

ISSUES OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Censorship:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that **'everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media'**

In UK, people are free to express their views unless the content is likely to incite violence or discrimination. However, some people think there should be censorship of these views, which would mean preventing the publication or broadcast of certain content.


I believe in a world of justice and human rights for all. A world where girls can grow up free of fear of abuse. A world where women are treated with the respect and dignity that is their right. A world where poverty is not acceptable. My dear young friends, you can make this your world.

Ban Ki-moon

Human Rights and Social Justice

The dignity of human life is a common belief for all religious and non-religious traditions. Each life, regardless of age, gender, ability, etc, is of worth and value and should be treated as such.

> Set up in 1960 by Peter Benenson
 > Works worldwide to protect and campaign for people whose basic human rights are denied
 > Uses non-violent methods to raise awareness, e.g. marches, writing letters, etc
 > Achieved Nobel Peace Prize in 1977



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE BORN FREE AND EQUAL IN DIGNITY AND RIGHTS.

1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Arguing For Religious Expression:

- France has banned religious symbols in public as it is a **secular** country
- It can be considered **disrespectful** towards others' beliefs

Arguing Against Religious Expression:

- Evangelism is an important part of a person's faith. Jesus said to, **'make disciples of all nations'**
- It may be a person's mission to share their faith with others or convert others to their religion
- It is a duty in the Gospels to speak and preach about faith

Freedom of Religious Expression:

- Through **clothes**, e.g. Salvation Army uniform represents the fight against injustice and poverty
- Through **symbols**, e.g. wearing a cross or crucifix, to represent the belief that Jesus was sacrificed and resurrected for the sins of humanity
- Through **actions**, e.g. through the work of religious charities, such as Christian Aid

Why? CA base their actions on their love of God and their Christian values of love, justice, compassion, stewardship, equality and dignity

What? Charity working in over 60 countries to stop poverty and challenge unjust systems



What? From 1941, CA have been running campaigns and raising awareness about global injustice

How? By challenging the systems that favour the rich over the poor and marginalised

CA support work that empowers individuals

Oxfam indicates that there are 2 million malnourished people in UK. Food poverty is on the rise and more people are relying on services like food banks. **Barnardo's** suggests that there are 3.7million children living in poverty in UK.

Christians and Wealth / Poverty

- A person's value should be judged by their actions, not by money or possessions
- Some Christians, e.g. **Quakers**, are against gambling because it encourages a love of money for its own sake and encourage greed
- Jesus taught that **wealth doesn't make people happy**. He warned that money can take the place of God in people's hearts
- The **Parable of the Rich Young Man** warns people against the greed of material wealth. *"The love of money is the root of all evil"*.
- Some people, e.g. monks and nuns, take a vow of poverty to give up material wealth in exchange for spiritual wealth
- The **Parable of the Sheep and the Goats** tells us how God will judge people on their treatment of the poor, not on wealth
- Christians **tithe** (give 10% of their wealth to charity) or do voluntary work to express their faith. Some Christian charities are set up to combat social injustice and poverty around the world, e.g. **CAFOD** and **Christian Aid**



Many companies are now **Fairtrade Providers** to be socially responsible and to ensure that our products do not exploit people or the environment. Fairtrade works to benefit small-scale farmers, workers and those who are **marginalised**.

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Prejudice and Discrimination

Laws protect people in UK, but many would say that **discrimination still exists**, e.g. some buildings do not have disability access

Interpretation of the Bible can lead to discrimination, e.g. the **role of women** in the Christian Church. In RC Church, women cannot become priests as Jesus' disciples were all male.

Religious discrimination is based on **prejudice** and formed by **ignorance**. **Islamophobia** stereotypes all Muslims as extremists. As a result, activities organised by Muslim communities have been set up to educate and inform people about Muslim beliefs and practices and counter harmful stereotypes. Days such as **'Visit my Mosque'** invites people in to ask questions and understand the role that mosques play in local communities and in national charity and welfare activities

Christians and Prejudice & Discrimination

- All life was created by God; each person is equal and sacred
- Jesus' example and teachings were about the marginalised and discriminated, e.g. **Zacchaeus** the tax collector
- The **Parable of the Good Samaritan** teaches us about how we should **'love our neighbours'**
- "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus"*
- The CoE's Committee for Minority and Ethnic Anglican Concerns (**CMEAC**) encourages ethnic people to become a part of the church, supports race awareness initiatives throughout society and creates links with other faiths and cultures through inter-faith dialogue
- CARJ** (Catholic Association for Racial Justice) seek to value, respect and celebrate the equality and dignity of all God's people
- Martin Luther King** followed Jesus' teachings to turn the other cheek and not return hate for hate. He did this through organising non-violent protests and acting on his personal convictions that all are born equal before God.

Humanists and Prejudice & Discrimination

- All humans belong to the **same species**, 'Homo Sapiens', and share ancestors
- We should **treat people as individuals**, not stereotype or discriminate
- Stephen Fry** has spoken out against the damage that prejudice can create. He has campaigned to counter the prejudice in society regarding mental illness
- We should **counter prejudice and discrimination through education**



Show Racism the Red Card

that's humanism!



Religious Extremism

There is a fine balance between freedom of speech and action, and actions and speech that are considered **extreme**.

For some believers, they may feel justified in acting in certain extreme ways because of a **personal conviction**. This might happen because:

- Interpret the religious scripture in a way that makes them believe that this is the way to behave or react
- Think that such actions will be **rewarded** in the afterlife
- Are **influenced** by family or friends who act in a similar way
- Believe that they are doing the **work of God**

The **Westboro Baptist Church** are well-known for their homophobia; the KKK are well-known for their racism and murder

Liberation Theology:

- Jesus' actions and life were about trying to **liberate** (free) people from injustice
 - Jesus is often portrayed as a **freedom fighter**
 - Liberation theology is the idea that God has the power to change situations in the world that are unjust
 - Oscar Romero** was Archbishop of El Salvador in 1977. He fought against the corruption and injustice he witnessed. As a result of his campaigning and influence, Romero was shot on 24th March 1980
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Humanists:

- We should have **respect for all** humans as worthy of equal consideration
- Support for freedom of belief and expression
- Tolerance** for all beliefs and ways of life as long as they do not harm others
- Campaigning for human rights and social justice is important
- The International Humanist and Ethical Union support the **empowerment** of oppressed people

Campaigned against the lack of education for girls in Pakistan

The Taliban had banned girls from attending school. For Malala, this was against the right 'to education' The Taliban issued a death threat against her when she campaigned using her blog and promoted her views on the media

A gunman shot Malala in the head, but she survived



Christians on Human Rights

- All people are children of God and created in God's image
- Human life should not be destroyed or mistreated
- "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them"*
- People should be treated with unconditional love - **'agape'**
- Jesus set the example of agape - a selfless, unconditional love that voluntarily suffers for the benefit of another, without expecting anything in return
- Christian charities try to replicate this unconditional love in the work they do, e.g. the **Salvation Army** work to provide kindness and compassion to those in need

- Discrimination:** Treating people differently, based on prejudice
- Censorship:** Limiting access to information considered obscene, offensive or a threat
- Extremism:** Believing in and supporting ideas that are very far from the norm
- Personal Conviction:** Something a person strongly feels or believes in
- Human Rights:** Basic entitlements a person should be able to have or do
- Prejudice:** Pre-judging someone without any evidence
- Relative Poverty:** Poverty in relation to the standards of the society in which the person lives
- Absolute Poverty:** Deprivation, where a person cannot access their basic human needs
- Social Justice:** Promoting a fair society by challenging injustice and valuing diversity