

Crime and Punishment Knowledge Organiser

1. Good & evil actions and intentions

Some people suggest that those who commit the worst crimes are evil.

But where does evil come from?

Christianity: Evil is seen as the abuse of the free will God gave to humans. In order to be able to appreciate good, then evil has to exist. Most Christians believe in a figure called the devil or Satan. So, evil is a combination of internal and external factors.



Islam: The Qu'ran says there is a devil who was an angel. Iblis was expelled from paradise he refused to bow to Adam. Iblis continually tempts and punishes humans to be wicked. Evil is a mix of powerful evil being and the weakness of humans.

4. Religious attitudes to different types of crime

Hate crimes are widely condemned by both Christians and Muslims, Jesus specifically taught to love thy neighbour which means everyone.

Murder is wrong and a grave sin because both Christians and Muslims believe only God has the right to take life. Neither Muslims nor Christians permit **theft**, even as a means to provide for ones family

5. Treatment of criminals

Christians do not disagree with discipline. They see a positive need for it, however, they may question the method used since Jesus' teachings on love and caring for people rule out any physical punishment. Instead, Christians focus on positive sanctions that help offenders to realise the error of their ways and reform.



Corporal punishment: to punish the offender by causing physical pain. It is illegal in the UK but allowed in some other parts of the world. Some Muslim countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, allow caning as punishment for offences such as gambling and sexual promiscuity.

Community service: offers offenders a chance to make up for what they have done and receive help in reforming their behaviour. Christians are in general agreement that it is a suitable punishment for fairly minor offences.

Prison: Prison involves loss of liberty in response to serious crimes. Many Christians support prison if it is for the purpose of reformation and the conditions are reasonable.

7. The death penalty

Abolished in the UK in 1965 and is now illegal in many EU countries.

The Principle of Utility = an action is right if it promotes the maximum happiness for the maximum number of people.

The sanctity of life = God gave life, so only He has the right to take it away.

For	Against
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a justifiable retribution for serious crimes It is a deterrent It gives the victim's family a sense of justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only God has the right to take life Jesus taught a message of love and forgiveness It is hypocritical

2. aims of punishment

Retribution: is the least positive of the 3 aims of punishment.

It means that society, on behalf of the victim, is getting its own back on the offender. In the Old Testament it says **"An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth"**



Deterrence: This is the belief that if offenders are seen to be punished for wrongdoing, then this may 'put off' others from committing that offence. The offender themselves might also be put off from reoffending.

Reformation: This is the aim of punishment most Christians prefer because it seeks to help offenders by working with them to help them understand that their behaviour is harming society. It is hoped that offenders will change their attitudes and become responsible, law-abiding members of the community.

6. Suffering

For many people, suffering is an unfortunate part of living. It may be caused by something natural, such as an illness, or it may be due to how people have behaved. Whatever the cause, Christians believe they should try to help others who are suffering. Christians feel that they should follow the example of Jesus, who helped many whom he saw were suffering, and who taught that those who believe in God should help those who suffer.

Why do we suffer?



Christians – Free will means we can make our own decisions, including the wrong ones, suffering can be seen as a test from God, and suffering can make us stronger **"we also glory in our sufferings, because we know suffering produces perseverance"**

Muslims – Also believe free will means suffering is down to our actions, Allah allows suffering for unknown reasons, suffering can be a test from God or temptation from Iblis (Satan), God will never allow someone to suffer more than they can endure

3. Reasons for crime & types of crime

Causes of crime include: *upbringing, mental illness, poverty, opposition to existing laws, greed/hate, or addiction.*

There are 3 key **types** of crimes: *Crimes against the person (e.g. murder); Crimes against property (e.g. burglary); Crimes against the state (e.g. terrorism).*

St Paul tells Christians to **"obey the laws of the land"**



Many Christians believe that we should support prisoners such as Prison Fellowship, an organisation which helps reform and support both the prisoner and their families by getting them qualifications and counselling.

8. Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a core Christian belief and one Jesus emphasised in his teachings. Christians are expected to be forgiving towards those who wrong them, if they expect to be forgiven themselves: **"Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us"**.

Many Christians would argue that forgiveness is not a replacement for punishment. During his ministry Jesus was asked how many times you should forgive someone who wrongs you and he replied

"I tell you not seven times, but seventy-seven times"

Abortion

Key words

Abortion: the deliberate termination (ending) of a pregnancy by removal and destruction of the foetus.

Foetus: the developing baby in the womb.

Embryo: the developing baby before 4 months.

The legal status of abortion

Abortion has been legal in England, Scotland and Wales since 1967 when The Abortion Act was passed.

It is currently legal for a woman to have an abortion up to the 24th week of pregnancy. This limit was put in place in 1990. Under this law abortion is allowed if two doctors agree there is a medical reason for it.

There are a number of rarer situations when an abortion may legally be carried out after 24 weeks.

When does life begin?

This question is key because those that disagree with abortion often see it as murder or killing.



But there has to be a life before there can be murder.

The answer to this question does affect whether or not we see an abortion as wrong.



Why might a woman want or need an abortion?

Some reasons could include:

The pregnancy was a result of rape which may lead to painful memories

The mother has money worries



The mother feels too young to raise a child



The father is making her end the pregnancy

The mother already has children and feels she can't cope with another child

The mother is not in a loving relationship so feels she cannot raise a child in that situation

The foetus is disabled



The mother does not feel emotionally ready

Her family will disown her if she continues with the pregnancy and has the baby

The different viewpoints

Those who consider abortion to be **WRONG** are **PRO - LIFE**.

Those who support a woman's right to choose are called **PRO -CHOICE**.

Humanist View



Generally, humanists are more concerned with the quality of life than the right to life if the two come into conflict. The probable quality of life of the mother, the father and other family members would all be given due weight.

When necessary, most humanists would usually put the interests of the pregnant woman first. They believe however that all other possible options should be explored before abortion e.g. adoption.

Christianity and abortion



Christians might be pro-life because they believe in **Ensoulement** - when a human gains a soul and truly becomes a human. Many Christians believe this happens at conception. Therefore, the foetus is a person and terminating the pregnancy is ending a human life - murder.



Christians might also be pro-life because they believe in the **Sanctity of Life**. Sanctity of Life is the belief that all life is given by God and is therefore sacred. This means all life belongs to God - only God should make decisions about when life ends.



Some Christians think abortion is sometimes acceptable, as it is important to show compassion to the unborn embryo/foetus and show compassion to the mother. In the Bible it says "love thy neighbour as yourself" - in some circumstances it could be compassionate to allow abortion.



Islam and abortion



Abortion is generally not permitted within Islam unless it is to save the mother's life.

Hinduism and abortion

Hindu law books say that human life is sacred and abortion is a sinful act.

While strict Hindus still believe abortion is a sin, this view is generally ignored in modern India where abortion is legal if it is carried out in a government clinic.

Many Hindus support abortion. It has been estimated that 5 million abortions are performed in India every year.

