



## Highsted Knowledge Organiser

### Subject RS GCSE

#### Year 9 Term 3: Christian beliefs

What I need to know

What do Christians believe about creation and the life of Jesus?

Student reference point **Genesis 1** gives an account of how God created the world and everything on it. God created everything in 6 days and rested on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Some **fundamentalist** Christians interpret the creation story **literally** and believe that it means that each part of creation took place within 24 hours and within the same week. They reject the scientific belief that the universe has developed over millions of years and concepts such as the 'big bang' and 'evolution'. They may believe that dinosaurs and humans existed at the same time.

However, other Christians adopt a more **liberal, non-literal interpretation**. They may see a day in Genesis as representing millions of years, allowing for scientific theories to be incorporated within the account (such as evolution, with life appearing first in the waters and then on land)

Furthermore, other Christians may see the story as being entirely **symbolic**, designed to inform us of God's power and nature rather than to be a historical account.

**Genesis 2** – Adam lives in paradise in the Garden of Eden and God creates a companion for Adam from his rib – a woman called Eve. God gives them one commandment – not to eat fruit from the tree of knowledge. This account makes it clear that humans have a role in **caring and ruling over God's creation** (they are given '**dominion**' over his creation and this power must be exercised through **stewardship** on his behalf). **Humans are unique** in his creation as they are made in '**God's image**'

#### **Genesis 3 – The fall**

A serpent (the devil) tempts Eve to eat fruit from the tree of knowledge, and she encourages Adam to do so as well. They confess to God what they have done; God is angry and banishes them from the Garden of Eden to live elsewhere on earth. This is important for Christians as it represents the moment when the perfect relationships between God and humans was broken. Because of this all Christians believe that we are all born with '**original sin**' and this is why it was necessary for Jesus to die on the cross to pay the price for this sin.

#### **The role of Word and Spirit in creation: John 1: 1-5**

*"In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God, and the **Word** was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*

**Some Christians interpret the 'word' as meaning 'Jesus' which means that this emphasises that Jesus is God and that he was part of all of creation.**

**Incarnation** – Christians believe that Jesus was God incarnate – God in human form. An angel appeared to Mary and told her that she would give birth to a son, who would be named Jesus. Mary was a virgin when she gave birth.

Evidence for Jesus being the son of God came from...

- The virgin birth
- His miracles (e.g. healing the sick, feeding the 5000)
- His resurrection (coming back to life after he was killed)

**Crucifixion** – Jesus’ teachings brought him into conflict with the Jewish authorities who accused him of blasphemy because of what he said. He was eventually arrested and executed for stating that he was a king which was a form of treason. He was nailed to a wooden cross and a crown of thorns placed on his head. Christians believe that he suffered as any human would.

**Matthew 27: 28-50 (note the highlighted points if asked for a brief account)**

*They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a **crown of thorns** and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and **mocked him**. “Hail, king of the Jews!” they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.*

*As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named **Simon**, and they forced him to carry **the cross**. They came to a place called Golgotha (which means “the place of the skull”). There they **offered Jesus wine to drink**, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. When they had crucified him, they **divided up his clothes by casting lots**. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. **Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.***

*From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon **Jesus cried out in a loud voice**, “Eli, Eli, lemasabachthani?” (which means “**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**”).*

***Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.** (died)*

The significance of the crucifixion: **Salvation and atonement – Jesus’ death on the cross was an act of atonement. The ‘fall’ (when Adam and Eve disobeyed God) broke the perfect relationship between humans and God but Jesus dying paid the price for this sin and allowed people to be forgiven and live for eternity with God in heaven after death.**

**Christians believe the Bible explains how Jesus took on the sins of everybody (so that they could be forgiven) , and how Jesus took on the punishment for all of our sins, even though he had done nothing wrong himself**

**Resurrection** The resurrection is fundamental to the Christian faith. This is when Jesus rose from the dead after his crucifixion. They see this as his greatest miracle and evidence that he was God.

**Ascension**

**Christians believe that Jesus appeared to a number of people after his resurrection before ascending (going up) to Heaven. Some take this literally - he rose up - while others believe that the language is more symbolic.**

**From this moment Jesus was no longer on earth but Christians believe that God’s spirit remained with us**

Suggested reading [Study of Christianity - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - Eduqas - BBC Bitesize](#)



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### Subject RS GCSE

#### Year 9 Term 4:

#### Christian sources of authority. Beliefs about life after death

What I need to know  
What are the Christian sources of authority?  
What do Christians believe about life after death?

#### Student reference point

**Law** Christians view the Bible as being the **word of God** – a record of '**divine law**' (God's laws by which we should live our lives)

However, the Bible was written by people who were seen as being **inspired by God** or who received **revelations** (messages and understanding) from God

While the Bible is the main source of authority in Christianity, it can be **interpreted in different ways** (as discussed in the creation section):

- **Literal interpretation** (every word is true and actually happened)
- **Non-literal interpretation** (it is true, but a certain amount of interpretation is required)
- **Symbolic** (the meaning of the stories is important – they should not be seen as historical accounts)

In addition to the Bible, there are other **sources of authority** in Christianity as well such as:

- Ministers or priests
- The teaching of a particular denomination
- Other, more experienced Christians within the church
- Responses to prayer
- Conscience, feeling moved by the Holy Spirit

#### **Sin as preventing salvation**

Sin is anything that goes against **God's law**. Sin separates people from God, while **salvation** brings them together. Therefore, the more people sin, the more people move away from God.

#### **Grace and the Spirit**

**Grace** refers to the **goodness and mercy** of God towards human beings.

God sends the **Holy Spirit** to bring **grace** and help people to move closer to God. The Holy Spirit plays an important role in **evangelical worship**, with 'gifts from the spirit' such as speaking in tongues or having the power to heal helping people to believe in and understand God.

**Eschatological beliefs = beliefs about death, judgement and the final destiny of the soul and humankind.**

**Christians believe that the Bible tells us that if you believe in and follow the teachings of Jesus then you will live forever in Heaven.**

**Judgement** Christians believe that there will be a day of judgement where a final decision is made over how they will spend eternity. Christians believe that on this day Jesus will return to earth (the second coming) and earth will cease to exist. People will be separated into those who will go to heaven and those who will go to hell...

The story of the Sheep and the Goats tells us that there will be a day of judgement where people will be divided into those who have led good lives (e.g. by helping the poor) and those who have not. Those who have led good lives will have eternal life (in heaven) while those who have not will have eternal punishment.

The story of Lazarus and the Rich Man tells of somebody who gained riches for himself but did not care for the poor and was therefore sent to Hell when he died. It also emphasises the importance of people listening to Christian teachings and believing them without having to see evidence.

#### **Resurrection**

Christians believe that people who have died will be brought back to life with physical bodies on the day of judgement. The physical body will be raised as a spiritual one – everybody will be resurrected and their spirits will live on in Heaven or Hell.

#### **Traditional and contemporary beliefs about Heaven and Hell**

The Bible does not give many descriptions of Heaven and Hell, and they are therefore interpreted in different ways. Most Christians view them as the places that you go in the afterlife: Hell if you have been bad, Heaven if you have been good. They believe that Heaven is where God and angels are located.

Some believe that heaven is a **physical** place whereas others believe that it is a **spiritual** place. There are also different views of hell, but most agree that it is a place of suffering. As with heaven, some believe that it is a physical place whereas others see it as a spiritual place. Most Christians believe that the main torment and punishment is complete separation from God.

#### **Traditional views...**

Physical places

Heaven in the sky, hell underground

Heaven = paradise, people restored in healthy, physical bodies. Images of clouds and golden gates.

Hell = images of fire and endless torture/punishment

#### **Contemporary views...**

Heaven is where God is, hell is where he is not.

Would an all loving and forgiving God send people to Hell for eternity? A current debate in Christianity

#### **Purgatory**

Catholic Christians believe in purgatory. People who die cannot go immediately to heaven because of their sins so they go to purgatory, a place to stay before heaven, in which they go through a process of cleansing and purification.

Suggested reading [Study of Christianity - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - Eduqas - BBC Bitesize](#)