

Unit 2 = Religion and Medicine

(Christianity &

Key Concepts

Conception

- The moment a life begins (RC)
- The beginning of a pregnancy
- The uniting of sperm and ovum for a new life to begin
- When a human egg is fertilised

Embryology

- Knowledge and expertise in how things grow and develop
- The science of living things as they grow in early stages
- Experimenting with embryos and early forms of life
- Dealing with embryos and life forms from the very beginning

Quality of Life

- Feeling valued and on top of the world
- When a person feels of value and capable of contributing to life
- The extent to which life is meaningful and pleasurable
- Being free from undue pain, anxiety and stress

Transplants

- To remove a body organ and replace in a different body
- Placing an organ from a donor to save another life
- Replacing a worn out or diseased body part

Sanctity of Life

- Life is precious and utterly priceless
- Life in all its forms is sacred (a gift from God)
- No one should take life or deny it

The sanctity of Life

Sanctity of Life in Christianity

- God is interested and involved in each human's life.
- Life is sacred and a gift from God.
- Only God should take life away.
- Jesus showed in his teachings that all life should be valued.

When Christians state that life has sanctity, they are saying that life is special to God. Each person is a separate, human being with many rights, especially the right to life. Christian beliefs about God as creator include the belief that all humans are created as individuals who have their own purpose. Every individual is unique, and unlike any other

individual in the universe. Every human has a special place in God's eyes and in God's creation.

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb...."

Christians believe that God is the Lord of life because he is the Creator. God has given life to everyone, so it is only right that he decides when it begins and ends. As life comes from God, then the belief has developed that life itself is sacred - Holy and set apart for God. This means that life should be protected and used in the way which God would want.

Christian's believe that because life comes from God and that life is a gift, they have a responsibility to take care of themselves and others. They should try to do something useful with their lives rather than just waste them. They should look after their own health and the health of others. This includes not participating in unhealthy activities such as smoking over-eating and heavy drinking. These activities show ungratefulness for God's gift of life.

"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?"

Sanctity of Life in Islam

- Every soul has been created by Allah.
- Allah has a plan for each life.
- No one has the right to take their own life or anyone else's life.

"A soul cannot die unless Allah gives his permission..."

"Do not take life - which Allah has made sacred - except for a just cause"

"It is Allah who gives you life, then gives you death; then He will gather you together for the Day of Judgement"

Medical Science

Medical science has developed rapidly, and today it is possible to cure or help people survive illness or accidents that at one time would have been fatal.

It is possible for life to be created outside of the womb, and it is possible for life to be ended prematurely.

Such advancements bring dilemmas or at least a series of questions to do with the beginning of life, prolonging life and ending life.

In this topic you will look at issues such as

1. Infertility & Treatments
2. Genetics & Embryology

3. Cloning
4. Organ removal/transplants (Human & animal)
5. Abortion
6. Life support technology (use of and withdrawal)

1) Infertility & Treatments

For many couples it may be difficult for them to have babies. Up to 10% of couples in the UK have to get medical help in order to have a baby.

There are many different examples of solutions produced by medical technology known as Embryo Technology.

IVF (In-vitro-fertilisation/Test tube baby)

The egg of the woman is fertilised outside of the womb using either the husband's or a donor's sperm, and then replaced in the womb.

In some cases an egg is donated by another woman and is fertilised by IVF using the husband's sperm, and then it is inserted into the womb.

Embryo donation is when both the egg and the sperm come from donors, and are fertilised outside of the womb, and then placed inside the womb to allow the fertilised egg to develop and grow.

Artificial Insemination (AI)

Sperm is collected and placed into the uterus artificially.

AIH (Artificial Insemination by Husband)

The husband's sperm is inserted into his wife's uterus. This procedure is used when the couple have difficulty conceiving, but where the sperm and ovum are normally fine and healthy.

AID (Artificial Insemination by Donor)

An anonymous man donates sperm, which is then inserted into the uterus of a woman, by a medical doctor. This procedure is used when a couple have difficulty conceiving because of problems with the husband's sperm, or if the woman does not have a male partner.

IVF and AI do not always work and they can be very expensive procedures. However, if they do work and a baby is born, people can become parents and experience all the pleasures of bringing up their children.

Surrogacy

This is the procedure when a the egg and sperm, of wife and husband are fertilised by IVF (outside the womb) and then inserted into another woman's womb; or when another woman is artificially inseminated by the husband's sperm, using her own egg.

In both cases, after the birth the woman (surrogate) mother hands the baby to the husband and wife.

This method is used when the couple have difficulty conceiving because of problems either with the woman's egg, or with her womb not being able to keep a foetus for long enough.

<u>Reasons For IVF/AI</u>	<u>Reasons against IVF/AI</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life is a gift - no one has the right to a child.• Children have a right to know who their parents are.• Can the cost of treatment be justified when so many children are starving in the world?• IVF involves throwing away some fertilised eggs.• Fertilisation takes place without sexual intercourse. Allah/God intended procreation to be the end product of sex.• Third party (donor) IVF/AI is seen as adultery.• Semen/sperm should not be wasted or destroyed - (potential

	<p>life)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption is available, which means unwanted children could be placed with people who desperately want them.
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Christian views

Most Christian Churches believe that it's okay for science to assist childless couples to conceive - as long as the process does not involve anyone else egg/sperm (donors).

AIH is permissible as no third party is involved, and the sanctity of marriage is not interfered with.

IVF is sometimes accepted provided donor eggs/sperm are not used. However this must be the last resort.

Roman Catholics never accept IVF because it can lead to the creation of 'spare' embryos. These can be used for experimentation (14 days old or under) or simply thrown away.

Roman Catholics believe that life begins as soon as the egg and sperm meet (fertilisation/conception), and that even an embryo has rights. Embryos are human lives, and must not be treated as if they are disposable.

'Spare Embryo'

Anglicans (Church of England) and most Muslims believe that it is right to test on spare embryos for medical

research in order to learn more about the causes and cures for infertility, or for other medical research, e.g. looking at genes etc.. However there are strict rules. The embryo can only be used up until 14 days after fertilisation. The embryo can however be frozen, and then used at a later date.

The embryo may also be implanted into someone else's womb at a later date. This raises many questions.

Surrogacy -

Muslim views

If a couple or individual cannot have children then the **Qur'an** teaches that Muslims should accept what Allah has chosen for him or her.

“(Allah) creates whatever He wills. He grants daughters to whom He wills, and sons to whom He wills; or He gives both sons and daughters to whom He wills and makes barren whom He wills. Indeed He is Knowing. (Surah 42: 49-50).



However Muslims are allowed to take steps to achieve a family as it is desirable in to have children, but all other forms of natural conception must have failed.

Artificial insemination by the Husband (**AIH**) is permitted in Islam as long as the couple are still married and sperm is not used after the husband is deceased. In vitro fertilization (**IVF**) is also permissible in Islam only on the condition that both sperm

and egg involved are from a man and a woman who are **married** to each other. To use an egg or sperm from someone else would be consider having an affair and therefore no different from **zina** (adultery). No Muslim should ever consider this as a way of conceiving a child.



Surrogate motherhood is not allowed since it involves introducing the man's sperm into the uterus of a woman to whom he is not married. This is tantamount to having an affair with another woman. Also introducing a **third party** into the family may also mean that the child ends up confused about their own identity and place in the family.

In the case of surrogate motherhood, the question arises as to the identity of the real mother of the child. Is she the genetic mother who provides the egg from which the child is born, or if she is the woman whose womb serves as a carrier for the child? Such confusion may affect the child emotionally and he or she may feel torn between two mothers.

Finally, Muslims believe that the surrogacy amounts to **dehumanizing** pregnancy and the women involved by reducing womb down to the level of something that can be bought or sold. Muslims believe that any fertility treatment that involves an exchange of money devalues both the people involved and the entire idea of children. Ultimately, such a process goes against the dignity and honour that Allah has bestowed on man and woman.

Genetics



Embryology

- The science of living things as they grow in early stages.
- Knowledge and expertise in how things grow and develop.
- Dealing with embryos and life forms in their very beginning.
- Experimenting with embryos and early forms of life.

Genetic Engineering

- Genetic engineering means many different things. However, to explain it basically it is about changing or destroying parts of a human's genetic make up in the embryonic stages of life.
- Screening is one of the main reasons for embryos to be tampered with. This is when embryos are tested for genetically inherited diseases, so they don't get passed on.

Typical case study

Sarah has found out recently that she has 'Huntingtons' disease. She and her husband want to start a family. She is a Christian but does not want to pass her disease on. She can go to the hospital and have her embryos checked to make sure only the ones without the disease develop. The ones with the disease will be destroyed. Sarah is now 35 and is only just developing symptoms.

What should she do?

Things to think about/questions often raised;

- Is it right to screen for an incurable genetic disease that doesn't show itself till middle-age, like Huntingdon's disease?
- Is it right to end a life because it's not perfect?
- Do you know anyone with disabilities? Do you think it would be right to deny them their life because of this?
- Is it better to destroy embryos which are not perfect? Is it better to save society money?
- Does the idea of genetic engineering value humans for the wrong reasons?
- Is a person's soul more important than their physical shell?
- Is it better to live than not live at all, no matter what?
- How far is too far? What about 'designer babies'?

Christian Views

- Christians, (especially Roman Catholics) are generally against genetic engineering.
- They believe that we are all created in the image of God and entitled to life.
- They believe that it encourages people who are not 'perfect' to be destroyed before they are born.
- Christians believe that every person has the right to life.
- However, some Christians believe that God gave us the gifts of science therefore they are his will!

Muslim Views

- Generally, Muslims are for genetic engineering.
- They believe that Allah has given them these gifts and they should be used.
- Also, many Muslims believe that the embryo at the early stages isn't a viable life. (before ensoulment)
- It is in this belief that Muslims and Christians separate on the issue of Genetic engineering.
- Muslims generally believe that prevention is better than cure.

Cloning

- Cloning means making a living thing from another living thing such as a plant or animal. The process uses the genes of the first so they both have identical DNA.
- In the last few decades scientists have been trying to clone animals.
- They transplant DNA (the gene pattern which makes living things unique) from the cell of one animal into the cell of another which has had its DNA taken out.
- Now scientists in America have announced that they have created a clone of a human embryo.
- An announcement by an American company that it has created a human embryo clone is being viewed as both an incredible scientific achievement and a dangerous step.



"Went in for a simple blood test and got cloned by mistake."

- In 2005, British scientists announced they had successfully cloned the country's first human embryo. The only thing they plan to do with this research is to use cells from the embryos to help treat disease in the future.
- It was made illegal to clone embryos to make babies in 2001.
- Opponents of cloning say cloning humans is very wrong
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- In 1997 Dolly the sheep became the first ever cloned mammal.
- Scientists in Scotland used a new type of technique. When Dolly was born months later, it had taken 276 tries to get it right.
- Since Dolly cows, pigs, monkeys, rodents, cats, mules, horses and dogs have been cloned.
- Christians are generally against cloning.
- They believe the soul of the person enters the embryo at conception.
- They believe that dividing the cells are against Gods intent for that person.
- Christians believe it is unnatural and that people are trying to 'play God'.
- Christians believe that each person is unique and that Cloning goes against this.
- They are generally for anything which helps a couple conceive.
- They believe that advances in technology only exist because God has willed them.



- As a result they feel that if cloning an embryo is being used to better the chances of a couple having a child, then this is permissible.
- Remember Muslims also believe that ensoulment happens later on in the pregnancy!

Organ Donation

- Organ donation is the gift of an organ to help someone else who needs a transplant.
- Hundreds of people's lives are saved each year by the generosity of organ donation.
- The organs taken after death are then transplanted into the body of someone desperately needing them!



The first successful kidney transplant was in 1954. The first heart transplant took place in 1967

- Kidneys, heart, liver, lungs, pancreas and the small bowel can all be transplanted.
Tissue and bone can also be used.
Recently (this month) a lady had a skin and face transplant.



Christian Views

- Throughout his life Jesus taught people to love one another and he proved his love for the world upon the cross.
- It seems in keeping with this that Christians consider organ donation as a genuine act of love and a way of following Jesus' example.
- Christians feel it to be a generous and loving thing to do!

"Do unto others as you would wish them do unto you."

Matthews Gospel

- Sacrifice and helping others are important themes in the bible which teaches the principle of seeking for others what you hope others would do for you.
- It is not a rule for Christians that their organ's have to be donated - however it is generally seen as a loving thing to do!
- Jehovah's witnesses - agree with organ transplantation, but all blood must be drained from the organ before it is transplanted!

Muslim Views

In 1996 the Muslim Law (Shariah) Council UK issued a fatwa (religious opinion) on organ donation. The council resolved that:

- *The council supports organ transplantation as a means of alleviating pain or saving life.*
- *Muslims may carry donor cards*

- *The next of kin of a dead person, in the absence of a card or an expressed wish to donate their organs, may give permission to obtain organs from the body to save other people's lives.*
- Normally, violating the human body, whether living or dead, is forbidden in Islam - but the Shariah believes this can be overruled when saving another person's life.
- However there are also a significant number of Muslim scholars who believe that organ donation is not permissible .
- Both viewpoints take their evidence from the Qur'an and the Ahaadith and therefore individual Muslims should make a decision according to their understanding of the Shariah or seek advice from their local Imam or scholar.



Abortion

An abortion is when a foetus is expelled from its mother's uterus before the pregnancy reaches 'full term' (usually 40 weeks)

To many people the issue of abortion is to do with choice and rights:

- The Choices and rights of the mother, and whether she wants and is able to have the baby.
- The rights of the child not yet born, to be alive and grow independently.
- The choice about making decisions in accordance with one's own conscience.
- The right of religious believers to consider how their beliefs impact on such an issue.

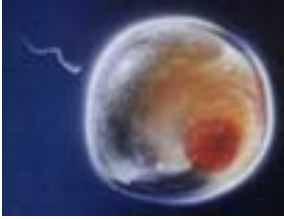
Abortion was legalised in Britain in 1967, and still remains legal provided that it takes place before the 24th week of pregnancy. If birth takes place during or after 24 weeks it is possible for the baby to survive.

According to the law, a woman can not choose to have an abortion without a good reason. She should persuade two doctors that her mental or physical health would be at risk if she went through with the pregnancy, or that any children she might already have would suffer if she had another baby.

Doctors and nurses do not have to agree with abortion, or agree to take part in caring for someone who chooses to have an abortion. If they want to, they can choose to have nothing to do with it. Different medical staff will do the work instead.

For many doctors abortion goes against the 'Hippocratic Oath' they had to sign when they became a doctor, which states that their job is to care for and preserve life.

Abortion is so controversial because, people hold different views about when life begins.



- Some people feel that life begins at conception - when the egg and sperm meet and fertilisation takes place.

- Some people feel that life begins when the heart starts to beat - week 3 (at this stage the beating heart can be seen on an ultrasound scan).



- Some people feel that life begins when the foetus is fully formed, e.g. it has all its organs, muscles, limbs, bones, and sexual organs. From now on it just has to grow and mature - week 12.

- Some people feel that life begins when the foetus will be able to survive outside of the womb - (any time after 20 weeks, usually between 22/23 weeks).



- Some people feel that life begins after birth - usually between 38 and 40 weeks.

Christian Views

Not much is said in the bible about abortion, because abortion was not commonplace at that time. Girls were often married very young, usually as soon as their first period. Abortion was not a safe procedure and medicine was not as developed as it is today.

The bible does not use the word 'abortion' or deal with the issue directly so many Christians hold different views, depending on how they interpret the bible.

Arguments for and against abortion, could be found in the bible.

The bible stresses the sanctity of human life:

“...Made in the image of God”



The bible sometimes suggests that we are predestined, and that God has a plan for each of us:

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart...”

One passage in the bible explains what should happen by law if someone causes a woman to miscarry:

“If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely but there is no serious injury the offender must be fined whatever the woman’s husband demands and the courts allow. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.”

This suggests that the foetus is considered to have the protection of the law.

However, some passages talk about understanding and forgiveness, especially the passages and teachings of Jesus.

"Let the person who is free from sin cast the first stone"

Different Church Teachings

Roman Catholic Church

Roman Catholics DO NOT agree with abortion. They believe in the sanctity of life and that we are all 'made in God's image'. It is always very wrong to kill an unborn child, at whatever stage of the development, because it is a sacred human life which deserves to be treated with the same respect as any other human being. Roman Catholics believe that life begins at conception and that abortion goes against the 10 commandment 'Do not murder.'

The purpose of sex is to pro create. If you are not ready to have children, then no sex is to take place.

In cases of rape, Roman Catholics will encourage women to either keep their child or give it up for adoption. They will not accept abortion, because the foetus should not have to pay the price for someone else's crime.

The Church of England (Anglicans)

Generally, they Church of England, Do NOT accept abortion, mainly for the same reasons as Roman Catholics however, they do however take the mother into consideration.

Ideally, the unwanted child should be given up for adoption however, if her physical or mental health is at risk, or the

health of the unborn child is at risk then an abortion may be accepted. Each case will be looked at individually.

Muslim Views

This is a very controversial topic for Muslims, and many do have different opinions about abortion. Life is seen to be sacred, and not disposable, except for just causes. Many people believe that Allah gives life so only he can end it.

The Qur'an is quite specific that abortion for purely social and economic reasons is not permitted:

"Do not kill your children for fear of want"

Muslims will however permit abortion if the aim is to save the life of the mother.

Some Muslims believe that it is also permissible if there is a strong likelihood of a serious deformity or disease in the child. However some Muslims believe that aborting for these reasons is wrong and that Allah understands things we cannot. There is a purpose to all life, however difficult it is for us to understand. There is also a purpose to suffering and that humans should not have expectations that life will be enjoyable or easy. Life is a test.

All Muslims believe that on Judgement Day Allah will take into account each person's 'niyyah' (intention) when judging their actions. So as long as your intentions are for the best of everyone involved even the unborn child, Allah will reward you for your actions.

Up to four months after conception the mother's rights are greater than those of the child; after 4 months the child has equal rights with the mother.

Most Muslims will accept abortion before 'ensoulment' or 'quickening' takes place. This is usually 120 days into the pregnancy. If an abortion takes place after this time, it must be due to the physical health of the mother being at risk, and not for any other reasons.

Life Support Technology