Christian Beliefs Overview

Creation	Creation	The Trinity	The Holy Spirit
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." (Bible) This line **influences** Christians to see God as omnipotent (omnipotent) and benevolent (all-loving) and to look after the planet (stewardship) since he created the planet for humanity.	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." (Bible) 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 to make sense of the three distinct aspects of God.	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.) - 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." (Bible)	The **Holy Spirit** was present at different times throughout the Bible. - **During creation** 'The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.' (Bible) - **During the immaculate conception** of Jesus, "She was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit." (Bible) - **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." (Bible) - **Pentecost** appearing to the disciples, "They were filled with the Holy Spirit." (Bible) Christians are **influenced** to ask for guidance from the Holy Spirit and pray to the Holy Spirit as a powerful force in their lives.

The Incarnation	Jesus' Baptism	The Last Supper	The Crucifixion
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." (Bible) Christians call Jesus' sacrifice '**atonement**' since he is making up for human sin (all the way from Adam and Eve,) he is also called the 'Lamb of God' 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 to learn moral lessons, since God was made man in order to spread the Good News to humanity.	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, 'Baptise you with water but the one who comes after me with baptised you will the Holy Spirit and fire." (Bible) 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 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.	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 would sacrifice. He told his disciples to "Take this in remembrance of me" and to "love one another, as I have loved you." (Bible) 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.	Upon Jesus' arrest, his disciple Peter cut off the ear of a Roman, but Jesus said, "Put your sword back in its place." (Bible) 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 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." (Bible) 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.

The Resurrection	The Ascension	Judgement at Death	Life after Death
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. Some people think it was a physical resurrection of his body as he was said to have eaten, others say it was a spiritual resurrection as he was said to have walked through walls. 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. 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.	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 the Father." (Bible) 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.	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." (Bible) Whereas other Christians say that if 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.)	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." (Bible) Whereas hell is a **punishment** for wrongdoers, "Weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Bible) 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. **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.

Exam practice

1. Explain two Christian **beliefs** about judgement. (4 marks)

P:	E:
P:	E:

2. Explain two different Christian **teachings** about the Trinity. (6 marks)

P:	E:
P:	E:

Q:	O: ( )

12 Mark Practice Questions:

"The resurrection is the most important belief in Christianity."
"There is no proof that Jesus is the son of God."
"The afterlife is a good way to get Christians to behave themselves."
"Salvation is God's greatest gift to humans."
"The stories of the incarnation prove that Jesus is the son of God."
"The Bible tells Christians all they need to know about God's creation."

Success Criteria:
-Write **12-mark questions** as three lengthy paragraphs - agree, disagree and opinion paragraph.
-Include points, explanations, examples and quotes.
-Link your ideas back to the question.
-Embed your quotes, in the Bible it teaches, "_____"…