

Key Words & Definitions: Christianity

Ascension	After Jesus rose from the dead it is the belief that after a period of time Jesus ascended (rose up) to his father in heaven
Atonement	The belief that Jesus' death on the cross healed the rift between Humans and God
Blasphemy	Showing a lack of respect to God or holy things
Charismatic Christians	Christians who emphasis the presence and the work of the holy spirit, spiritual gifts and miracles
Creator	Christians understand God's role as 'Father' to include creating the universe and all things in it.
Creationism	Belief that all life was made by God
Day of Judgement	Belief held by some Christians that the day will come when the dead will present themselves to God who will decide whether they should go to heaven or hell (depending upon the life they led when alive).
Ecumenical	Representing or promoting unity within different churches
Eschatological beliefs	The beliefs about the "last things": death, judgement, heaven, hell
Eucharist (mass or holy communion)	A sacrament instituted by Jesus at the last supper; it is an act of thanksgiving for the life and death of Christ
Evangelism	Preaching of the gospel to others with the intention of converting others to the Christian faith
Evolution	The process by which different living creatures are believed to have developed from earlier less complex life forms during the history of the earth
Extemporaneous prayers	Non- formulaic, spontaneous prayers. Believe repeating set prayers, the real meaning is lost
Faith	Belief in God and religious teachings without proof.
Freewill	Christian belief that God gave humans the freedom to decide for themselves how to live and behave. However, they must accept the consequences of their actions. Only humans have freewill which makes them different from animals.
Genesis	Where the creation story is found in the Bible.
Heaven	Christian idea of a perfect afterlife with God.
Hell	Christian idea of the worst afterlife without God.
Holy week	The week that precedes Easter Sunday, when Christians remember the events leading to Jesus' death
Nicene Creed	Statement of Christian faith from 325 CE
Incarnation	God becoming human in the form of Jesus
Individual worship	Having a personal relationship with God is important, so may pray alone or with their families, but may not gather with others in church
Informal worship	Prayer with no set structure. Emphasise the importance of the holy spirit and spontaneous action in worship
Intelligent design	The idea that certain features of life are best explained by an intelligent cause, rather than an undirected process, such as natural selection
Lay person	A person who is not a member of the clergy
Lent	Period of 40 days that leads up to Easter
Literal	Understanding something as it is written
Liturgical worship	A form of worship which follows a set pattern and has established rules and rituals
Messiah	"anointed one", a title given to Jesus by the early Christians who believed Jesus' life had been foretold in the old testament
Monotheism	Belief in one true God
Nativity	The accounts of Jesus' birth in the gospels of Luke and Matthew
Non-literal	Some Christians do not believe the Genesis story to be a literally accurate account, but more of a symbolic story
Omnibenevolent	The state of being all loving and infinitely good - a characteristic often attributed to God
Omnipotent	The all powerful, almighty and unlimited nature of God

Original Sin	One idea that Christians are born with original sin
Parable	A short, often simple story which contains a deeper meaning
Persecution	Persistently cruel treatment, often due to religion or belief
Pilgrimage	A journey to a sacred place, usually an act of religious devotion
Pluralist	A society where a number of religions are followed alongside each other
Purgatory	Roman Catholic idea about where the soul goes until it has been purified and can go to heaven.
Resurrection	The belief that Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, conquering death
Sacraments	An outward sign of an invisible and inward blessing by God, for example baptism and Eucharist
Salvation	Christian idea - if you believe in Jesus he will forgive your sins and you will be saved from hell.
Secular	A society where religious beliefs and practices are increasingly less important to a growing number of people
Sin	An immoral act that goes against God's law
Speaking in tongues	Found in charismatic and Pentecostal churches where the belief that someone is filled with the holy spirit during worship and speak in an unknown language
Trinity	The three persons of God; God the father, Son and Holy Spirit