

# Christianity – Belief in God

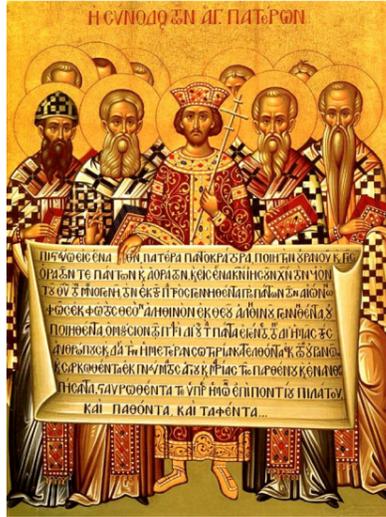
<b>Trinity</b>	God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
<b>Nicene Creed</b>	Statement of Christian beliefs: "I believe in God... I believe in Jesus Christ... I believe in the Holy Spirit..."
<b>Creation</b>	The world and humanity which God made
<b>Incarnation</b>	God came to earth in the flesh as Jesus. The incarnation is celebrated at Christmas.
<b>Last Supper</b>	Jesus' Last Meal with his disciples. Jesus instituted the Eucharist... "This is my body... Do this in remembrance of me"
<b>Crucifixion</b>	Jesus' death on a cross. Christians remember this on Good Friday
<b>Resurrection</b>	The belief that Jesus rose from the dead three days after his crucifixion. This is celebrated at Easter.
<b>Ascension</b>	Jesus goes back to His Father in heaven 40 days after resurrection
<b>Salvation</b>	Being saved from sin so that one can enter heaven
<b>Grace</b>	God's unconditional love for everyone E.g. the gift of salvation is through God's grace
<b>Atonement</b>	Rebuilding of relationship between God and people (reconciliation).
<b>Eschatology</b>	The study of what will happen after death
<b>Judgement</b>	On the Last Day, Christians believe they will receive judgement from God and be sent to Heaven or Hell
<b>Purgatory</b>	A place where souls go to be purified so that they can enter heaven (Catholic belief)
<b>Problem of Evil</b>	How can a good and powerful God allow suffering and evil?

<b>The nature of God</b>	<b>Omnipotent</b> (all powerful) as shown in the creation, and book of Exodus when God frees the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt	
	<b>Omnibenevolent</b> (all loving) as shown in Psalms which refers to God's "steadfast love"; love that is committed, reliable and trustworthy. "For God so loved the world he gave his only Son..."	
	<b>Omniscient</b> —God is all knowing and all seeing. God knows all which is why He can be fair and bring justice at judgment day. This doesn't mean God controls everything, He still gave humans FREE WILL, but knows what they will choose to do.	
	<b>Trinity</b> – God is 3 beings in one. The father, the son, the holy spirit.	
<b>Creation</b>	The story of God creating the world and everything in it can be found in Genesis. Some Christians ( <b>FUNDAMENTALISTS</b> ) take this <b>literally</b> (everything really happened exactly as is written) and some ( <b>LIBERAL CHRISTIANS</b> ) take it <b>non-literally</b> (there may be some truth to the story but it might not have happened exactly as its written down. E.g. the days in the creation story could refer to 6 periods of time, not days, and God may have created the world using the Big Bang / evolution	
	Christians believe that the holy spirit and Jesus were both involved in creation as it says in the Bible 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'	
<b>Jesus Christ</b>	The <b>incarnation</b> means 'taking on flesh' Christians believe that God came to earth in Human form through Jesus. This story is told through the 4 gospels, also known as the nativity and is the reason why Christmas is celebrated. In the gospel of Luke, the account is very factual. The account of John is more symbolic, with Jesus being referred to as the <b>word</b> .	
	Jesus was accused of blasphemy and crucified by the Romans. This is why Easter is celebrated. Jesus shared the last supper with his disciples and was then given away by Judas. Jesus was beaten and mocked and then hung up on a cross to die. His body was placed in a tomb but Mary found it was not there on Sunday as Jesus had risen (resurrection)	
	Christians believe that since creation, humans gradually became separated from God through sin. As he is living and graceful though he has given Christians a way to be saved from these sins and to be forgiven (and therefore enter heaven). This is known as <b>salvation</b> and can be achieved through following Jesus "I am the way, the truth and the life, the way to the Father is through me."	
	Atonement is the idea that sins can be forgiven by God, and the relationship between God and humans can be healed.	
	Ascension: takes place 40 days after the <b>Resurrection</b> : Jesus, in the company of the disciples, is taken up in their sight after telling them to remain in Jerusalem until the coming of the <b>Holy Spirit</b> and telling them that he will return; as he ascends a cloud hides him from their view.	
<b>Salvation</b>	What are we saved <i>from</i> ? In the Christian doctrine of <b>salvation</b> , we are saved from "wrath," that is, from God's judgment of sin. Our sin has separated us from God, and the consequence of sin is death. For Christians, the promise of salvation is the belief that Jesus took the punishment of sin, and therefore Christians can be united with God in heaven.	
<b>The afterlife</b>	Eschatological beliefs refer to ideas about the end of life. Christian believe that living in sin will result in Hell and following Gods law will result in Heaven. Some Christians take 'heaven' and 'hell' to mean real, physical places. Others believe they are more of a state of being – either away from God or with God.	
	The story of the <b>sheep and goats</b> teaches Christians that they will be separated at their end of their life they will be judged and separated just as a shepherd separates goats from sheep. The 'sheep' will be with God and will have helped others in their lives. The 'goats' will be sent away and will be those who didn't help others.	
	<b>Luke 16</b> contains the <b>Parable of the Rich man and Lazarus</b> . Laid outside the gate of this rich man's house, however, was an extremely poor man named <b>Lazarus</b> who simply hoped "to eat what fell from the rich man's table" The rich man was completely indifferent to the plight of Lazarus, showing him no love, sympathy, or compassion whatsoever. Eventually, they both died. Lazarus went to heaven, and the rich man went to hell.	

# Christian Beliefs

**NICENE CREED** = Statement of Christian beliefs.

Christians believe that there is only one God. Christian beliefs about the Holy Trinity are clearly stated in the **Nicene Creed** after Arius was exiled and excommunicated from the Church for teaching that Jesus was created by God, and therefore inferior.



Emperor Constantine called together all of the Bishops to combat the heresy, and they wrote the creed acknowledging Jesus to be one with God the Father, and ensuring the all Christians would always belief in the trinity.

**WE BELIEVE** in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come

AMEN.

## PROBLEM OF EVIL AND SUFFERING

### What is the problem of evil and suffering?

If there is a God, why does evil exist?  
If God is omnibenevolent and omnipotent, why does evil exist?  
**God and evil cannot coexist** as God is supposed to be **Omnipotent** and **Omnibenevolent**.

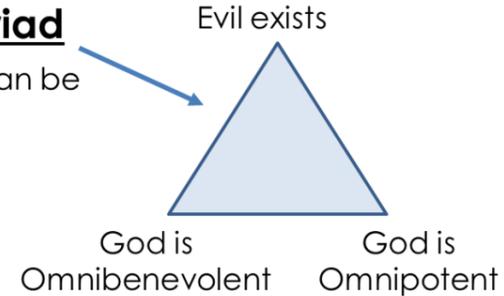
**Evil definitely exists**

**God does nothing about it, he must not care (Omnibenevolent)**

**God does nothing about it, he must not be all powerful (Omnipotent)**

### Inconsistent Triad

Only two sides can be true!



saying that suffering was part of his universal plan and Job wouldn't understand—God created the world and was omniscient, there was no way Job could expect to have understanding of the creation and the reasons why things happen.

Instead Job should just have faith that God is good.

### PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN RESPONSES TO EVIL



Prayer

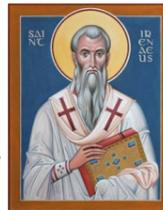


Charities



Mission and medical care

Irenaeus' Theodicy	Augustine's Theodicy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evil is both Gods' and humans' responsibility.</li> <li>God allows suffering to help people grow into the likeness of God</li> <li>Developed by John Hick who argued that God uses evil to improve and has more meaning than if God had made them perfect in the first place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taught that evil was an absence of evil.</li> <li>Moral evil is a consequence of human sin.</li> <li>Taught that original sin (as a result of the Fall) is responsible for suffering.</li> <li>Humans are Responsible for evil, not God.</li> </ul>



### Key Terms

<b>Good</b>	That which is considered morally right, beneficial and to our advantage
<b>Evil</b>	That which is considered extremely immoral, wicked and wrong
<b>Forgiveness</b>	A choice to not blame someone for wrongdoing and not seek revenge or let resentment build up
<b>Free Will</b>	The ability to make choices voluntarily and independently. The belief that nothing is pre-determined
<b>Punishment</b>	A penalty given to someone for a crime or wrong they have done
<b>Sin</b>	Deliberate immoral action, breaking a religious or moral law
<b>Suffering</b>	Pain or distress caused by injury, illness or loss
<b>Justice</b>	Fairness; all people having equal opportunities and provisions