teachings affect Christian attitudes...

- Christians should try to reduce pollution and preserve resources

- Christians should show stewardship by working to share the Earth's resources more fairly and improving the standard of living in LEDCs

- Christians should help the work of groups that try to reduce pollution and conserve resources

BUT some Christians believe human interests come first: e.g. shutting down a polluting factory that employs 3000 people would not be a Christian solution

However: some non-Christians think only government actions can deal with the issue, recycling etc., might not help climate change or for it to have an impact it would have to be on a global scale!

Islam & Stewardship

Islam teaches: God created Adam as his **Khalifah** (type of steward), so Muslims are God's Khalifahs who have to look after God's creation as it says in the **Qur'an**.

Islam also teaches: people will be **judged** by God on how they treat the Earth as life is a test and this is part of God's test.

Thus Muslims aim to not pollute, share resources, conserving resources.

However, like Christianity, **human interests** come first

Medical Treatments for Infertility

IVF: egg is taken from the mother's womb, fertilized in a test tube and put back in the womb

Artificial Insemination by husband (AIH): sperm is used for IVF.

Artificial Insemination by donor: unknown male's sperm used for IVF

Egg donation: unknown women's egg used for IVF.

Embryo donation: sperm & egg both donated by unknown people and fertilized by IVF

- **12.5% couples** in UK have fertility problems
- Its part of **human nature** to want children, psychological problems may result by not having them
- In 2007, **12% births** were results of fertility treatments

Attitudes to Infertility Treatments in Islam

Islam allows IVF & AIH because...

- the egg & sperm are from the husband & wife
- all Muslims should have a family
- unused embryos are not foetuses so life is not taken

Islamic law: all other types of infertility treatments are wrong...

- they deny a child's right to know its natural parents
- they are same as adoption = banned in Islam
- egg or sperm donation is like adultery

Christian Attitudes to Transplant Surgery

All Christians believe organs shouldn't be bought from poor people, as the poor shouldn't be exploited.

Some Christians (e.g. Catholics) agree with TS...

- **immortality of the soul** means the body isn't needed after death
- leaving organs for others is a way of **loving your neighbor**
- leaving organs for others is a way of treating others as you would like to be treated (**Golden Rule**)

Other Christians believe TS is wrong...

- transplanting from the dead to the living is playing God which is a great sin
- it ignores the **sanctity of life**
- it isn't natural so might not be God's plan
- raises the problem of when someone is dead, if they are on life support should they stay on life support or their organs be donated?

Different Christian Attitudes for Infertility Treatments

Catholic Christians...

- life is given by God and no one has the right to children so only natural methods of conception are ok
- IVF involves fertilising several eggs, some are **thrown away or used for experimentation** – this does not promote the **sanctity of life & may be seen as murder**
- all forms of artificial insemination / surrogacy involve sin of male masturbation
- all forms of embryo technology involve fertilisation being separated from sex = **not God's plan** for procreation
- infertility may be part of God's plan for the person to do something else with their life

Other Christians...

- One of the purposes of Christian marriage is to have children, so infertility treatments must be good
- the discarded embryos are not foetuses and so life is not being taken
- IVF gives Christians the opportunity to share their love with children & raise them as Christians to do God's work

The nature & Importance of Transplant Surgery

TS = an organ is taken from one person (dead, but sometime living using organs we can do without) & put in another to replace an organ that isn't working e.g. heart, eyes. TS is **very effect & can save lives**.

In the UK **Human Tissue Authority** control organ donations so people cannot sell their organs.

TS is important because...

- cures life-threatening conditions (e.g. kidney failure) & improves people's lives & saves over 3000 lives a year
- more people need TS every year so organ donation is essential
- TS gives people a chance to help others

Attitudes to Transplant Surgery in Islam

Most Muslims don't agree with TS...

- **The Shari'ah** teaches that nothing should be removed from the body after death
- TS is playing God, which is the greatest sin of shirk
- **The Qur'an** teaches only God has the right to give & take life
- TS does not treat life as sacred (sanctity of life)
- Muslims believe they need their organs for resurrection on the last day

Some Muslims allow TS because...

- the Muslim Law Council of the UK says that Muslims can carry donor cards and have transplants
- Islam aims to do good and help people

3. Peace & Conflict

The United Nations & World Peace

The UN was formed after WW2 to preserve world peace & bring about conflict resolution. Through the Security Council the UN can try to stop threats to world peace by...

- imposing sanctions on countries threatening peace
- authorize the use of force by member states
- send UN peacekeeping forces to prevent outbreak of conflict, stabilise conflict situation and bring peace agreements

The UN runs the ICC (International Criminal Court) in The Hague which upholds international law.

E.g. UN worked for peace in Kosovo in the 90s to stop Serbia from performing ethnic cleansing against Kosovar Albanians. Thousands died & thousands became refugees until NATO drove the Serbian forces out & the UN took over & helped set up political parties to protect Kosovo as a democratic state.

- ive** the UN hasn't always been able to prevent wars e.g. with Syria
- ive** the UN Security Council has only 5 members so is said to be bias

How Religious Organisations Promote World Peace

There are groups in all religions that work for world peace: Christian Peacemakers Teams, Pax Christi International (a Catholic Group) The Muslim Peace Fellowship, The Jewish Peace Fellowship etc.

The work for peace by...

- hold meetings to **inform** about the horrors of war and promote political parties not in favour of war
- they organise **protests** to change public opinion and consequently government policy on war
- the attend inter-faith conferences to help all religions work together to promote peace
- they work for the world wide acceptance of human rights

BUT some believe the UN is more effective than religious organisations because it is not religiously motivated which is sometimes associated with bias **BUT** religious organisations hold little power in comparison to the UN

Why Wars Occur

Religious differences e.g. Serbia invaded Kosovo to protect Christians from the Muslim majority

Nationalism & ethnicity e.g. the Rwandan genocide was the ethnic majority trying to rid the country of the ethnic minority

Resources e.g. some think Iraq was invaded because the West wanted access to its oil reserves

Ideals & Politics e.g. differences in political ideas lead communist North Korea to invade capitalist South Korea, in 1953 the UN went to protect the South and **STILL** there isn't peace.

Wars could be ended if...

- religions came together to find unity & peace
- if we had a federation of states (a world-wide version of the EU) political differences wouldn't cause as much conflict
- economic wars couldn't occur if we had equal sharing of the world resources

Attitudes to War in Islam

The greater jihad = struggle to make yourself & society perfectly Muslim. **The lesser jihad** = fighting in a just war

- Qur'an teaches Muslims must fight if attacked & that a Muslim who dies in a just war will go straight to heaven
- Prophet Muhammad fought in wars & taught that Muslims should fight just wars

Despite this most believe modern weapons means no war can be just & Islam teaches love so just wars must always be the last resort with the aim of peace

Just War Theory

Although the effects of wars are bad many believe some wars can be justified.

Using Just War Theory a war is justified if...

1. the cause of the war is **just** (e.g. self-defence)
2. it is being fought with the authority of the **UN**
3. it has the **intention** of bringing back peace
4. it is the **last resort** – all other ways of ending the conflict have been tried & failed
5. there is a reasonable chance of **success**
6. the methods used avoid killing **civilians**
7. methods used are **proportional** to the cause e.g. you wouldn't use a weapon of mass destruction to destroy a country that has invaded a small island

Differences among Christians in their Attitudes to War

Christian pacifists = refuse to fight in wars (e.g. Catholic Pax Christi, the Quakers etc.) because...

- Jesus said 'love your enemies' & turn the other cheek when attacked
- The Decalogue 5th commandment teaches 'do not kill'
- Jesus wouldn't allow Peter to fight back when He was being arrested
- Modern warfare affects so many innocent people so can never be justified

Some Christians believe in just wars because...

- Most Churches (including the Catholic Church) allow for just wars
- St Paul said that Christians must obey the orders of the government so they should fight when ordered
- Jesus did not condemn soldiers
- In the same way we need police to protect innocent people against criminals, we need armed forces to protect innocent states against criminal states

Christian Attitudes to Bullying

Bullying is frightening people who are weaker than you. Christians are against it because...

- aggression without just cause is sinful
- people are God's creation & should be respected
- the Good Samaritan, Greatest Commandment & Golden Rule teach love not bullying
- The Christian Church teaches the protection of human rights, bullying denies people HR

Attitudes to Bullying in Islam

- Islamic society is based on respect
- violence without a just cause is sinful & it is the duty of Muslims to protect the weak, bullying is the opposite
- Muhammad said 'every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim' no one should bully their brother

Religious Conflicts within Families

- Religions tell parents to bring their children up in the faith, so if the child rejects religion there could be conflict, as parents worry their non-religious child may act sinfully & **will not be with them in the after-life**
 - Children wanting an **inter-faith marriage** could cause conflict because the religious wedding ceremony & how to raise the children (which religion to bring them up as) could be difficult
 - If parents do not follow their religion strictly but their children do can cause problems e.g. the child may want to take a low paid job as an imam or priest, and may not be able to give the parent grandchildren. Also the child may morally object with the parents like choices e.g. Muslim parents running off-licence, Christian parents divorcing
- BUT religion can bring families together** through worshipping together, religion promotes respect & so may not cause conflict, & children often turn out like their parents so it is unlikely there will be conflicts anyway

Christian Teachings on Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Christians have a duty to reconcile with & forgive bullies, persecutors, and enemies because...

- **Jesus died** to bring reconciliation & forgiveness
- **Jesus said** if Christians do not forgive others, they will not be forgiven themselves
- St Paul taught we should try **live in peace with everyone**
- **The Church** promote reconciliation & forgiveness

Some struggle to forgive because they think it isn't natural to forgive enemies, and they believe they should oppose evil not forgive it

Forgiveness & Reconciliation in Islam

Muslims believe they should try to forgive & reconcile because...

- God is compassionate & merciful to sinners so Muslims should be too
- To receive forgiveness on **judgement day** they must be prepared to forgive others
- **The Qur'an** says Muslims must forgive those who offend them

BUT Muslims believe they shouldn't forgive those who work against Islam.

4. Crime & Punishment

The Need for Law & Justice

- All groups need rules that its' members must follow
- Laws in business make sure we are paid and treated fairly
- Protect the weak from the strong
- Keeps things organised in advanced societies such as the UK

St Aquinas said an unjust law is not a proper law because...

- 1) If a law is unjust people will feel that it is right to break the law.
- 2) If some are unjust people may think all laws are unjust
- 3) If laws don't give justice people will take law into their own hands

Theories of Punishment

- 1) **Retribution** – punished in proportion to the crime e.g. kill those that kill. Believe criminals should suffer for what they have done wrong.
- 2) **Deterrence** – if cut someone's had off for stealing then they will not steal again.
- 3) **Reform** – include educating criminals so they gain qualifications and don't have to turn to crime
- 4) **Protection** – keep criminals in prison for so long that when released they are no longer a danger

Why Justice is Important for Christians

Justice is important to Christians. **God is just and rewards the good whilst punishing the bad.** Christians churches began the Jubilee 2000 campaign where they tried to end 3rd world debt as a way of sharing the Earth's resources more fairly. Chapel dedicated to justice at Exeter Cathedral.

Believe in justice because...

- Bible says God is a God of justice
- Jesus said the rich should share with the poor
- New Testament has lots of statements about how Christians should treat people fairly

Why Justice is Important in Islam

- Quran says God is just
- Last Day is concerned with justice
- As **khalifahs** they must share the Earth's resources equally
- Islam teaches all people should have equal rights

Different Christian Attitudes to Capital Punishment

A crime punished by death is called a 'capital offence'. Abolished in the UK in 1970.

1) Against it because...

- Jesus came to save (**reform**) sinners. Can't reform the dead
- Jesus banned the Old Testament law of 'an eye for an eye' (**retribution**)
- Human life is sacred and only God can take it away
- Jesus said '*turn the other cheek*'

2) Some see it as a good way to keep order in society because...

- Bible mentions it as a punishment for certain crimes and the Bible comes from God
- Catholic and C of E churches have not condemned the use of capital punishment
- Church used it for crimes like heresy
- Aquinas said peace in society was more important than reforming sinners

The Nature of Capital Punishment

Non-religious arguments in favour

- Will deter crimes like murder and terrorism
- Murderers are a threat to society. This threat should be permanently removed.
- The only retribution/compensation for murder is death

Non-religious arguments against

- Could be wrongly convicted
- Countries without death penalty have lower murder rates, so doesn't work
- Executed terrorists become martyrs and inspire others to become terrorists

Attitudes to Capital Punishment in Islam

- Allowed for 3 crimes; murder, adultery and apostasy (someone working against Islam). Must be clearly proven. Agree with capital punishment because...
- Is a punishment set down by God in the Quran. Do what God wants.
 - Muhammad himself sentenced people to death
 - Sharia law lays down the crimes to be prescribed death and all Muslims try to follow this
 - Sharia law allows victims families to be paid blood money for murder in place of the death penalty.

Christian Attitudes to Drugs & Alcohol

All against illegal drugs because...

- St Paul taught a Christian's body is a temple and should not be abused
- Drugs have mental effects which make it hard to worship God correctly

They have two attitudes to tobacco and alcohol

1. OK if used in moderation because...
 - Jesus' first miracle was turning water into wine
 - St Paul said Christians could drink in moderation
 - Jesus drank wine at the Last Supper
2. Some practise abstinence because...
 - Bible warns against drunkenness e.g. Noah's drunkenness brought shame on the family
 - Bible notes alcohol 'impairs judgement, inflames passions and invites violence.'

Attitudes to Drugs & Alcohol in Islam

Both prohibited as 'haram' because...

- Quran says Satan uses them to keep people from God
- Muhammad calls them '**khamr**' (forbidden)
- Seen as suicide by Muslim lawyers which is banned
- Muhammad says a number of times that Muslims should have nothing to do with alcohol

Tobacco is not mentioned in the Quran so declared 'makruh' which means extremely disliked but not 'haram'.

Laws on Drugs & Alcohol, & Reasons for them

Class A drugs, e.g. cocaine, ecstasy, heroin

- 7 years in prison for possession
- life in prison for supplying

Class B drugs, e.g. Ritalin, amphetamines

- 5 years in prison for possession
- 14 years in prison for supplying

Class C drugs, e.g. cannabis, anabolic steroids

- 2 years in prison for supplying
- 5 years in prison for supplying

UK law on tobacco: cannot be sold to under 18s, adverts for tobacco products are banned

UK law on alcohol: supervised under 16s can go anywhere in a pub, over 16s can have an alcoholic drink with a meal if accompanied by an adult

	TOBACCO	DRUGS	ALCOHOL
HEALTH PROBLEMS	-Increases risk of getting over 50 medical conditions -Can cause impotence in men	-Death through overdose -Major cause of mental illness	-Causes liver and stomach problems -Mental health problems
SOCIAL PROBLEMS	-Watching loved ones die -Makes people smell	-Dealers could be criminals -Major cause of gang crime	-Causes 41% of all deaths through falls -65% of murder victims have been drinking

Other key words for your answers about Islam...

- **Qur'an** is the Muslim holy book
- **The Hadith** is a combination of sayings & conduct of the prophet Muhammad
- **Fatwas** are the rulings of Islamic scholars
- **Sharia law** comes from a combination of the Qur'an, the Hadith & fatwas

In the **Parable of the Good Samaritan** Jesus is telling people to help anyone in

In the **Parable of the Sheep and the Goats** Jesus says that those who do good deeds will go to heaven and those who do bad will go to Hell.

'God is the author of Sacred Scripture (Bible) because he has inspired its human authors.'
(Catholic Catechism)

'Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God.'
(1 John 3:10)

'Do to others as you would have them do to you.'
(The Golden Rule)

'We are all one in Christ Jesus'
(Galatians 3:28)

'**Before** I formed you in the womb **I knew you**'
(Jeremiah 1:5)

Key Christian teachings to use in your answers...

St Paul taught that we will all be **judged by God** after death

The **sanctity of life** teaches us that all life is God given and holy therefore it should be respected.

'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.'
(Matthew 5:6)

'God created man in his own image'
(Genesis 1:27)

Catholics believe that the authority of the Church comes from the **Magisterium** (the Pope and his Bishops).

"Love one another as I have loved you"
(John 13: 34)