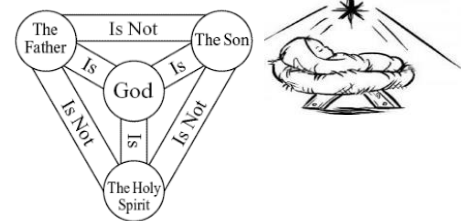


Christian beliefs about God - Incarnation

Key Words	
Incarnation	The belief that God was born as a human being in the person of Jesus. The word 'Incarnation' means born in flesh.
Crucifixion	Jesus' death on the cross. Christians believe that Jesus died like this to pay the price for our wrongdoing, so we have a chance to go to Heaven.
Gospels	The four versions of the life of Jesus in the New Testament of the Bible. The word 'Gospel' means good news.
Incarnation	The belief that God was born as a human being in the person of Jesus. The word 'Incarnation' means born in flesh.
Metaphor	A word or phrase that is not meant to be taken literally but is used to describe something else. E.g. saying someone has a 'heart of gold'.
Miracle	An event that seems impossible and makes people think God must have made it happen.
Nativity	The story of the birth of Jesus.
Salvation	The Christian belief that we have been saved from the punishment for sin by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The word Salvation means being saved.

Christians think of Jesus as The Son in the Trinity. So Incarnation and Trinity are linked because Incarnation is how The Son came to live on Earth. God did not send someone else - he came to Earth himself!



Incarnation and the Big Story of the Bible



The Bible tells us that God's relationship with humans was spoiled by humans turning away from him.

Christians believe that God sent prophets to help repair the relationship by reminding us about God.

But in the end, he had to come himself to live among us and show us how to live and what to believe.



Why is Incarnation so important to Christians?

- It helps them to know God better and understand what he is like, because he lived among them.
- It helps them to know what to believe and how to live because they have the words and example of Jesus to follow.
- Without Incarnation, there could not have been the Crucifixion and Christians believe this is what has given them the hope of salvation.



How do Christians show their belief in Incarnation?

- They celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas with church services, nativity plays and Christmas carols.
- They worship and pray to Jesus because they know he is God.
- They follow Jesus' teachings and examples because they know it is God who is telling them and showing them how to live.

John's Gospel tells us about seven things that Jesus said and seven things that he did that help Christians to understand more about what God is like.

<u>The seven 'I am' statements in John's Gospel.</u>	
Jesus used metaphors to describe himself and these help Christians to know what God is like. When he said these things, he was telling people that he is God.	
I am...	Possible meaning
the bread of life	I will give you all your spirit needs to stay strong, like bread gives your body what it needs to stay strong
the Good Shepherd	I will lead you look after you and protect you like a shepherd leads, looks after and protects his sheep
the Light of the World	I bring hope and goodness into the world to banish despair and evil, like a light banishes darkness.
the Way, the Truth and the Life	I will show you the right way to live and tell you the truth about what to believe, so you can have eternal life.
the True Vine	I am the thing that connects you all and that you grow from, like a vine connects the grapes that grow from it.
the Door of the Sheep	I am the one who can let you in to eternal life, like the door of the sheep lets the sheep into the fold.
the Resurrection and the Life	I have power to raise you after death into a new life in Heaven.

<u>The seven signs in John's Gospel.</u>	
John tells us about seven miracles Jesus performed, which help Christians to realise that he is God and see what God is like.	
Miracle	What happened
Feeding the crowd	Jesus fed a large crowd with just five loaves of bread and two fish. There was enough for everyone and there were even leftovers!
Healing the official's son	Jesus healed a child who lays dying in another town. Even though he was not with the child, he made him better.
Walking on water	When the disciples were in their boat on Lake Galilee in a storm, they saw Jesus walking towards them across the water.
Raising Lazarus to life	Jesus' friend Lazarus had died. Jesus went to his tomb and called him out. Lazarus came out - he was alive!
Healing the blind man	Jesus met a man who was completely blind. He rubbed mud in his eyes and the man could see. Jesus said he could cure spiritual blindness as well as physical blindness.
Healing the paralysed man	Jesus met a man who had been unable to walk for over 30 years. He wanted to go into a pool that had healing powers, but could not get himself in. Jesus commanded him to get up and walk, and he did!
Turning water into wine	At a wedding, the wine had run out. Jesus called for some jars of water and when the host poured it out, it had turned into wine.

Think...how do the seven signs show Christians God's power and love?

Do they show Christians anything else about God?

Are the seven 'I am' sayings or the seven signs more helpful in understanding God?



