

# My Revision Notes: AQA AS Religious Studies: Religion and Ethics and Philosophy of Religion

## AS Unit A Religion and Ethics 1: Now test yourself answers

### 1.1 Utilitarianism

1. The ethical theory that argues that the correct way of action is that derived from working out what brings happiness to the greatest number.
2. It is a calculation used in Utilitarian theory to assess the best course of action to take.
3. It considers the consequences of a particular action or the 'end' result, and it is the assessment of this 'end' that determines whether or not the action is morally good. As it considers consequences it is also known as 'consequential thinking'.
4. Any three from the list at the top of page 10.
5. Other names for it include the 'pleasure calculus' or the 'felicific calculus' ('felicific' means to bring about happiness).
6. The most important contribution by Mill was his introduction of the idea of universalisability. Similar to Bentham's principle of utility, Mill wanted to show that what is right and wrong for one person in a situation is right or wrong for all. Mill also revised Bentham's form of Utilitarianism by revisiting the definition of happiness (pleasure) and, similar to Aristotle's idea of 'eudaimonia', he equated 'happiness' with the idea of what is good, wholesome, fulfilling and virtuous; that which leads to well-being. Thirdly he distinguished between pleasure that stimulated the mind (higher pleasure) and pleasure that was merely physical (lower pleasure).  
Could also have: Mill moved the calculation of pleasure away from quantity towards quality.
7. Strong Rule Utilitarianism argues that rules are universal in nature and, if applied in any situation, they would lead to the greatest happiness of the greatest number (i.e. they would maximise happiness). Weak Rule Utilitarianism argues that on certain occasions the rules can be disobeyed if a greater amount of happiness will result.
8. Although Bentham is said to be an Act Utilitarian, he did not claim that it was necessary to calculate the rightness and wrongness of every act from the hedonic calculus, just that this was generally the case.
9. Act, Rule, happiness, higher (and lower pleasures), quality (not quantity).
10. Any two from page 13.
11. Any two from page 13.
12. Any two from page 13.
13. Any two from page 13.

## 1.2 Situation Ethics

1. It was a middle way that rejected the two extremes of: (1) rigidly applying set principles and following laws as absolutes without consideration of context (legalism). (2) Acting without reference to any rules and having total freedom to act as one pleases (antinomianism).
2. Any from:
  - (I) 'an innate, radar-like, built-in faculty – intuition'
  - (II) 'inspiration from outside the decision maker – guidance by the Holy Spirit'
  - (III) 'the internalised value system of the culture and society' (introjection)
  - (IV) 'the reason making moral judgements or value choices' (Aquinas).
3. He is not so much interested in what it 'is' as in what it 'does'.
4. To look forward (pro) and not backwards (retro) to solve moral problems.
5.
  - (i) Situation Ethics is about faith - positivism
  - (ii) Situation Ethics is always considerate of the circumstances - relativism
  - (iii) Situation Ethics has people as its main concern - personalism
  - (iv) Situation Ethics is always practical - pragmatism
6. Explain what the following terms mean for Fletcher:
  - (a) Agape – unconditional love
  - (b) Justice – unconditional love distributed
7. (a) A Christian being asked to go to war – do not kill. (b) Having a child through IVF to save a sibling because of genetic illness – do not commit adultery.
8. Any three from the bullet list on page 19.
9. Any three from the list on page 20.
10. Any three from the list on page 20.
11. Any one from the list on page 21.
12. Any one from the list on page 21.

### 1.3 Religious teachings on the nature and value of human life

1. The nature of being human, the status of being human and the purpose being human.
2. A redemption through forgiveness and the atonement for sins.
3. Survival and populating.
4. The idea of a 'relationship' between God and humanity is seen in the Judeo-Christian tradition through ideas of covenant and chosen people, later fulfilled through the sacrifice of Jesus. In its infancy the relationship involves a betrayal and disobedience on the part of humanity; however, the purpose of humanity is to achieve its potential as sons and daughters of God through the new covenant established through Jesus Christ.
5. The fall depicts the relationship between humanity and God that was broken. It has been traditional Christian teaching that we were all present seminally in the sin of Adam and Eve and so we all inherit a sinful nature.
6. Armenians taught that all human beings have total free will. Luther (hence Lutherans) believed that sin had so clouded the human mind that our free will was severely restricted and that only by grace could we turn to God.
7. (1) To develop in our 'likeness' of God (Genesis 1:26) by living as God would want them to. (2) To follow the Greatest Commandment and Golden Rule.
8. It is very important because as human beings it gives us the power to shape our own destiny as a species.
9. The New Testament teaches that within the Christian Church there is neither Greek nor Jew, but 'all one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:26–28). The parable of the Good Samaritan teaches to treat everyone with kindness and compassion.
10. The Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church have a traditional view on the role of women. Women are not allowed to become priests within these traditions.
11. Given that in Christianity the general human condition is one of a sinful disposition then the very basic view of humanity involves disability on a spiritual level for Christians. On a practical level the belief is that in all situations, the strong should support the weak with compassion.
12. Man is seen as being created in God's image to rule over everything in creation.
13. All life has been created by God and is therefore sacred and precious.
14. The very basis of Christian teaching is the self-sacrifice made by Jesus when he died on the cross.

## 1.4 Abortion and Euthanasia

1. Any 4 from: birth, conception, viability, potentiality, consciousness and ensoulment.
2. The sanctity of life means that life is sacred and therefore assumes the existence of a God. Singer and science see life as valuable in itself. Singer sees all life forms as valuable whereas a scientific view of human beings and their position within the process of evolution can see humans as having greater status than other beings.
3. It 'holds no currency and has no rights'.
4. Where a woman has an ectopic pregnancy and removal of the fetus is almost certain to kill it, but the primary aim is not to kill the fetus.
5. Any two from the bullet list on page 35.
6. Because between, within and beyond religions there are different views based upon a variety of different sources.
7. The Roman Catholic Church believes that abortion is murder, breaking the commandment 'Do not kill'. Some followers of the Anglican tradition believe that in certain circumstances it is the lesser of the two evils, for example if the mother is in danger.
8. Active, passive and voluntary.
9. The right to refuse treatment and the right to prolong life through treatment.
10. How could the new law be effectively monitored?
11. 'Good death', 'easy death' or 'gentle death'.
12. (a)Active euthanasia (iii)  
(b)Passive euthanasia (i)  
(c)Voluntary euthanasia (ii)  
(d)Non-voluntary euthanasia (v)  
(e)Involuntary euthanasia (iv)
13. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that euthanasia is wrong but some may argue that actions should be guided by Christian love and that unnecessary suffering should be avoided.
14. Christianity.
15. Any two from the list on page 41.
16. Any two from the list on page 42.
17. Any two from the list on page 42.
18. Any two from the list on page 43 ('against' column).
19. Any two from the list on page 42.
20. Any two from the list on page 42.