

Glossary of Key Christian Terms

FESTIVALS

All Saints Day - This is a day when Christians think about the lives of Christians in the past whose example can inspire and guide them way that they live today.

Ascension Day - Christians believe that Jesus is alive and ruling with God in heaven. They celebrate Ascension Day to remember his leaving the earth to be with God in heaven.

Christmas - Christians celebrate Christmas as they believe God came into our world as Jesus, 'Immanuel, God with us.'

Easter - Christians celebrate Jesus rising from the dead (resurrection) and their belief that he is alive today.

Good Friday - Good Friday is when Christians remember Jesus' suffering and death on the cross as a sacrifice for sins. They believe that because of His sacrifice they can be forgiven and 'at one' with God (atonement).

Harvest - Christians believe that as God made everything and keeps it going it is important to thank Him for the harvest, and to care for His world.

Lent - For Christians Lent is a time for penitence, not long before Easter. They show they are sorry for the wrong things they've done, owning up to God (confession) and trying to change (repentance).

Maundy Thursday - It is on Maundy Thursday that Christians remember the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples. The bread and wine of communion are, to Christians, the body and blood of Jesus. As they take and eat it they remember that because of Jesus' death on the cross they can know God's forgiveness.

Palm Sunday - Palm Sunday is when Christians remember Jesus' riding into Jerusalem on a donkey not long before he died and was resurrected. They celebrate Jesus coming as king and think about what it means for him to be king of their lives.



Pentecost - Christians believe that God lives within them in the person of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. Jesus said the Holy Spirit is "a Helper, to be with you forever," (John 14 v 16). Christians remember that the Holy Spirit first came during the Jewish feast of Pentecost not long after Jesus' ascension into heaven.

Shrove Tuesday - Shrove comes from the old word 'shrive' that means to confess. Christians believe that confession, admitting what we have done wrong, is an important part of our relationship with God. It is believed that when we confess our sins God will forgive them.



JESUS

Atonement – Atonement in Christianity is the belief that, when Jesus died, he paid the price for humanity’s sins. Jesus took the punishment that we deserve, so that we can be close to God.

Crucifixion – Jesus’ execution by the Romans. They nailed him onto a cross.

Good News – The message that Jesus died on the cross, so that all who believe in him can enter into relationship with God.

Incarnation – The belief that Jesus was God in human form.

Kingdom of God – Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God. Christians believe that they enter the Kingdom of God when His rule is accepted and obeyed in their own lives.

Miracles – A miracle is something that happens that can’t be explained through natural or scientific means. Jesus performed many miracles, such as feeding the 5,000, healing a blind man and raising Lazarus from the dead.

Parables – Jesus told many stories to people. These stories all had a special meaning, and are known as parables.

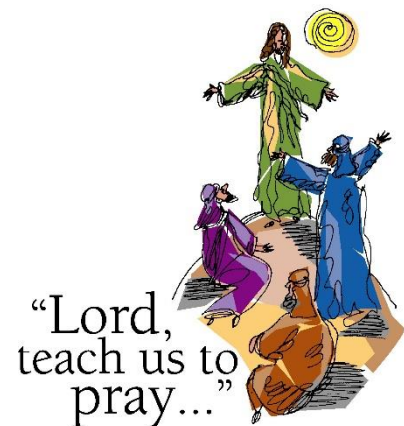
Redemption - Christians believe that because of Jesus’ death on the cross they can be forgiven by God and go to heaven when they die.

Resurrection – The act of being raised back to life. Christians believe that, just as Jesus was resurrected, everyone who has ever lived will one day be resurrected and answer to God for the way they have lived.

Salvation - Christians believe that all people can be saved - rescued from the consequences of the wrong things they have done - because of the death and resurrection of ‘Jesus Christ, our Saviour.’

The Lord’s Prayer – Jesus taught the disciples to pray in what is known as ‘The Lord’s Prayer.’

Trinity – The belief that God is three in one: God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit.



THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Bible – The holy book that Christians read to learn about God and how he wants them to live.

Church – A church is a community of Christians meeting together for worship. The Church (with a big ‘C’) is the family of all Christians throughout the world.

Conversion Experience – When someone changes their ideas about God, going from not believing to believing, they are said to have had a ‘conversion experience.’

Communion/Eucharist – The ceremony that Christians take part in to remember Jesus’ death. They drink wine to remember his blood spilled and bread to remember his body that was broken on the cross.



Denominations – Christians have the same, basic ideas about God, however they can have different ideas about how to do things, such as worship. Denominations refers to the different types of Christian groups that meet, for example, Anglicans, Baptists, Catholics. A bit like a pair of trainers is a pair of trainers, but you can ones made by a variety of brands. All different, but essentially the same.

Evangelism – Evangelism is ‘announcing good news’ - showing and sharing the Christian faith. Although it may be a special gift of some (evangelists), Christians believe that this is something that, each in their own different way, every Christian should do.

Faith – Faith is another word for trust. Christians believe that, even when bad things happen, they can trust God and be at peace because He is with them and in control.

Pilgrimage – A special journey undertaken by religious people. Travelling on pilgrimage gives time for Christians to pray and think about the example of what happened to the Christian people who have been there before them. Some places are associated with miraculous healings or experiences of God.

Prayer – A form of communicating with God. Christians believe that prayer deepens their relationship with God. It is like a conversation - listening as well as speaking.

Worship – Worship is ‘worth - ship’ - giving to God what He is worth. Much more than just singing and praying, everything that Christians do can be an act of worship, showing God how much he loves them.

rites of passage

Adult Baptism - Adult baptism comes after a person has made their own decision to believe in Jesus and live as a Christian. Their body is fully immersed in water to symbolize their sins have been washed away; they are a new person in Christ.

Christening/Infant Baptism- A ceremony that welcomes a baby into the Christian Church. The vicar pours water on the baby's forehead

Confirmation - Confirmation usually occurs when a child is old enough to make a decision to follow Jesus. The ceremony shows that believe in Jesus and intend to live as a Christian. The bishop prays for them to receive the Holy Spirit to help them in their Christian life.

Dedication - A dedication is a more informal way of celebrating the birth of a child, sharing the time with the church that the family attend. During the ceremony, the church promises to help bring the child up in the Christian faith.

Funeral - The ceremony that is performed celebrating a person's life. Christians believe that, just as Jesus was resurrected, everyone who has ever lived will one day be resurrected and answer to God for the way that they have lived. Through Jesus they believe that God forgives them for the wrong things they have done, and this allows them a place in heaven.



Wedding - Two people commit their lives to one another in holy matrimony during a wedding ceremony. Christians believe that the couple is making their promises to God as well as each other. To break these promising is seen as a sin.

