

Topic 2: What Makes a Good Life?

Exploring what different religions believe makes life meaningful and how we can live well.

★ ASPIRE FOCUS: We can aspire to live with purpose, show kindness and make a positive difference in the world. ★

1 KEY VOCABULARY

Word	Meaning
 Ethics	Study of right and wrong and how we should live.
 Morality	Ideas about right and wrong that guide our behaviour.
 Values	Important beliefs that influence our choices.
 Conscience	Inner sense of right and wrong that guides us.
 Agape	Selfless, unconditional love in Christianity.
 Forgiveness	Choosing to stop anger and not punish.
 Duty	Moral responsibility to do what is right.
 Humanism	Belief that people can live good lives without religion.
 Worldview	Set of beliefs and values that shapes how we live.

2 MAKING MORAL DECISIONS

People make moral decisions using different guidance and approaches.

SOURCES OF MORAL GUIDANCE



Religion – teachings from holy books, leaders and traditions.



Conscience – our inner sense of right and wrong.



Reason – using logic to think about consequences.



Society – laws, culture and others' opinions.



Experience – learning from the past and our own lives.

ETHICAL APPROACHES



Utilitarianism (teleological) – aims to bring the greatest happiness for the greatest number.



Kantian Ethics (deontological) – focuses on doing your duty and treating people as ends, not means.

3



Christianity

- Follow Jesus' example of love and forgiveness.
- Aim to love God and love your neighbour.
- Show kindness and help others.
- The Bible teaches how to live a good life.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbour as yourself."

Matthew 22:37-39



Judaism

- Live by the mitzvot (commandments).
- A good life brings blessing and helps repair the world (tikkun olam).
- Justice and kindness are central.
- Torah helps guide our choices.

"You shall love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord."

Leviticus 19:18



Islam

- Worship Allah and follow the Five Pillars.
- A good life pleases Allah and brings reward.
- The Qur'an guides us to mercy, justice and kindness.
- Purpose is to live in submission to Allah.

"Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it."

Qur'an 99:7



Buddhism

- Develop compassion and follow the Noble Eightfold Path.
- A good life reduces suffering for all.
- Wisdom and mindfulness are important.
- Enlightenment (nirvana) is the goal.

"Hated is never appeased by hatred; by love alone is hatred appeased."

Dhammapada 5



Sikhism

- Live honestly and remember God.
- Use your talents to serve others (seva).
- Help the community and promote justice.
- Aim to live truthfully and do good deeds.

"Recognise the whole human race as one."

Guru Granth Sahib, Pg. 1299



Humanism

- Use reason, empathy and respect for human dignity.
- A good life helps others and promotes human rights.
- Meaning comes from human choices and positive impact.

"We can live good lives without religion or belief in a God."

Humanists UK

4 COMPARING WORLDVIEWS

 Love and Compassion	All worldviews value love and kindness. They encourage caring for others.
 Rules and Guidance	Religions follow rules from holy books. Humanists use reason and human rights to guide choices.
 Purpose and Meaning	Religions see purpose in serving God and others. Humanists find purpose in helping people and making the world better.
 Similarities and Differences	All aim to reduce suffering and improve life. They differ in beliefs about God and where meaning comes from.

5 KEY PEOPLE



Jesus
Central figure of Christianity. Taught love, forgiveness and service. Source: The Bible



The Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama)
Founder of Buddhism. Taught that suffering can be reduced through compassion, wisdom and right living. Source: The Tripitaka



Peter Singer (Humanist)
Philosopher who argues we should use reason to reduce suffering and improve wellbeing. His ideas link to utilitarian thinking. Source: Practical Ethics (1979)

6 KNOWLEDGE SUMMARY



Different people and worldviews have different ideas about a good life.



Ethics helps us think about right and wrong and make moral decisions.



Christians believe following Jesus leads to a good life.



Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and Sikhs follow teachings that guide how to live well.



Humanists believe we can live good lives using reason, empathy and respect.



People use different guidance and ethical approaches, including utilitarianism (consequences) and Kantian ethics (duty), when making moral decisions.



WE CARE

We show kindness, respect and compassion in all that we do.



WE CHALLENGE

We ask big questions, think deeply and learn from mistakes to improve.



WE COMMIT

We are proud of our learning and our positive contribution to the school community.



WIDER READING

Read more about worldviews, sacred places and inspiring people from different faiths.