

Year Group 6	Worldview: Christianity
Strand:	Beliefs and Questions
Key Question:	How far is belief in the resurrection important to Christians today?
Focus of study:	The resurrection and its importance to Christians today
Background information for teachers:	
<p>The resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday is often considered to be the central tenet of Christianity. It is considered as one of the core proofs of the divinity of Jesus. Jesus predicted his death and resurrection; if it is true that Jesus rose from the dead that is taken to prove that he is God. Paul expresses this clearly in 1 Corinthians 15: 12- 22 and the rest of the chapter explores how the early church thought about the resurrection and its implications for belief and practice. This passage is not easy to use in its entirety with pupils at this age group but select some of the core verses to unpack in pupil friendly language. There is much evidence for the resurrection, though it is not proof in the scientific manner. The change in the disciples, the number of witnesses, and the fact that neither the Romans nor the Jewish authorities were ever able to produce the body are usually cited as key elements of the evidence.</p> <p>Christians believe that because of the resurrection, the people who follow Jesus receive forgiveness of their sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit and eternal/everlasting life. The death of Jesus, who did not resist arrest, but appears to have given up his life willingly inspires many Christians to live sacrificial lives, often giving up their own lives for what they hold to be the truth.</p> <p>Many Christians hold the belief that resurrection from the dead applies not just to Jesus, but to all who follow him. This is what is referred to as eternal life. Jesus refers to what will happen when he 'goes away' as he puts it. John 14, which records Jesus' words to his disciples as part of the Last Supper contains many of these statements. V2-3 'In my father's house are many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me...'</p> <p>In John 16:7, Jesus makes it clear that unless he 'goes to away' the Holy Spirit cannot be given. The Holy Spirit is understood by Christians to be the power that enables them to live obedient lives, and obedience is one of the keys by which the followers of Jesus are to be known and recognised.</p> <p>Most Christians believe that without the resurrection the teaching of Christianity is meaningless. Salvation and justification would not be possible without the resurrection. The resurrection is evidence of the divinity of Jesus and therefore proves that his teaching about himself is correct. Otherwise, he and all Christians since, are liars, and Jesus is not God.</p> <p>Theologically, the resurrection links Jesus to the festival of first fruits, when the crops gathered at the harvest were presented by the Israelites at the Temple. The death of the first sons of Egypt in the Exodus gave freedom to the Israelites. Likewise, Jesus' resurrection brings about peoples' freedom from sin and death.</p>	
Prior learning	<p>Christians believe that Jesus is one of the three persons of the Trinity.</p> <p>Christians believe that God sent Jesus to earth to show that he loved humans.</p> <p>Jesus is fully God and fully man.</p> <p>The incarnation is one of the central beliefs of Christianity.</p> <p>Christians believe that Jesus was crucified on 'Good Friday'.</p> <p>Christians believe that the Bible points to the need for humans to be saved from sin and restored to a good relationship with God.</p> <p>The New Testament teaches that Jesus died for the salvation of humankind.</p> <p>The example of Jesus' sacrifice is followed by some Christians.</p>
Building blocks	<p>Christians believe that the resurrection of Jesus reveals that he is divine.</p> <p>Most Christians believe that there is life after death, or eternal life.</p> <p>This belief gives Christians hope for the future but also makes some prepared to die for their beliefs.</p> <p>Because Jesus is still alive Christians have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit</p>
Outcomes	Pupils can explain and evaluate the evidence for the resurrection and make a link to the belief in the divinity of Jesus.

	<p>Pupils can talk and write about the impact of belief in the resurrection on Christians in today.</p> <p>Pupils can make links between a range of biblical passages and Christian beliefs.</p>
Resources	<p>https://request.org.uk/resource/?resource_search_phrase=Resurrection – this page holds the results of a search on the word resurrection on the RE Quest website. Many of the links below are to resources from this page.</p> <p>https://request.org.uk/resource/life/beliefs/christianity-basically-the-resurrection/</p> <p>https://request.org.uk/resource/festivals/holy-week-and-easter/what-is-the-resurrection/</p> <p>https://request.org.uk/resource/jesus/death-and-resurrection/what-happened-to-the-body/</p> <p>https://request.org.uk/resource/resolve/what-happened-to-the-body/</p> <p>https://request.org.uk/resource/teachers/teaching-resources/life-resources/funeral-life/what-do-christians-believe-about-life-after-death-what-is-heaven-like-what-is-read-at-a-funeral/</p> <p>https://request.org.uk/resource/festivals/holy-week-and-easter/why-is-the-resurrection-so-important-to-christians/</p> <p>https://www.christianity.com/wiki/jesus-christ/significance-jesus-resurrection-why-it-matters.html#google_vignette – article with background for teachers.</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5oahzPBz4EQ – a challenging academic talk for teachers who want to go deeper in exploring the theology behind the resurrection.</p>
Vocabulary	<p>Salvation: The act of saving. Christians interpret the ‘big story’ of the Bible as pointing out the need for God to save people. This salvation includes the ongoing restoration of humans’ relationship with God.</p> <p>Crucifixion: A punishment used by the Romans where people were tied or nailed to a wooden cross and left to hang and die. This was only inflicted on non-Roman citizens who challenged the Roman state,</p> <p>Sacrifice: The act of giving up something that you want to keep to help someone else. Christians see Jesus’ death as the ultimate sacrifice, giving up his life to save others’.</p> <p>Forgiveness: When someone understands and can move on when someone else has done something wrong or acted in a way that has upset them. For Christians it also includes the idea that God does not demand repayment for human sin, because Jesus paid that price on their behalf.</p>
Engage:	<p>What do pupils recall about the Easter Story? Which part of the story do they think is the most significant part? And why?</p> <p>Revise any parts that the pupils are unsure of and begin to focus in on the resurrection and the 40 days between the resurrection and the ascension.</p> <p>Mind-map the meaning of the word resurrection. What do pupils think it means? Do the verses below help to explain it?</p> <p>Share the verses between groups of pupils and challenge them to consider what these verses might mean to Christians today. What questions do these verses raise?</p> <p>On the third day he will be raised to life! Matthew 20:19b Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: “I have seen the Lord!” John 20:18a “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!” Luke 24:5b-6a “Don’t be alarmed,” he said. “You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen!” Mark 16:6a He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Matthew 28:6 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;” John 11:25 “The Lord is risen indeed! Luke 24:34a</p>

He is not here; he has risen! **Luke 24:6-7**

Don't be afraid! I am the First and Last. I am the living one. I died but look—I am alive forever and ever!

Revelation 1:17b-18a

By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. **1 Corinthians 6:14**

With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. **Acts 4:33**

He was buried, [and] he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. **1 Corinthians 15:4**

After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. **Acts 1:3**

Pupils could consider at this point of a scale of 1 – 5 how likely/ realistic they think the resurrection is.

Enquire and Explore:

Examine evidence for the resurrection.

Where do pupils think they might find evidence either for or against the resurrection?

Examine some of the Bible verses from John 20: 15 – 21:14 or read it in a story version of the Bible so that pupils get the sense of the narrative. Also consider Luke 24:13-48, Mark 16: 9-14 and Matthew 28-11-15.

Gather the differences and similarities from the different accounts of seeing Jesus after His resurrection.

What do these accounts have in common? What is different? Ask pupils to identify the elements that they would include if they were going to write one account for a children's Bible. Why would the Bible include so many instances of Jesus appearing to people after he was resurrected?

It may be worth mentioning the way that the disciples changed after the resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Thomas, who had the encounter with the risen Jesus later than the others is believed to have travelled to India where he founded one of the earliest Christian communities, before being martyred, like so many of the disciples.

Why do you think this is still a widely held belief of Christians today? What conclusions might Christians draw from a belief in the resurrection of Jesus?

Revisit the scale created at the end of the previous lesson. Have any of the pupils changed their minds? If so, in which direction and why?

What conclusions do Christians draw from their belief in the resurrection? (part 1)

- Evidence that Jesus was divine – that is God and part of the Holy Trinity.
- That what he said was true and he can be trusted.

Explore evidence for the divinity of Jesus using Biblical texts and the resources from RE Quest as support.

What do pupils know about Jesus? Who does the Bible say that he is? Who does Jesus say that he is?

Create a definition of divinity. How might the resurrection support a belief in the fact the Jesus is divine?

What other evidence is there in the Bible? What stories can the pupils remember from the life of Jesus? This may be a good place to revisit some of the miracles and healings.

Explore some of the 'I am' statements from the book of John: "I am that bread of life" (John 6:48). "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:14). "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25). "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). What do these statements say about who Jesus thought that he was? He came to perform His Heavenly Father's will. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38).

What do these quotes tell us about the role Jesus had on Earth?

You could hold a class debate to address the question: Was Jesus Divine? What evidence do we have to support/refute this?

Prepare a sheet- For and Against so that children can work in teams to decide on whether or not there is evidence of the divinity of Jesus.

What conclusions do Christians draw from belief in the resurrection? (part 2)

- That they (Christians) can have eternal life.
- That sins (wrongdoing) can be forgiven.

- That the Holy Spirit is available to all Christians.
- That Jesus by his spirit is still alive today and able to offer guidance and support.
- *Do the pupils have other ideas?*

Explore some of, or all the ideas above. The questions of belief in eternal life and the concept of forgiveness of sin are probably the most important. Forgiveness, atonement and salvation are interlinked and find their origin in the concept of the resurrection. Most Christians would consider that without the resurrection there would be no salvation or any of the allied ideas. Jesus' death on the cross was seen as a victory over sin and death. If Jesus could be raised from the dead, as St Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, so can his followers.

Despite this belief, physical death still happens, and Christians do not deny this. Eternal life is understood as being raised at the Day of Judgement and there are Bible verses that explore that, although there are different interpretations about what that means in practice, and the concept of heaven is much discussed. How does belief in the resurrection impact on attitudes to death? Does it impact on funeral practices? There are a couple of interviews on RE Quest about different Christians believe about life after death. Explore Christian funeral practices, looking at funeral services and perhaps talking to undertakers or clergy about funeral practices.

Does belief in the resurrection make any difference to the way that Christians live their day to day lives? What do the pupils remember about the way the Christians live (or should live?) and how that might link with what they have learned about the resurrection.

The promise of eternal life and the presence of Jesus with them in the form of the Holy Spirit makes many Christians bold, like the early disciples were and ready to die for what they believe. This may be an opportunity to explore some of the martyrs, but be guided by how much time you have available.

Interview some Christians about how they feel about the resurrection and its resurrection. Pupils to plan the questions and prepare the interviews.

What conclusions do they come to? Prepare to share those findings and bring this unit's learning together.

Reflect and communicate:

What do pupils now think about the importance of the resurrection to Christians? Have they changed their minds about what is the most important part of the Easter story?
How would a Christian explain the importance of the resurrection to a non-believer? Are there other questions that might need to be asked?

Assessment opportunities:

Make links between Bible passages and Christian beliefs about Jesus and his resurrection.
Debate on the evidence for the divinity of Jesus.
Create an explanation of the importance of the resurrection.

Notes

There is more in this unit than will fit easily in 6 lessons. Choose the bible passages and the amount of content carefully to ensure that the building blocks are met.