

Sin and Forgiveness 1



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Absolutism

Someone who has absolute morals always follows the rules. These rules may have been set by themselves, their parents or the law. A person with absolute morals will always make the same decision and doesn't consider the situation. In religion both Roman Catholics and Jews have absolute morals. So for example stealing is wrong, you shouldn't take other people's possessions – the law says so. Therefore with absolute morals even if you were a homeless and hungry person, you would not steal food to survive.

Relativism

Someone with relative morals will consider the situation before they make a decision. This means that sometimes rules are broken but in that situation it seemed the best thing to do. In religion Buddhism and The Church of England both have relative morals. So for example these people still see stealing as wrong but if they were homeless and hungry may say their only option was to steal food.

FORGIVENESS:

Forgiveness is stopping blaming someone and/or pardoning a person for what they have done wrong. Reconciliation is bringing people back together to a point of harmony after a dispute.

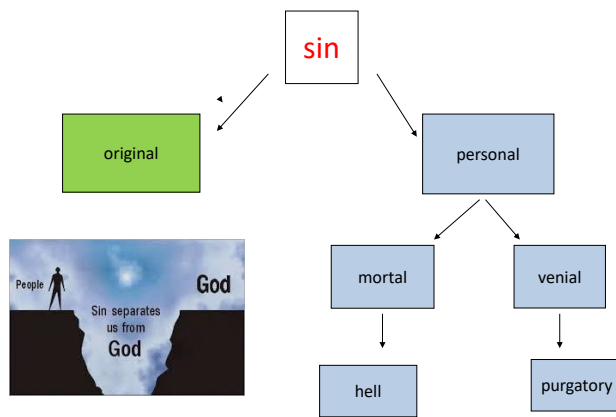
Christian views on forgiveness

Why forgive?

- We ask for forgiveness in the Our Father prayer.
- Jesus told parables about forgiveness, for example - the Lost Son God will forgive if we repent. The unmerciful servant God will forgive us if we forgive others.
- Jesus died to save us from the sins of the world.
- His resurrection shows we can all be forgiven and have a place in heaven.
- It reconciles people with God and each other.
- It is a reminder of the endless love, mercy and forgiveness that God pours out.



What is Sin?



Mortal and Venial Sin

- Mortal sins are grave sins that break one of the ten commandments and breaks the connection with God completely.
- Venial sins are less grave than mortal and reduce the connection with God. Not breaking it completely.

Mortal Sins
Murder
Theft
Adultery
Slander
Venial Sins
Minor lies
Fights and arguments
Gossip
Cheating at a game

Justice is important to Christians because...

- We are all equal in the eyes of God.
- Christians have a duty to look after other people and try to guide them to do what's right.
- Jesus taught we shouldn't seek revenge, we should turn the other cheek. This does not mean we have to be submissive victims though, just that we should respond with love and forgiveness.
- Jesus taught that judgement belongs to God. Passing judgement on others is seen as hypocrisy.

KEYWORDS



Theories of Punishment

Protection—the punishment should protect society and themselves from crime and harm.

Reform—the idea that punishments should try to change criminals so that they will not commit crimes again.

Retribution—the idea that punishments should make criminals pay for what they have done wrong.

Deterrence—the idea that punishment should be of a nature that they will put people off committing crimes.

Problems with these punishments:

- Deterrence doesn't work. In the UK prisons are full and half of all prisoners reoffend after they are released.
- In many cases retribution doesn't work either. Victims often feel the criminal has not been punished enough, so don't feel a sense of justice. E.g. someone who commits murder may be released after 10 years.
- Some argue reform goes against the idea of punishment. They would argue teaching and education is a privilege not a punishment.
- Protection only works while criminals are locked away. Many are released in to society, and many re-offend.

For Capital Punishment

- Some Christians believe that capital punishment can be used by Christians as the best way of preventing murder and keeping order in society.
- The O.T. in the Bible sets down the death penalty as the punishment for a number of crimes such as murder, kidnapping and adultery, so it is allowed by God.
- The Christian Church itself used capital punishment in the past for the crime of heresy (holding beliefs different from official Church teachings) this means that capital punishment cannot be un-Christian.

Against Capital Punishment

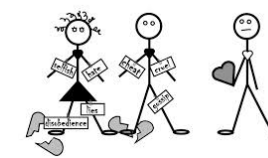
- Jesus banned retribution when he said that an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is wrong. For Christians the law of the New Testament has replaced the law of the Old Testament which permits capital punishment.
- Christianity is based on the belief that Jesus came to save (reform) sinners. It is impossible to reform a criminal who has been executed.
- Christianity teaches that life is sacred and that only God has the right to take life. If abortion and euthanasia are wrong, then the death penalty must be wrong.

Sin and Salvation

What is it?

Sin is an action that breaks God's law.

Salvation means being saved from sin and giving Christians eternal life with God.



The importance

- It saves them from Hell and leads them to eternal life with God
- It was the purpose of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.
- It gives Christians a reason to lead a Holy life.
- It explains why the Catholic Church has the sacraments of baptism, reconciliation, confirmation and the Eucharist.

Time to think: Are any sins unforgivable?

Key Words

- **Absolutism** (ab/so/lut/ism) the belief that there are certain actions that are always right or always wrong. The belief that moral laws exist eternally and are not just human inventions.
- **Eucharist** (Eu/cha/rist) meaning "thanksgiving". The name Catholics use to describe the rite where the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus and is received by the people. Also the name for the real presence of Jesus in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
- **Evangelisation** (Evan/gel/is/ation) literally means spreading the "good news" which we translate as Gospel. The sharing of the Gospel and life of Jesus with others.
- **Forgiveness** (For/give/ness) the act of pardoning someone for the offences they have caused you. Overlooking a person's faults.
- **Punishment** (Pun/ish/ment) the consequences of a wrong decision and a penalty imposed by a person in authority on the person who has committed wrongdoing.
- **Relativism** (rel/a/tiv/ism) the belief that there is no moral law and that rules that govern what is right and wrong are human inventions and change from place to place and from age to age.
- **Salvation** (Sal/va/tion) the belief that through Jesus' death and resurrection humanity has achieved the possibility of life forever with God.
- **Sin** acting against the will or laws of God.
- **Free Will** the belief that humans are able to make their own decisions without any interference from God