

AQA A Religious Studies Paper 2: Religion and Life



The origins of the universe and value of the world



Big Bang theory- a huge expansion of space that set the creation of the universe in motion. It is the leading scientific explanation for how the universe began.

Christian views

1. God designed and made the universe out of nothing in six days (Genesis 1).
2. Fundamentalist Christians- believe this story is exactly what happened or that 6 days means 6 longer periods of time.
3. Liberal Christians- the creation story is symbolic- its main message is that God created the universe. May believe scientific views.
4. They value the world and are in awe and wonder as it's God's gift.

Buddhist views

1. Do not believe in a creator/ creation. Have a cyclical vision of the universe with no beginning or end.
2. Can accept the Big Bang theory.
3. Believe it's more important to find a way out of suffering than find the origins of the universe (e.g. the Buddha's parable of the man hit by a poisoned arrow).
4. They value the world as it provides and sustains life and provides conditions for enlightenment.



The origins of human life



Theory of evolution (TOE)- species evolved over time. Creatures could adapt to environment (survival of the fittest).

- Christian beliefs: Genesis 2 tells the story of Adam and Eve. Can accept TOE but believe God is the creator.
- Buddhist beliefs: No creator- they believe life comes into existence when the conditions are right. Can accept TOE.



The use and abuse of the environment



Stewardship- Christian belief that humans have a duty to look after the environment for God.

Dominion- power and authority.

Natural resources- materials found in nature e.g. oil and trees.

1. Christians believe we should look after the environment due to stewardship: 'Work it [the land] and take care of it'- Genesis 2:15 (when God put Adam in the Garden of Eden).
2. God also said humans had dominion over the earth: 'rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground'- Genesis 1:28.
3. Buddhists want to avoid damaging the earth for future generations because:
 - Dependent arising (all life is interconnected)
 - Dukkha (misuse of the environment causes suffering)
 - First moral precept (avoid causing harm to living beings)
 'I believe that not only should we keep our relationship with our other fellow human beings very gentle and non-violent, but it is also very important to extend that kind of attitude to the natural environment'- the Dalai Lama.
4. Christians and Buddhists work towards reducing the use of natural resources, recycling more and using renewable energy sources.



Pollution



Pollution- to contaminate something, especially the environment.

Three types of pollution:

Air	E.G. factory fumes, car fumes	Causes asthma, climate change
Land	E.G. not getting rid of rubbish properly	Causes poisoned wildlife and food
Water	E.G. dumping waste into rivers or seas	Causes oil spills, harm to wildlife

Christians and Buddhists want to reduce pollution because:

Christian views	Buddhist views
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. World is on loan to humans. 2. Parable of the Talents- God is the final judge. 3. 'Love thy neighbour'- Luke 10:27 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pollution contradicts the first moral precept. 2. Dependent arising- need to protect the earth as animals and plants depend on it.

The use and abuse of animals



Metta- loving- kindness (Buddhist).

Karuna- compassion (Buddhist).

Religious attitudes towards animals

Christian	Buddhist
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you'- Genesis 9:3. 2. Humans are more important because they were created in the image of God. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Animals treated with kindness (metta) and compassion (karuna). 2. Principle of karma teaches that causing harm to others is unskilful and leads to suffering.

Animal experimentation (testing)

Christian views	Buddhist views
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In modern times, Christians support limited animal testing if it is justified. 2. Animals can help save human lives. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some are against as it goes against the first moral precept, the Eightfold Path and metta and karuna. 2. Others support it if it's the only way to save human lives.

Using animals for food

Christian views	Buddhist views
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No rules about eating meat. 2. Be sensitive to the beliefs of others. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Many are vegan or vegetarian. 4. Mahayana scripture states the Buddha told his followers not to eat meat. <p>'All tremble at violence, all fear death'- Buddha in Dhammapada, v.129.</p>



Death and the afterlife- views



Christian views	Buddhist views
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Catholic Church- purgatory (souls purified for heaven). 2. Jesus' resurrection is evidence of an afterlife. 3. Day of Judgement. 4. Heaven and Hell. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Death is a process. 2. Rebirth- when they die, their consciousness enters another life at its conception. 3. Quality of rebirth depends on karma. 4. Becoming enlightened ends future rebirth.

Abortion



Abortion- removal of a foetus from a womb in order to end a pregnancy.

Sanctity of life- human life is sacred and precious.

Christian views

For	Against
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acceptable in some circumstances e.g. if it's a result of rape. 2. 'Love thy neighbour'- Mark 12:31. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sanctity of life: 'before I formed you in the womb, I knew you'- Jeremiah 1:5. 2. Life begins at conception.

Buddhist views

For	Against
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It's personal choice. 2. If the baby will suffer e.g. disability or poor quality of life. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form of killing- against first moral precept. 2. Causes suffering to the foetus.

Pro- choice groups e.g. Abortion Rights believe the mother's life is more important.

Pro- life groups e.g. SPUC believe life begins at conception, so abortion is murder.

Euthanasia



Euthanasia- painless killing of a patient who is suffering from an incurable and painful illness, or who is in an irreversible coma. Active euthanasia is illegal in the UK.

Three types: voluntary (ill person asks for euthanasia), involuntary (person can decide but isn't given the opportunity to), non-voluntary (person is too ill to decide).

Christian views

For	Against
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'Love thy neighbour'- most loving thing e.g. Tony Bland. 2. Free will- humans can choose to end life. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interferes with God's plan. 2. Against sanctity of life: 'you shall not kill'- Exodus. 3. Suffering brings people closer.

Buddhist views

For	Against
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Karuna- compassionate to help someone end their life. 2. Respect right of individual to do what they wish. 3. Could benefit future consciousness. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Against first moral precept. 2. Karma- could lead to future suffering.



Death and the afterlife- quotes



Christianity: 'whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life'- John 3:16

Buddhism: 'Having reached perfection... This body is his last'- Buddha in Dhammapada.

