

Crime and Punishment

Key words

Crime: an offence, which breaks the law.

Punishment: the penalty imposed for breaking the law.

Different types of crime

- **Hate crime-** Typically involve violence and targets an individual or group based on their race, gender, sexuality, disability etc.
- **Homicide-** Murder/ killing another person.
- **Theft-** Taking someone's property.
- **Burglary -** Illegally entering someone's property in order to steal.
- **Robbery -** Stealing from a person using force.

Why do people commit crime?

- ✓ Free will- simply put we have free choice over actions.
- ✓ Pressure from those around.
- ✓ Poverty
- ✓ Hate.
- ✓ Greed
- ✓ Addiction
- ✓ Upbringing/ social environment.

Aims of Punishment

<u>Reformation</u>	Help the criminal see why their behavior was wrong and change their mindset. Called be thought of as rehabilitation.
<u>Retribution</u>	Make the criminal pay for what they have done- revenge.
<u>Protection</u>	Taking dangerous criminals out of society to keep us safe.
<u>Deterrence</u>	To put people off committing crime.
<u>Reparation</u>	The criminal makes up for the crime committed.
<u>Vindication</u>	Makes sure the law is respected.

Prison



Prison is reserved for those who have committed a serious crime. The punishment of imprisonment is loss of liberty/ freedom.

Whilst Christians support their use, they are concerned about the way they are run and levels of reoffending. Many prisons contain troubled individuals who need social help, education, medical help, work and life skills, and as Christians, there is a **duty** of care and help, which is based on religious teachings. Even criminals deserve fair and humane treatment.

Muslims agree with the use of prison, but under Shari'ah law prisons have less of a role in reforming the criminal and are normally only used while an offender is awaiting trial or punishment.

Corporal punishment



Corporal punishment is to use physical pain as a punishment for a criminal act. Corporal punishment was permitted in schools in the UK until 1986. It is now illegal in the UK but allowed in some other parts of the world.

Most Christians believe that it is completely unacceptable to inflict pain on any person, no matter what they have done wrong. Christians do not disagree on discipline. Christians focus on positive sanctions that help offenders realise the error of their ways and reform. Jesus always treated people with respect and Christians believe they should follow his example.

Islamic law allows corporal punishment. In many Muslim countries, the Law of Compensation can be used which swaps corporal punishment for paying compensation.



Community service

Community service is often called community payback. The punishments involve doing unpaid work in the local community, like cleaning up a park.

It also allows them to carry on working and doing the payback in the evenings. This enables them to keep their job.

It is seen as more positive than prison and the judge might think it could have a better effect than sending them to prison.

Christians generally support community service. The Church of England produced a report that commended programmes for offenders, which required unpaid work in the community, counselling and treatments for addiction in a mainstream setting.

Community service sentences are rarely used in Shari'ah law because they are not considered enough of a deterrent to protect society.

Capital punishment: Also known as, the death penalty is the practice of executing someone as punishment for a specific crime. It can only be carried out by the state.



For	Against
It is a deterrent - the death penalty will stop other people from doing such awful crimes	Courts can make mistakes. Innocent people are being executed.
It can provide closure for the victim's family.	All life is sacred and murderers should be given a chance to reform
One thing is certain: no executed person will ever kill again.	It is inhumane and degrading to put anyone through the mental torture of death row.
Those who have taken a life should be killed – a life for a life.	If someone is put to death, they have no chance to change their life or to contribute positively to society
It is a waste of resources housing criminals for their entire life.	Most murders are done impulsively, so it does not deter.

Christian	Muslim
The Bible teaches 'if you do not forgive others, your sins will not be forgiven.' AGAINST	Most countries that still use the death penalty are Muslim. FOR
Christians believe that you should 'love thy neighbour' and therefore would not agree with the death penalty. AGAINST	One of the most often repeated phrases in the Qur'an says that Allah is 'the most merciful.' AGAINST
"An eye for an eye" . FOR	Sharia Law – derived from the Qur'an – includes the death penalty for certain crimes. FOR

Forgiveness: Forgiveness means stopping blaming someone and / or pardoning them for what they have done wrong. Jesus forgave a woman committing adultery, when people challenged this Jesus said, "He who is without sin may cast the first stone." John 8. Islam and forgiveness- It states in the Qur'an 'A kind word with forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury.' (Surah 2:263)
Social justice: refers to actions that promote a fair society and which challenge injustice. Actions that make sure that all have access to their rights. For example, the work of Christians through foodbanks to ensure all people have access to basic foodstuffs.
Amnesty International is the world's biggest human rights organisation with over 7 million members.