

Unit 8: Religion and Society Key Words

8.1 Rights and Responsibilities

Bible the holy book of Christians

Church the community of Christians (with a small c it means a Christian place of worship)

conscience an inner feeling of the rightness or wrongness of an action

the Decalogue the Ten Commandments

democratic processes the ways in which all citizens can take part in government (usually through elections)

electoral processes the ways in which voting is organised

the Golden Rule the teaching of Jesus that you should treat others as you would like them to treat you

human rights the rights and freedoms to which everyone is entitled

political party a group which tries to be elected into power on the basis of its policies (eg Labour, Conservative)

pressure group a group formed to influence government policy on a particular issue

Situation Ethics the idea that Christians should base moral decisions on what is the most loving thing to do

social change the way in which society has changed and is changing (and also the possibilities for future change)

8.2 Environmental and Medical Ethics

artificial insemination injecting semen into the uterus by artificial means

conservation protecting and preserving natural resources and the environment

creation the act of creating the universe or the universe which has been created

embryo a fertilised egg in the first eight weeks after conception

environment the surroundings in which plants and animals live and on which they depend to live

global warming the increase in the temperature of the earth's atmosphere (thought to be caused by the greenhouse effect)

infertility not being able to have children

in-vitro fertilisation the method of fertilising a human egg in a test tube

natural resources naturally occurring materials, such as oil and fertile land, which can be used by humans

organ donation giving organs to be used in transplant surgery

stewardship looking after something so it can be passed on to the next generation

surrogacy an arrangement whereby a woman bears a child on behalf of another woman OR where an egg is donated and fertilised by the husband through IVF and then implanted into the wife's uterus

8.3 Peace and Conflict

aggression attacking without being provoked

bullying intimidating/frightening people weaker than yourself

conflict resolution bringing a fight or struggle to a peaceful conclusion

exploitation taking advantage of a weaker group

forgiveness stopping blaming someone and/or pardoning them for what they have done wrong

just war a war which is fought for the right reasons and in a right way

pacifism the belief that all disputes should be settled by peaceful means

reconciliation bringing together people who were opposed to each other

respect treating a person or their feelings with consideration

the United Nations an international body set up to promote world peace and cooperation

weapons of mass destruction weapons which can destroy large areas and numbers of people

world peace the ending of war throughout the whole world (the basic aim of the United Nations)

addiction a recurring compulsion to engage in an activity regardless of its bad effects

capital punishment the death penalty for a crime or offence

8.4 Crime and Punishment

crime an act against the law

deterrence the idea that punishments should be of such a nature that they will put people off (deter) committing crimes

judgement the act of judging people and their actions

justice due allocation of reward and punishment/the maintenance of what is right

law rules made by Parliament and enforceable by the courts

reform the idea that punishments should try to change criminals so that they will not commit crimes again

rehabilitation restore to normal life

responsibility being responsible for one's actions

retribution the idea that punishments should make criminals pay for what they have done wrong

sin an act against the will of God