



Fundamentals –Year 13 – Developments in Christian Thought

Key knowledge by the end of Year 13 (Students should also know the Year 12 content)

DEVELOPMENT:

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND THEOLOGY:

The teaching of contemporary Christian theology of religion on:

- o exclusivism - the view that only Christianity fully offers the means of salvation
- o inclusivism - the view that although Christianity is the normative means of salvation, 'anonymous' Christians may also receive salvation
- o pluralism - the view that there are many ways to salvation, of which Christianity is one path
 - whether or not if Christ is the 'truth' there can be any other means of salvation
 - whether or not a loving God would ultimately deny any human being salvation
 - whether or not all good people will be saved
 - whether or not theological pluralism undermines central Christian beliefs

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND SOCIETY:

-the development of contemporary multi-faith societies - the reasons for this development, for example migration

-Christian responses, including:

o responses of Christian communities to inter-faith dialogue - how Christian communities have responded to the challenge of encounters with other faiths, for example:

- o Catholic Church: Redemptoris Missio 55–57
- o Church of England: Sharing the Gospel of Salvation

-the scriptural reasoning movement - its methods and aims - how the mutual study and interpretation of different religions' sacred literature can help understanding of different and conflicting religious truth claims

- whether or not inter-faith dialogue has contributed practically towards social cohesion
- whether or not Christian communities should seek to convert people from other faiths
- whether or not scriptural reasoning relativises religious beliefs
- whether or not Christians should have a mission to those of no faith

SOCIETY:

GENDER AND SOCIETY:

The effects of changing views of gender and gender roles on Christian thought and practice, including:

-Christian teaching on the roles of men and women in the family and society - including reference to:

- o Ephesians 5:22–33
- o Mulieris Dignitatem 18–19

-Christian responses to contemporary secular views about the roles of men and women in the family and society - the ways in which Christians have adapted and challenged changing attitudes to family and gender, including issues of:

- o motherhood/parenthood
- o different types of family



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- whether or not official Christian teaching should resist current secular views of gender
- whether or not secular views of gender equality have undermined Christian gender roles
- whether or not motherhood is liberating or restricting
- whether or not the idea of family is entirely culturally determined

GENDER AND THEOLOGY:

The reinterpretation of God by feminist theologians, including:

the teaching of Rosemary Radford Ruether and Mary Daly on gender and its implications for the Christian idea of God - Ruether's discussion of the maleness of Christ and its implications for salvation including:

- o Jesus' challenge to the male warrior messiah expectation
- o God as the female wisdom principle
- o Jesus as the incarnation of wisdom
- Daly's claim that 'if God is male then the male is God' and its implications for Christianity, including:
 - o Christianity's 'Unholy Trinity' of rape, genocide and war
 - o spirituality experienced through nature
- a comparison of Ruether's and Daly's feminist theologies
- o sexism and patriarchy in Christianity, as it has developed in the mainstream Churches
- o whether Christianity can be changed or should be abandoned
- whether or not Christianity is essentially sexist
- whether or not a male saviour can save women
- whether or not only women can develop a genuine spirituality
- whether or not the Christian God can be presented in female terms

CHALLENGES:

THE CHALLENGE OF SECULARISM:

The rise of secularism and secularisation, and the views that:

- o God is an illusion and the result of wish fulfilment - the views of Freud and Dawkins that society would be happier without Christianity as it is infantile, repressive and causes conflict
- o Christianity should play no part in public life - the views of secular humanists that Christian belief is personal and should play no part in public life, including:
 - o education and schools
 - o government and state
 - whether or not spiritual values are just human values
 - whether or not there is evidence that Christianity is a major cause of personal and social problems
 - whether secularism and secularisation are opportunities for Christianity to develop new ways of thinking and acting
 - whether Christianity is, or should be, a significant contributor to society's culture and Values



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LIBERATION THEOLOGY AND MARX:

The relationship of liberation theology and Marx, including:

Marx's teaching on alienation and exploitation –

- alienation occurs when humans are dehumanised and unable to live fulfilling lives
- exploitation occurs when humans are treated as objects and used as a means to an end

liberation theology's use of Marx to analyse social sin -

- liberation theology's use of Marxist analysis to analyse the deeper or 'structural' causes of social sin that have resulted in poverty, violence and injustice, including:

o capitalism

o institutions (for example schools, churches, the state)

liberation theology's teaching on the 'preferential option for the poor' –

- the view that the Gospel demands that Christians must give priority to the poor and act in solidarity with them, including implications of this:

o placing right action (orthopraxis) before official Church teaching (orthodoxy)

- whether or not Christian theology should engage with atheist secular ideologies
- whether or not Christianity tackles social issues more effectively than Marxism
- whether or not liberation theology has engaged with Marxism fully enough
- whether or not it is right for Christians to prioritise one group over another

SKILLS

KEY SKILLS DEVELOPED IN YEARS 12 AND 13

- critical analysis of key texts and philosophical and religious views
- evaluation of different viewpoints
- analysis of ethical and theological outlooks
- essay writing skills
- advanced literacy skills including the use of technical language
- the use of quotes to support statements