THE DEVIL

AKA Satan/ Lucifer (Satan (Hebrew) means to ‘wander’. They believe he wanders the Earth looking for trouble)

Christians believe that God is more powerful than the Devil. Good must be stronger than evil

Some don’t believe in the Devil- people choose whether to be good or bad (struggle in the mind)

Devil often depicted as a fallen angel – this is not found in the Bible- in Apocrypha (R/C books)

There are few references to the Devil in the Bible

Eve was tempted by the serpent


Revelation 12:7-9 reference to the Devil

Job in the OT.

Christian art – depicted as being red, horns, tail and hooves.

GOOD AND EVIL

MORAL EVIL

Acts committed by people, which are seen as cruel & unkind.

Holocaust an example of moral evil

Our conscience ‘inner voice’ helps us choose right/wrong

NATURAL EVIL

Natural occurrences, such as volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunami etc

CHRISTIAN RESPONSES TO EVIL

Some see the idea of an Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omni benevolent

God problematic- why does God allow people to suffer?

Suffering allows us to develop faith- makes us stronger, rewarded in Heaven

Moral evil – people choose to do ‘bad things’

Some see suffering as a ‘test’ – God has a purpose for suffering on Earth

Story of Job- tested by God, he never gives up hope

OTHER RESPONSES TO EVIL

There are a number of options to the problem of evil

1) God doesn’t exist
2) God is not all-powerful
3) God is responsible for everything, so is responsible for the evil too.

Irenaeus- people needed to suffer & freely choose between good & evil (freewill) (How does this idea work with the suffering of children?)

Augustine- evil a result of a lack of good

Needs to be a balance in the world between good & evil

REDEMPTION

Jesus allowed himself to be crucified- his death atoned for all sins.

He redeemed mankind by dying on the cross. Jesus saved humanity from the consequences of original sin- reopening the way to God.

Today Christians see the sacrament of baptism as cleansing sin. Way of welcoming Christians into the Church.

Baptists do not baptise children

R/C believe that people can receive absolution by making confessions to priest.

OTHER SOURCES OF MORAL AUTHORITY

God ultimate authority

Christians follow the Bible as a source of moral authority.

The example of Jesus and the teachings in the NT followed too

Morality & conscience – some say it is God calling to them

Faith- belief or trust in something – without proof

Humanists believe in conscience, believe it’s not God

Atheists – have a source of moral authority too- but not from God= upbringing etc

THE FALL & ORIGINAL SIN

The Fall- When Eve picked the fruit from the forbidden tree (tree of knowledge) original sin entered the world. They were thrown out of the Garden of Eden

R/C believe all born with original sin (lack of holiness) different from ‘sin’ committed themselves.

1st act of disobedience

Some believe humans lost their immortality because of the fall

‘Original sin’ does not appear in the Bible, but the idea is found in St Paul’s letters

COPING WITH EVIL

Evil arrived because of the fall

NT many believed that illness & suffering were a punishment for sins

Also for original sin committed by Adam & Eve.

Christianity teaches that God came to Earth and took human form as Jesus.

Christians believe that God answers their prayers, but not necessarily in the way they hoped

Help the suffering by-remembering the suffering of Christ, Bible, talking with other Christians, helping the bereaved, raising funds
**ANIMALS/HUMANS**

Similarities - Physical make-up (eyes heart etc) Hair, DNA
Differences: superior intelligence, humans can rationalise, emotions, soul
Some Christians believe only humans have souls (this is part of what separates us)

**ANIMALS**

In the Bible Noah was told to take two of every animal to be saved from the flood
Humans given power over the creatures (dominion)
Gen 2 Adam told to name animals.
Christians told to act like stewards ‘rule over the fish of the sea & the birds of the air…’ this brings a responsibility
St Francis of Assisi – believed animals to have souls
Jesus’ teaching reflects that God cares about the animals as well as humans (Luke 12:6)
Poor treatment of animals now punishable (2006) by bans, fines or prison
Eating meat: For: Natural to eat (teeth) Needed for survival by some Against: God’s creation

**REUSE REDUCE RECYCLE**

**SCIENTIFIC THEORIES**

Big Bang - Massive explosion about 18 million yrs ago led to creation of universe
Evidence - Universe still expanding
Cons - Doesn’t explain how intelligent life formed
Evolution - Darwin’s theory of evaluation. Idea we were evolved over a period of time. Humans originated from apes
Evidence - Fossils & bones
Cons - The complexity of the world not explained
Criticism of science - universe points towards order, not chaos (eg a Big Bang)
Phillip Gosse – God places fossils to test the faith of humanity

**RELIGION AND SCIENCE**

Means - power or authority (but not domination)

**DOMINION**

**ENVIRONMENT**

Christians show care for the environment by worshipping God.
Chico Mendes - Steward, rubber tapper, cared for the planet.
Greenpeace – not a religious organisation, but many believers join because of their aims.
1998 - Churches join in with environmental work

**STEWARDSHIP**

Means - to look after something for someone.
Adam & Eve 1st stewards
Christians look after the planet for God

**CREATION**

Literal view - God created the world in 6 days & rested on the 7th
Humans were created in the image of God.
Non-literal view - God created the world, but could have been over a period of time
Nicene Creed – ‘God creator of Heaven & Earth’

Complexity of the universe suggests a designer (intelligent design) Theological argument
William Paley’s watch analogy - complexity/ purpose points towards a designer
Some Christians believe God created the world ex nihilo. Some believe he created it from matter that was already there.
Both agree that God was responsible for the creation of the world

**CREATION STORIES**

Account 1 - “In the beginning God created the Heavens & Earth…”
Humans given stewardship over the earth (to look after it) & dominion over animals
Man & woman created equally

Account 2 - Humans made before plants & animals
Man was created first & woman was created from man’s rib as a companion

Some Christians/ atheists believe these accounts to be myths
**REVELATION**

Means to understand something you didn’t know before.

‘God is revealed through the world…’ (Psalm 19:1-4)

Christians believe they have had personal experience of God & he has spoken directly to them.

Received through Prayer

Pilgrimage

Meditating

Biblical passages

Awe

**GENERAL (OR NATURAL) REVELATION**

Available to everyone and is natural as it comes from nature. This is found in the beauty & complexity of the world.

‘God reveals himself through creation’ (Romans 1:19-20)

The conscience is part of this revelation

**HOW MIGHT GOD REVEAL HIMSELF TODAY?**

Baby, Crashing of waves, weather etc

Forgiveness- still practiced today

**SPECIAL REVELATION**

Various accounts in the Bible of God behaving in these ‘special’ ways.

Prophets-messengers of God

Some Christians believe the Bible ‘all scripture is God breathed’ (2 Timothy 3:16) as the Bible is the word of God that is all they need.

R/C – regard the teachings of the Church as a part of a special revelation

**IS IT REASONABLE TO BELIEVE?**

Subjective- individual (can’t be proven)

Objective- open to all

Faith – plays a huge part – ‘you just feel it’

**JESUS**

Paul wrote that God reveals himself through Jesus- his work & his teachings

“So the Holy one to be born will be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35)

Jesus (Messiah) (2nd person in the Trinity)

Incarnation of God/ Immanent in the world

Jesus is God- (Colossians 1:15-20)

Jesus reveals God to humanity. Jesus entered a relationship with mankind.

Jesus atoned for our sins (original sin) our saviour & redeemer

Jesus’ revelation & faith shown through-

Love- Gods son – John 3:16

Calming the storm (Mat 8:26-27)

Righteous anger (Luke 2:13-26) Forgiveness (Mark 2:5-10)

**CONVERSION**

Means to ‘change’- can be dramatic

Various examples of people being converted to Christianity.

St Paul (Acts 9:1-19a) persecuted some of the first Christians. Then converted himself.

Evangelical Christians see conversion as the beginning of faith.

Some see it as ‘being born again’

Conversion can change a person’s life as they believe God has revealed himself to them personally.

Nicky Cruz was converted whilst in prison

Some atheists may be critical & believe direct contact from God may be a result of a psychological disorder

**MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE**

Some Christians may experience a ‘baptism of the Holy Spirit’ after converting to a faith.

Charismatic gifts (opening up to the Holy Spirit) eg Speaking in tongues (Acts 2:1-11)

The Apostles began speaking in tongues on the first day of Pentecost.

Some Christians see glossolalia as ‘dangerous’

It is a very subjective experience & some are very critical of it.

Meditation or contemplative prayer is not just emptying the mind, but filling it with Gods word

**GOD**

God reveals himself through prayer (grace), miracles (see phil 1) Worship (Christians show devotion, respect, give thanks) R/C believe God reveals himself through the sacraments & confession