

## Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment – personal learning checklist

Students should study religious teachings, and religious, philosophical and ethical arguments, relating to the issues that follow, and their impact and influence in the modern world. They should be aware of contrasting perspectives in contemporary British society on all of these issues.

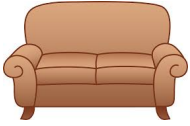
They must be able to explain contrasting beliefs on the following three issues with reference to the **main religious tradition in Britain** (Christianity) and **one or more other religious traditions**.

Corporal punishment.	
Death penalty.	
Forgiveness.	
Religion, crime and the causes of crime	
Good and evil intention and actions, including whether it can ever be good to cause suffering.	
Reasons for crime, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poverty and upbringing</li> <li>Mental illness and addiction</li> <li>Greed and hate</li> <li>Oppositions to an unjust law.</li> </ul>	
View about people who break the law for these reasons.	
Views about different types of crime, including hate crimes, theft and murder.	
Religion and punishment	
The aims of punishment, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retribution</li> <li>Deterrence</li> <li>reformation</li> </ul>	
The treatment of criminals, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prison</li> <li>Corporal punishment</li> <li>Community service</li> </ul>	
Forgiveness.	
The death penalty.	
Ethical arguments related to the death penalty, including those based on the principle of utility and the sanctity of life	

**Command words** are the words and phrases used in exams and other assessment tasks that tell you how you should answer the question.

<b>Evaluate</b>	Tests evaluation. It requires you to consider different viewpoints and arrive at a judgement.
<b>Explain</b>	Tests knowledge and understanding of beliefs, teachings and practices. It requires you to identify relevant points and demonstrate understanding by adding detail/development.
<b>Explain how X may influence Y</b>	Tests knowledge and understanding of (eg) how a religious belief or practice influences individuals or groups. This means how it would make them think feel or act.
<b>Give</b>	Tests recall of knowledge, eg two examples or two beliefs.
<b>Similar</b>	Nearly the same/lots in common
<b>Contrasting</b>	Different/opposite

<b>AQA Theme E: Religion, Crime and Punishment glossary</b>	
<b>Addiction</b>	Being addicted to/dependent on a particular substance; can be a cause of crime (eg stealing money to pay for illegal drugs)
<b>Aims of punishment</b>	The reasons why certain punishments are given e.g. retribution, deterrence, reformation
<b>Causes of crime</b>	The reasons why people break the law e.g. addiction, greed, poverty
<b>Community service</b>	Punishment involving the criminal doing a set number of hours of physical labour/work in their local community
<b>Corporal punishment</b>	Punishment in which physical pain is inflicted on the criminal
<b>Crime</b>	Action which breaks the law; can be against the person (e.g. murder), against property (e.g. vandalism), or against the state (e.g. treason)
<b>Criminals</b>	A person who has committed a crime/broken the law
<b>Death penalty</b>	Capital punishment; the execution of a criminal which is sanctioned by the state e.g. hanging, the electric chair, firing squad
<b>Deterrence</b>	Aim of punishment; the threat of punishment as a way to put a person off committing crime (e.g. knowing they could go to prison if they steal)
<b>Elizabeth Fry</b>	A Quaker prison reformer
<b>Evil intentions</b>	Having the desire to deliberately cause suffering or harm to another
<b>Forgiveness</b>	Pardoning/letting go of blame against a person for wrongs they have done; moving on
<b>Greed</b>	Reason for committing crime – wanting or desiring something or more of something
<b>Hate crimes</b>	A crime committed because of prejudice views about a person or group
<b>Justice</b>	Fairness in society and the world
<b>Law</b>	The rules a country demands its citizens follow, the breaking of which leads to punishment
<b>Murder</b>	Unlawfully killing another person
<b>Principle of utility</b>	The concept of acting out of the greater good for the most people (e.g. removing a dangerous criminal from society in order to protect others)
<b>Poverty</b>	The state of being without the things needed for a reasonable quality of life; can be a cause of crime
<b>Prison</b>	Imprisonment is a form of punishment where a criminal is locked in a secure guarded building (prison) for a period of time
<b>Retaliation</b>	To pay someone back for their harmful actions
<b>Reformation</b>	Aim of punishment; helping the criminal see how and why their behaviour was wrong, so that their mindset changes for the better
<b>Retribution</b>	Aim of punishment; getting the criminal back for their crimes
<b>Self-defence</b>	Acting to prevent harm to yourself or others.
<b>Sanctity of life</b>	Belief that life is sacred/special because it was created by God therefore it should not be abused/killed
<b>Theft</b>	Taking something without the owner's consent
<b>Unjust law</b>	A legal requirement within a society that is believed to be unfair; a cause of crime if a person believes they cannot follow (or must act against) a law they believe is unjust
<b>Upbringing</b>	The environment a child lives in, and the instructions they receive, while they are growing up; can be a cause of crime



## **Theme E Religion, Crime and Punishment SofAs.**

### **Old Testament**

- “Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed” Genesis 9:6
- “Thou shall not murder” Exodus 20:13 and “Thou shall not steal” Exodus 20:15
- “But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot...” Exodus 21:23-24
- “He who spares the rod hates their children” Proverbs 13:24

### **New Testament**

- “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘you shall not murder’ and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgement” Matthew 5:21-22
- “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth. ’But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also” Matthew 5: 38-39
- “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy times seven times” Matthew 18:22
- “Love thy Neighbour” Matthew 22:39
- “I was in prison and you visited me” Matthew 25:36 (Parable of the Sheep and Goats)
- “...Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her... Go now and leave your life of sin” John 8; 1-11 (Jesus saves the adulterous woman)
- “Treat others how you wish to be treated” The Golden Rule
- “Forgive us our sins as we forgive those that sin against us” The Lord’s Prayer
- “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female...” Galatians 3:28
- “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except which God has established” Romans 13:1

### **Other**

- “The Laws of the Realm may punish Christian men with death for heinous and grievous offences” Thirty Nine Articles

### **Islam**

- “Do not take life, which God has made sacred” Qur’an 17:33

**Crime and punishment.** A crime is any action against the law. If charged of a serious crime in the UK, suspected offenders appear in a court before a judge and 12 jury people selected at random. Those found guilty will face a punishment. In the UK there are no punishments given to cause physical harm (corporal punishment) or death (capital punishment).

Christians believe that people should try to do 'good' things e.g. give to charity, as being loving and generous is following Jesus' teachings, even if the law doesn't say you have to. They also agree that crimes are wrong, however so are some legal actions such as adultery. A Christian would argue that actions such as murder, child abuse and terrorism are evil as they cause suffering and death. Christians might say that a person who does these things isn't necessarily evil, but due to original sin we all have a tendency to do evil things. Human beings are not perfect and make mistakes.

**Christian attitudes to lawbreakers.** In general, Christians believe that laws are there to protect the rights of all citizens and should be respected.

Some Christians feel that a punishment should be as severe as the crime. However, they may hate the crime, but not the person who committed it. Many Christians believe that criminals still have rights, and that inhumane treatment is wrong. Most Christians believe that offenders should be helped to change their ways. Jesus taught this in the parable of the sheep and goats. This teaches Christians to treat prisoners with compassion.

**Different types of crime and Christian attitudes to these.**

Hate crimes - often violent actions against someone because of their race, religion, sexuality etc. These are targeted at people rather than property therefore are considered to be more serious crimes. Christians condemn serious crimes such as murder and hate crimes. Jesus taught that all people should 'love thy neighbour' and St Paul taught "there is neither Jew nor Gentile... you are all one in Christ Jesus" echoing the belief of equality.

**Reasons for crime.** There are many reasons why people may commit crimes. **Poverty** - people may steal because they are poor. Although this might be a good reason, it is still against the law. St Francis said that "if Christians don't dig deep and generously open up their wallets, they do not have genuine faith." **Upbringing** - if raised in a family where crime is the norm, it is easy to be drawn into a life of crime.

**Mental illness** - kleptomania is a condition that makes people steal. Anger management problems may lead to assault or murder.

**Addiction** - addicts may resort to stealing. However, the drug that causes most crime is alcohol. Christians disprove of excessive drinking.

**Greed** can lead to crime such as theft and fraud. Christians are taught not to covet (be envious) in the 10 commandments. **Hatred** is a negative feeling that can lead to aggression and violence. **Opposition to unjust laws** - sometimes people break laws in order to try and change them e.g. Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat for a white person.

**Aims of punishment. Retribution** - to get your own back, "an eye for an eye". In the Old Testament this would mean a murderer would be punished by death, but Christians today interpret it to mean the offender should receive a punishment severe enough to match the seriousness of their crime. **Deterrence** - to put people off committing crimes and to put off offenders from re-offending. Years ago, people were punished in public with floggings and executions, this was to deter others. **Reformation** - to change someone's behaviour. A preferred aim of punishment for most Christians. This may involve therapy sessions, meeting the victims, working in the community. This aim focuses on compassion and can be seen in the work of Elizabeth Fry.

**Christian attitudes to suffering.** Christians believe they should try to help others who are suffering as Jesus promoted this in many of his teachings e.g. "love thy neighbour". Many question why a loving God, who cares about his people would allow them to suffer. However, many would argue that many crimes are a result of an abuse of freewill and God should not be blamed.

**Christian attitudes to causing suffering to others.** Christians are generally opposed to causing others to suffer. Jesus even spoke out against using violence in self-defence and said we should "turn the other cheek". However, humans are not perfect, and they do make mistakes. If someone has caused suffering, they should aim to make amends so relationships can be restored. If possible, people should heal the wrong that has been done.

**Forgiveness** is a core belief in Christianity and Jesus emphasises this when asked how many times one should forgive their brother and he answers "...not seven times but seventy-seven times". They are expected to forgive others and believe that God will forgive them shown in the Lord's prayer "forgive us our sins, as we forgive those that sin against us". Gee Walker forgave the 2 men that murdered her son Anthony Walker. However, forgiveness is not a replacement for punishment.

**Christian attitudes to the death penalty.** Some argue that due to the sanctity of life, the death penalty is wrong as only God should be able to take away life. However, others say because a murderer has taken away a life, then the death penalty is deserved, and God would approve. This view is supported again in the Old Testament where it says "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth". This links to the aim of punishment retribution. They might also add that the death penalty is backed up by utilitarianism (the greatest good for the greatest number) and that it protects society as that criminal is unable to cause any further harm.

**Christian attitudes to the treatment of criminals.** Most Christians agree that **prison** should help to reform offenders so access to education and training are essential. Most Christians would not support **corporal punishment** (physical pain) as there should be a focus on positive sanctions, following in Jesus' footsteps. **Community service** may include unpaid work in the community, drug rehab and apologise to the victim of their crime. The Church of England has supported this.

Others say that Jesus taught a message of forgiveness and compassion. He saved a woman from being stoned to death and told her to "leave her life of sin" linking back to reformation being an important aim of punishment. St Francis spoke out in support of the global abolition of the death penalty and the need for rehabilitation of criminals.

## How to write in Religious Studies – 12 Mark questions



→ Icing – turn the statement into a question

→ Layer 1 – Argument **for** the statement

→ Layer 2 – A **different** point of view

→ Layer 3 – which is the best argument? Why?

## How to write in Religious Studies – 4 Mark questions

