

The Last Minute

Name

GCSE RE Revision Booklet

Paper 1: Christianity- Section 4- MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH

REMEMBER this book is only a general overview and may not cover everything you could be questioned on

Matters of Life & Death- Useful Key Words

Matters of Life & Death

Abortion - the removal of a foetus from the womb before it can survive

Assisted suicide - providing a seriously ill person with the means to commit suicide

Euthanasia - the painless killing of someone dying from a painful disease

Immortality of the soul - the idea that the soul lives on after the death of the body

Near-death experience - when someone about to die has an out of body experience

Involuntary euthanasia - ending someone's life painlessly when they are unable to ask, but you have good reason for thinking they would want you to do so

Paranormal - unexplained things which are thought to have spiritual causes eg ghosts, mediums

Quality of life - the idea that life must have some benefits for it to be worth living

Reincarnation - the belief that, after death, souls are reborn in a new body

Resurrection - the belief that, after death, the body stays in the grave until the end of the world when it is raised

Sanctity of life - the belief that life is holy and belongs to God

Voluntary euthanasia - ending life painlessly when someone in great pain asks for death

LAD = Life after death

Name:

Matters of Life & Death

*Jesus rose from the dead (**resurrection**), this is only possible because there is LAD.

*St Paul teaches that people will be resurrected for LAD in the same way Jesus was

* **The Creeds** of the Church teach about LAD

*The Bible teaches people are made up of a body and a soul. **The soul is immortal** and will live on after the death of the body.

*LAD gives life **meaning and purpose**, e.g. living a holy life may lead to heaven.

*Catholics believe we will be judged when we die so we must live a good life so that you will get rewarded in heaven.

*To live a good life you must follow God's teachings **so Christians get baptised, seek forgiveness for sins, worship God**, pray frequently, & treat people well.

*Jesus taught: love your neighbour as yourself, this means helping / being kind / showing respect to everyone including strangers maybe by doing charity work.

*LAD gives life meaning and purpose. Christians may suffer less from depression than atheists!

Non-Christian reasons for believing in LAD

***Near death experiences** - when a person is clinically dead then comes back to life.

***Evidence of the spirit world** - Mediums can contact the dead and pass messages to living relatives.

***Ghosts** - some people claim to have seen the spirits of dead people.

***Past life experience** - some people claim to remember past lives, this is evidence of **reincarnation** the idea that after you die you come back to life on earth as something else

Catholic Response

The Catholic Church rejects the evidence of mediums, ghosts etc., as superstitions.

LEDCs = Less economically developed countries

MEDCs = More economically developed countries

Poorer countries have more poverty because...

- **Wars** - common in LEDCs & they destroy crops, hospitals, homes & schools leading to poverty

- **Unfair trade** - people not paid enough in poorer countries so rich countries make all the profits

- **HIV/AIDS** - common in LEDCs, people too ill to work so no money to live off

- **Lack of Education** - in LEDCs fewer children are educated so less chance of getting out of poverty

Why some people do not believe in LAD

- They see **no evidence for God** or the spiritual world so think nothing happens when you die.

- The **different religions contradict each other**. If LAD were true they would all believe the same thing.

- Different religions believe different holy books, there is **no way to decide which one is true**.

- All evidence of the paranormal (e.g. ghosts) **goes against what science says is possible**.

- There is no physical place for people to go in LAD. Space is trying to Remove World Poverty above the clouds.

Long-term plans to help people become self-supporting e.g., CAFOD has set up a scheme in Brazil to help homeless children get an education & skills to earn a living.

Disaster & Emergency aid includes sending food, water, shelter & medicine e.g. to victims of the Tsunami in Thailand
Raising Awareness, 5% of CAFOD budget spent on educating people in Churches & school etc., about ending poverty
Speaking out for people too poor to fight for their rights

Why CAFOD is trying to remove world poverty...

+ The Gospels teach us to share our wealth with the poor
+ Jesus told us to treat everyone equally & love our neighbours & treat others as we would like to be treated (Golden Rule)

+ The Catholic Church says it is our duty

The Nature of Abortion

The law says that abortion is only allowed if two doctors agree that either

- The mother's **life** is at risk
- The Mother's **mental health** is at risk.
- The child will be born severely disabled

Abortions cannot be carried out after **24 weeks** of pregnancy unless the mother's life is in serious danger & it is an extreme circumstance.

Why Abortion is a Controversial Issue Pro-choice vs Pro-life

*Many people believe that **life begins at conception**, therefore abortion is murder.

*Some argue a woman should have the right to do what she wants with her own body. **An unwanted fetus is like an unwanted tumor.**

*Some believe that the time for abortion should be **reduced to 18 or 20 weeks** when the fetus is less developed

*There are arguments about whether medical staff should have to carry out abortions.

Christian Views on Abortion

Catholics believe... all direct abortion is wrong

- Life is holy & belongs to God, only He should end it
- Life begins at conception so it is murder
- The 10 commandments states murder is wrong
- The Church points to evidence that abortion can lead women to suffer mental health issues
- Even in the case of rape... two sinful acts (wrongs) do not make a right so adoption is always the better solution as it brings joy to the adopting family.

Doctrine of Double Affect = Indirect Abortion

If someone were to take treatment for an illness, e.g. chemotherapy for cancer, to save the life of the mother knowing it will abort the baby Catholics believe this is ok.

Liberal Protestants believe... abortion is wrong but must be permitted in certain circumstances e.g. if the woman is raped or fetus severely handicapped.

* Jesus taught us to love your neighbor – abortion might be most loving thing to do.

* Christianity is concerned with justice, if women were not given the choice this would not be just.

Christian Views on Euthanasia

Catholics believe assisted suicide, voluntary euthanasia & non-voluntary euthanasia are all wrong because...

- Life is sacred, God created it only He can take it away
- Ending someone's life is murder, forbidden in the 10 commandments
- Catechism teaches the **Doctrine of Double Affect – Indirect Euthanasia**. If painkillers are taken that will shorten someone's life, but they are taken only to end pain not life, this is ok.
- Switching off **life support machines** is not euthanasia if the doctor believes him/her to be brain dead.
- **Refusing treatment** that will cause suffering & only delays death is also not euthanasia

Some Christians believe...

- Any form of euthanasia including switching off life support machines or refusing treatment is wrong. They believe both to be murder or suicide which are banned by God in the Bible & they take these teachings literally

A few Christians believe...

- Living wills which say when someone wants to die should be respected as this is the kindest thing to do
- Modern medicine means we cannot know what are God's wishes & what are man's
- Jesus said 'love your neighbour', ending pain is loving

The Nature of Euthanasia

Euthanasia is the painless killing of someone dying from a painful disease

Voluntary euthanasia is ending the life of someone in great pain who asks for death.

Non-voluntary euthanasia is ending the life of someone in great pain when they are unable to ask & you have good reason for believing they would want you to.

British law says that that euthanasia is murder but withdrawal of nutrition & hydration (passive euthanasia) or withholding treatment is not murder

Why Euthanasia is a Controversial Issue

Pro-choice vs Pro-life

Many want it to remain illegal because...

- + A doctor's job is to save life, not to end it.
- + A cure for the disease may be found so people should not give up hope.
- + People might change their mind when it is too late

Many people want it made legal because:

- Advances in medicine mean people who would have died are now being kept alive & are too old & ill so they should have the right to die.
- People have the right to commit suicide; they should have the right to ask someone to help them die.

In the **Parable of the Good Samaritan** Jesus is telling

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

In the **Parable of the Sheep and the Goats** Jesus is telling
good

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

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

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

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

Key Christian teachings to use in your GCSE answers...

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

The **sanctity of life** teaches us that all life is precious and therefore

Catholics believe that the authority of the Church comes from the **Magisterium** and

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

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



GOOD LUCK!