







AQA Religious Studies A – Theme D: Religion, Peace and Conflict

Key Words			
Forgiveness	Pardoning someone for wrongdoing	Peace-making	Working toward bringing about an end to war and a state of peace
Greed	Going to war to gain land or natural resources such as oil	Protest	A public expression of disapproval, often in a big group, can be peaceful or violent
Holy War	A war that is fought for religious reasons, usually backed by a religious leader	Quakers	A Christians denomination who worship in silence and are well known pacifists
Just War	A Christian theory that asks whether a war is fought justly	Reconciliation	Restoring friendly relationships after a war or conflict
Justice	Bringing about what is right and fair, according to the law or God’s will	Retaliation	Deliberately harming someone as a response to them harming you
Nuclear Weapon	A weapon using a nuclear reaction to cause massive damage	Self-Defence	Protecting yourself or others from harm
Pacifism	A belief that all forms of violence are wrong, commonly held by Quakers	Terrorism	Using violence in order to further a political or religious message
Peace	A state of happiness and harmony, an absence of war	WMD	Weapons of mass destruction: chemical, nuclear or biological weapons

Key Ideas			
Protests and Terrorism 	<p style="text-align: center;">Protests</p> <p>The right to gather together and protest is a fundamental democratic freedom. UK law allows for peaceful public protest but sometimes protests can turn violent and become a riot. Christians often protest unjust laws or for other forms of justice but would rarely advocate the use of violence in protest.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Terrorism</p> <p>Examples of terrorism include suicide bombing, mass shootings or using vehicles to injure pedestrians. The aim of terrorism is to make society aware of a cause or issue and to make people frightened to go about their business. Christians don’t promote political violence + believe terrorism is wrong as it targets innocent people</p>
Reasons for War 	<p>Greed To gain more land or to control important resources such as oil or gas. e.g. The UK and US invading Iraq in order to control oil resources</p>	<p>Self-Defence To defend one’s country against invasion or attack or to protect allies who are under attack e.g. UK threatened by Nazi invasion in WWII</p>	<p>Retaliation To fight against a country that has done something very wrong or to fight against a country that has attacked you e.g. US invading Afghanistan in retaliation for 9/11</p>
Nuclear War and WMD 	<p>Nuclear weapons work by a nuclear reaction and devastate huge areas and kill large numbers of people. They are a type of WMD (weapons of mass destruction) which also includes chemical and biological weapons. All these weapons are not allowed under the Christian Just War Theory and would therefore be rejected by most Christians. Nuclear weapons were used at the end of WWII in Japan to force the Japanese to surrender. Some people say their use was justified as it prevented more suffering even though 140,000 people died. Although some Christians justify war with ‘an eye for an eye’, this cannot be used to justify the use of weapons of mass destruction as they are not a proportionate response.</p>		
Holy War 	<p>A Holy War is a war which is fought for religious reasons, often with the backing of religious leaders. An example of this was the Crusades fought from the 11th-14th Century by Christians, backed by the Pope. Religion can still be a cause for war today such as in Northern Ireland where Protestant and Catholic Christians fought a civil war between 1968-98.</p>		
Just War Theory 	<p>Just War Theory is a Christian moral theory for working out if a war meets internationally accepted criteria for fairness. These are some of the conditions that must be met in order for a war to be just:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just Cause – fought in self-defence or to protect others • Just Intention – fought to promote good and defeat wrongdoing • Last Resort – only going to war if all other methods have been tried first • Proportional – excessive force should not be used and innocent civilians must not be killed 		
Pacifism and Christian Responses to War 	<p>Pacifism is the idea that all forms of violence are wrong. Pacifists such as Quakers refuse to take part in war and often choose to be a conscientious objector (someone who doesn’t go to war for moral reasons) or to assist in medical tasks like ambulance driving. Christians try to follow Jesus’ teaching that “blessed are the peacemakers”</p>		<p>Christians try to show mercy and agape to victims of war and provide them with assistance. This can be through charity or through welcoming them into their churches. It can be victims in their own country or refugees such as people fleeing from Syria or Yemen. This is an example of ‘love your neighbour’ in action.</p>