

Key words:

Theist: Someone who does believe in God.

Atheist: Someone who doesn't believe in God.

Agnostic: Someone who believes is not enough evidence to say whether God exists or not.



Humanist: Someone who does not believe in God but sees as central the morally good behaviour of humans.

Spirituality: The quality of being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things.

Stewardship: A Christian belief that humans have a duty to look after the rest of creation.

Dominion: A Christian belief that humans get to control the rest of creation.

What do many religions have in common?

Key beliefs:

1. The belief in and worship of a **divine power**, seen to be a God or gods.

2. Beliefs may vary but all believe in some sort of afterlife where the soul lives on.

3. All believe in humans treating each other with kindness and compassion.

Key practices:

1. Followers are expected to show **devotion** to the religion and take part in certain **rituals** e.g. baptism in many Christian denominations.

2. Often contain a **moral code/religious laws** which are used to guide its followers on the 'right path' e.g. the Ten Commandments or the 5 Pillars.

3. All have holy books or sacred writings which followers read and learn from.

4. All celebrate festivals to remember

Why are there world religions?

The idea of having 'World Religions' came about in the UK in the 60's.

They decided there needed to be a focus on other religions to remove some of the focus from Christianity, which was the only religion studied at the time. The chosen 6 are called 'World Religions' because of their size. They have the most followers in the world.

Nearly 80% of the world population follow one of the World Religions.



Religion and spirituality



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What is Humanism?

A Humanist is an agnostic/atheist with a moral, scientific worldview. Someone who focuses on the importance of humans rather than God.

Is Humanism a religion? No, it is a movement – a way of life

How does a Humanist see the world? The world is precious and we are very lucky to have our planet

How do Humanists see death? It gives meaning to this life. Death means that they need to live life to the full

How do Humanists make moral decision? They decide what to do on how it affects others, making sure that it is for the greater good and makes people happy

What do they think about science? It provides the truth about life. They hold science in high regard.

How do they view the role of women in the world? Women are treated as an equal.

Is Humanism a growing movement? Yes, now that people are coming to understand humanism, they might not label themselves as a atheist but as a humanist

What is the difference between Humanism and atheism? Atheism is the belief but humanism is a way of life.

How do you practice Humanism? You practice it through the way you treat people or how you make moral decisions in daily life.

What does it mean to be spiritual?

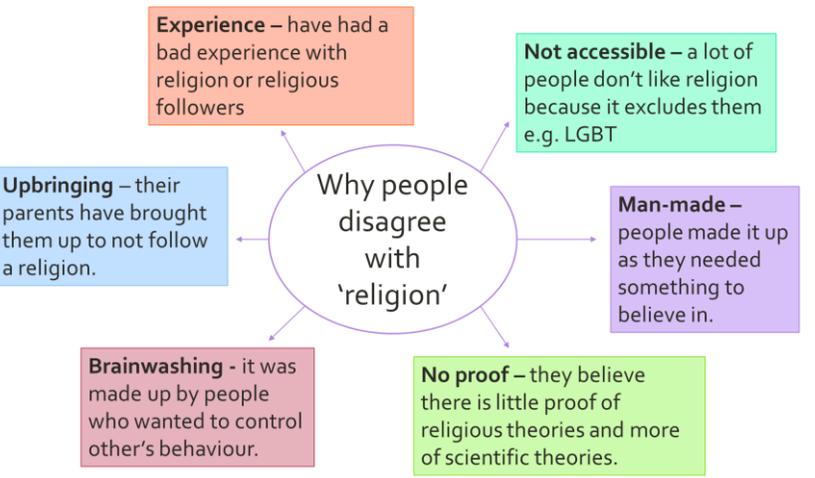
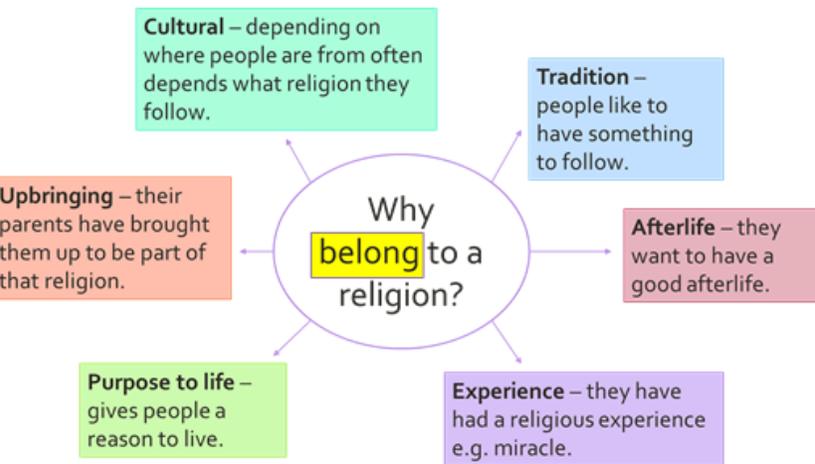
Spirituality: the quality of being concerned with the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things.

The ultimate reality is known as a spiritual, not a physical one. It is difficult to talk about because unlike most scientific facts, it lies beyond what can be known in the usual way. Religious people would say that although the spirit cannot really be described, its presence can be felt. It is what gives something its innermost essence and distinctive character. It could be argued that Buddhism is the most spiritual of the world religions.

Buddhism is a spiritual tradition that focuses on personal spiritual development and the attainment of a deep insight into the true nature of life.

There is no belief in a personal god. Buddhists believe that nothing is fixed or permanent and that change is always possible. The path to Enlightenment is through the practice and development of morality, meditation and wisdom.

Religion and spirituality



Reasons to believe in God	Reasons not to believe in God
Gives a sense of purpose and direction to believers.	There is no scientific evidence for the existence of God.
They may have had a personal experience with God, for example, been witness to a miracle.	The afterlife is just wishful thinking, there is no evidence.
Their family are religious, and they have been brought up following a particular faith.	Scientific theories such as Evolution can explain our existence.
Belief in God gives them reassurance that this life is not the end.	They have grown up in a household where they don't believe in God.
The world is so well designed, there must be intelligent design behind it which is God.	They have lost their faith due to personal tragedy.
Belief in God gives answers to philosophical questions such as how did we get here.	The world is not so well designed, for example, illness, disease and death.

Religion	Symbol	Founder or important leader	Sacred writing	Place of worship
Christianity	✝	Jesus	Bible	Church
Islam	☾★	Prophet Muhammad	Qur'an	Mosque
Judaism	✡	Abraham	Torah	Synagogue
Hinduism	ॐ	None	Vedas	Mandir
Sikhism	☞	Guru Nanak	Guru Granth Sahib	Gudwara
Buddhism	☸	Prince Siddhartha	The Tripitaka	Temple



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Christian views on animals:

- According to the Bible, God made the world, humankind was made to populate it, and animals were created for the use of humankind.
- **Christianity teaches that we should treat animals with kindness, but that they can be used to benefit humankind (as long as their suffering is considered).**
- Some Christians believe that money should not be wasted on animals when human beings are suffering.
- Unlike some other religions, there are no specific food laws to be followed in Christianity, so vegetarianism and veganism are a matter of personal choice.

Muslim views on animals:

- Muslims believe that they have been appointed 'Khalifah' (stewards) of the Earth. This is the idea that people should look after the Earth in Allah's name. This includes taking care of animals.
- **Muslims also believe that animals exist to be used by humans, but they should still be treated kindly.**
- Cruelty to animals is forbidden, as is their use simply for our pleasure. Making animals fight and hunting for sport are not allowed. Animals that are going to be eaten must be killed according to Sharia Law, this includes being treated well before they are killed and being slaughtered humanely.

Jewish views on animals:

- Experiments on animals may be tolerated if they result in a benefit for humankind, but only as a last resort.
- **Jewish teachings contain laws which forbid cruelty to animals. Animals are here to help us, and not to be abused.**
- **In Judaism, if meat is to be eaten, the animal must be slaughtered in a humane manner.**
- Cruel sports (e.g. bullfighting) are seen as an abuse of G-d's creatures. Hunting for sport is frowned upon.
- The Torah says animals deserve a day off on the Sabbath, just like people.

Examples of stewardship:

- Recycle, reuse and reduce waste
- Make sure litter goes in the bin
- Help people who are in need
- Donate to charity
- Be kind to animals



Different ways animals are used:

- Zoos
- Leather
- Animals in the circus
- Experiments on animals
- Eating meat
- Bull fighting (blood sports)
- Fishing
- Wool
- Fur
- Horse/dog racing
- Dairy products (milk, eggs, cheese)
- Working animals, cattle)

Zoos are still acceptable because:

1. They are educational, you can learn about different species.
2. They protect endangered species.

Zoos are not acceptable because:

1. It's cruel to keep them locked up and not in their natural habitat.
2. You can learn about them on the internet or documentaries.

Religious views on the use of animals:

Religious people believe that all animals are part of God's creation. All life, including that of animals, is sacred (holy/to be respected). Most religious believers think they were given dominion over animals, so can make use of them for food, clothing and as working animals. However, animals should always be treated with respect, fairness and kindness.



Reasons why people don't eat meat.



Reasons why people might eat meat:

Meat contains nutrients such as protein to help the human body. The human body is designed to eat meat (teeth and digestive system). Many would argue eating meat is part of their culture and tradition. Humans are more important than animals, therefore it's acceptable to eat meat. Many Christians argue humans have dominion over animals so therefore eating meat is acceptable.

Sanctity of life: The idea that all life is special. Many religions believe life is sacred because God created it.

Quality of life: How good or comfortable life is.

'And God said to them....have dominion over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature..'

'God made the world and gave the duty of stewardship to humans'

Christians believe God put humans in charge of the rest of creation because humans are the closest thing to God.

Humans can control creation but must do it with respect because they have been given the duty to look after all creation by God.

Animal experimentation:

Many people would agree that experiments on animals which do not have any health benefits for humans are cruel and unnecessary.

However most would agree that if animal experiments are performed for medical research to save a human life, then it is acceptable.

Most would argue it's acceptable for medical research because a human life is more important than an animal's life. Which key term describes the Christian belief that humans have power over animals because we are the prime species?

Christian views on animal experimentation:

Most Christians believe that because humans are the closest in terms of qualities to God, then humans have the power to control all other creation - dominion. Therefore if it is to save a human life, animal experimentation is acceptable as Christians believe that every attempt should be made to look after all human life.

However some Christians and other believers are against any kinds of animal experimentations because they believe in God gave us 'stewardship' over animals – the duty to look after them.



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