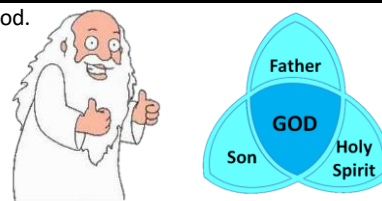








Component 2 Christianity – Beliefs

Key words

Omnibenevolent – the state of being all-loving and infinitely good – a characteristic often attributed to God.
 Omnipotent – the all-powerful, almighty and unlimited nature of God.
 Trinity – The three persons of God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 Incarnation – God becoming human in the person of Jesus.
 Atonement – The belief that Jesus’ death on the cross healed the rift between humans and God.
 Resurrection – The belief that Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, conquering death.
 Monotheism – The belief that God is one.



The Nature of God	Problem of Evil	The Trinity
<p>The ‘nature of God’ talks about what God is like. In Christianity, there is only one God, and He is described as being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Omnipotent (all powerful) ➢ Omnipresent (everywhere) ➢ Omniscient (all knowing) ➢ Omnibenevolent (all loving) ➢ Transcendent (outside of this world) ➢ Timeless (exists outside of time) ➢ Eternal (lasting forever) <p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Apostles’ Creed</u></p> <p>This contains the most important Christian beliefs about God. It is recited in church or at solemn occasions, such as a baptism. All Christians sign up to the beliefs stated in the creed, even if they are not Roman Catholic.</p> <p>The most important beliefs are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 God is an all-powerful creator 2 Jesus was born of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit 3 Jesus was crucified, buried and rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. 4 There will be a day of judgment. 5 There is one holy and universal 	<p>The problem of evil and suffering is a difficult question for people of faith. For Christians, they attempt to reconcile the existence of a good, loving God with the existence of evil and suffering. The inconsistent triad is that these three statements can’t be true at the same time – God is omnibenevolent, omnipotent and evil exists. Atheists argue the triad proves God doesn’t exist.</p> <p>Christian Theodicies</p> <p>Theodicy – a solution to the problem of evil.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Free Will – people must make their own choices so evil must be possible. 2 There is a force for evil in the world, sometimes referred to as the ‘devil’ or ‘Satan’. E.g. Story of Job 3 God shares in our suffering. Some believe that suffering is a way to participate in the suffering of Jesus. 4 Suffering is a mystery as in the story of Job. 5 How we deal with suffering gives us the opportunity to become better people – it is strengthening and soul-shaping. Irenaeus. 	<p>The Holy Trinity</p> <p>The three persons of God: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Christians are often blessed in church services by a minister with reference to this belief, e.g. <i>“In the name of the father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”</i></p> <p>God the Father</p> <p>Jesus taught to refer to God as ‘God the Father’. This refers to God as the all-powerful (omnipotent) and all-knowing (omniscient) part of God.</p> <p>Jesus Christ</p> <p>Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. For Christians, Jesus <i>is</i> God. This belief is known as the incarnation.</p> <p>God the Holy Spirit</p> <p>After Jesus’ ascension, God sent the Holy Spirit into the world to guide Christians to live in the best way possible. The Holy Spirit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gives comfort, courage, inspiration and guidance. -Helps people to believe in Jesus and strengthen their faith. -Helps to understand and interpret the Bible/the Word of God. -Intervenes in the world in a miraculous way, e.g. in special church services.
Creation	Jesus	Crucifixion
<p>Creation:</p> <p>For Christians, God is the creator of the universe.</p> <p>The main events in creation are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Creation of the universe 2 Creation of the earth 3 Creation of Adam and Eve (humankind) 4 Temptation of Adam and Eve 5 The fall of humankind from grace <p>Genesis 2:</p> <p>“This is now bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man.”(Genesis 2:22-23)</p> <p>God gave one rule to Adam and Eve: “You must not touch the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, or you will die.” (Genesis 2: 3)</p> <p>In Genesis, people have a clear purpose – to have ‘dominion’ or powers over the earth, but this must be exercised through Stewardship on God’s behalf. People have a God-given duty to take care of the earth in a responsible way, looking after both the environment and animals. The ‘evil’ or ‘sin’ that is innate in all human beings is a consequence of The Fall (when Adam and Eve eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil against God’s will. Called original sin).</p>	<p>Four important events in Jesus’ life:</p> <p>The Incarnation (God becomes man) The Crucifixion and death of Jesus Resurrection Ascension to heaven</p> <p>All of these events are recorded in the Gospels.</p> <p>How was Jesus divine? For Christians there are many events or miracles from the life of Jesus which provide evidence that he was divine, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The miracle of the virgin birth 2 The voice of God at the Baptism of Jesus 3 Jesus’ ability to perform miracles 4 The resurrection of Jesus <p>Jesus:</p> <p>God incarnated (God made human) Not conceived through sexual intercourse, but born to the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit</p> <p>The Son of God: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”</p>	<p>Crucifixion</p> <p>Jesus’ teachings brought him into conflict with the Jewish authorities, who accused him of blasphemy because he claimed to be able to forgive sin. His followers believed he was the Messiah, which led to his arrest and execution as the authorities believed that Jesus was claiming to be King – this was treason.</p> <p>Jesus suffered like any other human being as he is truly God and truly human. Jesus participates in the suffering of humanity. This is important because it shows that God understands human suffering.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Main points of the crucifixion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Jesus is executed by the Romans -The soldiers mock Jesus and put a crown of thorns on him -He is crucified at a place called Golgotha -Two criminals are crucified with him -Jesus is mocked by people in the crowd -Jesus prays while on the cross -Jesus dies on the cross -A darkness came over the land at Jesus’ death

Word and Spirit in Creation	Ascension	Resurrection
<p>John 1:1-5 "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God"</p> <p>Most Christians understand the 'Word' to be a reference to Jesus, the second part of the Trinity. Jesus as the 'Word' is central to the belief that Jesus is God as a part of the Holy Trinity.</p> <p>Therefore, in this quote, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" Jesus, or 'the Word' was present at the beginning of creation and that he is God.</p> 	<p>After Jesus rose from the dead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Jesus appeared to the disciples -Jesus appeared to other people -Jesus ascended (rose) to his Father in heaven <p>Some Christians believe that Jesus physically ascended into heaven. The ascension is important because it marks the end to the presence of Jesus on earth in a physical way. Christians believe that Jesus' Spirit is now at work in the world.</p> 	<p>Jesus rose from the dead 3 days after his death. The female disciples were the first to see the empty tomb and spread the news that Jesus was alive. Christians believe the resurrection is important because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) It enables the final resurrection. 2) It is the greatest miracle. 3) It defeats death. 4) It defeats evil and sin. 5) It completes salvation/atonement. 6) It shows Jesus is God. 7) It is the basis of Christianity. 
Salvation	Atonement	Interpretations of Creation
<p>Salvation is being saved from death and sin. Jesus' death gives humans a chance of salvation</p> <p>How to Christians achieve Salvation?</p> <p>Roman Catholics believe that by taking part in the Sacraments, they will be able to achieve salvation and go to heaven. They believe that Baptism washes them clean of sin. Confession allows for the Christians to be absolved (freed) of sins committed in life.</p> <p>Protestants, e.g. Church of England, believe that they must have faith in Jesus to achieve salvation.</p>	<p>Some Christians believe that Jesus' life and death is an act of atonement for the sins of the world and that salvation is offered to all those who believe this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sin separates humans from God -Jesus' death atones from human sin. -Jesus' sacrifice means we have a chance to live with God for eternity after death. -Jesus was a sacrifice that paid for human sin. This replaces the sacrifices of animals that were made in the Old Testament. Jesus is final sacrificial lamb. -Jesus paid the ransom for human sin, releasing humans from sin and allowing them to be saved. -Jesus paid for our atonement with his life. 	<p>Some Christians (creationists) believe that the Genesis story contradicts modern science and therefore disagree with the big bang and evolution.</p> <p>Other Christians (liberals or theistic evolutionists) understand the Bible metaphorically and believe that God created using the big bang and evolution.</p> <p>The big bang is the idea that about billions of years ago a huge explosion – A Big Bang – sent it all spiraling outwards, eventually creating the universe as we know it today.</p> <p>Evolution is the theory that all life originated as single-cell organisms and has developed in complexity and size over billions of years.</p> <p>Charles Darwin (a theist) pioneered the theory of evolution by natural selection.</p>
Eschatological Beliefs	Judgement	 
<p>Eschatology refers to beliefs about death, judgment, heaven and hell. These are also known as the 'last things'. Christians believe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life is a preparation for an afterlife to be with God in heaven • In the Nicene Creed: "We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come" • Jesus' death and resurrection provides them with evidence that death is not the end. Jesus was resurrected: so will they be • The physical body dies and the immortal soul lives on. • The cross is symbolic of death and resurrection. • In John's Gospel, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, saying that anyone who believes will never die. • The way to heaven is through faith in Jesus. 	<p>There will be a Judgment Day where people will be judged by the quality of their lives</p> <p>Jesus will separate the people who go to heaven from those who go to hell, like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31-46)</p> <p>The spiritual part of a person, their soul, joins God in heaven at death. However, Christians also believe that at the end of time there will also be a physical resurrection. This means that people will be brought back to life with physical bodies – just as Jesus was.</p> <p>This belief is stated in the creeds. At the ends of time, a trumpet will sound and the dead will rise up. This signifies the victory over death – "death has been swallowed up in victory."</p> <p>Some Christians believe that hell is a place of suffering. Some believe that it is a physical place where people burn eternally. Others believe it exists in a more spiritual dimension. Most Christians think that the real torment of hell resides in absolute separation from God as he is not present in hell. To be in hell is not to be in the presence of God.</p>	

