

Theme 2 - Issues of Good and Evil - Forgiveness

- † Peace and Conflict
- † Christian teachings about forgiveness
- † Examples of forgiveness arising from personal beliefs

Good/Evil	Good is what is morally right and to our advantage; evil is considered immoral and wrong	Justice	Fairness; where everyone has equal opportunities
Forgiveness	Granting pardon for a wrongdoing	Free Will	Ability to make choices; nothing is predetermined
Conscience	Moral sense of right and wrong	Pacifism	War and violence can't be justified
Suffering	Pain or distress that can be physical or emotional	Morality	Principles determining right from wrong

Key Sources of Authority

‘Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “LORD, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.”’ - Matthew 18:21-22

‘For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.’ - Matthew 6:14-15

Key Quotes

- ‘You are not a God that has pleasure in wickedness’ Psalm 5:4
- ‘In the beginning God created heaven and earth’ Genesis 1:1
- ‘In the image of God, He created him, male and female He created them’ Genesis 1:27

Peace and Conflict: Just War Theory, Pacifism and Conscientious Objectors, Wales’ Society of Friends	Jesus taught the importance of peace (‘blessed are the peacemakers’). There are different Christian attitudes to taking part in conflict. Many Christians practice the seven conditions of the Just War Theory that to partake in a war it must be fair, declared by a government, fought to bring about good, a last resort, have a chance of success, and must use only necessary force and attack only legitimate targets. Some Christians are conscientious objectors and refuse to take part in any conflict. Pacifists believe that war and violence can’t be justified e.g. Society of Friends .
Christian teachings about forgiveness	The teaching and practices of Jesus show the importance of forgiveness . He told Peter that one should forgive not just once but many times. Jesus taught that if you want to be forgiven then you must forgive others. For Catholics, acts of confession to a priest and penance support the giving of forgiveness. Many Christians, however, believe that forgiveness can only be granted by God . The prayer that Jesus taught his disciples (the Lord’s Prayer) showed the importance of forgiveness - ‘Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.’
Examples of forgiveness arising from personal beliefs	There are many local, national and international examples of Christians who have forgiven others because of their Christian beliefs . Forgiving does not mean forgetting. Often the ability to forgive has come through following the example of Jesus and through prayer . Martin Luther King was able to forgive those who fire-bombed his house. When Anthony Walker was murdered in a racist attack his mother Gee prayed for the strength to be able to forgive her son’s killers.

Exam Practice

Explain two religions attitudes about taking part in conflict. (8)

‘It is important to always forgive others.’ Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view (in your answer you must refer to religion and beliefs in your answer). (15)

Key Connections

Each area of study will connect with other areas in Christianity and other philosophical and ethical issues.

Consider how examples of forgiveness relate to the **teachings and actions of Martin Luther King**.

Consider how Christian teachings about forgiveness relate to the **Lord’s Prayer**.