

Religion and Human Experience - Paper Two

Unit 1 Conflict

Key Concepts

Conflict – clashes and breakdown of relationships,

Interfaith dialogue – different faiths talking to each other about their faith,

Non-violent protest– showing disapproval without hurting anybody,

Reconciliation – making up after a dispute and coming together again,

Just war - a war which is fought under agreed conditions,

Pacifism – a belief that any form of violence is unacceptable

Interfaith Dialogue

Corrymeela – tries to promote peace between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. It is a place where both Catholics and Protestants can come together to talk and work together, promoting inter-faith dialogue. They run discussion groups where both sides can learn to forgive each other. There are Children's programmes and youth centres there too. Some people live there, others come to take part in the many activities.

Children of Abraham – Muslims and Jews, internet based organisation, looks at building understanding between Jews and Muslims. The site is called Children of Abraham as it reminds them that they have a common ancestor, Abraham and that they should try to respect and understand each other. The site has chat rooms where they can talk frankly and learn to understand each other through open discussions.

Neve Shalom – Also known as Oasis of peace, this organisation supports Jews and Muslims living together in peace and mutual respect. They have a unique way of educating their children, teaching them both languages and about each other's cultures, religions and traditions. They hold charity fundraisers and raise awareness through events, newsletters, presentations, talks and visits to the village. Their mission is to advance social equality in both Israel and the UK. Their aim is to create a place of peaceful co-existence to challenge extremism by inter-faith dialogue.

Two examples of people who have used non-violent protest

Martin Luther King – inspired by Jesus' example of non-violence; he too preached love and forgiveness – this was evident in his actions and his speeches and books. As a result, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Led peaceful demonstrations- such as sit-ins and boycotts, he always stressed the importance of equality but believed that black supremacy was as bad as white supremacy. He even prayed for the people who bombed his house.

Gandhi – he used non-violence against injustice in both South Africa and India. He believed in Ahimsa and weapon was Satyagraha. He disobeyed the authorities but in a non-violent way – marches (most famous the Salt March), gave speeches, led national strikes. If any of his supporters used violence then he would often go on hunger strikes

until the violence stopped. Not only did he achieve Indian self-rule but he also tried to help mend the divisions in Indian society between rich and poor, Hindu and Muslim.

Explain the attitude of two religious traditions towards peace/war

Buddhism – Generally disapproves of any form of violence. They follow the principle of Ahimsa (non-harming). The Buddhists first precept of guide for living is to avoid harming any living creatures. The way to achieve peaceful living is through following the Eight Fold Path and practice loving kindness towards all human beings. An example of a Buddhist pacifist is the Dalai Lama who has never fought back physically against the Chinese occupation of Tibet. Theravada Buddhists would always say that killing is wrong. Mahayana Buddhists, on the other hand, believe that violence can be right if it can bring about a much better situation – this is known as using ‘skilful means.’ In the Far East, there is a very strong tradition of peace, especially Japan where you would see many peace pagodas built by Buddhists.

Christianity – some Christians such as Quakers believe war is unacceptable under any circumstances. During World War II many Quakers were prepared to go to prison for their beliefs, this is known as being a conscientious objector. Obviously, all Christians want peace and this is something to be aimed for – there are many examples in the Old Testament as peace being the ideal state. Jesus too many believe was a peacemaker – he said ‘blessed are the peacemakers ...’ and ‘Those who use the sword will die by the sword.’ Many Christians today try to follow Jesus’ example setting up such places as Corrymeela and organisations such as Pax Christi. Some Christians believe that war can be acceptable under certain circumstance and support the just war theory. They also argue that Jesus did on occasions show anger – he upturned the money lenders table in the temple and cursed a fig tree. Many Christians believe that fighting might be necessary to upturn an evil regime and would argue that the army is an extension of the police force, there to maintain law, order, peace and justice in the world. Some Christians believe that having nuclear weapons is acceptable as a deterrent to stop aggressors.

Islam – the word Islam means submission and peace and therefore shows the importance Islam gives to the ideal of peace. However, this does not mean that people should accept an unjust situation. Mercy and peace are seen as very important ideas and are referred to in the Qur’an. Muslims also believe in the greater and lesser Jihad – war is seen as the lesser Jihad, the greater Jihad being the struggle for goodness within oneself. Even if war occurs it must be led by a spiritual leader, it must be the last resort and civilians, trees and animals should be protected. The example of Muhammad is also important when considering this issue. Although Muhammad did fight on several occasions he brought about peace between Makkah and Medina and united both areas under Islam. Muhammad also preached forgiveness as demonstrated by the story of Muhammad and the lady with the rubbish.

Christian teaching about evil

1. As well as a power for good there is a power for evil – Satan
2. Some Christians believe there is evil in the world because of the devil

3. The bible shows many people are tempted by the devil – e.g. Adam and Eve
4. Many Christians connect the idea of free will with evil and suffering which are caused by human misuse of free will and so is not the fault of God
5. Other Christians point out that this world was not created as a paradise. To be able to do good requires the existence of evil.
6. Evil exists because of original sin – from Adam and Eve

Buddhist teaching about evil

1. Evil brings suffering. Evil is depicted as Mara who tempted the Buddha just before he became enlightened; however, this is not an actual person and more of a symbol for the Buddha's inner struggle to gain enlightenment.
2. Evil is present because people cannot fully grasp the idea of no fixed self or that nothing is permanent. A person who fully understands this is an enlightened person who will no longer be part of the cycle of death and rebirth.

Describe two ways that religion can help someone who is suffering

Describe a charity e.g. Salvation Army giving some detail about what they could do to help – set up soup kitchens to help the homeless in some areas, second hand furniture given to disadvantaged families, publish a magazine called 'War Cry' profits go to helping the poor, raise money by singing in one of the Salvation Armies bands.

Through corporate and individual prayers – The vicar or priest could ask the congregation to pray for someone, they could light a candle, visit them in the hospital and the priest could even offer last rites if they are seriously ill and dying.

Their community could remind them of the teachings of their religion. That sometimes suffering is necessary/ a test of faith/ will be rewarded in the next life/Jesus also suffered. Sometimes good will come out of suffering and remind them that people in the past have laid down their lives for others – MLK, Oscar Romero etc – this links with Jesus

The story of Job – which comes from the bible and is about having faith in God, not always fully understanding why we suffer and that even good people will suffer.

Teachings about Peace:

Christianity:

- During Church services, Christians are invited to share peace with each other by shaking hands. Quakers are pacifists and will refuse to take part in any war or conflict. They believe that peace should always be maintained and may refer to the example of Jesus, who taught, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God'.

Buddhism:

- Buddhism encourages peace through the idea of ahimsa (not hurting or harming any living creature) The Dalai Lama encouraged people to respond to violence with peace. E.g. when China used force in Tibet to put an end to the opposition there, the Dalai Lama called for a non-violent protest. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. They think their way to peace is through forgiveness and tolerance.

Teachings on forgiveness:

Christianity:

- In the Lord's prayer, Christians ask God 'to forgive their sins, as they forgive those who have sinned against them'. There are examples of Christians who have forgiven others, for example, Martin Luther King forgave those who bombed his house. In the Bible, Jesus taught you should forgive 70x7, which means to forgive endlessly. Jesus also forgave those who crucified him and those who have sinned. In the story of Zacchaeus, Jesus forgave him for taking too much tax off the people. The Bible also states, 'Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you'.

Islam:

- Islam teaches that Allah will always forgive someone who is truly repentant and that he will reward those who will forgive others. All should pursue ways in which reconciliation can be achieved. For example, Neve Shalom. All descriptions of Allah show gentleness and tolerance, for example, one of his 99 names in the 'All-forgiver'. War should only be considered in the defence of Islam. The Quran states, 'those who control their anger and are forgiving towards people, Allah loves the good'.

Contemporary Examples:

Gee Walker – Forgive those who killed her sons because she was a Christian

Dietrich Bonhoeffer – Was a Christian, but planned to assassinate Hitler because of his actions during WW2, showing that some Christians may think it is right to fight for a better outcome or the lesser of 2 evils

Unit 2 – Religion and Medicine

Key Terms

Conscience – an innate moral sense that guides actions, e.g. knowing right from wrong.

Religious people often call this the voice of God

Free will – a belief that everyone is responsible for their actions and that they have a choice to do right or wrong. Christians believe that god gave people free will

Hippocratic Oath – this is a promise that doctors sign promising to treat patients to the best of their abilities and to preserve life at all costs

Medical Ethics – The process of deciding what is good and acceptable in medicine

Quality of Life – extent to which life is meaningful and pleasurable

Sanctity of Life - life is seen as holy/sacred, god given

Abortion

Christian view

All Christians believe that life is sacred and God-given. There are many different views amongst Christians. Roman Catholic Church abortion is unacceptable under any circumstances; the foetus is viewed as a person from the moment of conception and has full human rights. Roman Catholics believe that abortion is a grave sin and goes against one of the 10 Commandments – Thou shalt not kill. The Church of England allows abortion under certain circumstances such as if the mother's life is in danger.

Muslim view on abortion

There are many different views about abortion. There is no direct reference in the Qur'an to abortion although Muslims believe that life is sacred and god-given. Abortion is generally allowed before 120 days and if the mother's life were in danger. It is believed that ensoulment (ruh) takes place after 120 days and therefore abortion would not normally occur after this time. It is believed that after this time the baby's rights are equal to that of the mother's rights.

Euthanasia

Christian view of euthanasia

All Christians would believe that life is sacred and god-given.

Some might decide that only God can take a life that any type of killing is always wrong –that it goes against the 10 Commandments – thou shalt not kill. They might, therefore, support hospices and follow in the footsteps of Dame Cicely Saunders who tried to heal people. They might believe that Jesus was a healer and that is what we should try to do. Others might decide that we should do what we think is the most loving thing to do – so this could mean helping someone die ... They might support organisations such as EXIT and even take someone to a euthanasia clinic – they might believe that this is following the teachings of Jesus such as 'love thy neighbour'.

Jewish view of euthanasia

Like Christians, Jews believe that life sacred and god-given. They believe that god is the controller of life and death. If a person kills someone to put them out of their misery it is seen as murder even if that person requests it. However, Jews do allow withholding treatment if there is no hope of recovery. The life support machine could also be switched off if that person is seen 'as brain dead' – that is the machine is not supporting life but actually providing it.

IVF

Christian view of IVF

No direct biblical teaching concerning fertility treatment – although in Genesis it says 'be fruitful and multiply'

The Biblical view of childlessness was that it was God's intention.

Most denominations accept IVF and AIH

Many oppose AID – The Pope called it "mechanical adultery"

Roman Catholics oppose fertility treatment – 'unnatural' sexual acts e.g. masturbation.

Roman Catholics would also be against the storing of embryos for IVF treatment as not all of these harvested eggs would be used – and after 5 years they would be destroyed.

Muslim view of IVF

Married family life with kids=Muslim ideal

Most Muslims recognise that infertile couple may need medical help

No objection to IVF and AIH, but AID=adultery, therefore directly prohibited

Surrogacy is forbidden as polygamy removes need for surrogacy. The Qur'an sees motherhood as very important and that any child is seen as a gift from god.

Read only you do not have to learn the following, just be aware of some of the issues:

Christian view of Genetic Engineering

God-given responsibility to care for creation

Worry that genetic engineering abuses human authority

Many accept genetic engineering on the grounds that it is hugely beneficial to human health

Most very wary of cloning – seen as meddling with nature

Human life conceived through man, woman and God

Some support strictly controlled therapeutic cloning (for helping cure diseases such as Parkinson's)

Embryology and Transplants

Attitude to embryology and transplants – Christianity and others religions

Most religious groups have no moral problem with the use of transplant surgery

Catholics oppose all embryo research

Other denominations accept controlled embryo research

C of E supports embryo research up to 14 days

Most accept organ donation

Blood transfusions accepted by all except Jehovah's Witnesses

Some Muslims may have an issue with donation of organs as the body belongs to Allah
Use of animals? Pig? Muslims

Other ethical concerns

Where will it all end? What counts as something defective? Will genetic engineering have a negative impact on future generations? Could it make the human race susceptible to viruses? Who will get this treatment? Will only the rich be able to afford it?

Sanctity of Life:

Christianity:

All life should be valued because it is sacred and holy as we are all part of God's creation. Therefore, only God has the authority to create life and take life away. The miracles of Jesus also show that human life should be valued and persevered as Jesus raised Jarius' daughter from the dead. In the Bible, it states, 'You created every part of me; you put me together in my mother's womb'.

Judaism:

In the Torah, it states all life is holy and sacred because it is created by God. Humans were created in God's image and are therefore important, as the Torah states, 'So God created man in his image'.

Make sure you feel confident to discuss whether the quality of life or sanctity of life is more important.

The alternatives to euthanasia:

- Hospice movement – many will go to a hospice to receive palliative care (which means to receive treatment to help relieve pain and other symptoms causing discomfort). They will also receive a great deal of love, care and skilled attention from trained medical, nursing and support staff. Hospice movements add quality and dignity to the lives of those who visit, ensuring that, if required, and the remainder of the journey is not undertaken alone.

Hippocratic Oath:

- This is a special promise made by those working in medicine to do their best to preserve life. Although the original Hippocratic Oath is rarely used nowadays, all doctors take an oath to uphold the standards of their profession and also to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Contemporary examples:

Diane Pretty – Diane, from Luton, attempted to change the British law to end her own life as she suffered from motor neurone disease. She could not communicate easily and her husband had to look after her every hour of every day. She believed the quality of her life, and her husband's were more important than continuing to live. She took her fight to court, but her fight was turned down.

Unit 3 Religious Expression

Keywords:

Community – a group of people with something in common e.g. their faith

Evangelism - seeking converts through preaching the word of God,

Faith – a belief in a religion e.g. Hinduism,

Identity- one's own self e.g. personality and character

Pilgrimage – a special journey for religious or spiritual purposes

Sacred – something set apart and dedicated to god e.g. holy building

Christianity code of conduct – Catholics dip their finger in a small bowl of holy water as entering the Church and make the sign of the cross on their forehead. Most Christian traditions would genuflect in front of the altar before taking their seat. Believers would dress smartly and men usually remove hats before entering the church. They would not talk whilst the priest or vicar was giving a sermon.

Islam code of conduct – remove shoes, wash before entering wudu in order that they are clean and prepared for worship, men and women separately, cover heads, dress modestly, face Makkah during prayers.

Sikhism code of conduct – remove shoes, cover heads, men and women sit separately, shouldn't make political speeches, knee before the Guru Granth Sahib on entering, make donations, support and partake of the langar, no alcohol or tobacco

Uses of religious buildings

Worship. Rites of passage – birth, marriage and death. Initiation ceremonies – confirmation, first Holy Communion, community centre – youth clubs, mums and toddler groups, teaching the faith classes – Sunday Schools, Qur'an classes, charity work- rumble sales etc

Importance of places of worship

Christianity – supports the community, guidance is given from listening to sermons, and Sunday schools help young children develop their understanding of their religion, Holy Communion, confession, rites of passage.

Islam - used for personal and communal worship, many men go to the mosque throughout the week and especially for Jumma prayers, the mosque helps them feel part of the community and a sense of Ummah (brotherhood), many marriages take place there and the body is often brought to the mosque before burial.

Reasons for going on pilgrimage

To be healed - Lourdes, a religious duty one of the 5 Pillars of Islam, to earn a good afterlife or gain good karma, learn more about their religion historically, feel God's presence, the act of repentance (forgiveness of sins).

Importance of pilgrimage within a religious tradition

Christianity- pilgrimage is not compulsory in Christianity. Christians might go on pilgrimage to worship with other believers, to see for themselves where their religion began if they are visiting the holy land and some may even travel to the river Jordan to be baptised like Jesus did. If they were visiting Lourdes they might be hoping to be healed or to help someone else is healed. For any site, they might hope to deepen their faith both intellectually and spiritually. Some Christians see pilgrimage as an act of repentance.

Islam – pilgrimage is obligatory; it is one of the Pillars of faith so it is of central importance within the Muslim faith. All Muslims are expected to go on pilgrimage to Makkah at least once in a lifetime if they are healthy and able to afford it. They would go to Makkah to be with other Muslims and to walk in the footsteps of their prophets.

It is important to mention that pilgrimage can aid a person's spiritual and intellectual understanding of their faith. It is more than just simply being there.

Why Evangelism is important

Obedying holy writing to spread the word of God: "*Go out and make followers of all nations*". They think they are being kind to others by telling them about God, they are copying what their religious leader or founder did, to be rewarded in the afterlife. It may also appropriate to mention the role of the media, interfaith organisations and evangelistic activities.

Interfaith dialogue

Aims to help understand each other, share common views and live in harmony with each other. Could discuss here Corrymeela, Neve Shalom, Children of Abraham and local interfaith groups in Crowthorne and Reading.

Attitudes to other faiths

Christianity – some Churches see it as their Christian duty to spread 'the good news', various ways – preaching in the streets, door to door canvassing etc. Also though the media

Islam – believe everyone is born a Muslim so becoming a Muslim is known as revert. Many Muslims consider it important to evangelise and also take part inter-faith dialogue.

How a place of worship helps believers express their faith

Christianity – guidance can be given by listening to the sermon given by the priest, taking Holy Communion together might help make their faith stronger and remind them of the sacrifice Jesus gave. Roman Catholics might go to the confessional to ask the priest to forgive their sins. They might look at the stained glass windows and be reminded of an important story in the Christian faith.

Buddhism

The statue of the Buddha may remind Buddhists about their aim to gain enlightenment. The features of the statue which represent wisdom, compassion and loving kindness will help the believers develop these qualities in their own lives. Going to the temple and giving offerings to the monks will help the lay people gain good karma and remind them of the importance and role of the Sangha.

Could also discuss any other religion e.g. – Facing Makkah during prayers in the mosque, the sharing of food in the Sikh Gurdwara etc

Explain two religious symbols found in a place of worship – any two such as Torah scrolls, crucifix, stained glass windows, mihrab, pulpit etc

Hinduism

The Hindu Mandir contains symbolism and many examples of expressions of faith. Usually brightly coloured and featuring statues and images of the Hindu gods and goddesses, it is a holy building dedicated to the act of worship. Artefacts such as the puja tray symbolise various aspects of worship. Offerings are made to the images and are seen to be blessed. The Om symbol will also be prominently displayed, both inside and outside the building, to show the importance of concentration and meditation.

In all religions, the symbols used as expressions of faith are important to the religious believer. They help to give a sense of belonging and community and also contain some religious idea or teaching. Artefacts may also be regarded as special or sacred. All of this is designed to make a religious building conducive to worship.

Christianity

A cross or crucifix represents religious beliefs about Jesus Christ. In some Protestant Churches, the cross is a symbol of the death of Jesus, although the cross is empty to express the belief that Jesus is resurrected. In the Roman Catholic tradition, there is more of an emphasis on the death and suffering of Jesus, so the crucifix, a cross with a figure of Jesus, is more common.

You might see a cross on the Church notice board, fixed to the outside of the building, or in a graveyard on headstones. Inside, a cross or crucifix would be used in paintings, on Church banners or in stained-glass windows. Priests may wear vestments that display a variety of religious symbols, including the cross. Christians may also choose to wear a cross or crucifix on a chain as a symbol of their religious belief and commitment. Roman Catholics may carry a rosary to help them recite prayers, but also as a sign of their faith.

Students need to consider the role of symbols and art as a means of expression and their role in generating an atmosphere conducive to worship. E.g. Stained glass windows – art is very symbolic and metaphorical and can be interpreted in a variety of ways by religious believers. Art can provide a focus for worshippers to meditate upon, so they can feel closer to their faith and religion. Most stories from sacred texts are more understandable when in the form of art and symbolism. E.g. stained glass windows.

How religious charities or organisations express their faith

Salvation Army

They believe they are fighting a war on poverty. They help the homeless in Britain by organising drop-in centres where rough sleepers can get food and warmth. They also offer advice and support. They also run second thrift shops and sell a magazine called 'The War Cry' which helps raise money so they can support the homeless. Their motivation is Jesus' teachings from the bible; they believe it is their Christian duty to help people who are less fortunate than themselves.

Christian Aid:

Christian aid wants to create and establish the world free from poverty and injustice. They provide relief in times of disaster and help people regardless of religious or nationality. They speak out against injustices such as unfair trade and try to deliver practical help where it is most needed. For example, providing water and food for those in starvation and providing help for those who have experienced natural disasters. In addition, they will campaign for change to trading to ensure those in 3rd world countries are benefiting.

Tzedek:

Tzedek is a Jewish overseas development and educational charity. The work with some of the poorest people in the world, regardless of their race and religion. They try to help people in distress and in damaging political and economic conditions. They help to fund small-scale, self-help sustainable projects, assisting people long term in looking after themselves and coping with the conditions they live in.

Expressing faith through what is worn:

Christianity:

Many Christians will wear a cross or a crucifix. They wear this to express their religious beliefs about Jesus Christ. The cross, usually worn by the protestant, is a symbol of the death of Jesus – the cross is empty to symbolise the belief that Jesus is resurrected. In the Catholic Church, there is more of an emphasis on the death and suffering of Jesus, so the crucifix, a cross, with the figure of Jesus is more common. The Cross/crucifix also symbolises that they are a Christian and reflects their commitment. Roman Catholics may carry rosary beads to help them recite prayers. Some Roman Catholics will wear a Chasity ring to symbolise that they do not believe in sex before marriage.

General:

While on the Hajj, Muslims will wear the Ihram. This is a white seamless robe which symbolises their belief in Ummah and that all people are equal. Sikhs will wear the 5Ks as

an outward sign of their religious beliefs. They believe that the turban protects their hair, which they consider being a gift from God.

Contemporary Examples:

- Nadia Eweida fought for her right to wear a cross necklace, as British airways claimed it took away from the co-operate image of the uniform. She claimed she suffered discrimination. She won her fight and was allowed to wear the cross.
- Malcolm X – Malcolm X attended the Hajj, where he claimed this made him feel like a whole human and he changed his views on race and gender to fight for equality between blacks and whites due to his experiences of pilgrimage.

Unit 4 Religion and Authority

Key Concepts:

Authority - right or power over others, someone who ensures the law is kept,

Duty – something someone is expected to do e.g. religious duty of praying,

Justice – when people are treated fairly without discrimination of any kind,

Human rights – something people are entitled to because they are human,

Personal conviction - what you feel and know to be right e.g. because of your religious beliefs,

Punishment - to inflict a penalty on a person or to make them suffer for what they have done wrong.

Christian who worked for Human Rights

Oscar Romero – he spoke out publicly about the injustices he saw, he held meetings in the Church after they had been banned by the government, he prayed for government reform, he organised public demonstrations to protest against the abuses happening, he encouraged new forms of worship to support the oppressed to give them opportunities to identify how they felt. He used his influence as a bishop to try to help the poor and he even disobeyed his superiors when they told him to keep out of the politics of the country. He also soldiers to disobey immoral orders. He helped with food distribution for the poor. He stood up for the rights of his countrymen and was prepared to risk his life to helping others – he was assassinated whilst giving mass in Church.

Christians generally believe that we are all made in the image of God – therefore, we should all be treated equally and fairly. People like Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela are good examples of Christians who have campaigned for equal rights for all people.

You could also talk about Martin Luther King (Christian), Gandhi (Hindu) and Dalai Lama (Buddhist)

Conflict between personal beliefs and the law of the land

Any appropriate example:

refusing to fight during war – Quakers – this is what happened during World War 11 in Britain – some Quakers were imprisoned for refusing to fight – this is known as conscientious objectors, others became stretcher bearers – so although they were not fighting they were still serving their country in a different way. Quakers are a group of Christians who are pacifists.

Abortion – you may as a Catholic or Evangelical Christian believe that abortion is wrong under any circumstance. In America where abortion is allowed on demand, you might decide to campaign against this law. This could be done by writing to M.P.'s, signing petitions and protesting. In some extreme cases, doctors and nurses have been killed by anti-abortionist demonstrators who feel that for the greater good abortions should be stopped at any costs.

You could also discuss – Capital Punishment and the Quakers, Muslims and polygamy, wearing the hijab or not being allowed to wear it, euthanasia, underage sex, wearing certain clothes in school. Whatever example you use you must explain the reasons why they do what they do and not just state what the clash is.

Holy Books as Authority/Guidance – learn two of the following:

The Bible- considered being the word of God, many teachings in the bible have an influence upon a Christians daily life e.g. Ten Commandments, truth statements and oaths are often taken on the bible. Some Christians believe the bible is literally true and can not be argued with e.g. the creation of the world was literally made in 7 days. The bible is used in public and private worship. People often have favourite bible passages which as read at weddings and funerals. Such passages serve to inspire people and give them strength when times are hard.

The Pali Canon

The teachings of the Buddha are contained in the Pali Canon and so act as a guide for Buddhists - for example the 4 Noble Truths and the 8 Fold Path. Some parts of the Pali Canon are very important to monks and nuns as they contain all their rules for living. Some parts of the Pali Canon are read to young children these are stories with morals known as the Jakata Tales.

The Quran

It is believed to be the direct word of God. It should be read in Arabic so that the exact wording cannot be changed. Some people even learn the Qur'an by heart – becoming a hafiz. The Qur'an forms the basis of Sharia law. The Qur'an forms a code for daily life – how to dress, what to eat. Respect is shown to the Qur'an by how it is treated – wrapped in cloths, kept higher than other books, wash hands before touching an Arabic copy. It is studied by Muslims and also used as a source of comfort.

Attitude to Capital Punishment and punishment

Buddhism

There are many different traditions of Buddhism so there is no one unified view of Capital Punishment. However, Buddhists place great emphasis on violence. The first precept of Buddhism is to avoid harming any living creature. The Buddha was against any form of physical or mental violence. Some Buddhists try to develop qualities of loving kindness, compassion and generosity – CP goes against this. Buddhists would try to help the offender make amends so that he could be rehabilitated back into society. Excessive punishment would not help this.

Christianity

Christian attitude to following the laws of the country are usually 'render to Caesar the things that are Caesar and to God the things that are God's.' So Christians believe they should follow the laws of the country as well as God's laws.

Mixed views about capital punishment. Some see it as a legitimate way of keeping law and order and a way of upholding justice. Those who support CP would look to such as

bible quotes as 'An eye for an eye ... a life for a life.' Some Christians are against CP as they believe it breaks the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill'. They would argue that all life is sacred and that two wrongs do not make a right. They believe that Jesus preached forgiveness and compassion, not revenge. The Quakers are a group of Christians who have been campaigning against the death penalty since 1818.

Religious Teachings about Duty:

Christianity:

- Duty to God to love the lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Duty to your neighbour to love your neighbour as yourself. This is reflected in the story of the Good Samaritan, where Jesus taught to treat others how you would want to be treated (Golden rule). Duty to yourself to apply your talents fully and to obey the laws of the state you are living in.

Islam:

- Duty to God to submit yourself fully to the will of Allah and to maintain the 5 pillars of Islam. Duty to your neighbour to protect and honour them and to show kindness and support and to support the ummah. Duty to yourself to preserve your body and mind and to look at the world you live in and be a khalifah.

Religious teachings about authority:

Christianity:

Many Christians believe that the Bible has ultimate authority as it is the direct word of God and many teachings within the bible have a direct influence upon a Christian's daily life. For example, the 10 commandments such as 'Do not Kill'. Some Christians believe that the Bible is to be taken literally true and not to be argued with, for example, the world made in 7 days. Others believe it to be non-literal and the creation story is more poetic and symbolic, rather than literal. Christians believe that God has ultimate authority as he created man in his image, however in the Bible, it also states you must also follow the laws of your land.

Islam:

Many Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the direct word of Allah and therefore contains ultimate authority which must be obeyed by all Muslims. Therefore, it should be read in Arabic so that the exact wording cannot be changed. Many people learn the Quran of by heart and become a hafiz. It forms a code for daily life, informing them of how to act, dress and what to eat so they will be rewarded with a place in Jannet.

Contemporary Examples:

Oscar Romero

Pope – He is considered to be infallible – any teaching/proclamation he makes will be taken to be ultimately true