AQA Religious Studies A – Christian Beliefs and Teachings

1. Key Words			
Ascension	Jesus returning to be with God in heaven after the crucifixion	Omnipotent	God's nature as all-powerful
Atonement	Making things better after sinning, asking for forgiveness from God	Original Sin	The built-in tendency to do wrong which comes from Eve's disobedience
Benevolent	God's nature as all-loving	Resurrection	Jesus returning from the dead after he was crucified
Crucifixion	Jesus' execution by the Romans on the cross	Salvation	Being saved from sin and given eternal life in heaven by God
Incarnation	God becoming flesh in the form of Jesus Christ	Sin	Any thought or action which goes against God's will
Just	God's nature as fair	Trinity	God's nature as three-parts-in-one, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Key Ideas		
2. **Nature of God**	- Christians believe in **one God** who is the creator and the sustainer of all that exists - God **is** **omnipotent** which means they are almighty and have unlimited power - God is **benevolent** which means they are all-loving and all-good - God is **just** which means they are a perfect and fair judge - **The Problem of Suffering** asks: if God is all these things why do they allow bad things to happen to good and innocent people?	
3. The Trinity	- Christians believe God is three persons in one. This idea is called the **Trinity**. - Each person of the **Trinity** is fully God but the three persons of the **Trinity** are not the same. - The **Father** is the creator of all life - The **Son** is Jesus Christ who is both fully human and fully God - The **Holy Spirit** is the unseen power of God at work in the world, especially answering prayers *"We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit"* – The Nicene Creed	
4. Incarnation and Crucifixion	**Crucifixion** - Jesus travelled to Jerusalem to preach and he was sentenced to death by Pontius Pilate - Jesus was then nailed to a **cross** where he died. - In his last moments Jesus was able to forgive those who were killing him showing Christians how important **forgiveness** is - This event is remembered on Good Friday *"Forgive them father, they know not what they do"* – Luke 23:34	**Incarnation** - Christians believe that God was **incarnated** (born) in human form as **Jesus Christ** - **Mary** was impregnated by the Holy Spirit and gave birth as a virgin – for Christians this is proof of Jesus' status as the son of God - **Christmas** is the festival that celebrates the incarnation *"The word became flesh"* – John 1:14
5. Resurrection and Ascension	**Resurrection** - After Jesus was dead and buried Christians believe he **rose from the dead** – this is the **resurrection** - Early on the Sunday three women visited his tomb expecting to find his body but it was not there - After his **resurrection** Jesus appeared to his disciples and told them to spread the word of him - This event is celebrated on **Easter Sunday** *"He is risen"* – Christians say this to each other on Easter Sunday	**Ascension** - Forty days after he rose from the dead Jesus **ascended** (went up) into heaven **A belief in resurrection and ascension ...** - Shows **life after death** is real - Assures Christians they will rise again after death and live on in the afterlife - Leads Christians to try and lead a **good life**
6. Sin and Salvation	- Christians believe you are **judged** after you die (see Religion and Life) and how well or badly you have lived and treated others decides if you go to **heaven** or **hell** - **Sin** is any action or thought that goes against God's will, Christians can look in the Bible for advice on what is a **sin** e.g., murder (you shall not kill) and adultery (cheating, you shall not commit adultery) - God gave humans **free will** but they should use that freedom to make good choices and not **sin** - **Salvation** is the idea that Jesus's crucifixion saves human beings from eternal damnation - The death of Jesus made up for **original sin** – the idea that we were all damned by Eve's choice to disobey God – it allows us to **atone** for sins and reach eternal life in heaven	