

1. Which of the following is another term for the death penalty? [1 mark]

A) corporal punishment      B) capital punishment      C) megadeath      D) ultimate punishment

2. Give two ways that the death penalty is carried out. [2 marks]

lethal injection/ electrocution/ hanging/ stoning/ crucifixion/ lethal gas/ firing squad

3. Explain two Christian teachings that could be used to support the death penalty. [4 marks]

“eye for an eye, life for a life” retribution > like-for-like punishment

“The Lord is a God of justice” > if someone has murdered, the death penalty is a just punishment

The death penalty is sanctioned in the Old Testament > for crimes like murder, adultery and blasphemy

4. Explain two Christian teachings that could be used to oppose the death penalty. [5 marks]

“it is mine to avenge” says the Lord > justice should be left to God

All life is sacred > sanctity of life > even the worst criminals’ lives are sacred

Christians are taught to forgive without limits > the death penalty leaves no room for forgiveness and reconciliation

“love your neighbour” > incompatible with killing a criminal

5. 'The death penalty should be used as a punishment for murder.'

[12 marks]

Some Christians agree:

"eye for an eye, life for a life" retribution > like-for-like punishment

"The Lord is a God of justice" > if someone has murdered, the death penalty is a just punishment

The death penalty is sanctioned in the Old Testament for murder

Cheaper than prison – the money could be invested in the NHS or schools

Deterrent > will stop other would-be murderers

Some Christians disagree:

Prisoner a better alternative: allows reformation but still a serious punishment

"it is mine to avenge" says the Lord > justice should be left to God

All life is sacred > sanctity of life > even the worst criminals' lives are sacred

Christians are taught to forgive without limits > the death penalty leaves no room for forgiveness and reconciliation

"love your neighbour" > incompatible with killing a criminal

Christians are commanded to forgive > Christians forgiveness is conditional on them forgiving others > Lord's prayer "we forgive those who sin against us"

Nothing is unforgivable > the crucifixion means that all sin can be forgiven

Forgiveness is unlimited > Jesus' teaching "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times"