

1. Issues of Relationships

a) What is meant by 'adultery'?

A married person engaging in sexual intercourse with a person who is not their spouse. For example, Christians view it as wrong as it goes against the wedding vow 'will death do us part'.

b) With reference to one religion, explain views about sex outside of marriage.

Catholics view sex outside of marriage as wrong as sex is sacred and held, reserved for marriage only. It should be used by a married couple only so that they may be 'fruitful and multiply' as precreation should only occur in marriage.

The Church of England believe that like the Catholics remaining chaste before marriage is ideal however they also accept that sex outside of marriage does occur. They may find it acceptable between a couple who have been together a long time and intend to marry.

c) From two different religions or two different religious traditions, explain the importance of family life.

Christians believe that family life is important as family is where 'one can learn moral values' and where children can be raised in the Christian faith. The family unit is important as it is the ideal place to follow the Biblical teaching 'train a child the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it'. It is also important in reflecting the Church community and helps give the best start to children.

Muslims believe that family life is also important for raising children under their faith as it reflects the Fitrah. They also believe that is important for looking after all those and that the young support the old 'since they cared for you when you were young'. This supports in turn the Ummah which is important for family unity as well as for the whole Muslim community.

d) "Same sex relationships are against God's plan". Discuss this statement, showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer).

Some may agree with this statement as in Genesis God commanded Adam and Eve to 'fruitful and multiply' a fact that cannot be achieved by a homosexual couple and therefore same sex relationships may disagree.

However others may disagree as, as humans we can never understand God's plans and therefore have no right to declare same sex relationships are against God's plans because we do not know we are not God.

A Christian may agree because in the Bible it states 'Man shall not lie with another man. It is detestable', indicating that God does not condone same sex relationships and therefore they must be against his plan.

A Quaker however, may disagree as God is omnibenevolent and would never deem something as homosexual relationships as against his plan. In support of this is the Bible verse 'God is love' proving that same sex relationships are not against God's plan as he would never be so cruel as to deliberately create a person against his plan to be punished.

However a Muslim may agree because they may view homosexuality as 'immoral and evil'. Furthermore in the Qur'an it says in reference to homosexuals 'you are a degenerate people' showing that same sex relationships are against God's plans as the Qur'an contains Allah's infallible words and this shows that Allah does not look kindly on homosexual relationships indicating they may interfere with Al-Qadr.

In conclusion I disagree because Jesus never once referenced homosexual relationships when he returned to earth to renew the faith in God. This to me indicates that he did not view same sex relationships as a pressing interference with God's plan and seeing as we are all imago dei there is no reason why he should create some people as more against his plan than others. In any case, I agree firmly with the Bible verse 'what right have you to judge your neighbour' as unless someone is a sinless human being they cannot tell somebody else they are against God's plan and it is God who will 'judge' who is and who isn't against his plan not we humans.

1. Life after Death

a) What is meant by 'quality of life'?

The extent to which life is meaningful and pleasurable. For example, many pro-choice activists use this as an example as to why abortion should be acceptable.

b) With reference to religious beliefs, explain views about abortion.

Catholics believe that abortion is always wrong as reflected in the Didache . 'You shall not kill the embryo by abortion'. They value the sanctity of life over the quality of life and believe an embryo gains a soul at conception meaning it is a human's life and to abort it would be murder. The Church of England don not believe abortion should be used to encourage promiscuity but accept that there may be circumstances in which abortion is morally preferable, such as the mother's life is in danger.

c) From one religious tradition, explain views about life after death.

Muslims believe that on the day of judgement (Akirah), that all will be raised from the dead to be sorted by Allah into those going to Jannah and those going to Jahannam. The concept of the resurrection is supported by the verse from the Surah 'we have the power to restore his very finger tips'. Jannah is thought to be a place of lush greenery, flowing rivers, reclining chairs and beautiful serving maidens, whereas Jahannam is thought to be a place of burning fire, incessant torture and 'boiling water'. To reach Jannah one must have done enough good deeds or had good niyyah to outweigh a person's bad deeds. These have all been recorded in the Book of Deeds by the 'noble scribes' Raqib and Atid during the course of a Muslims' life.

- d) **Scientific theories along best explain how the universe exists.’ Discuss this statement, referring to religious and non-religious beliefs, such as those held by Humanists and Atheists, in your answer.**

Some may agree as Stephen Hawking presented the idea that the creation of our universe was part of a cyclical series of Big Bangs and Big Crunches. He then asks ‘what place therefore for a creator?’ showing that scientific theories alone explain why the universe exists and there is no room for religious concepts.

However others may disagree as many famous scientists have believed in the scientific theories of how the universe was created as well as being strongly religious. For example, Sir Issac Newton and Albert Einstein, who once said ‘science without religion is lame and religion without science is blind’, this showing that both scientific theories and religious ideas can explain how the universe exists.

An atheist may however agree as Richard Dawkins said that the Big Bang and Evolution are the best ways to explain the universe. There is far more evidence for these theories such as the cosmic background radiation discovered in the 1960’s than for any religious ideas. The Bible even says ‘belief in religion is the belief in what one cannot see’ proving it is entirely at odds with science and lacks evidence and thus science must alone be the best explanation of how the universe exists.

However Muslims may disagree as they believe the Qur’an’s creation stories are compatible with scientific theories as the Qur’an says the ‘heavens and the Earth were solid matter before we split them.’ This may reference atoms as well as the Big Bang and therefore scientific theories alone do not best explain how the universe exists.

In conclusion, I disagree with the statement as old earth creationists believe that the six days in which God created the world in the Bible, may actually be reference to six long periods of time and therefore science alone does not explain how the universe came to be.

1) Christian beliefs

- a) **Explain what Christians mean by ‘incarnation’**

The belief that God descended to earth in human form as Jesus. For example, the Bible states ‘The Lord became flesh and made his dwelling among us’.

- b) **Explain Christian views on why suffering exists.**

Christians often say that suffering and evil are due to free will which is a ‘gift from God’. This means that moral evil is due to the greed of others or even because of a person’s own decisions.

The Book of Job also teaches that suffering may be a test of faith and that at the end we shall be rewarded. It also stresses that our suffering may be part of a bigger plan which God knows as ‘he holds the life of every creature in his hand’ but we as mere humans cannot begin to comprehend.

c) Explain Christian teaching about the importance of the crucifixion of Jesus

The crucifixion of Jesus is important because in this way the 'rift' between humanity and God because of the original sin is healed. Jesus was in effect the 'lamb of God' or the sacrificial lamb for humanity so his crucifixion is incredible important as he atoned for humanity's sins. It is also important in this way as he means Christians no longer have to carry out animal sacrifices like in Jewish tradition. His crucifixion is also important as it means Christians are now able to have a close and personal relationship with God. His crucifixion was also important as Christians can now reach heaven as stated in the Bible 'that whoever believes in him (Jesus) shall have eternal life'. Belief in his crucifixion is also important in reaching heaven as Jesus stated 'no one can come to the Father unless through me'.

d) "Belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus is necessary to receive eternal life in heaven." Discuss this statement, showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (You must refer to religion and belief in your answer)

Some may agree as it is Jesus' death and resurrection that atoned for the original sin and this means the 'rift' between humanity and God was healed. Therefore belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus is necessary for receiving eternal life as it was his sacrifice that allowed for humans to reach heaven. 'I am the resurrection believe in me and you shall have eternal life'.

However, a Jewish person may disagree as they believe Jesus to have been a normal person and therefore his death could not have resulted in a resurrection and thus believing in this myth will not gain you entry to heaven.

A Christian may disagree as the Bible states 'that whoever believes in him shall have eternal life', implying that one must believe in Jesus' death and resurrection to receive 'eternal life' in heaven. However this could also be interpreted to mean that all that is required for eternal life is belief in Jesus and therefore believing in his death and resurrection are not necessary. Also a Christian may also disagree as they may believe it is our good deeds that shall reward us with life in heaven. Jesus told his disciples this in the parable of the sheep and goats and said 'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat' in order to explain how he would sort people on judgement day. Therefore it is your good deeds that will gift you eternal life.

In conclusion, I disagree with the statement and believe it is your intentions and deeds that control whether or not you enter heaven. This is supported by the Muslim belief that the 'noble scribes' Raqib and Atid record your niyyah and deeds in the book of Deeds. It is this book that is presented to Allah on the day of judgement and this book that will aid his decision on whether or not you shall reach Jannah.

1. Christian practices

a) State two ways in which Christians might worship God

Liturgical worship, for example, following a set prayer and service structure such as liturgy of the Word. Individual worship, for example, personal prayer and reflection to build a personal relationship with God.

b) Explain the importance of one Christian celebration

Christmas is important as it allows for Christians to celebrate the life of Jesus and his birth. It reminds them in this way of the fact that he is the 'son of God' and that through him the world was 'freed of sin'. Christmas is also important as it reminds Christians that God understands their suffering as he became 'flesh' and 'made his dwelling among us', so he too has faced human suffering. Finally, Christmas is important as it reminds Christians of the importance of charity and giving as the wise men brought Jesus gifts and because Jesus was God's gift to the world (the Messiah).

c) Explain the significance of Baptism and The Eucharist for Christians

Baptism is significant because it follows Jesus's own example as he was baptised by John the Baptist. It also reminds Christians of the fact that Jesus was our salvation as John said 'Behold the Lamb of God', who he's come to face the world of sin' and it also reminds them that Jesus was the son of God as 'a voice came from the heavens'. "You are my son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased".

The Eucharist is also significant as it reflects the last supper where Jesus predicted his own crucifixion. It is also significant truly commanded by Jesus when he said 'do this in remembrance of me'. To Catholics it is even more significant as they believe to enter heaven one must carry out sacraments to repent for our sins.

d) "Pilgrimage has no relevance in the 21st Century". Discuss this statement, showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (you must refer to religion and belief in your answer).

Some may agree with this statement because pilgrimage may be expensive therefore making it irrelevant as in today's society money would be better spent on things a person personally needs rather than in visiting a shrine.

Some may disagree as many believe in the healing properties of going on pilgrimage. For example, the water at Lourdes is supposed to be able to cure almost anything. Therefore pilgrimage is still relevant as people still believe in its value.

A Christian may agree because there is no explicit command in the Bible to go on pilgrimage and therefore it is not relevant as 'God did not make it an obligation'. However although there is no express command going on pilgrimage does follow the example of Mary and Joseph (as well as Jesus once he was old enough as they went on pilgrimage every year, thus meaning pilgrimage is relevant as it follows Jesus' example.

A Christian may also agree because there are places such as Taize where 100,000 of young people visit every year. Taize works on bringing denominations together and therefore must be relevant as pilgrimage in this way encourages Jesus' teaching of 'love thy neighbour'.

A Muslim may agree because the money spent on pilgrimage would be better used for Sadaqah as it follows Muhammad's teaching of 'whoever works for a poor man is like a warrior fighting for God's cause. Therefore this shows pilgrimage is irrelevant as in today's society it is more important to give to charity than visit an ancient shrine.

In conclusion, I disagree because pilgrimage gives the opportunity for all to worship together and in this way share the Holy Spirit as the Bible says 'Where two or more join together I am with them'.