

# Exam Question Bank

## PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

1. Critically compare Plato's Form of the Good and Aristotle's Prime Mover [40]
2. To what extent is Aristotle's use of the senses to make sense of reality more convincing than Plato's reliance on reason? [40]
3. "There is no evidence for dualism!" Discuss [40]
4. The word 'soul' is best understood as a metaphor. Critically evaluate this claim. [40]
5. Talk about a separate soul rests on a category error! Evaluate this statement. [40]
6. *To what extent are a posteriori* arguments are more persuasive than *a priori* arguments for God? [40]
7. It is more likely that the universe came about by chance than that God designed it. Discuss this statement. [40]
8. To what extent does Aquinas provide sufficient explanation for his conclusion "and this is what everybody calls God"? Discuss with reference to the Third Way. [40]
9. The Cosmological Argument is defeated by the fallacy of composition. Discuss. [40]
10. Critically assess the view that the Ontological Argument is the most persuasive argument for the existence of God. [40]
11. "Existence is not a predicate." Discuss [40]
12. To what extent does Anselm's ontological argument justify people in having Christian faith? [40]
13. The ontological argument fails because it can be reduced to absurdity: it is obvious that perfect islands don't exist by definition, so God can't. To what extent is this judgement fair? [40]
14. There is no way to establish the validity of religious experiences, so they are not a reliable basis for faith in God. Discuss. [40]
15. Are corporate religious experiences any more reliable or valid than individual experiences? [40]
16. Religious experience is a good pointer towards the existence of God, but it is not a sufficient basis for belief in God in itself. Discuss this statement. [40]
17. To what extent does Augustine's theodicy succeed in defending God against the charge of allowing evil and the suffering it causes? [40]
18. Why would a perfect God need to put people through a 'vale of soul-making'? [40]
19. To what extent is the evidential problem of evil a greater challenge to Classical Theism than the logical problem of evil? [40]
20. Is it possible to successfully defend monotheism in the face of evil? [40]
21. The Christian concept of God is incoherent! Discuss. [40]
22. Critically evaluate the claim that Richard Swinburne provides the most useful understanding of the relationship between divinity and time. [40]
23. To what extent does Boethius succeed in resolving the problems of divine knowledge, benevolence, justice, eternity and human free will? [40]

24. God can only do what is logically possible. Discuss. [40]
25. Critically compare symbol and analogy as approaches to religious language. [40]
26. The Via Negativa is an unhelpful way of approaching religious language. Discuss. [40]
27. Meaningful theological discussion depends on the Cataphatic approach to language; it is impossible through the Apophatic way. Critically assess this claim. [40]
28. Aquinas' analogical approaches to religious language are too limiting to support religion. Discuss. [40]
29. A symbolic understanding of religious language renders religious discourse incomprehensible. Critically evaluate this claim. [40]
30. Critically assess the claim that Religious Language is necessarily non-cognitive. [40]
31. To what extent can Scripture mean anything if religious language is understood to be non-cognitive? [40]
32. How far is Aquinas' analogical view of theological language valuable in the philosophy of religion? [40]

## ETHICS

1. To what extent is Aquinas' natural law a helpful method of moral decision-making when it comes to Assisted Dying? [40]
2. Critically assess the view that something or someone being good depends on its success or failure in achieving its *telos*. [40]
3. To what extent is it fair to say that the universe as a whole – including human nature – is inclined towards the good? [40]
4. Is the principle of double effect an adequate defense? [40]
5. Situation ethics provides the most helpful method of moral decision-making. Discuss. [40]
6. To what extent does something being good, bad, right or wrong depend on the extent to which, in any given situation, *agape* is best served? [40]
7. Is it fair to say that, given his misunderstanding of the Christian concept of *agape*, Fletcher's Situation Ethics is merely a version of Utilitarianism? [40]
8. Situation ethics is an unhelpful approach because it renders decision-making entirely individualistic and subjective. Discuss. [40]
9. Kantian ethics provides a helpful method of moral decision-making when it comes to Business. Discuss. [40]
10. Does goodness depend on doing one's duty? [40]
11. Critically assess the view that Kantian ethics is too abstract to be applicable to practical moral decision-making. [40]
12. "Kantian ethics is so reliant on reason that it unduly rejects the importance of other factors, such as sympathy, empathy and love in moral decision-making." Evaluate this claim. [40]
13. Utilitarianism is unhelpful when making decisions about sex. Discuss. [40]

14. The right action is always that action which makes most people happy. Discuss. [40]
15. Utilitarianism fails because it is impossible to measure pleasure. Critically evaluate this view. [40]
16. Assess the view that Natural law is a more helpful approach to euthanasia than situation ethics. [40]
17. The religious concept of sanctity of life has no meaning in twenty-first century medical ethics! Discuss. [40]
18. To what extent should a person have complete autonomy in medical decision-making? [40]
19. Is there really a moral difference between killing somebody and letting somebody die? [40]
20. "Utilitarianism a more practical way of making decisions in business ethics than Kantian Ethics!" Discuss [40]
21. The concept of corporate social responsibility is nothing more than 'hypocritical window-dressing' covering the greed of a business intent on making profits. Critically assess this view. [40]
22. Capitalism stands against human flourishing! Discuss. [40]
23. To what extent is it possible to be a good consumer? [40]
24. To what extent does globalisation encourage the pursuit of good ethics as the foundation of good business? [40]
25. Is "what does "good" mean?" the most important question for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Moral Philosopher? [40]
26. Saying that an action is "wrong" is meaningless! Discuss. [40]
27. Everybody knows what is right and what is wrong! Discuss. [40]
28. Critically compare Aquinas and Freud on the concept of guilt. [40]
29. To what extent is Freud's account of conscience more convincing than that of Aquinas?
30. Is the voice of conscience the same as the voice of reason? [40]
31. To what extent is conscience the product of education? [40]
32. "We are all determined by our genes." To what extent is this a fair claim? [40]
33. Religion should have no place in 21<sup>st</sup> Century sexual ethics. Evaluate this claim. [40]
34. "Decisions about sex are personal and private; they are nobody else's business." Critically assess this statement. [40]
35. To what extent are normative theories useful in making decisions in sexual ethics? [40]

## DEVELOPMENTS IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

1. "Both Augustine's interpretation of the Fall and his doctrine of Original Sin are simply wrong!" Discuss
2. Critically assess the view that if Augustine is right, humans can never be morally good. [40]
3. Augustine's view of human nature is an optimistic one. Discuss this claim. [40]

4. Is there a distinctive human nature? [40]
5. Is it possible to discuss when God's judgement will take place meaningfully? [40]
6. Could hell be eternal? Discuss. [40]
7. "Heaven is the transformation and perfection of the whole of creation" Discuss [40]
8. Is purgatory a state through which *everyone* goes? [40]
9. To what extent can God can be known through reason alone? [40]
10. Faith is sufficient reason for itself. Critically evaluate this claim. [40]
11. To what extent can human beings have natural knowledge of God after the Fall? [40]
12. Is natural knowledge of God the same as revealed knowledge of God? [40]
13. Is it wrong to trust in God, when we have no evidence of His existence? [40]
14. Jesus was only a teacher of wisdom! Discuss [40]
15. Was Jesus was more than just a political liberator? [40]
16. Was Jesus' relationship with God truly unique? [40]
17. Did Jesus think he was divine? Discuss. [40]
18. To what extent are Christian ethics distinctive? [40]
19. Are Christian ethics are personal or communal? [40]
20. To what extent is acting with love sufficient to live a good life? [40]
21. Is the Bible is a comprehensive moral guide? [40]
22. Critically evaluate the view that Christians should not practise civil disobedience. [40]
23. Is it always possible always to know God's will? [40]
24. Critically evaluate Dietrich Bonhoeffer's approach to suffering. [40]
25. To what extent has Bonhoeffer's theology relevance today? [40]
26. If Christ is the 'truth', can there be any other means of salvation? [40]
27. "A good God could not send anybody to hell!" Discuss.
28. Will all good people be saved?
29. To what extent does theological pluralism undermine central Christian beliefs?
30. Can a Christian be a theological pluralist? [40]
31. Inter-faith dialogue has not contributed practically towards social cohesion. Evaluate this claim. [40]
32. Should Christians seek to convert people from other faiths?
33. Christians should try to convert atheists. Discuss. [40]
34. To what extent does scriptural reasoning relativise religious beliefs? [40]
35. The Church cannot change to reflect secular views of gender. Discuss [40]
36. To what extent have secular views of gender equality undermined Christian gender roles? [40]
37. Is motherhood is liberating or restricting? [40]
38. To what extent is the idea of family entirely culturally determined? [40]
39. Critically compare Ruether's and Daly's approaches to sexism and patriarchy within Christianity, as it has developed in the mainstream Churches. [40]
40. Has Christianity a future? [40]
41. Christianity is essentially sexist! [40]
42. If God is male, then man is God! Discuss [40]
43. Can a male saviour save women? [40]
44. Critically assess the view that only women can develop a genuine spirituality. [40]
45. Can God be mother? [40]

46. Are Christian values just human values? [40]
47. "Christianity is a major cause of personal and social problems!" Discuss this claim. [40]
48. "Secularism presents an opportunity for the Church to develop new doctrines and practices." Critically evaluate this idea. [40]
49. Should Christianity continue to play a role in public life within the UK? [40]
50. Are British values actually Christian values? Should they be? [40]
51. To what extent should Christian theology engage with atheist secular ideologies?
52. Assess the view that Christianity tackles social issues more effectively than Marxism. [40]
53. Liberation theology has not engaged with Marxism fully enough! Discuss. [40]
54. Critically assess the view that since Christians should not show favouritism, it is wrong to offer a preferential option for the poor. [40]