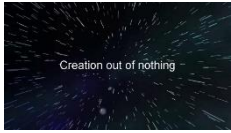













Christian Beliefs Overview

<p><u>Creation</u></p> 	<p><u>Creation</u></p> 	<p><u>The Trinity</u></p> 	<p><u>The Holy Spirit</u></p> 
<p>Christians believe that God created the world out of nothing (ex nihilo.) Some take the story of Genesis (first book in the Bible) literally - God created in six literal days (144 hours,) others say it is a metaphor and a day = a longer period of time. Genesis states, "In the beginning he created the heavens and the Earth." This line influences Christians to see God as omnipotent (omnipotent) and benevolent (all-loving) and also to look after the planet (stewardship) since he created the planet for humanity.</p>	<p>When the Earth was being created by God the Father, the Holy Spirit (which is another way of seeing God) watched over creation. In Genesis it states, "And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters." This line influences Christians to see God in three forms (Trinity) as a Father, as a Son and as a Holy Spirit and to read the Bible in order to make sense of the three distinct aspects of God.</p>	<p>Christians see the Trinity as three distinct persons of God, but they are all God - so it is a monotheist religion (one God in three forms.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - God the Father: created the Earth and loves his creation. Judges us at the end of time. - God the Son: God in human form. Taught parables and performed miracles. Died to save mankind from sin. - God the Holy Spirit: an immanent guide who supports Christians. Also appeared to the disciples on the day of Pentecost after Jesus had ascended. "They were filled with the Holy Spirit." 	<p>The Holy Spirit was present at different times throughout the Bible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During creation 'the Spirit of God hovered over the waters.' - During the immaculate conception of Jesus, "she (Mary) was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit." - At Jesus' baptism in the form of a dove, anointed Jesus with power, "at that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him." <p>Christians are influenced to ask for guidance from the Holy Spirit and pray to the Holy Spirit as a powerful force in their lives.</p>
<p><u>The Incarnation</u></p> 	<p><u>Jesus' Baptism</u></p> 	<p><u>The Last Supper</u></p> 	<p><u>The Crucifixion</u></p> 
<p>Christians believe God was incarnated (made man) to take away the sins of the world. The Bible says that he was born to a virgin called Mary in a stable due to a lack of room in the inn. John I calls him "the Word" since he came to speak the words of God through parables, e.g. the Good Samaritan. John says, "In the beginning was the Word." Christians call Jesus' sacrifice 'atonement' since he is making up for human sin (all the way from Adam and</p>	<p>Christians believe that Jesus was baptised by John the Baptists (his cousin.) John feels he is not worthy to baptise Jesus, but Jesus says it is the right thing to do. John states, "I have come to baptise you with water but the one who comes after me with baptised you will the Holy Spirit." Jesus is baptised not because he is sinful, but to set an example of how to lead a sinless life like him and as a sign he will start his mission to go out to spread the</p>	<p>Jesus lived in the Roman Empire but the Roman leaders saw him as a threat to their power for claiming to be 'King of the Jews.' He was officially killed for treason. He also angered the Jewish authorities (Sadducees and Pharisees) for claiming to be the Son of God - Jews do not believe in a Trinity - they call it blasphemy (false belief about God.) Jesus had a Last Supper before he died where he handed out bread and wine, representing his body and blood that he</p>	<p>Upon Jesus' arrest, his disciple Peter cut off the ear of a Roman but Jesus said, "put your sword back in its place." Jesus was arrested, tried and crucified on a cross by the Romans as a punishment. However, Christians call this day Good Friday, as through his death they believe the sins of the world were transferred onto him (atonement) allowing individuals to be sin-free and have a better chance of being allowed into heaven. This saving from sin is</p>

<p>Eve,) he is also called the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world," since he is seen as a human sacrifice. Christians are influenced to celebrate Christmas as a festival to celebrate the incarnation of Jesus and they read the Bible, including Jesus' parables in order to learn moral lessons, since God was made man in order to spread the Good News to humanity.</p>	<p>words of God to humanity. At the baptism, the Father is heard saying, "this is my Son with whom I am well pleased" and the Holy Spirit is present as a dove. This influences Christians to also be baptised to purify themselves from sin and to please the Father. They are also encouraged to act as a 'sheep' leading a sin-free life dedicated to helping others.</p>	<p>would sacrifice. He told his disciples to "take this in remembrance of me" and to "love one another, as I have loved you." He said one of his disciples would betray him (go behind his back.) This disciple was Judas who told the Romans where Jesus was in exchange for two bags of silver. Christians are influenced by the Last Supper to take the Eucharist (bread and wine) to remember him, to live by their faith and obey God and to love one another as Jesus commanded.</p>	<p>known as salvation. Despite his physical and mental pain, Jesus forgave all of humanity on the cross, "forgive them Father for they know not what they do." Christians are influenced by the crucifixion to forgive those who have wronged them and to accept suffering in their own lives - if Jesus overcame his suffering then they can too.</p>
<p><u>The Resurrection</u></p> 	<p><u>The Ascension</u></p> 	<p><u>Judgement at Death</u></p>  <p><small>"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." Matthew 25:31-32.</small></p>	<p><u>Life after Death</u></p> 
<p>After Jesus died, the Bible states that he was seen again, he had risen from the dead. This is known as the resurrection. He was seen by his mother Mary and the disciples (his followers.) He was seen for 40 days after his death. "He is not here, he has risen." Christians are influenced by the resurrection to see Jesus as omnipotent as he overcame death and they believe him when he said he really was the Son of God - he was not lying about being God in human form. "I am the resurrection and the life." Christians say, "I believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting" (Apostle's Creed) to emphasis their belief that Jesus was risen after his death.</p>	<p>Christians believe that Jesus was risen and was seen for 40 days after his resurrection, but then decided that it was time to return to his Father in heaven. His return to heaven is known as the ascension. It is written that he ascended from the Mount of Olives surrounded by his disciples whom he blessed. Two angels took him up into the clouds and he is said to be "seated at the right hand of my Father." Christians are influenced by the ascension to believe that Jesus now lives in heaven with his Father and feel a sense of joy that Jesus had fulfilled his mission on Earth, so was able to return to heaven.</p>	<p>Christians believe that God will judge us at death but differ about when this will happen. Some say it will happen immediately but others say it will happen at the end of the world, after Jesus has returned to the Earth (the Second Coming.) All Christians believe in the resurrection - they will rise to heaven after death, but differ about who enters heaven. Very strict Christians say only those who believed in Jesus will enter heaven, since Jesus said, "I am the way the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me." Whereas other Christians say that as long as you are a good person then Jesus will allow you to enter heaven. This difference is known as salvation through grace (salvation as a free gift for Christian believers) vs salvation through good work (salvation due to helping others.)</p>	<p>Entering heaven or hell depends on the behaviour of the person. Heaven is a reward, described as a peaceful place with no pain or suffering; where God will "wipe every tear from their eyes." Whereas hell is a punishment for wrongdoers. Some Christians see it as a place of eternally burning flames and torment, whereas others see it as a darkness without the light of God. "It is a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth." Roman Catholics discuss a third place called purgatory; a place where the soul waits until it is cleansed enough to enter heaven. Christians are influenced by the prospect of an afterlife to do good works, like a 'sheep' in the parable of the Sheep and Goats, giving food and drink to the poor and to act like a 'Good Samaritan' and help their neighbour. They would also repent (apologize for their sin) to have a clean soul, ready for heaven.</p>