

Glossary – Christianity By Topic

Belief in God	39 Articles of Religion	A historical record of beliefs (or doctrines) held by the Church of England
Belief in God	Ascension	Going up into heaven
Belief in God	Atheist	Someone who does not believe in the existence of God
Belief in God	Atonement	The action of restoring a relationship, in Christianity, Jesus' death and resurrection restores the relationship between God and human beings.
Belief in God	Baptism	The Christian ceremony that welcomes a person into the Christian community
Belief in God	Begotten	Born of
Belief in God	Benevolence	All good
Belief in God	Big Bang Theory	A scientific theory about the origins of the universe which suggests that the universe is expanding away from a single point, a process which started around 13.7 billion years ago.
Belief in God	Charismatic	A power given by God e.g. Inspired teaching
Belief in God	Conservation	Protecting something from being damaged or destroyed
Belief in God	Creationism	The belief that the world was created in a literal six days and that Genesis is a scientific/ historical account of the beginning of the world
Belief in God	Creed	A statement of firmly held beliefs, for example, the Apostle's Creed of the Nicene Creed
Belief in God	Crucifixion	Being nailed to a cross and left to die
Belief in God	Day of Judgement	God assesses a person's life and actions
Belief in God	Environment	The surroundings in which plants and animals live and on which they depend for life
Belief in God	Eschatology	An area of Christian theology which is concerned with life after death
Belief in God	Evolution	The process by which different species have developed from earlier species
Belief in God	Free will	Having the freedom to choose what to do
Belief in God	Grace	Undeserved love
Belief in God	Heaven	Place of eternal paradise where Christians believe they will spend their afterlife
Belief in God	Hell	Place of punishment and separation from God
Belief in God	Holy Spirit	The Spirit of God, who gives the power to understand and worship
Belief in God	Humanist	A nonreligious person who looks to reason and empathy in order to live a meaningful life
Belief in God	Humanity	All human beings
Belief in God	Immortal soul	A soul that lives on after death of the physical body
Belief in God	Incarnation	To take on flesh, God becomes a human being
Belief in God	Jesus Christ	The Son of God, who came into the world as human being
Belief in God	Nativity	The birth of someone
Belief in God	Natural evil	Suffering caused by natural events, such as earthquakes
Belief in God	Natural Law	A set of moral principles based on the idea that people should choose to do good actions that comply with God's wishes
Belief in God	Omnipotence	All powerful
Belief in God	Paranormal	Experiences which suggest that there may be a nonvisible, spirit world, such as ghosts or communications through mediums
Belief in God	Prayer	A way of communicating with God

Belief in God	Prophecy	A message from God in which he communicates his will
Belief in God	Purgatory	A place where the souls of the dead are cleansed and prepared for heaven
Belief in God	Repentance	To say sorry for, and turn away from, any wrong doing
Belief in God	Resurrection	Rising from the dead; also the view that after death God recreates a new body in a heavenly place
Belief in God	Salvation	Being saved from sin and the consequences of sin, going to heaven
Belief in God	Satan	'the adversary'; one of God's angels who rebelled against the rule of God
Belief in God	Sin	Anything that prevents a relationship with God, either because the person does something they shouldn't or neglects to do something they should
Belief in God	Spiritualist	Someone who believes that the spirit of dead people can communicate with living people
Belief in God	Stewardship	Looking after something so it can be passed on to the next generation
Belief in God	Survival of the fittest	The idea that members of a species that are best suited to an environment survive
Belief in God	Trinity	God as one being, in three persons
Belief in God	Universalism	The belief that because of the love and mercy of God everyone will go to heaven
Belief in God	Vale of soul-making	An environment in which human beings can overcome evil by making good choices
Belief in God	Vision	Seeing or hearing someone or something holy

Living the Christian Life	Advent	A season of preparation for Christmas
Living the Christian Life	Alpha	A course by churches and local Christian groups which enables people to find out more about the Christian faith in a relaxed setting.
Living the Christian Life	Anoint	Apply oil to a person's head as a sign of holiness and God's approval
Living the Christian Life	Charity	Giving to those in need
Living the Christian Life	Christingle	A lighted candle symbolising Jesus as the light of the world, often carried by children in church celebration around Christmas time.
Living the Christian Life	Commodity	A useful or valuable thing which satisfies particular wants or needs
Living the Christian Life	Convert	To change from one set of beliefs to another
Living the Christian Life	Denominations	The name given to the main groups within the church
Living the Christian Life	Ecumenism	A movement that tries to bring different Christian denominations closer together
Living the Christian Life	Epiphany	A moment of suddenly revealing something surprising or great
Living the Christian Life	Equality	Treating people in the same way irrespective of differences such as sex, race, education, disability or sexuality
Living the Christian Life	Eucharist	: the ceremony commemorating the Last Supper, involving bread and wine; also called Holy Communion or Mass
Living the Christian Life	Evangelism	Preaching the gospel in order to attract new believers
Living the Christian Life	General Synod	The national group within the Church of England that debates issues relating to Christian belief and practice.
Living the Christian Life	Holy Week	The week before Easter
Living the Christian Life	Intercession	Prayers for those who are suffering
Living the Christian Life	Liturgical	A set form of worship, usually following agreed words
Living the Christian Life	Local church	A meeting place for local believers and the community of believers who gather there
Living the Christian Life	Mission	Sending individuals or groups to spread the Christian message
Living the Christian Life	Missionary	A person who preaches and invites people to convert to the Christian faith
Living the Christian Life	Non-liturgical	A form of worship which is not set
Living the Christian Life	Ordination	The appointment of men and women to professional ministry in the Church
Living the Christian Life	Outreach	An activity to provide services to people in need.
Living the Christian Life	Parish	A community of local believers within a particular denomination
Living the Christian Life	Pentecostalism	A Protestant movement that puts special emphasis on a direct and personal relationship with God through the Holy Spirit
Living the Christian Life	Pilgrimage	A journey to a religious or holy place
Living the Christian Life	Reconciliation	Restoring peace and friendship between individuals and groups
Living the Christian Life	Rites of passage	Events marking key stages in life
Living the Christian Life	Sacrament	An important Christian ceremony
Living the Christian Life	Sermon	A talk or teaching from a church leader
Living the Christian Life	Shrine	A holy place
Living the Christian Life	Spiritual gifts	Gifts given by God to believers e.g. Speaking in 'tongues', a special language
Living the Christian Life	Vigil	Staying awake at night in order to pray; also the name given to the celebration of a festival on the eve before the festival itself
Living the Christian Life	Worship	Believers expressing love and respect for, and devotion to God.

Matters of Life and Death	Abortion	Ending a pregnancy by deliberately removing a foetus by surgical or medical means
Matters of Life and Death	Euthanasia	The deliberate administering of life ending medication by a third party.
Matters of Life and Death	Hospice	A place which provides care for people with a serious, terminal or incurable illness
Matters of Life and Death	Law	Guidelines as to how people should behave
Matters of Life and Death	Prochoice	Holding the belief that the mother should be able to choose whether to have an abortion
Matters of Life and Death	Prolife	Holding the belief that the foetus has a right to life'
Matters of Life and Death	Quality of life	The value given to life depending on how far a person can find enjoyment and pleasure from it
Matters of Life and Death	Sanctity of life	The belief that life is created by God and made holy by him
Matters of Life and Death	Situation ethics	Ethical decisions made according to the specific context of the decision
Matters of Life and Death	Utilitarianism	The belief that the right course of action is the one the will produce the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people
Matters of Life and Death	Conservation	Protecting something from being damaged or destroyed
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Marriage and the Family	Abstinence	Choosing to restrain oneself from doing something, for example, having sex or eating food (also called fasting)
Marriage and the Family	Adultery	When a married person has a sexual relationship with someone other than their spouse.
Marriage and the Family	Annulment	Declaration that a marriage is null and void, in effect, as if it had never happened, for reasons such as being under age or being forced to marry.
Marriage and the Family	Cohabitation	Living together in a sexual relationship but without legalising the union through marriage
Marriage and the Family	Conception	The moment when a sperm fertilises an egg, creating an embryo that can develop into a baby
Marriage and the Family	Divorce	The legal ending of a marriage
Marriage and the Family	Faithfulness	Not having a sexual relationship with anyone other than a partner
Marriage and the Family	Gender discrimination	Acting upon a prejudice about someone's gender, for example, not appointing a woman to a high pressured job on the assumption that she must be too fragile for the role, or expecting a man to do a heavy physical task on the assumption that he must be strong.
Marriage and the Family	Gender prejudice	Making a judgement about men or women on the basis of their gender, for example, judging all women to be emotionally fragile or all men to be emotionally strong.
Marriage and the Family	Heterosexuality	Sexual attraction to members of the opposite sex
Marriage and the Family	Homosexuality	Sexual attraction to members of the same sex
Marriage and the Family	Marriage	The legal union of a man and a woman or a same-sex couple
Marriage and the Family	Moral evil	Suffering caused by humans, such as war
Marriage and the Family	Persecution	The ill treatment of an individual or group usually on the grounds of religion, politics or ethnicity
Marriage and the Family	Pride	A social movement encouraging homosexual people to express their sexuality more openly and with self esteem.
Marriage and the Family	Procreation	To have sex and produce children
Marriage and the Family	Promiscuity	Sexual relations with multiple partners on a casual basis
Marriage and the Family	Sanctity of marriage	The idea that marriage has special significance as a holy gift from God