

## Ethics

### Religion and Medical Ethics:

**Sanctity of Life** – ‘Life is a sacred gift from God – only he can take it **and** give it.’

#### *Quote:*

*Genesis 1:26-27: ‘God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him’*

**Abortion** – ‘The artificial termination of a foetus in the womb.’ Due to one of four reasons:

- a) Preserve the life and/or health of the mother.
- b) Terminate a pregnancy brought about by rape.
- c) To prevent a child from being born disabled or mentally handicapped.
- d) To prevent a birth because the mother is exceptionally young.

Legal in UK since the 1967 Abortion Act – two doctors must agree. Pregnancy may be terminated up to the **24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy**.

#### *Quotes:*

*a) The Didache (**condemns**): ‘You shall not kill by abortion the fruit of the womb.’*

*b) Jeremiah 1:5 (**shows Bible saying life begins in the womb**): ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.’*

#### *Views:*

*Roman Catholic Church – abortion is never justified. The foetus is a human being from the moment of conception & its rights to life are equal to that of the mother’s. **HOWEVER** it accepts a pregnancy may end as the result of necessary medical treatment given to a woman, what they call the **double effect** (something morally good e.g. the medical treatment has a morally bad side-effect e.g. the death of the foetus but the bad side effect wasn’t intended – this is even justified when the side-effect could be foreseen.)*

*CofE & Quakers – Abortion should not be encouraged but under certain circumstances may be justified – in 1993 the CofE spoke out against the rising number of abortions but left the final decision up to the individual.*

**Foetal Development** – ‘Medical treatment so that those who are infertile can produce offspring.’

Most common = **IVF (In-Vitro Fertilisation)** – human egg and sperm are brought together in a lab – embryos are formed which are placed into a woman’s womb and thus can develop naturally from there.

### Quotes:

a) Genesis 9:7 (**supports childbirth**): 'And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.'

b) Genesis 25:21 (**against artificial treatment – God grants children if infertile, not science**): 'Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.'

### Views:

Roman Catholic Church – strongly against fertility treatment. Concerned about spare embryos which are created and then destroyed (murder). Fell using donor sperm and eggs is a form of adultery. Breaks the Sanctity of Life.

CofE – normally supports. Argue God would want the most loving thing and that this would mean helping couples have families. Brings happiness to people without the pain of having no children.

**Surrogacy** – 'Having a baby for someone else.'

### Views/Quotes:

Roman Catholic Church – against as it involves a third person (adultery)

Bible – Genesis 16:1-2 (**allows surrogacy**): Now Sarah, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so she said to Abram, 'The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.'

**Cloning** – 'The making of a replica or duplicate of something'

### Quotes:

- a) Psalm 100:3 (**against**): 'Know that the LORD, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves.'
- b) John 3:5 (**against**): Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."
- c) Mark 3:1-5 (**shows Jesus breaking the rules of the Sabbath – therefore if Jesus breaks religious rules, so can scientists.**): 'Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone." Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent. 5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.'

**Euthanasia** – ‘The act of bringing about a gentle or easy death (mercy killing)’

Different from suicide as it involves people who normally cannot take their own life. Illegal in the UK but legalised in the Netherlands since 2002, the US state of Oregon since 1997, and in Switzerland since 1942. There are four types:

- a) Voluntary Euthanasia – when the person concerned asks for someone to help them die/persuade them to help people die.
- b) Involuntary Euthanasia – carried out without the patient’s consent (e.g. when they are in a vegetative state/coma and life support must be shut off)
- c) Active Euthanasia – a specific action is carried out to end life e.g. overdose
- d) Passive Euthanasia – life support switched off as they can no longer help the patient.

**A & C and B & D link together in most cases.**

**Quotes:**

*Exodus 20:13/6<sup>th</sup> Commandment (**against**) – ‘You shall not murder.’*

*Hippocratic Oath (**against**) – ‘Most especially must I tread with care in matters of life and death. Above all, I must not play at God.’ & ‘Neither will I administer a poison to anybody when asked to do so, nor will I suggest such a course.’*

*Samuel 1:9-10 (**for**) - Then he begged me, ‘Come over here and put me out of my misery, for I am in terrible pain and want to die.’ “So I killed him,” the Amalekite told David, “for I knew he couldn’t live.*

**Views:**

*Roman Catholic Church – opposed as it is murder (**SANCTITY OF LIFE**). According to Pope John Paul II in *Evangelicum Vitae*, euthanasia was a ‘grave violation of the law of God.’ However if a large dose of painkillers ease someone’s suffering but the person ‘accidentally’ dies, then the **double effect** justifies this. In a similar way, the RCC believes that doctors shouldn’t use treatment to keep people alive and wants to let them die a gentle and easy death.*

*CofE – Similarly opposes. In 1992 said the ‘deliberate taking of a human life’ is forbidden, yet people should not be kept alive when suffering intolerable pain. Christians now argue that euthanasia is the most loving thing to do – ‘Love thy neighbour’ can justify this.*

*Doctors – they swear a **Hippocratic Oath**. This means they must preserve all life and not harm it.*

**Alternatives to Euthanasia:**

*Hospices – 1967, Cicely Saunders created world’s first modern hospice, St. Christopher’s, in London*

**Suicide** – ‘The act of killing one’s self’

**Quotes:**

*Ecclesiastes 7:17 (**against**) - Be not overly wicked, neither be a fool. Why should you die before your time?*

*Catechism (2325) (**against**) - Suicide is seriously contrary to justice, hope, and charity. It is forbidden by the fifth commandment.*

*Qur'an (Sura 4 Ayat 29) (**against**) - And do not kill yourselves, surely God is most Merciful to you.*

**Views:**

*Donatists (**for**) – Early Christian group who believed that killing themselves they could achieve martyrdom and go to heaven.*

*Catholics (**against**) - refer to Catechism above.*

*Samaritans (**for**) - Secular charity founded by Chad Varah as a suicide hotline; offers guidance and compassionate care and doesn't regard suicide as non religious but a mental disorder.*

*Islam (**against**) – refer to quote above.*

**Animal Testing** – ‘The testing of drugs & cosmetics on animals’

**Quotes:**

*Matthew 6:26 (**against**) - Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*

*Proverbs 12:10 (**against**) - A righteous man has regard for the life of his animal, But even the compassion of the wicked is cruel.*

*Genesis 1:28 (**against**) - God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”*

**Views:**

*CofE – ‘The fact that animals may be used in scientific procedures for the benefit of people shows that we believe that human beings have more value than animals. But the fact that we minimise the pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm that animals may have to undergo shows that we regard them as having intrinsic value.*

*Quakers – ‘The most controversial area of animal exploitation for Quakers is that of medical experimentation.’*

*Scientific - **Albert Sabin**, who developed the Polio vaccine said in 1993, "Without animal research, polio would still be claiming thousands of lives each year."*

*Catholics – **Catechism says:** ‘Animals are God's creatures...Thus men owe them kindness. We should recall the gentleness with which saints like St. Francis of Assisi treated animals..God entrusted animals to the stewardship of those whom he created in his own image. Hence it is legitimate to use animals for food and clothing...Medical and scientific experimentation on animals is a morally acceptable practice if it remains within reasonable limits and contributes to caring for or saving human lives. It is contrary to human dignity to cause animals to suffer or die needlessly.’*

## **Religion, Poverty and Wealth:**

### **How Christians help the poor:**

#### *Tithing:*

As well as being motivated by love, Christians should show a proper regard for the status of wealth. All things come from and belong to God, and Christians are told not to become too attached to money. In the Old Testament, a specific instruction is given to tithe. This means giving 10% of your wealth to the poor. Some Christians donate 10% of their salaries to charity.

#### *Give what you can:*

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, had a different approach. He believed you should give whatever you can afford to charity. For example, imagine that a man finds he needs £10,000 per year to live on. In his first year of work, he brings home only £9,500, leaving him £500 in debt. In his second year he earns £12,000. After paying off his debt, he can donate £500. The following year he earns £17,000. Now he can give £7,000 to charity.

Many Christians try to avoid making specific rules about giving. Charity is a virtue - a character trait we develop when we respond generously to the needs of others. Giving according to a rule takes away the love and compassion involved in charity. It can also prevent Christians responding to sudden crises such as the Tsunami.

#### *Quotes:*

*Mark 12:30-31 – ‘Love thy neighbour as you love thyself.’*

*Luke 18:25 – ‘It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’*

*Parable of the Sheep and the Goats - **(SIX THINGS YOU MUST KNOW)** - I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. 36 I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.’*

*General Synod of the Church of England, 1981 – ‘The Synod [believes] that, as a matter of common humanity and of our mutual interest in survival, the world requires a new and more equitable system of economic relationships between nations.’*

*General Synod of the Church of England, 1981*

### *Make Poverty History campaign*

Many of the problems that poor people face are caused by the way we (in wealthier countries) treat them. That's why so many people have joined in the campaign to 'make poverty history' by focussing on:

1. *TRADE JUSTICE*
2. *DROP THE DEBT*
3. *MORE AND BETTER AID.*

### **Charity:**

<b>Religion (denomination)</b>	<b>Obligation</b>	<b>Spiritual Component</b>	<b>Source</b>
<b>Catholic</b>	Most Catholic churches suggest that parishioners contribute 10% of their income to charity, with 5% going to the local church and 5% going to the parishioner's charity of choice.	The concept of sacrificial giving is very important in Catholicism, both to help those less fortunate and to show gratitude for God's gifts.	Catholics follow the Bible's words about tithing and giving. "Active love for the poor" is also emphasized in the catechism's treatment of the commandment "You shall not steal."
<b>Eastern Orthodox</b>	The Orthodox Church emphasizes voluntary stewardship instead of a specific tithe amount.	The church sees stewardship as a way for members of the church to participate fully in the church.	The Orthodox concept of stewardship comes from both the Old and New Testaments.
<b>Protestant</b>	Many Protestant churches follow the biblical exhortation to give 10% of one's income back to God. The tithe goes to wherever a person receives his or her spiritual teaching.	Many Protestant churches emphasize stewardship as the path to receiving God's blessings and both spiritual and material abundance.	Malachi 3:8-10 and many other Bible verses.

### **Moral & Immoral Occupations:**

There are certain industries and companies that Christians would consider immoral. For example, many Christians think it is wrong to encourage people to gamble. These Christians would avoid getting a job working for the National Lottery. In general, Christians would avoid working for companies that:

- *make or use gambling equipment*
- *produce firearms*

- *create alcohol or tobacco*
- *operate nuclear power stations*
- *sell military weapons*
- *experiment on animals*
- *pollute the environment*
- *produce pornography*
- *have a bad human rights record*
- *have poor employment records*
- *work with oppressive regimes*
- *support GM foods, embryology, abortion etc.*

*Christians working in industry might particularly look for companies that actively support:*

- *environmental protection*
- *pollution control*
- *conservation and recycling*
- *safety and security*
- *ethical employment practices*
- *fair trade*

#### **Main Christian beliefs – a summary:**

1. *Christians have a duty to care for those in need. Giving is an important part of Christian Life.*
2. *Christians must act on their beliefs and help the needy; by doing this helping God.*
3. *All humans are created “in the image of God” Genesis 1:27; we are equal in God’s eyes – we therefore have a responsibility to help all people.*
4. *We all belong to the family of God.*
5. *Christian Love is based on compassion and action.*
6. *God wants a world of justice and fairness, according to the Bible. It is human sin and disobedience which destroys this and stops justice.*

*Christians question if it is right to spend so much on weapons when so many people in the world are starving, lack the basics, lack hospitals, schools and sanitation. It would cost an*

*estimated \$17 billion a year to provide food, water, education, health and housing for everyone. World spending on military equipment is \$1000 billion.*

*For Christians, the first priority with the world's resources is to ensure everyone's basic needs are met. No individual, group or country has the right to monopolise or squander resources when there are other people suffering for lack of those resources. Christians should work to promote a more equal distribution of resources.*

## **Religion, Peace and Justice**

### **Christian Attitudes towards Warfare:**

The very earliest Christians were pacifists.

When Christianity became the Roman Army's official religion, these Christians were expected to fight.

Later, the Church believed it was right to go to war to defend the innocent, or if the war was a "holy war", i.e. defending Christianity.

The Crusades: in the Middle Ages, Christians led "The Crusades". Jerusalem was under Muslim rule, so the Church fought to recapture Jerusalem and stop the Muslims from expanding their empire. They used war because they believed God was on their side and they were fighting evil.

Today, most Christians agree that violence and war is sometimes necessary to fight evil, and bring justice and peace to the world. Some Christians are Conscientious Objectors. A few are pacifists.

***Old Testament** - In the Old Testament, people are sometimes commanded by God to go to war. In Deuteronomy, Joshua and Judges, God often tells his people to fight and destroy foreign tribes to gain the Promised Land (Israel). **In Deuteronomy 20:13**, the Laws of Warfare, a city that does not surrender, it is said that 'When the LORD your God gives it [the city] into your hand, you shall strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword.'*

*The Old Testament Prophet, Joel, tells the people that God wants them to go and fight.*

*"Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men drawn near and attack."*

### **Joel 3:9-10**

### **Just War:**

In the 4th Century, St. Augustine set out two conditions for a Just War (later added to by St. Thomas Aquinas and others) – ALL of these conditions should hold if a war is to be considered JUST.

1. PROPER AUTHORITY - war should be declared by a proper authority e.g. a government or king
2. JUST CAUSE – the war must be started for a good reason – e.g. self-defense, and not because of greed, etc..

3. RIGHT INTENTION – the war must be fought to establish good, or fight evil
4. LAST RESORT – it must be a last resort, when everything else has been tried, e.g. diplomacy
5. PROPORTIONALITY – the amount of force used must be only enough to succeed - no more
6. WIN POSSIBLE – it should be possible to win the war
7. JUST METHOD - no civilians should be involved, and no deliberate unnecessary cruelty.

### Christians and Pacifism:

The Old Testament is also, however, full of the message that God wants to see a world full of peace and justice. The Old Testament prophets often see the future Kingdom of God as a kingdom of peace.

‘Turn from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it.’ (Psalm 34v14)

### Jesus Quotes:

*“Do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”*

*Matthew 5:39*

*“Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”*

*Matthew 5:44*

*“Blessed are the peacemakers”*

*Matthew 5:9*

*“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you.”*

*John 14v27*

### Pacifist example – Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (4 February 1906 – 9 April 1945) was an important Lutheran pastor from Germany who was killed by the Nazis during World War II. He is known partly for his belief that killing Adolf Hitler was a moral act. He disagreed with the general anti-semitism and so created a theological college. Eventually he became part of an attempt to assassinate Hitler, but was arrested and executed, just seven days before Hitler killed himself.

### Christians and Punishment:

- Punishment works as a deterrent. Criminals should be afraid of what will happen if they're caught.
- Punishment offers retributive justice - victims of crime want to feel that the perpetrator has not got away with it.

- Society needs protecting from criminals, preventing them from committing more crimes.
- Punishment should reform criminals, helping them to see the 'error of their ways' and stop committing crimes.

A Christian response has to balance these aspects. It is no surprise, then, that Christians disagree about the treatment of criminals.

*Quotes: "If anyone injures his neighbour, whatever he has done must be done to him: fracture for fracture, eye for an eye, tooth for tooth. As he has injured, so he is to be injured". (supports capital punishment) (Leviticus 24:19-20)*