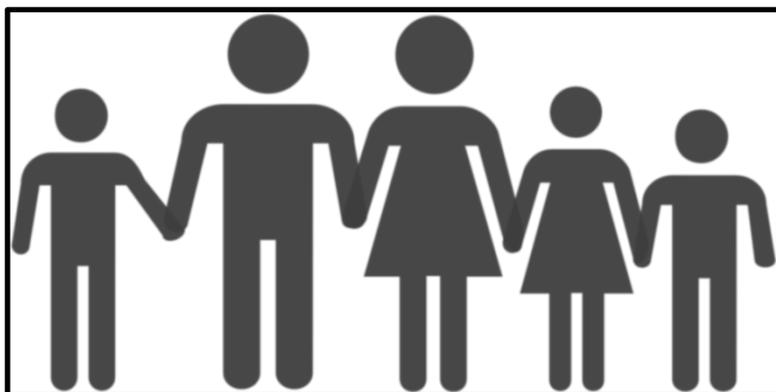


# Relationships & Families

## Revision

## Guide



Specification Content:	Done?
<b>Sex, marriage and divorce</b>	
• Human sexuality including heterosexual and homosexual relationships	
• Contraception and family planning	
• The nature and purpose of marriage	
• Same-sex marriage and cohabitation	
• Divorce, including reasons for divorce, and remarrying	
• Ethical arguments related to divorce, including those based on the sanctity of marriage vows and compassion	
<b>Families and gender equality</b>	
• The nature of families, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the role of parents and children</li> <li>• extended families and the nuclear family.</li> </ul>	
• The purpose of families, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• procreation</li> <li>• stability and the protection of children</li> <li>• educating children in a faith.</li> </ul>	
• Contemporary family issues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• same-sex parents</li> <li>• polygamy.</li> </ul>	
• The roles of men and women	
• Gender equality.	
• Gender prejudice and discrimination, including examples	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Key Terms:

**Adultery:** A sexual relationship between a couple not married to each other but married to/in relationship with others (affair).

**Age of consent:** According to the law, the age at which a person is considered old enough to give consent to have sex.

**Annulment:** Cancellation of a marriage in Roman Catholic tradition, as if marriage never was.

**Civil marriage:** Non-religious marriage.

**Civil partnership:** Legal union of two people of same gender; now of equality with heterosexual marriage in all respects.

**Commitment:** Making a promise or pledge, in this case, in marriage.

**Celibacy:** Not having sexual relations.

**Chastity:** Sexual purity, e.g. not having sex before marriage.

**Cohabitation:** Where a couple live together without being married/in civil partnership.

**Contraception:** Precautions taken to prevent pregnancy and to protect against contracting/transmitting STIs (sexually transmitted infections).

**Contract:** A binding agreement between two sides.

**Covenant:** An agreement based on promises between two sides, here in marriage where the agreement is made before God (as a witness) and with God (as a partner).

**Divorce:** Legal ending of a marriage.

**Extended family:** Family unit comprising mother, father and children, but also grandparents, cousins etc.

**Family planning:** Planning when to have a family and how big a family to have by use of birth control practices and/or contraception.

**Gender discrimination:** Acting on prejudices against someone because of their gender.

**Gender equality:** Belief that both genders have equal status and value, so discrimination against either is wrong.

**Gender prejudice:** The belief that one gender is 'better' than the other.

**Heterosexuality:** Being physically/sexually attracted to persons of the opposite gender.

**Homosexuality:** Being physically/sexually attracted to persons of the same gender.

**Nuclear family:** Family unit made up of mother, father and their child(ren).

**Polygamy:** The practice of one man having several wives.

**Procreation:** Having a child; seen as a duty in many religions.

**Remarriage:** Marriage for the second time, after divorce ending an earlier marriage.

**Responsibility:** Duties; what a person has to do as part of the agreement they have made, or role they have taken on.

**Single parent family:** Family unit in which child(ren) and one parent, either mum or dad, live together.

**Vows:** Promises made by bride and groom during marriage ceremony.

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## Sex, marriage & divorce

### Human sexuality including heterosexual and homosexual relationships:

Human sexuality refers to the way people express themselves as sexual beings. People begin to have sexual feelings at puberty. This is a natural part of human biology that usually leads to intercourse with the opposite sex and reproduction. A heterosexual relationship involves people of the opposite gender, while a homosexual relationship involves people of the same gender e.g. two men or two women. Both are legal in the UK over the age of 16.



As sexual intercourse can produce new life, the Christian Church teaches that the only place for this to occur is within a marriage, as this is believed to provide the most stable environment. However, the use of contraception, increased divorce rates and changing views in society means that for a lot of people, this isn't a major concern. Today, sex before marriage, having multiple sexual partners, children outside of marriage and homosexual relationships are much more common and have little, if any, taboo surrounding them. Since 2014, all homosexual relationships are entitled to marry or have civil partnerships, if they choose, making them equal to heterosexual relationships. However, this hasn't always been the case.

<b>1885</b>	Sexual acts between homosexuals are made illegal.
<b>1967</b>	Homosexual acts were declared legal for people over 21 except in the armed forces.
<b>1994</b>	Age of consent for homosexual acts is reduced to 18.
<b>2000</b>	Homosexuals are allowed to serve in the armed forces.
<b>2001</b>	Age of consent for homosexual acts is reduced to 16.
<b>2004</b>	Civil partnerships are recognised in law.
<b>2014</b>	Same-sex marriage is recognised in law.

Many Christians see heterosexual relationships as part of God's plan for human. In Genesis, it says that man and woman should be joined together and 'increase in number'. This is why some Christians are against sex outside of marriage and why some are against contraception and homosexual

"Do not have sexual relationships with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable."

*Leviticus 18:22*

relationships. Other Christians believe that they should do the most loving thing and adapt the Christian teachings to fit a changing world. One reason why some believe this is the above teaching in Leviticus. The meaning of it is something not all Christians agree on and

therefore, they can't decide whether being gay is acceptable or not. This teaching appears to only apply to male homosexuals and there are very few teachings, if any, that relate to female homosexuals. The Catholic church teaches that homosexual people should be chaste and not act on their feelings, otherwise they are sinning. The Church of England welcomes homosexual Christians who live in a faithful and committed relationship, but they aren't allowed to marry in church. Some Christians believe that same sex relationships should receive equal acceptance to heterosexual relationships. The Church of Scotland has started to change their teaching on this and looks set to allow same sex marriage in their churches. However, churches and other places of worship cannot be forced to perform same sex marriages.

**Sex before marriage:** Historically, it was considered to be scandalous for a woman to have sex before marriage. While this didn't stop people having sex before they got married, it has become normal for couples to have sexual intercourse before they get married. Many Christians believe that sex expresses a deep, loving, lifelong union that requires the commitment of marriage. As a result, many are chaste before they marry and do not agree that sex should be casual or temporary. Most Christians agree that using people for sex or being irresponsible and not protecting against STI's or pregnancy is irresponsible.

*'Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. **Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.**' 1 Corinthians 6: 18-19*

While both the Anglican and Catholic churches teach that unmarried people shouldn't have sex, some Christians accept that for some people, sex before marriage is a valid expression of their love for each other and therefore they don't class it as a sin.

**Sex outside of marriage (adultery):** All religions place a high value on faithfulness in marriage. Adultery, having sex with someone who isn't your husband or wife when you are married, is considered a sin. This is because when you get married, you make a commitment to the person you are marrying. Adultery is betraying their trust and the promises each of the partners made to each other when they got married. When Christians get married, they not only make promises to each other, but to God also. Adultery means they've broken those promises and is one of the Ten Commandments – 'You shall not commit adultery'. Jesus also spoke against adultery, after he forgave a woman who had committed adultery 'go now and leave your life of sin.'



**Contraception and family planning:** Most people in Britain today will use contraception of some kind, whether they are in a marriage, long term relationship or having casual sex. Not all methods of contraception prevent STI's e.g. the pill, contraceptive patch or injection, the calendar (rhythm) method, spermicide, iud or sterilisation only prevent pregnancy (and none are 100% effective). Contraception is useful as it helps

couples plan when they want to have children, without having to abstain from sex.

All Christian churches agree that having children is a blessing from God. However, most recognise that using contraception is an appropriate way of ensuring couples have children when it is appropriate e.g. making sure they have enough money. However, the Catholic Church teaches that artificial contraception e.g. the pill, is not natural and as God's teaching is for couples to '*go forth and multiply*', couples should have sex with the aim of having children. The Catholic Church is also concerned that contraception makes it easier for people to have sex both before marriage and outside of marriage. However, due to increases in human population and STI's including the spread of HIV, the Church had to change its teachings in order to protect people. Therefore, if people are using contraception for these purposes, then it is seen as acceptable.

**Christian teaching about marriage:** Marriage used to be defined as the legal union between a man and a woman. However, when the UK law changed in 2013 allowing same sex marriages, it changed to the legal union of two people. Many Christians opposed this change because of the way that it changed the nature of marriage and a lot of Christians thought that it should stay as a unique relationship between a man and a woman that involves their ability to create new life. Despite this, the law changed, although Churches and other places of worship do not have conduct same sex marriages.



Lots of Christians believe that marriage was one of the gifts God gave humans at Creation. They consider it natural for a man and woman to leave their parents and become 'one flesh' through which they can bring new life into the world. Some Christians believe that marriage is a sacrament, a lifelong union bless by God, that reflects the sacrificial love of Jesus, and an agreement before God. It is through marriage that couples can be intimate, have companionship, raise children and pass on their religion to the next generation.

*'The Church sees marriage between a man and a woman, as central to the stability and health of human society.'*

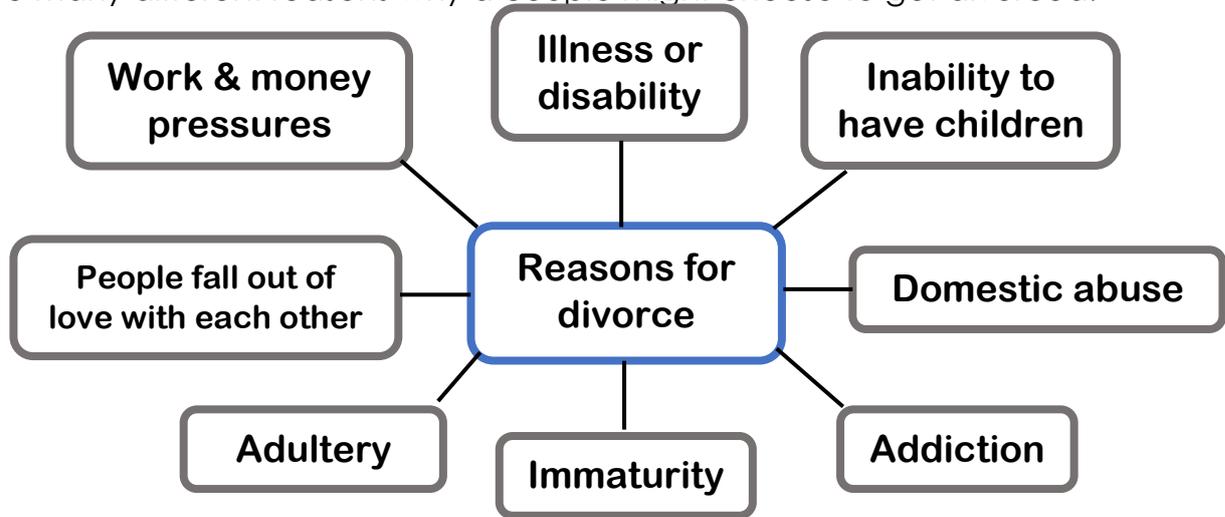
House of Bishops of the General Synod of the Church of England

In marriage, a couple promise to each other, either through vows or through a contract, to be good to each other, be faithful, to love and cherish each other, support each other, through good and bad, until the marriage is ended in death. The couple also has to agree on the different roles e.g. who keeps the house tidy, who leads the upbringing of the children, who earns money for the family etc.

Some people choose to cohabit before they get married, either to make sure their relationship is ready for the next step or because they're saving money for their wedding. Cohabitation is living with your partner without being married to them. Some people may never marry, but still choose to live and raise children in this relationship. Christians who disagree with sex before marriage believe that cohabitation is a sin. Other Christians, like Anglicans and some Protestants accept that people may choose to live in this way, as long as they are faithful, loving and committed.

**Divorce and remarriage:** In 2012, it was estimated that 42% of all marriages in England and Wales ended in divorce. Divorce is allowed after one year of marriage if the marriage cannot be saved. A divorce has to be obtained in order for either partner to remarry in the future.

There are many different reasons why a couple might choose to get divorced:



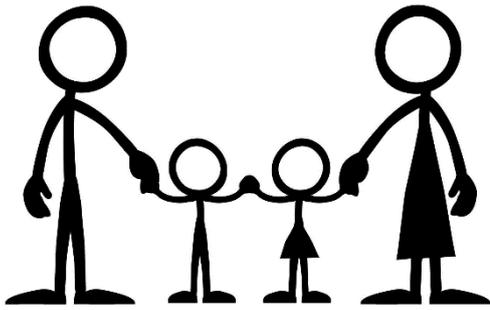
Christians have to balance ethical arguments between the sanctity of their marriage vows and compassion for those who are going through a breakdown of their marriage. While many would say that vows made before God are sacred and should never be broken, there may be circumstances when it might be more compassionate and loving to divorce, for example in cases of domestic violence that risk the health and safety of a partner or their children.

Jesus made it clear that divorcing and remarrying was classed as adultery, 'Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.' The Catholic Church teaches that a civil divorce cannot dissolve a marriage between two baptised people. Catholics can separate but they cannot marry someone else in a Catholic church while their partner is still alive. For Catholics, marriage is a sacrament that is permanent. The vows they make before God cannot be broken. However, Catholics can obtain an annulment under certain circumstances if it was never a true marriage. They are then free to marry.

Other Christians agree that marriage is for life, although sometimes divorce is the lesser of two evils. Divorced Anglicans can marry someone else in church with the Bishop's permission, as long as the priest is happy to perform the ceremony. Other Christians, for example Methodists, accept civil divorce and allow remarriage in church as long as the couple take their vows seriously. They believe that people should be allowed a second chance and forgiveness if they have made a mistake with their first marriage.

If a couple is having problems with their marriage, then they should seek counselling, prayer and support of the Church. They should think about forgiveness and reconciliation.

## **Families & Gender Equality**



**The nature of families:** The basic unit of mother, father and children (nuclear family) is still the most common in the West, although in the UK approximately 25% of children live in single-parent families. There are more 'stepfamilies', where divorced people with children marry new partners with children of their own. Some sex couples may have children from previous relationships, legally adopt children, conceive through in vitro fertilisation or use surrogates.

Many non-Western families & cultures are used to living in extended families, where families are larger and included grandparents and other relatives all lived together.

Parents love, care for and raise their children. Religious parents are generally expected to raise their children within their faith. Christian parents want their children to grow up with values such as respect for all life, generosity, compassion, loyalty and the ability to form loving relationships. They want them to be able to think for themselves and have self-discipline, listen to others and be tolerant of others' views.

"Anyone who doesn't provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

For Christians, love is at the centre of all relationships, especially the family. Christians are taught to 'honour your father and your mother', and this is especially true if they are elderly and need support.

There are examples of polygamy in the Bible and there was a law that protected the inheritance rights of the first-born child.

However, Christians today believe the ideal marriage of one man and one woman for life was created at the beginning with Adam and Eve.

Some Christians disapprove of same-sex parents because they feel the ideal is for children to grow up with a male and female role model as parents. Other Christians say that it is more important for children to be in a secure and loving family regardless of the gender of their parents.

"Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old."

**Purpose of families:** The family is the main building block of any society. It is where procreation chiefly takes place and it's where the needs of children are catered for. Happy, healthy families create stability for their members and stability in society itself.

For Christians, they believe that God reveals himself as Father, with Jesus his Son and humankind his children. They believe that God created life and loves and cares for it. An important role of Christian parents is educating children in their faith. Christian parents are expected to be good role models for their children and to teach them moral values. Many Christian parents will nurture the spiritual lives of their children. Some send their children to faith schools, or to groups run by their church, in order to further their children's education in their faith. For Christians, a family reflects the relationship of Christ

"Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him."

and the Church: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her."

The Christian Church teaches that both parents and children have responsibility to one another. This ranges from caring, loving, respecting and obeying.

### **The role of men and**

**women:** Historically, men had more positions of power and rights than women. In 1975, the Sex Discrimination Act made gender discrimination illegal in the UK. Despite this, it still occurs. For example:



- On average, women are paid less than men for doing the same jobs. This is known as the gender pay gap.
- Women make up roughly half of the work force, but men hold a higher proportion of senior positions.

In a family, the mother brings new life into the world and will usually be the baby's prime career. The father may help and support his wife but there is no doubt about the mother's importance at this time. Just because roles are different doesn't mean that they are unequal. Each family decides who will care for children and who will go out to work; often this depends on financial considerations.

**Gender Equality** means that men and women should be given the same rights and opportunities as each other. Many people in Britain today agree with the idea of gender equality, but there are many examples where it does not happen. Something that prevents it is gender prejudice based on stereotyping. An example of this is the idea that women are more naturally caring or are the weaker sex, so they should look after the home while men go out to work. Gender stereotyping can lead to gender discrimination, perhaps by not giving a man a job looking after children or not employing a woman on a building site.

"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Christians believe that all people have been created as equals in the image of God. The command to love one's neighbour means that discrimination is wrong. Jesus treated women with respect and welcomed them as disciples. Some traditional Christians believe that men are the head of the family and that women should mainly stay at home and care for the children. This may come from literal interpretations of Bible texts that reflect the position of women at the time they were written.

Most Christians today see marriage as an equal partnership where the different gifts of each person, male and female, strengthen family life.

# Practice Exam Questions

## 1-mark questions:

- Which of the following is the name given to the practice in some religions of having more than one wife?  
a) Procreation    b) Contraception    c) Stability    d) Polygamy
- Which of the following describes a sexual relationship between a man and woman?  
a) Homosexual    b) Heterosexual    c) metrosexual    d) transexual

## 2-mark questions:

- Give two religious beliefs about the purpose of families.
- Give two religious beliefs about divorce.

## 4-mark questions:

- Explain two contrasting beliefs in contemporary British society about whether the death penalty should exist in the UK.  
In your answer you should refer to the main religious tradition of Great Britain and one or more other religious traditions.
- Explain two contrasting beliefs in contemporary British society to remarriage.  
In your answer you should refer to the main religious tradition of Great Britain and one or more other religious traditions.

## 5-mark questions:

- Explain two contrasting beliefs in contemporary British society about sex before marriage.  
Refer to sacred writings or another source of religious belief and teaching in your answer.
- Explain two religious' beliefs about the role of parents in a religious family.  
Refer to scripture or sacred writings in your answer.

## 12-mark questions:

- 'Same-sex parents are just as good at bringing up children as other parents.'
- 'Religious believers should always treat men and women equally.'

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you:

- should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
- should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- should refer to religious arguments
- may refer to non-religious arguments
- should reach a justified conclusion.