

Beliefs & teachings: Christianity

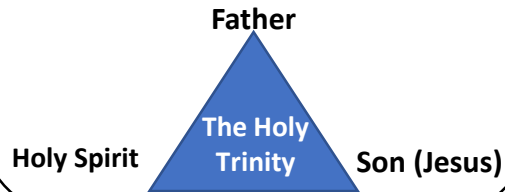


Key beliefs

Christianity is a **monotheistic** religion – they believe in **ONE** God.

Christians believe God is:

- Omnipotent** (all powerful)
- Omniscient** (all knowing)
- Omnipresent** (everywhere)
- Benevolent** (loving)
- Transcendent** (beyond understanding)
- Immanent** (personal)
- Eternal** (no beginning and no end)
- Forgiving** (he will forgive sins)




The Design Argument


Our world is too **complicated** and full of intricate working systems, to have just happened by chance. If we came across a watch, we would assume it has been 'designed' due to its **complexity**. Like the watch, some assume our world had a designer.

Reasons for believing in God



The Cosmological Argument

We live in a world of **'cause and effect'**. Something must have 'caused' our world to have come into existence. The only being powerful enough to do this is God – the 'uncaused cause'.



The Moral Argument

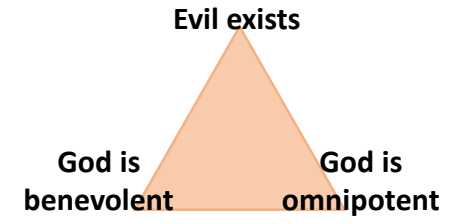
We all have a sense of **right** and **wrong**, and feel feelings of guilt when we do bad things. Christians believe this **moral conscience** comes from God and supports their belief that He is real.



Christian upbringing

Many people are Christians because they were **brought up** to be a Christian. Having spent so much time around other Christians, a belief in God would come very **naturally** to them.

The problem of evil




Moral evil = suffering caused by humans

Natural evil = suffering caused by nature


Responses:

- Suffering is a **necessary** part of life
- Suffering is **temporary**
- Suffering is a punishment for **sin**
- Suffering is caused by humanity's **free will**
- Suffering is a part of God's **plan**
- Suffering is a **test of faith**

Christians believe they will be **judged** on their actions in this life on judgement day – **Parousia**.

Creation



Science tells us that our universe is approx. 14bn years old, and our planet is approx. 4bn years old. An explosion (The Big Bang) led to the creation of all space, time and matter. Humans have evolved over time, through a process of **natural selection**. This is called **'evolution'**.

Genesis 1 & 2 says that God created the world in 6 days, and on the 7th He rested. Some Christians take this **LITERALLY** and read this story as **fact (fundamentalist)**. Others see the Genesis story as a **symbolic** story (**Liberal**)

Life after death

HEAVEN

PURGATORY

HELL

Heaven is traditionally seen as a physical place where God is. Jesus called it **"paradise"** or **"my Father's house"**. A more modern view is that heaven is simply 'with God'.

Roman Catholics believe there is a place before heaven, where people go to have their sins cleansed. People say prayers for **souls** to be released from Purgatory.

Hell can be an actual place of torment and suffering OR it can be when man is separated from God.

Soul

Our souls are:

- Immortal
- God-given
- Eternal
- Make us distinct from the rest of creation
- Return to God when we die

"Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith"