

GCSE



CCEA GCSE GLOSSARIES
Religious Studies

Unit 4: Christianity through a Study
of the Gospel of Matthew



For first teaching from September 2017

GCSE Religious Studies Glossary

Abraham	The 'father of the Jewish people'; Old Testament figure.
Allegory	A type of parable in which every person, place or thing has a spiritual meaning.
Angel	A celestial being; a messenger of God.
Annunciation	The time when Mary was told she would give birth to the Messiah; a special feast day in the Roman Catholic church (26 March).
Apostle	A person chosen (commissioned) by Jesus to spread the gospel; literally 'sent out.'
Aramaic	Language spoken in Palestine at the time of Jesus.
Ascension	The time when Jesus was taken up to heaven after his resurrection; celebrated in the Christian Church 40 days after Easter Sunday.
Atonement	The belief that reconciliation between God and people was made possible by the death of Jesus as a sacrifice for sin.
Baptism	A ceremony of initiation; carried out by the sprinkling or pouring of water over a person, or by full immersion in water.
Betray	To give information about a person, group or country to an enemy.
Birth narratives	The stories of the birth of Christ as found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.
Blasphemy	False claims to be God; irreverent words about God.
Caiaphas	The High Priest at time of the death of Jesus.
Caesar	A title used for Roman Emperors.
Chief Priest	Jewish religious leader at the time of Jesus.
Chosen people	The Jewish belief that the Jews are God's chosen people.
Christ	The Greek word for 'the anointed one': Messiah in Hebrew. Christians believe Jesus to be the Messiah predicted in the Old Testament.
Circumcision	The removal of the foreskin from the penis; a sign of God's covenant with the Jewish people.
Contemporary	Things that are modern and relate to the present time.
Controversial	Giving rise or likely to give rise to public disagreement.
Covenant	An agreement or promise; it refers to an agreement between God and individuals/group of people in the Bible.
Crucifixion	A cruel method of capital punishment which involves the victim being nailed to a cross by hands and feet.
Disciples	Followers of Jesus.

Discrimination	Treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people.
Easter	Christian festival celebrating the resurrection of Jesus.
Fasting	Abstain from (go without) all or some kinds of food or drink, especially for religious reasons.
Frankincense	A resin burned during Temple worship. One of the gifts the magi brought when Jesus was born.
Final Judgment	Refers to the end of time when Christians believe God will judge the living and the dead.
Garden of Gethsemane	A garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. This is where Jesus went to pray on the night he was arrested.
Gentile	A non-Jew.
God-fearer	A non-Jew who followed the teachings of the Jews but does not undergo circumcision or become a full member.
Golgotha	Also called ‘The Place of the Skull’; it is where Jesus was crucified.
High Priest	The religious leader of the Jews; the chief priest of the Sanhedrin.
Holy Spirit	Third person of the Trinity.
Holy Week	The week before Easter, starting on Palm Sunday.
Hypocrite	Someone who does not practise what they preach.
Idolatry	Worship of false gods.
Immanuel	Hebrew word meaning ‘God is with us’.
Incarnation	The belief that God assumed (took on) human form (in the person of Jesus).
Israel	The name used for the Jewish people.
Judaism	The Jewish religion.
Kingdom of God	The rule of God.
Last Supper	The final meal that Jesus shared with his Apostles in Jerusalem before his crucifixion.
Leprosy sufferer	Someone who suffers from leprosy – a skin disease that damages the nerves affecting the hands, feet and face.
Life after death	The belief that people survive physical die.
Magi	A name for the wise men who visited the infant Jesus.
Marginalised	A group or class of people that is regarded as less important than others or is relegated to a secondary position.

Magnificat	Mary's Song of Praise which she sang when she found out she was pregnant with Jesus.
Messiah	The promised deliverer of the Jewish nation prophesied in the Hebrew Bible. Christians believe Jesus is the Messiah.
Miracle	A remarkable and inexplicable act or event, e.g. a healing which is believed to be an act of God.
Moses	A leader, prophet and lawgiver in the Old Testament. Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and received the Ten Commandments from God.
Myrrh	A sticky brown substance that comes from trees, that has a sweet smell. It formed part of the gifts brought by the wise men from the east, who came to worship the infant Jesus. It was used in embalming dead bodies.
New Testament	The second part of the Christian Bible; tells the story of Jesus and the early church, and includes early Christian letters and literature.
Nunc Dimittis	The prayer of praise sung by Simeon when he saw the baby Jesus in the Temple; Nunc Dimittis are the opening words of the prayer.
Old Testament	The Books of the first part of the Bible, comprising thirty-nine books.
Outcast	One that is cast out or refused acceptance by society.
Palm Sunday	The Sunday before Easter Sunday when Christians remember Christ on a donkey being welcomed into Jerusalem.
Parable	A form of teaching used at New Testament times; a story which has a spiritual meaning or conveys spiritual truth.
Parousia	The 2nd coming (return) of Christ.
Passion	The Passion of Christ is the story of Jesus Christ's arrest, trial and suffering. It ends with his crucifixion.
Passover	Jewish religious festival which remembers the Exodus from Egypt.
Pentecost	A Jewish festival, also called the Festival of Weeks, which occurs 40 days after Passover; the Christian festival which celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit to Jesus' followers on the first Pentecost after Jesus' death.
Persecution	Treating people with hostility and hatred; can be sanctioned by a government.
Pharisee	A member of an ancient group of Jews, written about in the Bible, who believed in rigorously obeying religious laws and separated themselves from the ordinary people. Pharisee means 'Separated one'.
Pontius Pilate	Governor of Judea from AD26-36.
Prejudice	An unreasonable dislike of a particular group of people or things.
Prophecy	The foretelling or prediction of what is to come. Something that is declared by a prophet.

Prophet	A person chosen by God to give a message or warning.
Rabbi	A Jewish religious teacher.
Redemption	The Christian belief that Jesus' death was a payment for sin; it freed people from the punishment they deserved to receive from God on account of their wrongdoing and rebellion.
Renunciation	To give up something; usually for religious reasons.
Resurrection	The Christian belief that Jesus rose again three days after his death.
Sabbath	A day of religious observance and abstinence from work, kept by Jews from Friday evening to Saturday evening, and by most Christians on Sunday.
Sadducee	A member of a Jewish sect or party of the time of Christ that did not believe in life after death or the existence of spirits. They did not follow the oral law, only the written law.
Salvation	The belief that humankind can be saved and reconciled with God through the death of Christ.
Sanhedrin	The highest Jewish council at the time of Jesus; it had responsibility for religious and legal matters.
Samaritans	A mixed race, partly Jewish, who were seen as enemies of the Jews and treated with contempt.
Scribe	A teacher of the Law; someone who copied out the scriptures.
Sermon on Mount	Jesus' teaching which can be found in Matthew Ch.5-7.
Synagogue	Means 'bringing together'; refers to the building Jews meet for worship on the Sabbath.
Temple	The building in Jerusalem where Jews worshipped and offered sacrifices to God; the Temple was destroyed in AD70.
Torah	The Jewish Law, found in the first five books of the Old Testament.
Transfiguration	Describes a change or transformation in shape or appearance; refers to the event described in Matthew Ch. 17 when Jesus' appearance changed in front of his disciples.
Trinity	The doctrine that God is three persons, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in one being.
Universalism	The belief that God is for everyone, not just the Jews.
Vineyard	A piece of land on which vines are grown.
Virgin Birth	The belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus; Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit.