

Theme 2 - Beliefs about death and the afterlife

- Christian beliefs about life after death, and the afterlife including soul, judgement, heaven and hell**
- How Christian and Humanist funerals reflect beliefs about the afterlife**

Key Concepts			
Afterlife	Life after death; belief existence continues after death.	Euthanasia	'Mercy killing'. Allowing the death of someone suffering from a terminal illness.
Environmental Sustainability	Ensuring natural resources let people live well now and, in the future.	Evolution	Process by which different creatures are believed to have developed from earlier less complex forms.
Abortion	When a pregnancy is ended so there is no birth.	Soul	Spiritual aspect of a being that connects someone with God.
Quality of life	Extent to which life is meaningful.	Sanctity of Life	Belief that life is precious or sacred.

Christian beliefs about life after death

Although there are many different views about the nature of the afterlife, Christians believe that death is not the end and that the **soul** lives on. It is believed **God** on **Judgement Day** will decide who will be rewarded. There are different views about the nature of **Heaven** but most believe it is entered through beliefs in the **teachings of Jesus**. There are also different views about the nature of **Hell** although most Christians believe it is a separation from **God**. Beliefs about resurrection are often based on interpretations of **John 11** and **1 Corinthians**. **Catholics** believe the **souls** of good believers go straight to **Heaven**. Many believe there is a **purgatory** which is a place of cleansing before gaining entrance to **Heaven**.

How Christian funerals reflect beliefs about life after death

Many Christians consider it important to be buried as they believe on the **Day of Judgement** bones of the dead will reform for bodily **resurrection**. At Christian funerals **prayers** are said for the dying person so showing the importance of a relationship with **God**. **Biblical** passages which refer to **resurrection through faith** with **Jesus** are read at funerals e.g. **John 11.25**. **Candles** are often lit to reflect **Jesus** as the **light of the world**.

How Humanist funerals reflect beliefs about the afterlife

Humanists do not believe in a **soul** or in an afterlife. There are many different views amongst Humanists and funerals can be held in many places as they do not have a place of **worship**. Funerals will have readings and songs that were special to the deceased.

Key Sources of Authority

- Jesus teachings 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die, and whoever lives by believing in me will never die'**
- John 11:24-27
- Paul's teachings regarding the spiritual body being raised** - 1 Corinthians 15:42-44

Key Connections

Each area of study will connect with other areas in Component 1 and Component 2 (Christianity). Consider how...

- beliefs about life after death relate to good, evil and suffering** (Component 1)
- beliefs about life after death relate to the afterlife - judgement, resurrection, heaven and hell** (Component 2).

Exam Practice

- What is meant by soul?** (2)
Explain from two religions or religious traditions beliefs about life after death. (8)