

Religion and Philosophy GCSE Revision Notes

Beliefs about the existence of God (PHAPMAD)

Pantheism: God is everything – pan.

Henotheism: Many gods, but one rules above others.

Atheism: No Gods / disbelief.

Polytheism: Many gods.

Monotheism: A single god.

Agnosticism: One can never be certain

Deism: The belief in a disinterested deity with no personal relationship with the universe.

Classical Theism: The most common beliefs held about God which describes him with several Divine Attributes: (POOMOO)

- **Personal:** God is anthropomorphised; He is spoken of in human, personal terms.
- **Omnipotent:** God is all-powerful – able to do anything that doesn't contrast his nature.
- **Omniscient:** God is all-knowing.
- **Monotheism:** There are no other gods but God himself.
- **Omnipresent:** God is everywhere at all times.
- **Omnibenevolent:** God is all-loving– He represents moral perfection.

Christian Medical Ethics "THOU SHALT NOT MURDER"

Normative Ethical Theories

- **Descriptive ethics:** the study of the types of norms different cultures actually live by.
- **Normative ethics:** the study of what norms and theories should be lived by generally.
- **Applied ethics:** the study of what norms should be followed in particular situations.
- **Divine Command Ethics:** an action is good when it conforms to what God commands to be good
- **Natural Law:** an action is when a person achieves their purpose
- **Virtue Ethics:** an action is good if it achieves one of the virtues (prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice and/or faith) and avoids the vices of excess and deficiency
- **Egoism:** an action is good when it results in making the individual happy
- **Utilitarianism:** an action is good when it results in the greatest amount of happiness for the most people
- **Situation Ethics:** an action is good when it results in the greatest amount of altruistic love
- **Absolute Moralists:** Follow the rule always in every situation. There are no exceptions
- **Relative Moralists:** follow the rule usually, but sometimes there are no exceptions to the rule. What is right may depend on the situation
- **Teleological Moralists:** are concerned with whether a person achieves their telos; telos can be innate or God-given
- **Deontological Moralists:** are concerned with the intrinsic value of the action. Actions are right or wrong regardless of the consequences.
- **Consequentialist Moralists:** are concerned with the outcomes or results of an action. "Evil" may be done to bring about good.

Applied Ethical Principles

Decalogue – ten commandments

I am the LORD thy God

Thou shalt have no other gods

No graven images or likenesses

Not take the LORD's name in vain

Remember the sabbath day

Honour thy father and thy mother

Thou shalt not murder
Thou shalt not commit adultery
Thou shalt not steal
Thou shalt not bear false witness
Thou shalt not covet

The Golden Rule

"Love thy neighbour as you would love yourself". In essence, treat others as you would like to be treated.

Agape

Agape is selfless love which encourages Christians to do the most loving thing, as commanded by Jesus.

The sanctity of life and the Imago Dei

God created humans in his own image and there is something holy about human life. Life is a gift from God and is sacred because it is created. This means that they are entirely against Abortion as life is a gift from God and only God can take it away.

"You shalt not kill by abortion the fruit of the womb...has been shaped by and received a soul from God"

Stewardship and Dominion

"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have **dominion** over.... every living thing" This suggests that humans can use the world as a means to their end. On the other hand, other passages suggest something else. "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it". The latter is known as the stewardship teaching and humans have a duty of care to tend on God's behalf and will be judged accordingly.

Abortion

Abortion: the artificial premature expulsion of the foetus/embryo from the womb. A natural abortion is called miscarriage

UK Abortion Law

Abortion is permitted, by the 1990 Abortion Act, in the following situations:

1. if the mothers' life in danger
2. The child is likely to have ever disabilities
3. If the mother's physical and mental health is at risk
4. Other children will be seriously affected
5. Is approved by two doctors

The pro-life movement:

- generally argues that life becomes human life - 'obtains personhood' - at the point of conception.
- It says that abortion should not be allowed, but most would allow an abortion if the mother's life was at risk or if the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest.

The pro-choice movement:

- generally argues that human life begins much later in pregnancy, or at birth.
- There are many points of view among pro-choicer, but fundamentally they think that the woman should have full control over what happens to their body.

Relevant Biblical Quotes

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them"
Genesis 1: 26-27

"For you created in my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb" Psalm 139

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart" Jeremiah 1:5

Arguments concerning abortion

Summary of Arguments concerning Abortion

Roman Catholics and Conservative Protestants

Some Christians are Pro Life and believe that abortion is wrong whatever the circumstances and thus never permitted. They believe this because:

- Life is holy and belongs to God and thus only God can take life away (Job 1:21 —The Lord give, and the Lord has taken away ||)
- Life *and* personhood (—ensoulment ||) begins at conception
- All persons have a natural right to life.
- The mother and unborn child have equal rights.
- The 6th Commandment states —Thou shalt not kill
- However, an —exceptions || that occur under the law of double effect.

The double effect - This set of criteria states that an action having foreseen harmful effects practically inseparable from the good effect is justifiable if the following are true:

- the nature of the act is itself good, or at least morally neutral;
- the agent intends the good effect and not the bad either as a means to the good or as an end itself;
- the good effect outweighs the bad effect in circumstances sufficiently grave to justify causing the bad effect and the agent exercises due diligence to minimize the harm.

Some Anglicans and Liberal Protestants (e.g., Quakers)

Some Christians are pro-choice and believe that abortion is undesirable but is permissible in some circumstances (and thus in agreement with the Abortion Act). They believe this because:

- There are situations where the sanctity of life principle does not apply; e.g., —Just Wars || . Why not also abortions?
- Love thy neighbour as thyself; abortion may be the most loving thing to do in certain circumstances and be the lesser evil
- Life and/or personhood does not begin at conception
- The mother has more rights than the unborn child

Islam

Some Muslims are pro-choice in that abortion is undesirable but permissible because:

- Life is sacred
- The foetus receives its soul from Allah at 120 days/4 months (ensoulment)
- After 4 months the foetus can only be aborted if the mothers' life is endangered.
- Shari'ah Law suggests that of choosing the lesser of two evils should occur.
- The mother is the origin of the foetus; her life is well-established, with duties and responsibilities, and she is also a pillar of the family.

Fertility Treatment

In Vitro Fertilisation

- A method of assisted reproduction that involves combining an egg with sperm in a laboratory dish. The embryo is then implanted in the woman's uterus

Egg Donation

- A woman donates an ovum which is then fertilized with the semen of the husband of the woman into whose uterus the resulting embryo is transferred.

Embryo Donation

- Similar to egg donation, except the ovum is fertilized by semen from a donor because both partners are infertile and both carry a genetic defect.

Two types of surrogacy

- **Straight/Traditional Surrogacy:** The egg of the Surrogate Mother is fertilised by the sperm of the Intended Father. This is the simpler of the two types of surrogacy as conceiving is less complicated, mentally it can be the hardest to accept.
- **Host/Gestational Surrogacy:** The egg of the Intended Mother is fertilised by her husband or donor sperm. A baby conceived by this method has no biological connection to the Surrogate Mother.

Artificial Insemination (AI) - Live sperm are injected into a woman's uterus at the time of ovulation

Artificial Insemination by a Donor (AID) - The semen is provided by an anonymous donor and not the husband

Artificial Insemination by the Husband (AIH) - The semen is provided by the husband and inserted artificially in an IVF clinic.

Summary of Arguments concerning Fertility Treatment

Roman Catholics: Believe that AID, surrogacy and embryology are wrong in all circumstances. They believe this because:

- AID introduces a third person into the marriage partnership, and thus violates the sanctity of marriage principle and is a type of adultery. **AIH does not violate this principle.**
- Traditional and gestational surrogacy also violates the sanctity of marriage principle with adoption being a more natural process
- IVF and embryology destroys embryos in the research process when —spare || embryos are no longer required.
- This violates the sanctity of life principle suggesting life/personhood begins at conception and is technically murder (Divine Law - 6th commandment).
- Furthermore, humans have a right to life (natural law) and should not be used as means to an end. If the IVF process does not destroy embryos, it is permitted.

Anglican Church: Believe that AID, AIH, surrogacy, IVF and embryology permitted. This is because:

- Children are a blessing from God and that fertility methods are the most loving (agape) action for married couples that cannot conceive and have positive consequences for their relationship.
- Embryology is also permitted if the embryo is younger than 14 days as it is not a person, and that the consequences of embryo research can reduce suffering, and thus is the more loving action.

Euthanasia

Euthanasia - is the speeding up of death to ease the suffering of the terminally ill.

There are four types:

- Active Euthanasia – actively terminating the patient's life e.g. administering a lethal drug, withdrawing food
- Passive Euthanasia – withdrawing treatment to allow the patient to die e.g. withdrawing life support, medication
- Voluntary Euthanasia (Assisted suicide) - The patient requests that their life be prematurely terminated to end suffering
- Involuntary Euthanasia - The patient is incapacitated and will not recover; doctors and family decide to terminate the patient's life

The Law

The 1961 Suicide Act states that assisted suicide (active euthanasia) is illegal and is punishable by up to 14 years in person.

Summary of Euthanasia Arguments

Roman Catholics forbid all forms of active euthanasia and most forms of passive euthanasia. This is because:

- Any act that intentionally brings about death is the same as murder.
- Euthanasia is against the Sanctity of Life, the Ten Commandments and The Natural law

- The law of double effect* may also apply: —The use of painkillers to alleviate the suffering of the dying, even at the risk of shortening their days, can be permitted if death is not willed as an end or means. ||

Quaker Christians support all forms of euthanasia. This is because:

- Each situation is different (situation ethics)
- The agape principle to love thy neighbour as you love yourself || can include showing mercy to the terminally ill. Loving our neighbour requires us to show compassion at times of suffering and thus euthanasia can be a more loving act
- Agape overrules the sanctity of life principle

Suicide

Suicide literally means —killing of oneself ||

The Law:

Prior to the 1961 Suicide Act, suicide was illegal in the UK.

Arguments concerning Suicide

Conservative/traditional Christians regard suicide as a grievous mortal sin because:

- It violates the Divine Law (sanctity of life, 1 Corinthians) and Natural Law
- Suicides faced severe punishment in Hell and were denied a Christian funeral or burial
- Dante places suicides in the 7 Circle of Hell (alongside Murderers)
- 1 Corinthians: —Anyone who destroys that temple will be destroyed by God ||
- Suicide betrays a lack of faith and hope in God's providential care and plan: *"For everything there is a season...a time to be born, and a time to die."* Ecclesiastes

Progressive Christians take a more compassionate view towards suicide because:

- They follow agape teachings and the second of the great commandments (love thy neighbour)
- CCC: "We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives."
- More liberal approach to the sanctity of life.

Animals in Medical Research

The animals rights movement attempts ensure fair and humane treatment to all animals, especially those with higher levels of self-awareness

Arguments Concerning Animal Testing

Dominion:

- Divine Law: —Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion overevery living thing. || (Genesis 1:28).
- Humans have a higher right to life than the —beasts || as they are animated by the breath of God (pneuma), thus imparting the divine image (imago dei) and the individual soul (psyche). Thus, animals have no rights and can be used as a means to human ends.

Stewardship:

- Divine Law: —The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. || (Gen 2:15)
- Stewardship suggests that humans should utilise creation for their ends in a responsible manner; humans have a duty of care to tend creation on God's behalf and will be judged accordingly

Some Quakers would extend the Golden Rule to non-human species also.

Secular utilitarian thinkers: (like **Peter Singer**) **disagree with most forms of animal testing because:**

- Animal testing and the Christian attitudes towards animals that it partly reflects is —**speciesist**
- **Humans do not have souls and have equal rights to other animals** that are intelligent, self aware and have the **capacity to feel pain** (eg., primates, pigs, etc.)

Vivisection – use of animals in scientific experimentation

All Christian churches agree that the use of animals for essential medical research is acceptable. They place less value on animal life than human life.

The animals used in vivisection must be treated humanely and many Christians would agree with the three R's;

- **Reduce** the number of animals used in the experiment,
- **Refine** the methods of experimentation
- **Replace** animals when possible eg with cells.

Vegetarianism

Christian Church

- No formal teaching on vegetarianism
- Can bias/no clear distinction between Dominion (we can eat meat) or Stewardship (we shouldn't eat meat)
- Jesus and his disciples ate fish
- The Church generally does not make an issue of vegetarianism, and therefore it has no problems with Christians who adopt vegetarianism as a lifestyle choice.
- Vegetarianism not regarded as a higher moral lifestyle

Some Christians think that the Bible hints that the first people were vegetarian, because when God gives them all the fruits of the garden to eat he does not mention their being allowed to eat animals. They conclude therefore that vegetarianism is the divine ideal to which we must return.

Ethics of war and peace

War – A state of open armed, often prolonged conflict carried on between nations, states or parties.

Attitudes to war:

- Pacifist: Passive aggressive or 'non-violent' approach to warfare. Christians have a long history of avoiding war. Some Christians, such as The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), are totally opposed to fighting and during warfare they are conscientious objectors (taking a public stance against conflict).
- 'Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God' **Matthew 5.9** – also shows agape and natural law 'Thou shall not murder'
- Can be taken as a form of cowardice. Sometimes, such as when people you love are in danger, it is ok to retaliate for defensive purposes.

Just War: The Catholic and Anglican Church argue that war is justified, and thus violence is not inherently evil, when certain criteria are met. 'The Lord is a warrior, the Lord is his name.' (Exodus 15:3): (**DACRISP**)

- **Discrimination**- civilians must not be targeted
- **Authority**- must be started by the right authority (i.e. government)
- **Cause**- must have a just cause (i.e. to protect innocent lives)
- **Resort**- it must be a last resort
- **Intention**- it must be fought with the right intention (promote good, avoid evil etc.)
- **Success**- must be a reasonable chance of success otherwise it's just needless death
- **Proportion**- must be fought with proportion (similar arms on both sides)
- WW2 is an example of a just war met *most* of the criteria (the bomb on Hiroshima violates discrimination).

The theory is not intended to justify all wars but to prevent them by showing that going to war - except in certain limited circumstances - is wrong. The intention was to motivate states to find other ways of resolving conflicts, prevent war and to limit its effects.

Social Injustice

Social Injustice: Concerns how we should be fair and give members of society their due. It arises when equals are treated unequally and unequals are treated equally.

Christians believe that all people have human rights because they are all created by God in his image and loved by God as individuals. It is the duty of Christians to show God's love by caring for the poor and weak, and speaking out against injustice.

Christians have sought social justice in a number of ways.

Jesus' taught:

- When we help the needy or visit prisoners, we do it to Christ (Matthew 25:31-46).
- Christians must “love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22:39), i.e. everyone.

The Social Gospel Movement

- It is a Protestant Christian intellectual movement which attempts to integrate Gospel teachings with those of Luke 14 by applying Christian ethics to social problems
- General approach was charitable work within existing social and political structures, or by peaceful protest (i.e. Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott). Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Follows Natural Law of the New Testament and Jesus’ teachings *‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God’*.
- Desmond Tutu was a Christian Pacifist who was opposed to the apartheid. ‘You cannot use methods...that our enemy will use against us’.

Liberation Theology

- The Catholic equivalent movement
- Jesus considered the ‘liberator of the oppressed’
- Thus, Christians have a moral responsibility to spread social justice and take positive action to fight social injustice. Some take passive approaches whilst others feel it necessary to break the law and use violent acts to help the oppressed (Christianised ‘Che Guevara’ approach)
- Father Camilo Torres Liberation Theology Case Study (1929-66):
 - Colombian Catholic Priest
 - Tried to reconcile Marxism with Catholicism with a militant response
 - Joined a guerrilla army to fight against an unjust government
 - He called other Christians *“Revolution is not only permitted for Christians, but obligatory”*
- Criticisms of liberation theology:
 - Some would argue that Marxism and religion are incompatible *‘Religion is the opium of the people’*
 - Jesus himself distances himself from violence/ “zealotry” claiming that *‘the poor will always be with you’*

PUNISHMENT

Arguments for punishment

Jesus taught unconditional love, and this influences how Christians think. Some Christians think that society still needs to punish criminals though, and thus offer four types of punishment:

1. Retributive:
‘Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth’, therefore criminals are punished in a retributive way, and the law of revenge is valid.
2. Protective
It is punishment in order to protect and love the weaklings and the losers with no money and to protect the sanctity of life or whatever.
3. Deterrent
It is punishment as a deterrent for other criminals.
4. Reformative
It is punishment to make them criminals less likely repeat evil actions, and make them constructive members of society, to avoid eschatological punishment.

Christians need to balance these aspects, so it’s no surprise that they disagree over punishment. They refer to the Old Testament to justify these beliefs. ‘If anyone injures his neighbour, whatever he has done must be done to him...as he has injured, so shall he be injured’.

Arguments against punishment:

- Jesus and the New Testament “Forgive them Father, they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34) Jesus did not wish his persecutors punishment, and we should emulate that.
- ‘Whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other to him as well’ – that Jesus bloke again
- Jesus implies eschatological punishment instead of state punishment in ‘In anyone who says “You fool!” will be in danger of the fire of hell’.

- Thus, Christians who forgive victims of wrongdoing rather than retaliate will be 'greatly rewarded in heaven with blowjobs and beer'

Capital Punishment

Christian arguments in favour:

(Roman Catholics but only in extreme cases)

Old Testament.

'Whoever shed the blood of a man, by man shall his blood be shed' (Genesis 9:6)

Christian arguments against:

New Testament.

Probably Quakers

Only God should create and destroy life. "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 21:13)

Equality and Human Rights

Prejudice- attitude involving prejudgement

Discrimination- acting on prejudices

Stereotype- categorising a group based on a generalised judgement

Scapegoat- an innocent person blamed

Racism- prejudice and discrimination based on race

Sexism- prejudice and discrimination based on gender

Supremist- one group believed to be better

Homophobia- hate homosexuals

Xenophobia- hate a particular country

Sizeism-hate a particular size

Ageism- hate a particular age

Classism- hate a particular class

1. **Equality** – The belief that people are equal, have equal rights and opportunities
2. **Egalitarianism**– Relating to or upholding the doctrine of equality of mankind
3. **Justice** – Being fair, giving everyone their due

Christianity has a mixed reputation when it comes to equality.

- The Golden Rule 'Love your neighbour as yourself'
- Sanctity of Life 'Life is sacred'
- 'God does not show favouritism' - Peter
- 'You shall not deprive a foreigner or an orphan of justice' -Deuteronomy
- Imago Dei 'we are ALL made in God's image'
- Galatians 3:26 'There are no distinctions between Greek or Jew, slave or free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ.'

Criticism:

How can a religion preach both human equality and female subjugation? The idea is contradictory and hypocritical.

Racism

Racism is racial prejudice or discrimination that harms others, the belief that one race is superior to another due to their ethnicity.

Christian argument against racism:

- Mandela, Bonhoeffer, Luther King, Tutu
- The Golden Rule 'Love your neighbour as yourself' – the good Samaritan fable and its underlying secular logic
- 'God does not show favouritism' - Peter
- 'You shall not deprive a foreigner or an orphan of justice' -Deuteronomy
- Imago Dei 'we are ALL made in God's image'
- God made 'man' not 'white man' and then 'black man', but all men together in Imago Dei
- Galatians 3:26 'There are no distinctions between Greek or Jew, slave or free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ.'

Christian argument for racism:

- The Ku Klux Klan
- Avowed purpose to protect the rights and interests of white Americans by violence and intimidation.
- Iconic white costumes consisting of robes, masks and conical hats.

Muslim argument against racism:

- Racism is a sin, all people are equal in the eyes of God
 - All Muslims belong to one “brotherhood” called the “Ummah”
 - Muhammad appointed a black African as his first muezzin to call the adhan
 - Muhammad said ‘No Arab has superiority over a non Arab’

Sexism and Gender Equality

Conservative Protestants:

Men and women have different roles and are thus unequal in significant respects.

- In Genesis 2 Adam was born before Eve
- Eve was first to be tempted by the serpent
- Christ and all the Apostles were men
- God the ‘father’, literally a male God
- Timothy 2:12-15 ‘I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man; she must be silent’

Liberal Protestants:

Men and women are equal; woman can have jobs and be bishops.

- Genesis 1
- Galatians 3:26 ‘There are no distinctions between Greek or Jew, slave or free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ.’
- Golden rule, Jesus treated everyone, even women, equally
- New Testament references God as father and St Paul’s teachings about women reflect the patriarchal and monarchical society of the times and don’t form the core of Christian Ethics.

Hermeneutics: The interpretation of the Bible, whether it be literal or liberal.

The issue of female ordination

Roman Catholics refuse to permit the ordination of women for three premises:

- Tradition – patriarchal religion, 2000 years of all-male priesthood is not to be dismissed and the Church has no authority to do so
- All male apostles – priests ultimately descend from apostles, thus should also be male
- Jesus was a man, priests represent Jesus – RC church sees his maleness as vital to the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Most main line protestant groups accept the ordination of women for the Liberal protestant reasons above.

Also, God is sometimes described with female attributes, women have done a great deal for society and Church, the Church must not discriminate against 50% of the population.

Christian Attitudes to other religions

- **Interfaith Conflict**- intolerance, bigotry, discrimination between faiths
- **Sectarianism**- intolerance between members of a faith
- **Exclusivism**-only way to God and salvation is through Jesus Christ
- **Inclusivism**- Christianity is true but so are parts of other religions
- **Pluralist**- there are many paths to God, all views are equal (Blind men and elephant parable)
- **Evangelism**- preaching the gospel to Christians or to convert non-Christians
- **Missionary**- someone who spreads Christianity or assists other communities
- **Ecumenism**- movement to promote unity and co-operation between denominations
- **Interfaith Movement**- movement to promote unity and co-operation between religions

Most Christians (Jehovah’s Witnesses) are fundamentally exclusivist. This is because:

- of the doctrine of atonement.
- God created the perfect world which contained no sin.
- Humanity fell from grace, causing the original sin.
- Jesus, who was God in human form, paid the ransom of death for all of humanity. Therefore Jesus is ‘The way, the truth and the life. No-one gets to the father except through me.’

- Therefore, only Christianity shows the way to God and salvation, and all other religions are fundamentally wrong.

Evangelism is done in obedience to the Great Commission wherein Jesus commanded his disciples to proselytise.

Some Christians (quakers) follow the Pluralist view that all Religious views are equal in the eyes of God. 'In my Father's house there are many rooms' (John 14:2).

Others (modern Roman Catholic Church) hold inclusivist beliefs wherein Christ is the only way to salvation, but people of other faiths may be saved as they hold part of the truth. 'Men are without excuse' (Romans 1:18-23)

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Transgression- a sinful act rising from egoistic disregard of the rights of others

Atonement- reconciliation of God and humans brought about by the redemptive death of Jesus

Reconciliation- to bring estranged/disputing people together

Forgiveness- pardoning someone/not feeling resentful for a mistake

Teachings

- Forgiveness is a duty and a virtue for Christians
- Forgiveness is provided when the offender displays repentance and recognises their guilt.
- God forgave Christians for their sins, therefore, being made in the image of God, so should they. IMAGO DEI
- The underlying concept of atonement wherein Jesus dies to repay the original sin so God and man could live in relative harmony. Christians are obliged to mirror this sacrifice, practice *agape* and forgive others of their sins.
- "And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us" (Matt 8:21)
- Golden Rule 'Treat others as you would be treated'. You would want forgiveness if you were truly sorry.
- Catholics seek forgiveness through repentance to God via a priest, who asks for an act of penitence. In Protestantism you tell God directly, there is no mediation by a priest.

Ethics and Human Relationships

The Roman Catholic Church disagrees with **pre-marital** and **extra marital** (adultery) sex.

This is because:

- Sex should occur only in marriage
- The purpose of sex is procreation (Natural Law)
- The 7th commandment suggests that "Thou shalt not commit adultery"
- It breaks marriage vows
- Pre-marital sex increases the possibility of abortions
- Adultery often results in couples seeking divorce
- They are absolute moralists on this issue.
- Catholic priest and nuns take vows of celibacy and follow the words of St Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians: "It is good for a man....."

The Church of England disagrees with **extra marital** sex

This is because:

- Sex is a gift from God
- The purpose of sex is an act of unity (which strengthens couples commitment to each other) and to produce families
- The 7th commandment says "Thou shalt not commit adultery"
- It breaks marriage vows
- Pre-marital sex increases the possibility of abortions
- Adultery often results in couples seeking divorce
- They are absolute moralists on this issue
- Some Anglican's agree with **pre-marital** sex when the couple is in a committed long term relationship that will end in marriage.

Contraception

The Roman Catholic Church believes that the use of artificial contraceptives (e.g., birth control) is a sin.

This is because:

- The “purpose of sex” is procreation
- Pope Paul said “every marriage act must remain open to the to the transmission of life”
- They are absolute moralists on this issue.

The Protestant Churches believes that both natural and artificial forms of birth control are right as long as they are acceptable to both partners.

This is because sex is a gift from God, a gift which ought to be enjoyed.

- The “purpose of sex” is to unite two people in mind and body.
- They promote responsible family planning which reduces the need for abortions

Christian marriage ceremonies

The Christian marriage ceremony nearly always contains the exchange of vow, rings, Scripture readings and prayers. This attempts to create an eternal contract between the couple, not unlike that between God and humanity.

PURPOSE of marriage

Procreation

Union

Raising children

Pattern for society

One Flesh

Sanctity of marriage

Endless until death

The roles of men and women within a Christian family

Conservative Christians (like the Amish) believe that the primary role of women should be to bear children and serve the family and that men should provide for their families.

They believe this because:

- In Genesis 2:18 God is recorded to have said “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helpmate suitable for him.”
- In Ephesians 5:22 Paul wrote “Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the Husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church....Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her”

Liberal Christians believe that women and men may have equal roles. Women may have careers as well as assist raise children.

This is because:

- In Galatians 3:28 Paul said, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ
- Jesus treated women as equals
- A good example of this type of Christian family is The Simpsons

Christian beliefs about the ethics of divorce

The Roman Catholic Church disagrees with divorce.

This is because:

- Marriage is a sacrament (a ritual where god blesses the participants) and is for life.
- The covenantal vows (“until death us do part”) cannot be broken by any earthly power.
- Jesus said Marks’ Gospel that divorce is forbidden
- They are absolute moralists on this issue.
- However, a couple can have their marriage annulled (recognised as being invalid) if it is not consented and if the marriage was forced, or one partner does not want a child, or if someone enters marriage without knowing what it entails.

The Anglican Church disagrees with divorce but will allow it in certain circumstances.

This is because:

- Marriage is a sacrament (a ritual where god blesses the participants) and should be for life
- However, Jesus said in Matthews' Gospel that divorce is permitted if adultery has occurred
- People should be forgiven if they have made mistakes (e.g adultery) and they should be allowed to remarry
- Divorce is preferred if it is the "lesser of two evils".
- They are relative moralists on this issue.

Christian Responses to Civil Partnerships and Same Sex Marriages

Civil partnerships between same-sex couples are permitted in the UK (2004) and provide the equivalent rights as heterosexual marriages.

Leaders of the Catholic and Anglican Churches both disagree with same sex marriage:

- There are many divine commands in both Testaments against same sex relationships. Paul argued that homosexuality was unnatural and sexually immoral
- The proposal violates the Divine Law
- Passive homosexual preferences are allowed but they must not be carried out in action
- They believe marriage is a heterosexual concept by definition and tradition as its purpose is procreative, unitive and educative

Quakers permit same sex marriage:

- They support the proposal to make it legal and binding in law
- They follow the word of man

Christian Attitudes toward Remarriage

The Catholic Church disagrees with remarriage and will not allow a person to remarry within the catholic church

- This is because marriage vows cannot be broken by any earthly power
- Even if a couple are divorced in court, they are still viewed by the Church as wed, and thus remarriage is essentially bigamy and results in adultery
- Bigamy and adultery are mortal sins and must be annulled otherwise receiving communion is prohibited

The Anglican Church condones remarriage after divorce as do most protestant churches

- Jesus permitted divorce on the grounds of adultery said in Matthew's Gospel
- He stated further that a person can only be remarried if they divorce for the above reason, otherwise they are sinners and adulterers
- The Orthodox Church also allows divorce and remarriage on these grounds too