



Christianity key facts

You are expected to know all of the information in this booklet.
You will be assessed on this knowledge.

Christianity

- **Messiah** is a Hebrew word that means a rescuer or saviour. The Greek word for Messiah is **Christ**.
- People who believed that Jesus was the Messiah called him **Jesus Christ** and so they were given the name 'Christians'.
- There are over 30,000 **denominations** (different groups) of Christians. These groups have different beliefs and practices. They include Catholics, Protestants, Anglicans, Baptists, The Salvation Army and Quakers.
- Christians often worship in a **church**, although they can worship in other places too, including at home.

The Bible

- The **Bible** is a very important book for Christians because it teaches them about God and tells them how to live in a way that pleases Him.
- The Bible is split into two sections: the **Old Testament** and the **New Testament**.
- The Bible contains many books, each of which is divided into chapters and verses. eg. Genesis 1:27 means the Book of Genesis, Chapter 1, Verse 27.
- The Old Testament was written in the centuries before the birth of Jesus.
- The first four books of the New Testament are about Jesus' life. They are known as the **Gospels**.
- The **Ten Commandments**, given to Moses by God, are in the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament.
- Some Christians interpret the Bible **literally**. They believe that God dictated the words to the authors and that they recorded the words perfectly.
- **Liberal** Christians believe that God inspired and directed the authors of the Bible but let them express themselves in their own way. They think that many parts of the Bible are metaphors and not factually accurate.



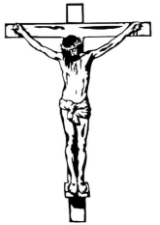
The Ten Commandments



1. Have no other Gods
2. Do not worship idols
3. Do not misuse God's name
4. Keep the Sabbath day (Sunday) holy
5. Respect your parents
6. Do not kill
7. Do not commit adultery
8. Do not steal
9. Do not lie
10. Do not want things that belong to other people

• Beliefs about the nature of God

- Christians are **monotheists** which means they believe in one God.
- Christians also believe that God is three – this is called the **Trinity**. The three persons of the Trinity are: **God the Father** (God in heaven); **God the Son** (Jesus); **God the Holy Spirit** (God at work in the world)
- Christians believe that God the Father is the **creator** of the world.
- Genesis 1:1 describes the creation of the world: 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'
- Christians believe that God is **eternal**, which means He has no beginning or end. He has always existed, even before the world was created, and will exist after it ends.
- Christians believe that God is **omnipotent**, which means He is all powerful.
- Christians believe that God is **omniscient**, which means that He is all knowing.
- Christians believe that God is **omnibenevolent**, which means that He is all good and loving.
- Christians believe that God is **immanent**. This means that He is active in the world today.



Jesus' birth, teachings, life and death

- Christians believe that God became human as **Jesus**. This is known as **incarnation** (becoming flesh).
- John 1:14 says 'the Word became flesh and lived amongst us' – this is referring to Jesus.
- Jesus was fully God and fully human at the same time.
- Christians believe that Jesus was born to the **Virgin Mary**, through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus often taught in **parables** – these are stories that explain important ideas. An example is the Parable of the Good Samaritan.
- Jesus also performed **miracles**. Examples are feeding the 5000 and turning water into wine.
- Jesus taught that Christians should **help other people**. Many Christians give to charity, support food banks and help the elderly as they are following Jesus' teachings.
- On the night before he died, Jesus had a meal with his 12 **disciples** (followers). This is called the **Last Supper**.
- Jesus was arrested by the Jewish authorities for blasphemy, put on trial, convicted and put to death. He was **crucified** (killed by hanging on a cross).
- Christians believe that, 3 days after **crucifixion**, Jesus rose from the dead (came back to life). This is known as the **resurrection**. Jesus appeared to his followers over the next 40 days.
- Christians believe that, on the 40th day after the resurrection, Jesus **ascended**. This means that he was taken up to heaven to be with God the Father. This is known as the **ascension**.

Jesus summarised the 10 commandments of the Old Testament into his Two Greatest Commandments:

- 1: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind and soul.
- 2: Love your neighbour as yourself.



Salvation

- Christians believe that Jesus' death made up for their sins, bringing God and people back together. This is known as **atonement**.
- **Salvation** means being accepted by God and having eternal life in heaven.

The afterlife

- Many Christians believe that the only way to get to heaven is by believing in Jesus. One reason for this is that the Bible says 'God so loved the world that He gave His only Son so that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.' (John 3:16)
- Christians often take part in **evangelism** – spreading the Christian message in order to convert people to Christianity – as they believe that they have a responsibility to help everyone get to heaven.
- Some Christians believe that they must believe in Jesus *and* follow his teachings to get to heaven. John 14:6 says 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'
- Other Christians believe that an omnibenevolent God would not send anybody to hell for not believing in Him, so they think everyone will go to heaven.

Baptism

- Baptism removes sin and welcomes a person into the Christian church.
- Some Christian churches, including the Catholic Church, baptise babies. This is known as **infant baptism**. Holy water is taken from the font and poured three times over the forehead of the baby and the sign of the cross is made on their forehead in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- **Believer's baptism** is a ceremony for older children and adults. The person who is going to be baptised says why they want this to happen, says they are sorry for their sins and says that they intend to follow Jesus in the future. They are usually fully submerged in the holy water. Baptists practice believers' baptism.



Prayer

- Christians believe that they can have a conversation with God through prayer.
- When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray, he taught them the Lord's Prayer.



The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

Holy Communion

- Holy Communion (also known as the **Eucharist**, or **Mass** for Catholics) uses bread and wine to remember the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection.
- Holy Communion uses the words and actions of Jesus from the **Last Supper**.
- The Bible says that he took bread and broke it and told them 'This is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' It also says that he took wine and drank it, saying 'This is my blood, do this in remembrance of me.'