

Good: Morally right, beneficial and to our advantage

Evil: That which is considered extremely wrong, immoral and wicked

Forgiveness: Give pardon for wrongdoings; give up resentment

Free Will: Ability to make choices voluntarily and independently. Nothing is pre-determined

Justice: Fairness; equal provisions and opportunities

Morality: Principles and standards determining which actions are right/wrong

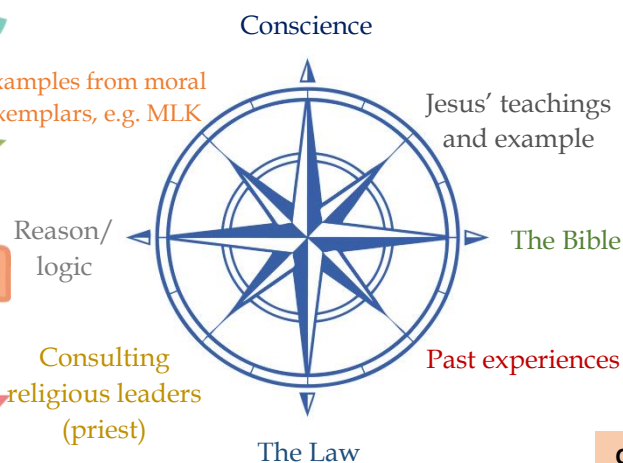
Punishment: Penalty given to someone for a crime or immoral action

Sin: Deliberate immoral action; breaking a religious moral law

Suffering: Pain or distress caused by injury, illness or loss

Moral Compass:

How do we make moral decisions?



Examples from moral exemplars, e.g. MLK

Reason/logic

Consulting religious leaders (priest)

Jesus' teachings and example

The Bible

Past experiences

The Law

The Two Types of Morality:

1. **Absolute Morality (RC/Quakers)**

A moral law or principle, e.g. 'do not kill' is wrong in all situations. Even if we are at war, it is still not permissible to kill.

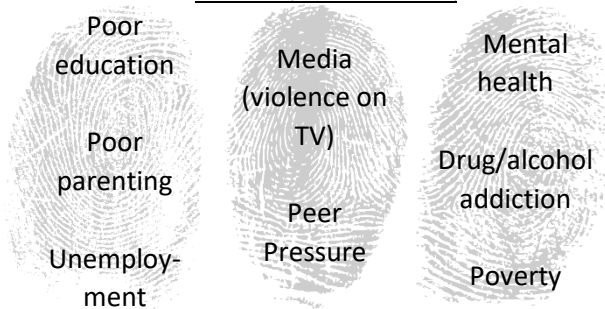
2. **Relative Morality (Church of England)**

A moral law or principle, e.g. 'do not kill' is either right or wrong, depending on the situation. In war, it might be permissible to kill.

The **WWJD** (What Would Jesus Do?) movement was started in America in 1990s by Evangelical Christians. This prompts Christians to make decisions that will be in keeping with the life and teachings of Jesus.



CAUSES OF CRIME



Arguments For the Death Penalty (Conservative Christians)

- Life terms in prison are expensive - £40,000 per year
- Some people cannot be reformed, e.g. the criminally insane
- It is closure for the victims
- There must be an ultimate punishment for the worst crimes
- Execution is the only way to protect society from dangerous people

Arguments Against the Death Penalty (Liberal Christians)

- It is just state-sanctioned murder
- Innocent people have been executed
- It does not deter murderers
- Two wrongs don't make a right
- Forgiveness is important
- Only God has the right to end a life
- "Do not murder"

Conservative Christians (Roman Catholic)

- "An eye for an eye"
- The Old Testament specifies 36 crimes deserving of capital punishment, implying that it is approved of and created by God
- It upholds the commandment 'do not kill' by showing the seriousness of the crime of murder

Humanists and the Death Penalty

- Killing is wrong as the state could be wrong – the person could be innocent
- The sentence cannot be reversed if new evidence comes to light



Liberal Christians (Quakers/Church of England)

- Execution goes against the sanctity of life
- Quakers have campaigned against the death penalty since 1818
- Every person is a reflection of God/contains a little of God. "Do not repay evil for evil" (Romans 12:17)

Why become a chaplain?

There is something of God in everyone

Following Jesus – showing compassion, love and kindness

"People are more than the worst thing they have ever done in their lives" (Helen Prejean)

Prison Chaplains

Some chaplains are non-religious and provide counselling, e.g. bereavement support, for inmates. This is important if an inmate is unable to attend the funeral of a loved one.

Prison Chaplains

Traditionally, chaplains are ministers, priests, etc. They have a pastoral role, looking after the emotional and spiritual welfare of the inmates.

AIMS OF PUNISHMENT

- Protection:** Stopping more people from becoming victims of crime, e.g. prison sentences for murderers
- Retribution:** Revenge or getting even. The criminal suffers as much as the victims have suffered
- Deterrence:** To put people off doing the crime. It warns other potential criminals of the consequence
- Reformation:** To reform a criminal. It addresses the cause of the crime and tries to rehabilitate offenders
- Vindication:** Proves the authority of the law. Reminds people that without law there is chaos
- Reparation:** Repairing the damage done through crime, e.g. community service to make amends



Good, Evil, Free Will and Suffering

- Problem of evil:** God is omniscient, omnibenevolent and omnipotent, so why is there evil in the world?
- God made the earth in Genesis 'and it was good'
- God gave people **Free Will**. Adam and Eve disobeyed God, causing the **Fall** and releasing 'original sin' into the world
- The **Ten Commandments** show how to live a good life. Breaking God's rules leads to suffering and 'evil'
- Jesus demonstrated 'good' qualities, e.g. tolerance, compassion and love. Christians have a **duty** to practise these in their everyday lives
- Moral evil** (human sin) vs **Natural evil** (from nature)
- Evil can be **soul-making**. It allows people to develop and achieve the proper virtues
- Irenaeus** believed that evil allowed for spiritual growth

- John Hick** said we could never understand God's plan. The soul-making we go through allows us to grow closer to God
- Life is a **test**, e.g. the **Story of Job**. Faith will be rewarded.
- Suffering helps humans to take part in the **suffering of Jesus**
- Good cannot exist without evil**, just as light cannot exist without dark and up cannot exist without down
- Suffering might be **part of God's plan**, allowing us to appreciate the world and what is good



Christians and Forgiveness

- Jesus and other leaders (MLK) or exemplars (Gee Walker) famously forgave following the Christian teachings of **love and compassion**
- Gee Walker forgave her son's killers
- "Do not judge and you will not be judged... forgive and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37)
- "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy" (Matthew 5:7)
- Jesus forgave **Zacchaeus** the tax collector, despite his cheating and selfish ways
- Jesus forgave the **adulterous woman**, telling her to 'go and sin no more'
- Parable of the Forgiving Father** reminds us of the power of forgiveness
- Parable of the Unforgiving Servant** reminds us that we must forgive in order to be forgiven ourselves



For Roman Catholics, forgiveness is achieved through atonement and the Sacrament of penance. God's forgiveness is given through a priest's pardon after confession.

Evangelical Christians believe that forgiveness is given by God and reliant upon faith.

Christianity is a religion of forgiveness. It supports justice, but forgiveness and punishment should go together. Jesus forgave those who betrayed him. On the cross Jesus said, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do".

Jesus taught compassion, not revenge. Punishment should reform a criminal and address the cause of the criminal behaviour. Some Christians have become prison chaplains to help prisoners to reform effectively.

Prison reformers, e.g. Elizabeth Fry used their Christian beliefs to change the way criminals were treated and to improve the state of British prisons.

Elizabeth Fry is famous for teaching female prisoners to read and write and holding Bible readings for inmates. Another Christian, John Howard, also recommended to parliament that conditions and practices within prisons be improved, e.g. clean running water and access to doctors. The government recently announced a change in the prison system, to treat inmates as 'potential assets, not liabilities.'

Utilitarianism is the belief that a good act is one that brings the greatest good for the greatest number. Also known as the **Principle of Greatest Happiness**.



CHRISTIANITY & PUNISHMENT



Justice is fairness. The punishment must fit the crime in order for it to be considered justice. Punishments must also **address the cause of the crime**, to prevent the offender from repeating the crime.

CRIME SCENE

- Crime is any offense punishable by law
- Some **sins** are punishable by law, but not all sins are crimes, e.g. 'to keep the Sabbath holy' (Ten Commandments)
- Consequences for sins are **suffering**, offending God, excommunication and exclusion from heaven
- Consequences for crimes is **punishment**, sanctioned by the criminal justice system
- Cybercrime is on the rise
- The most danger is posed by anti-social behaviour, including extremism, terrorism and sexual offenses
- Sins include: pride, greed, lust, envy, wrath, gluttony, sloth