**1.4 Matters of Life & Death Key Knowledge Revision Sheet**

**4.1 Origins of the Universe**

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| **Non-Religious** | **Creationist Christians** | **Liberal Christians** |
| Big Bang Theory: Georges Lemaitre (1927) We are here by chance. // Cosmic explosion which happened 13.7 billion years ago // Evidence found as heat can still be detected from initial explosion | Reject science as only God is omnipotent to have created the universe. // Breaks the sanctity of life. // Science is always changing so cannot trust ‘scientific evidence’ e.g. once thought the world was flat. // Evidence found in the Bible. It has ultimate authority as it is the word of God. Genesis details 7 day creation story ‘God said let there be light’ | Accept both beliefs – God could be the cause of the Big Bang Theory. ‘Let there be light’. BBT is compatible with the Bible. // Lemaitre was a Catholic priest so thought his theory did not challenge the belief in God. // Science explains how and religion explains why. The Bible is a metaphor not factual. |

**4.2 Sanctity of Life:** the belief that all life is holy and sacred as it was created by God.

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| ‘So God created mankind in his own image.’ (Genesis 1) // ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.’ (Jeremiah 1) // ‘Your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit’ (1 Corinthians) // ‘Thou shall not kill’ (Exodus) | **Why is the teaching of Sanctity of Life important?**   1. Shows God cares for humans. 2. Teaches all humans/life are equal. 3. Life is sacred. |

**4.3 Origins of human life**

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| **Non-Religious/Atheist** | **Creationist Christians** | | **Liberal Christians** | |
| Evolution – Charles Darwin ‘On Origin of Species’ (1859) We are here by chance. // Natural selection: species can change gradually over time to suit their environment. // Survival of the fittest – individuals who have features best suited to their environment are most likely to survive and pass on their genes.  Evidence: beaks of finches have evolved to catch and eat food better. | | Reject science as only God is omnipotent to have created the universe. He carefully planned for human life to exist. **//** Science is always changing so cannot trust ‘scientific evidence’ e.g. once thought the world was flat. **//** Breaks the sanctity of life. **//** Evidence found in the Bible. It has ultimate authority as it is the word of God. Genesis details 7 day creation story ‘God created man in his own image’ | | Accept both beliefs – God has power to use evolution to create humans. Animals are created on the 5th day and then humans on the 6th. Compatible with evolution. // Science explains how and religion explains why. // General Synod of Church of England 2010 agreed with evolution. The Bible is a metaphor not a factual book. |

**4.4 Abortion:**

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| The removal of a foetus from the womb before it can survive. UK Law – Abortion Act 1967:   1. Two doctors must agree 2. Allowed up until 24 weeks of pregnancy – unless the mother’s life is at risk. | **Medical Conditions:**  1. Serious permanent injury to the woman. 2. Puts the woman’s life at risk 3. High risk that the child would be severely disabled. 4. Puts at risk the physical or mental health of the woman or her existing children. |
| **Christian Reasons Against Abortion (Pro-Life)** | **Christian Reasons to Accept Abortion (Pro-Choice)** |
| ‘Thou shall not kill.’ (Exodus 20) | Jesus taught love and compassion ‘love thy neighbour’. |
| ‘Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.’ (Jeremiah 1) | The Church of England are opposed but in some circumstances may be the best option. Lesser of two evils. |
| Breaks the sanctity of life - The Catholic Church believes that life begins at conception. | Situation ethics: do whatever the most loving thing is – taught by Jesus. |
| **Non-Religious Reasons Against (Pro-Life)** | **Non-Religious Reasons to Accept Abortion (Pro-Choice)** |
| A foetus is a life that already possesses the full DNA to develop into a unique person. | Mother’s health will suffer |
| The woman’s right should not outweigh the rights of the foetus. | Unborn child severely disabled and have a low quality of life |
| Adoption is an alternative to abortion. The baby could be happy with a different family. | Cannot support the child/ parents are not ready |
| **British Humanist Society:** Abortions should be given safely however as a last resort. | |

**4.5 Life after Death**

* Resurrection: rising from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus is the strongest evidence. ‘‘Look at my hands and feet. It is I!’ (Luke 24)
* Remembered Lives: remember a past life e.g. a child who is able to give details about a previous life that they could not have known. Supports reincarnation – the soul is reborn again in another body.
* Paranormal: things to have a spiritual cause. Spiritualists/ mediums contacted by dead – experience ghosts, visions of the dead, telekinesis (objects moving without being touched).
* Logical belief: Near –death experiences can act as proof – medically dead and your soul leaves your body (out of body experience) and then your heart starts beating again and you live.
* Reward: Living a good life will be rewarded after they die. Day of Judgement – God will judge based on how they lived their life, giving them an afterlife they deserve.
* Comfort for those who are suffering or mourning the loss of loved ones.
* Meeting loved ones: ‘My Father’s house has many rooms… I am going there to prepare a place for you?’ (John 14:2)

**Why is the belief in life after death important for Christians?**

1. Impacts your daily life believing **God will judge you**.
2. ;Hopefulfor the future because they believe they will meet God.
3. Life after death is a core reason why **Jesus** came to Earth – free humanity from sin and enable them to live forever with God.

**4.6 Non-Religious Reasons Against Life After Death:** Humanists believe they spend too much time focusing on a ‘life to come’ and not enough time focusing on the one life they have.

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| **Non-Religious Challenge** | **Christian Response to Challenge** |
| The afterlife is a story made up to comfort people who are bereaved. Richard Dawkins ‘wouldn’t it be lovely to believe in an imaginary friend who listens to your thoughts… Who wants to believe a lie?’ | Christians do not believe comfort is proof of the afterlife. The Bible is evidence. They disagree the afterlife is a made up story. |
| Afterlife cannot be scientifically backed up by evidence. It is wishful thinking. | Science is not able to explain or prove everything. They trust in the Bible and the resurrection of Jesus. |
| Humanists, atheists and some Christians believe mediums are frauds. They are exploiting those who are bereaved. | Agree and concerned about mediums conducting séances. They may be exploiting those who are bereaved.  ‘Speak the truth to each other’ (Zechariah 8:16) against people who are misleading others. |
| Heaven and hell are outdated ideas invented to control people’s behaviour. Churches taught about hell to scare people into behaving. | Just because heaven and hell were used to control people in the past does not mean it doesn’t exist. |

**4.7 Euthanasia**: deliberate administering of life-ending medication by a third party

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| **Non-Religious Reasons For** | | **Non-Religious Reasons Against** |
| 1. **Voluntary euthanasia**: Allows the person to have a gentle, pain free death and they can choose how and when they die..  2. Dies with dignity rather than slowly getting worse mentally and physically.  3. Saves medical costs  4. Medics can focus attention on patients who have a chance of recovery.  5. Relieves the family of emotional and financial burdens.  6. Allows patient to decide when their quality of life is so low they would prefer to die. | 1. Requires judgement to be made that a life is no longer worth living – all people are valuable at all times.  2. May put pressure on sick people to choose euthanasia rather than seek a cure.  3 .Even if a sick person wants to die no one has the authority to take their life away.  4. **Non-voluntary euthanasia**: Doctors or relatives may make the choice without consulting the patient.  5. No person should value themselves as worthless.  6. Legalising would be a ‘slippery slope’ – how can you be sure that voluntary euthanasia really is voluntary? | |
| **Christian Reasons Against:**  1. Goes against the sanctity of life. 2. ‘Thou shall not kill’ (Exodus) 10 Commandments – Moses.  3. God created humans in his own image so only he has the power to give and take life.  4. Job 2:9-10 – has serious illness and recovers. 5. Hospice care is better. | | |

**4.8 Issues in the Natural World**

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| Threats | Christian responses |  |
| Pollution, waste disposal, global warming, deforestation, overuse of natural resources, animal abuse. | 1. Genesis – God created the universe as a gift to humanity.  2. Sanctity of life.  3. God gave humans a special responsibility over the planet. ‘Be fruitful and multiply..,rule over the fish…’ (Genesis 1)  4. Stewardship – to look after something for future generations.  5. Utilitarianism – greatest good for the greatest number  6. Situation ethics – loving thing | Care for animals – campaign, adopt, protect natural habitats, ban zoos and circuses.  The Christian Declaration on Nature, Assisi 1986: interfaith meeting on how to protect the environment. |