







# Eduqas Religious Studies – Issues of Good and Evil



Key Concepts			
Good	That which is considered morally right, beneficial and to our advantage	Morality	Principles and standards determining which actions are right or wrong
Evil	That which is considered extremely immoral, wicked and wrong	Punishment	A penalty given to someone for a crime or wrong they have done
Forgiveness	To grant pardon for wrongdoing; to give up resentment and the desire to seek revenge against a wrongdoer	Sin	Deliberate immoral action, breaking a religious or moral law
Free Will	The ability to make choices voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is pre-determined.	Suffering	Pain or distress caused by injury, illness or loss. Suffering can be physical, emotional/psychological or spiritual.
Justice	Fairness; where everyone has equal provisions and opportunity		

Key Ideas			
<b>Morality and Crime</b>  	<p><b><u>Making Moral Decisions</u></b> Making decisions is not straightforward. There are different elements that can impact how we make moral choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conscience</li> <li>Law</li> <li>Religion</li> <li>Past experiences</li> <li>Reason/logic</li> <li>Other values/beliefs</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Crime</u></b> People are tempted to commit crime for a wide range of reasons including <b>poverty</b> (not having enough money or food), <b>upbringing</b> (where people are not taught right from wrong), <b>addiction</b> (some people commit crimes to feed an addiction), <b>greed</b> (committing crimes out of a desire for things they cannot afford), <b>hatred</b> or out of <b>opposition to unjust law</b> (breaking the law to oppose hateful or unjust laws)</p>	
<b>Treatment of Prisoners</b>  	<p><b><u>Reformers</u></b> People who lobby for change e.g improving prison conditions <u>Elizabeth Fry</u> – 19<sup>th</sup> century Quaker reformer – passionate advocate for education in prisons – taught women how to read/write <u>John Howard</u> – Christian who called for basic but essential provisions such as clean water, separate cells, access to doctors.</p>	<p><b><u>Chaplains</u></b> Traditionally (but not always) a religious minister – there to provide pastoral care for inmates. They provide counselling and support rehabilitation and can see to spiritual/religious needs. They will also help prisoners to re-enter society. Many become chaplains as they see it as spreading Jesus’ commandment of love and compassion.</p>	
<b>Aims of Punishment (3 main ones)</b>  	<p><b><u>Deterrence</u></b> This aim of punishment seeks to <b>use punishment as a message</b> to others considering committing crime. By giving one criminal a harsh punishment others may be put off committing a similar crime.</p>	<p><b><u>Reformation</u></b> This aim of punishment seeks to help criminals <b>change their behaviour for the better</b>. It may involve therapy, education or training. Many Christians support this as a form of ‘love your neighbour’ <b>mercy</b>.</p>	<p><b><u>Retribution</u></b> This aim of punishment is society getting its own back on the offender. The Old Testament says <b>‘an eye for an eye’</b> so some Christians would argue that this form of punishment is just according to the Bible.</p>
<b>Forgiveness</b>  	<p><b>Forgiveness</b> is at the heart of Jesus’ teaching. When Jesus was crucified, he forgave those who sentenced him to death and crucified him saying: <b>‘Father forgive them, for they know not what they do’</b>. Forgiveness leads Christians to support reformation as an aim of punishment as it allows the criminal to be forgiven and to ask for forgiveness. They also use forgiveness as an argument against the death penalty.</p>		
<b>Good, Evil and Suffering</b>  	<p><b><u>Good</u></b> Christianity places ‘good’ qualities at its core e.g. tolerance, compassion, love. Jesus demonstrated these qualities. We make good choices through our free will.</p>	<p><b><u>Evil</u></b> <u>Natural Evil</u> – part of the natural world e.g. hurricanes, earthquakes <u>Moral Evil</u> – the result of human action e.g. murder</p>	<p><b><u>Suffering</u></b> A natural part of life – and a big philosophical question. Types of suffering include: war, greed, poverty, inequality. Christians see suffering as: a test of faith, punishment for sin, part of God’s plan, a life lesson.</p>
<b>Death Penalty</b>  	<p>The <b>death penalty</b> means the state killing criminals who have committed the worst crimes. It has not been used in the UK since 1969 but is still a common punishment elsewhere in the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some Christians argue that the death penalty is a just punishment for murder as the Bible says both ‘you shall not kill’ and <b>‘an eye for an eye’</b>.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> They may also argue that it <b>deters</b> criminals from committing the worst crimes and keeps people safe.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Christians argue that the death penalty goes against <b>sanctity of life</b>. Life is sacred and holy and only God can give and take life.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> They might also argue that the death penalty goes against the aim of <b>reformation</b> as a dead criminal cannot be reformed, forgiven or shown mercy to.</li> </ul>		

