

## What is 'salvation'?

In Christianity, salvation means *being freed from sin and its consequences*.

Christians believe that human sinfulness means that they had rejected God and no longer had a perfect relationship with him.

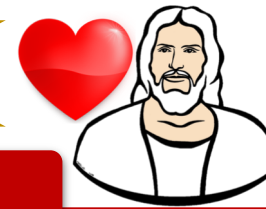
However, God loves humans and so provided a way for human sins to be 'paid for' so that the relationship between humans and God could be repaired and humans can hope to spend eternity with God after death.

Christians believe that the way God did this was to become human, as Jesus, and then to die on the cross.

Christians believe that by sacrificing his life Jesus paid the price for human sin once and for all.



# SALVATION



## Grace

For Christians, grace is the love and mercy shown by God because God wants them to have it, not because they have done anything to deserve or earn it.

It is a free, generous and undeserved gift from God. If Christians repent of their sins, they are truly sorry for them. Catholics believe that this makes them children of God and gives them the desire to change and do good.

Grace comes about in a special way in the sacraments, which Catholics believe are an encounter with God.

Salvation brought by Jesus comes to the world today through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist. As a result of receiving these sacraments, Catholics should try harder to live a Christian life. All Christians are called to a life of holiness, so they should try to live up to the teachings of Jesus.

## The importance of grace, free will and salvation for Catholics

Salvation from sin is important because without it, a person sin will stop them from having a relationship with God and ultimately might mean hell or purgatory after death. The salvation of humankind was the purpose of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Jesus is the saviour of the world for Christians. Christians believe they do not deserve this but are given it freely by God. It is up to humans how they respond. God created humans with free will. They can choose to accept what Jesus has done or reject it. God wants everyone to have a relationship with him, but it cannot be forced.

Salvation is important for Catholics because it explains why the sacraments of baptism, reconciliation, confirmation healing and the Eucharist are at the heart of Catholic life.



## How did Jesus' death bring salvation?

Christians use a range of ways to describe how Jesus' death and resurrection reconciled (reconcile means to forgive and restore relationships) God and humans. The most common is the idea of a sacrifice. In the Old Testament animal sacrifice was common practice. People sacrificed an animal, often a lamb, as an offering to God. The person making the sacrifice hoped to mend their relationship with God. However, they had to make frequent sacrifices as they continued to sin.

John the Baptist describes Jesus as '*the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world*' (John 1:29) This means that just as people had sacrificed a lamb, Jesus, death was a sacrifice to make up for human sin. But because Jesus was divine (meaning 'perfect or God like'), perfect and without sin his sacrifice restored the human relationship with God for all times, unlike the animal sacrifices.

So by sacrificing his life, Jesus 'paid the price' for human sin. Human beings could not do this for themselves, as they were sinners. He earned salvation by suffering this punishment on behalf of all human beings. Christians believe that, in turn, Jesus extends the salvation he earned to all those who believe in him. So Jesus is the savior of the world.



## "Lamb of God"

## Knowledge Check

1. Define the term *salvation*
2. What do humans need to achieve salvation?
3. What do Christians believe is a consequence of human sinfulness?
4. Why do Christians believe Jesus died for them?
5. Why is Jesus known as the "Lamb of God"? Where does the idea of the lamb as a sacrifice come from?
6. What is Jesus described as in John 1:29?
7. Define the term *grace*
8. What are the seven sacraments?

## Choose a Task

1. Create a detailed mind-map (try to make this visual)
2. Create a multiple-choice quiz (aim for at least 10 questions)
3. Create a poster/leaflet

**CHALLENGE!**  
Turn over the mat and try to complete your task without looking at the information. Then refer back to the task mat to see what you have missed/could have included.

## Exam Question

- a) Describe Catholic teaching on belief in God's grace [5]
- b) Describe Christian belief in salvation [5]