



Pearson
Edexcel

A level Religious Studies

9RS0 4B

Study of Religion -
Christianity

Scripts for Feedback





Question 1:

1 Explore the concept of the nature of God as personal.

(8)

A key concept in Christianity is regards to the nature of God is God's personal relationship with humanity. As man was made in God's image (Genesis 1:27), there is a personal relationship/connection between God and humanity.

Theologian Martin Buber explored this personal relationship through the comparison of "I-It" and "I-Thou". A "I-It" relationship is an extremely impersonal and static one as it implies a relationship that values someone/something merely for its instrumental value of what can be gained by one person in the relationship. This can often be thought of in regards to God's transcendence, however this is not the case, as the relationship between God and humanity is an "I-Thou" personal one. This means that there is a mutual love and deep understanding between God and humanity that transcends space, time and physical being.

In addition, prayer, religious experiences and atonement all highlight God's personal nature as they are expressions of God's love and grace within the personal, physical realm.



Question 2:

2 Assess the significance for Christianity of New Religious Movements.

(12)

Secularisation is the decline in Christianity over the past century mainly due to philosophical empiricism and science which is seen to oppose religion on issues such as the Creation of the universe being independent of God through the Big Bang and evolution disregarding Image Dei. However, new Religious Movements such as Pentecostalism and Charismaticism, are developments emphasising the Holy Spirit's gifts given to us and spiritual healing. They are significant to Christianity, as the attendance ~~in~~ has increased by half over ~~from 1980~~ over 25 years. For Christianity, this rejuvenation ~~is~~ re-establishment of Christianity in today's society has popularised the Religion in a way more people are engaged with due to its emotive and non-cognitive nature.

The New Religious movements such as Pentecostalism ~~is~~ have ~~used~~ placed less emphasis on Scripture but more on the religious experience and relationship with God ~~of~~ of the Congregation. This means that Christianity has moved with the time so it is less restrictive and open to interpretation letting individuals decide ~~to~~ how they want to



worship God. ~~Speake~~ However, this is has had a negative impact on Christianity as it devalues the absolutist nature of the Christian Church which is emphasised in Scripture such as the 10 Commandments in Exodus. New Movements have strayed so far from the true meaning of Christianity that it has no significance as it is becoming too distinct in itself. For example, in USA some church's have used Bible Scripture "raise the serpents" to mean worship with the Serpents. Members of this movement hold snakes and use them in their worship. Not only is this dangerous but it loses the true teachings of Christianity to "Love God and Love thy neighbour."

After World War II, over 100,000 people joined Charismatic and Pentecostal Churches due to the methods of worship such as Speaking in Tongues. This is significant to Christianity as this aspect of Christian Worship is being explored more thoroughly and they are using it for the same purpose as the Holy Spirit gave to his Apostles. This emphasises the Apostolic nature of the Church which is significant for Christianity as they are continuing the work of the Apostles to speak in Tongues and spread the Word of God. Therefore, the New Movements



have impacted Christianity in a way that is guiding Christians into a worship driven by faith in ~~the~~ God and by reaching a true understanding of the ~~not~~ purpose of the Trinity and role of the Holy Spirit as a guide. However, the view on speaking in Tongues is very judgemental as those who are unable to do so or do not possess this talent are considered lesser than those who can. This approach has a negative significance as it is very inclusive and reflects ~~not~~ reflective of Christian values.

Overall, the New Movements, most notably Pentecostalism and Charismaticism had had an impact on Christianity today. Due to Church attendance rising and the developments of new kinds of non-cognitive worship that focuses on what the individual wants to gain from a relationship with God.



Question 3:

Read the following passage before answering the questions.

substitution

In my view it would be best, in the interests of clarity, to restrict the term 'atonement' to its narrower and more specific meaning. The basic notion is then that salvation requires God's forgiveness and that this in turn requires an adequate atonement to satisfy the divine righteousness and/or justice. This atoning act is a transaction, analogous to making a payment to wipe out a debt or cancel an impending punishment. In the background there is the idea of the moral order of the universe which requires that sin, as a disruption of that order, be restored either by just punishment of the offender or a substitute, or by some adequate satisfaction in lieu of punishment.

transactional theories are immoral

I am going to argue that in this narrower sense the idea of atonement is a mistake; although of course the broader sense, in which atonement simply means salvation, is vitally important.

spiritual growth

(Source: Extract adapted from 'The Metaphor of God Incarnate', Hick, J., Westminster John Knox Press, 2006, Edexcel Anthology)

- 3 (a) Clarify Hick's view on atonement as illustrated in this passage.

You must refer to the passage in your response.

(10)

In this passage Hick understands that the basic notion of atonement is "to satisfy the divine righteousness". To clarify, Hick is referring to Satisfaction Theory which is mostly supported by Barth, which argues that Jesus' death on the cross was satisfactory in reconciling the relationship that God had with man because Jesus ~~was~~ the most divine being who is wholly innocent and free of blame.

However, Hick believes that all transactional theories ^{of atonement} are a "mistake" because they are morally unacceptable. Hick finds it inconceivable that an omnibenevolent God will be willing to sacrifice a wholly innocent being to save the



guilty humanity who should serve the punishment for their sins, because it is only morally fair. Hick also believes that transactional theories of atonement would not be morally accepted in modern society as the main theories of atonement which is ransom theory, that is "analogous to making a payment" and satisfaction theory would display an angry, vengeful God who is only concerned with the ^{committed} sins that humanity have made in the past such as Original Sin.

Alternatively Hick believes that we should only be concerned with the "broader sense" of atonement which he believes is moral exemplar theory. Moral exemplar theory allows humans to be saved of their sins through transforming their individualistic characters to become good people, just like Jesus was. For Hick, ~~for~~ this theory of atonement is acceptable to society because it presents Jesus as a martyr who refused to renounce his moral truths.



(b) Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of Hick's position on atonement.

Hick's own atonement theory is based on the ~~idea~~ moral exemplar-
the idea that through the teaching and understanding that we
have of Christ, salvation may be achieved. This is done through
participating in the loving principles ~~which~~ on which a god is based
upon and living a life which would satisfy the divine. However, he
still maintained that salvation ~~was~~ was achieved not
in human merit but through the willingness of the divine which
somewhat leaves inconsistency in his theory. The divine that goodness
and salvation should be achieved through ~~the~~ following the words of
Christ and his disciples and yet, salvation may only be a product
of God and not human merit. Hick needs to be more specific in
his theory and how human goodness translates to salvation. The
ambiguity of his argument makes the idea of atonement unclear.

However, the moral exemplar theory does train humans to be
respectful and loving in this life which the other atonement theories
fail to do. This makes it a more attractive position in principle.



it differs greatly from the satisfaction ~~and~~, substitution and ransom theories which demand that the sinful humanity needs ~~to be~~ restored through the death and suffering of Christ. Nick's theory differs in that it is positive and promotes that we should aim to live in the likeness of Jesus and 'become the child of God', instead of allowing Jesus to take the full human blame we are ~~to~~ taught to act morally. ~~This makes the~~ Nick's ~~pro~~ This strong means Nick's view on atonement.

By initiating other theories of Atonement, Nick makes his own argument stronger. He initiates the traditional medieval ~~and~~ respectively used also Justin Martyr's model of atonement. Nick claims that the transactional views of sacrifice and ~~and~~ salvation are contradictory and thus one and cannot be correct. He explains how the ~~of~~ great suffering of a divine creature can compensate for the mass sinfulness of humanity and maintains that there is no convincing model other than his own. By rejecting these narrow views of atonement and opening for the broader adoption that Christ died to replenish humanity is ~~is~~ much more appealing and allow for a much more ~~universal~~ universal understanding.

~~The~~ Nick's ideas of moral example have been criticised by traditional church and Christians, who have differing views on the interpretation of atonement. It can be said that the idea of participating in the will of Jesus is unclear.



and how it can directly link to salvation is too ambiguous to be accepted. Many have pointed out that salvation is an action of the divine and cannot be reduced to such a simple human interpretation. Because atonement is a divine act, we cannot conclude that salvation may be achieved ~~that~~ through acting ~~mean~~ morally and we therefore cannot accept Hick's theory of being atoning in any sense. There is no evidence to suggest that atonement and salvation can be achieved through anything other than divine and we cannot accept his position. However, it could also be said that we have no understanding of how atonement may take place in divine terms, consequently being unable to make conclusions about God's ability to atone humanity. This links to Hick's idea of the ~~epistemic~~ epistemic distance and how because God is at such a distance, we cannot have a full understanding of his ways. It also links to his idea that like effects don't necessarily demand like causes, thus we cannot make any definitive conclusions about God and all we can do is apply the rules given to us.

It could also be said that Hick's atonement model lacks a biblical basis which is fundamentally important in Christian theories. There are a few passages which point to salvation being achieved through the mercy examples theory. This backs up the idea that this model cannot directly lead to salvation. However, it also ~~is~~ is further supported by the evidence of Jesus sacrificing himself for the sake of humanity, supporting contrasting models of atonement. ~~Therefore~~



However, it is clear that Jesus' role as a teacher and as a moral example is extremely significant & through the adoption of a crucifixion era. Therefore, although the moral example theory has with explicit presence in the Bible, the continuing teaching of Jesus and the effect of his actions with his news.

Nick makes the inference that many religious beliefs ~~should~~ should not be interpreted in a literal way and should instead be interpreted as metaphors. He claims that although Christ did die on the cross, his religion may be nothing more than symbolic. The fact that Jesus is viewed as the son of God is not in his actual nature, but his willingness to accept the will of God. Nick also claims that many fundamental ideas of Christianity may only be the representation of the minority and the resurrection of Christ. He believes this is the case because we cannot accept what we don't know as a theological truth. This is a strong idea because it opens up the concept that not everything in the Bible should be taken literally. However, some have said that the concept strips religion of meaning and reduces the influence it can have.

Ken Burns presented very different views on the matter, claiming that the finite nature of humanity demands that we should be bound to him. However, Christ presents this as taking on the guilt of the humanity and absorbing moral sin.



Many find this more convincing than Nick as there is more of a basis in scripture and the Bible can be as being better - although with the idea of Christ dying for humanity is a joke, and not solely relying on action as a metaphor. The human virtues are compensated by through the sacrifice of Christ and for many, this is a more convincing stance.

Nick succeeds in maintaining the currently-accepted view on stories that are irrational, illogical and not comparable with the traditional ideas of God. However, it is clear that his own theories on moral example and metaphors do not fully convince those who have lost faith in the traditional interpretations. Barth's view may be seen as a compromise between the two stances.



Question 4:

human-identity
Barth - anthropomorphic
catechism

SECTION C
Write your answer in the space provided.

4 Evaluate the concept of the Bible as revealed theology and its relationship to natural theology.

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in Christianity have been influenced by **one** of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion - design argument/paley.
- Religion and Ethics.

Barth - God reveals himself.
natural revelation
romantic poets.

(30)

The concept of the Bible as revealed theology can also be seen as special revelation. Special revelation is inspired by the holy spirit and takes place during and in church and sacred texts such as the Bible.

Firstly, the Bible can be seen as revealed theology as it holds ultimate truths about God's nature. If the Bible is also considered as inerrant it is then seen as self-revelation of God. This is supported by Barth who advocates for special revelation as he believes "God reveals himself through himself, he reveals himself" within the Bible as the revealing God, whilst Jesus is the self-revealing God as he is God in carnate and spreads God's message through parables such as the



'the good samaritan' within the Bible. However a weakness of this is if the Bible is interpreted incorrectly. Augustine and Aquinas (Summa Theologiae) both state that the Bible must justify what the church teaches. However if ~~that~~ the church misinterprets God cannot be revealed through special revelation in the Bible. This is a strong weakness as it will mean people may mishear the word of God and he therefore won't be revealed to humanity.

Secondly natural theology or natural revelation cannot be seen within the Bible as its belief is that God is revealed through natural moral codes, criminal law which require philosophy & reason to be revealed. ^{a gods complication} A strength of this is William Paley as he used natural revelation to create his argument for God. However a weakness to natural revelation is that Butler said that without the Bible natural revelation creates ~~a~~ idolatry. Therefore humans will manifest their own Gods into



existence. This is a strong weakness as in the Ten commandments it says do not worship any made objects. Since the ten commandments is the breathed word of God it creates a large downfall for natural revelation and also makes it unreliable. However a strength for it Thirdly a special revelation is inspired by the Holy Spirit which seals a persons faith therefore when the Bible is being used it inspires the reader of Gods nature and they can read the sacred texts breathed by God. A strong strength of this is that the Bible is direct from God and can create a understanding for the reader of Gods love for humans for example in Genesis as he was creating ex nihilo, he created humans out of love. However a stronger weakness is that the Bible can be seen as dated as it has different views on slavery and gender compared to the modern times and since the Bible was written for a different society it may not be ~~accept~~ applicable for today's society.



This is a strong weakness as if time has changed, has Gods views changed. If not it may be difficult for God to be revealed to humanity through the Bible. However a weakness of this is that because of apostolic succession, the church has authority to ~~interpret~~ interpret the Bible.*

~~Formerly~~ ^{Formerly} ~~the~~ natural revelation can be experienced anywhere as it does not require special interpretation, like special theocracy. This is supported by the romantic poets who said "I feel closer to God walking through a forest than I do at church". This argument proves people feel close to God must bring in his creation. However a weakness of this is that Barrow said if you use natural revelation to see God it will create anthropomorphic Gods, ~~this~~ This is a strong weakness because it removes Gods qualities of being divine if he is limited to humans. Therefore it is believed that special revelation is the only way to truly know God, and this is ~~a~~ only possible through



sacred texts such as the Bible. This is strengthened as the Catechism says the Bible holds eternal truths about God, without this God cannot be fully known.

Fifthly the teleological argument rests on natural theology, as Paley used moral codes from the world to show the ~~irreducible~~ irreducible complexity in the world. He uses the revelation of nature to point towards a divine creator. The argument ~~is~~ is based off Aquinas' Summa Theologica of how he compares God to an arrow and archer as the purpose of the world. A strength of this argument is that it is a posteriori as we can see this evidence in the world and since it continually changes we can change our world view of God's creation. However a strong weakness of this link to philosophy is that there have been down the argument and it has been heavily criticised since, for example Dawkins said "mistaken as its elegant" and that evolution is a far simpler explanation. Therefore



when revealing the existence of God it cannot be done ~~freely~~ sincerely through natural revelation. Instead God should be revealed through the Bible as it contains the timeless word of God as well as eternal truths are demythologised according to Bultmann.

Overall special revelation is more likely to give an accurate revelation of God because it highlights the gap of knowledge between humans and God (epistemic distance). Therefore the Bible can bridge together some of this knowledge and create a revealing God. However Barth does say we can't use ordinary ~~to~~ language or symbols to know God exactly, so there's only so far the Bible can reveal true knowledge about God. To conclude humans will never know full knowledge of God as humans are not as capable as God, but since the Bible is a fundamental doctrine in the church it is needed to specialise teachings about modern day so it keep the eternal and



timeless word ~~as~~ of God according to Boethius. Since God is eternal and omniscience ~~+~~ his word should correlate to all of societies changing views with help from careful interpretation.

* If the people is seen as liberal it makes the Bible a human document. This is proven from the copying of man by Matthew and Luke as well as the contradiction by Matthew & Luke. If the Bible was the ultimate truth it would not have these mistakes.