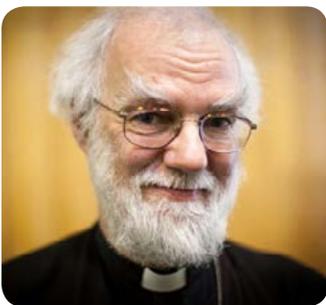


Lesson title:

What's faith got to do with world issues? An introduction to Rowan Williams, who leads Christian Aid.



This lesson features an interview with Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, and the current Chair of the international development charity Christian Aid.



We believe in life
before death

This lesson has been written to support the 2016 RS GCSE specifications.

The lessons in this series cover the following subjects:

- 1 Interview with Rowan Williams
- 2 What kind of charity is Christian Aid?
- 3 What is the point of modern Christian mission?
- 4 What is evil? Is there a solution to suffering?
- 5 What is church?
- 6 Salvation: spiritual or practical?

The other lesson plans are available to download from caid.org.uk/gcse

Flexibilities:

The learning ideas in this lesson can be used as they are written, but are flexible.

You might like to try:

- drawing attention to Christian beliefs and teachings about salvation, the gospel of Christ, and Jesus' teaching about money and helping the poor
- asking high-achieving students to research some of Christian Aid's work, such as projects in developing countries or campaigns for justice
- asking students to find out more about Rowan Williams from his writing. He's written many books, including acclaimed poetry, and there's plenty that students can find online.

Good learning: what's working well here?

- Rowan Williams is a widely known and respected commentator on Christian identity and theology in the UK, though your students may not have heard of him. His interview is engaging and will provoke deeper thinking.

Text and Beliefs

This work enables students to study some biblical texts about justice, peace and charity, consider what they mean and how they should be interpreted.

Texts include the story of Simon of Cyrene (Matthew 27:32, Mark 15:21, Luke 23:26) and the collection Saint Paul made from all his congregations for the impoverished Christians of Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8).

Impact

Students examine the ways these biblical and spiritual ideas make a difference in the work of Christian Aid.

Key concepts of the image of God and of salvation are applied to problems of global inequality and to the Christian community's response.

Connections

Students are challenged to consider what impact these ideas might have on their own opinions and behaviour: would the world be a better place if we all followed these teachings? In what ways? They are encouraged to think through their own spiritual and moral ideas about living in a world where poverty and environmental crises damage millions of lives.

Learning outcomes:

Emerging

- express their own ideas about fairness and human moral action
- summarise Rowan Williams' source of inspiration, beliefs about the world and how humans should act in the world.

Expected

- express their own ideas about how humans can show moral leadership
- express ideas about the value of the natural world and humanity
- explain why Simon of Cyrene's name is given to a group of modern charities supporting homeless people
- make a link between Christian teaching and Christian Aid's action in the world.

Exceeding

- articulate their own view on human liberty and what inspires moral leadership
- explain a Christian principle that inspires moral action and connect this to their own response.

Teaching notes

Preparing for this lesson

The lesson uses an exclusive interview with the chair of Christian Aid, Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury.

Starter: Considering students' own ideas

- Complete the sheet titled 'Thinking about my own ideas' on pages 5 and 6. Students will find it interesting to think about their own responses to the kind of questions Rowan Williams answers.
- Ask them to share their thoughts with others and discuss similarities and differences in the answers.

Interview with Rowan Williams

- Read the interview as a class, or get students to read individually.
- Complete the questions on the student sheets on pages 11-14, which will support discussion and understanding.

Create a job description

- Working either in groups or pairs, create a job description for a new leader of Christian Aid. Use the information on page 15 as a starting point, and then ask students to answer the questions on pages 16 and 17. This activity invites students to think about the leadership role they have been studying.
- Share and discuss the sort of characteristics and skills needed for such a role.

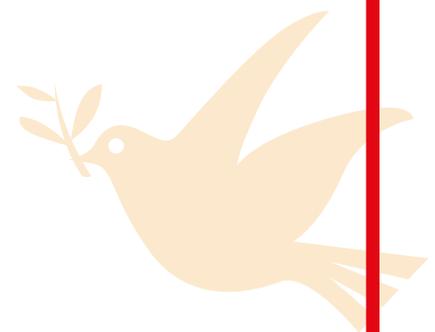
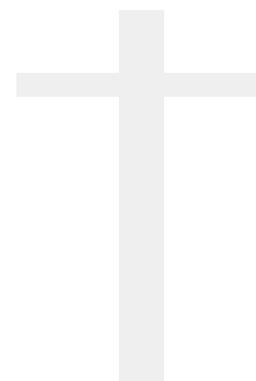
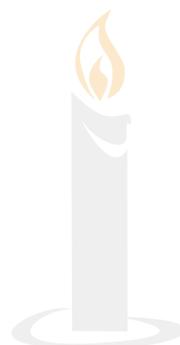
Controversy and debate

Rowan Williams gives definite perspectives on the meaning of key terms such as 'the image of God' and 'salvation', which students will have encountered throughout the GCSE RE course. Not all students will approach these issues from the same Christian perspective of Rowan Williams. Build on the diversity of viewpoints in your class by discussing whether his answers only apply to Christians, to religious people in general, or have some value to humans who care about the planet, whether they are religious or not.

Theological and religious background

This interview provides high-level contemporary ways of examining these kind of questions:

- Should Christians care more about salvation in heaven or on Earth?
- If everyone is 'made in God's image', then how should a Christian treat other people?
- Was Saint Paul the founder of the original 'Christian Aid'?
- Is God green? What difference should it make if the answer is 'yes'?



Supporting the Christianity paper

This page summarises the ways in which this lesson contributes to meeting the requirements of the GCSE Christianity papers.

In line with the 2016 GCSE requirements, this lesson aims to enable students to learn about:

the importance of the worldwide church including working for reconciliation, the persecuted church and the work of Christian Aid.

Students will think about:

- the role of the individual, including religious experience, reason and personal conscience
- the use of the Bible in worship and in personal and ethical decision making by Christians.

Students will develop their skills to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Christian beliefs of Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chair of Christian Aid

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key Christian sources of wisdom and authority including scripture which supports and influences contemporary religious faith and action
- understand the influence of religion on individuals, communities and societies
- understand significant views within Christianity about global issues
- apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values
- construct well-informed and balanced arguments on matters concerned with religious beliefs and values set out in the subject content.

In the specifications

AQA A

Christianity: Practices

The importance of the worldwide church including:

- working for reconciliation
- how Christian churches respond to persecution
- the work of one of the following development organisations: Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD), Christian Aid, Tearfund
- working for reconciliation: the World Council of Churches, the Ecumenical Movement.

OCR GCSE

Christianity: Practices

The role of the church in the wider world; the purpose of one of the following agencies: Christian Aid, Tearfund, CAFOD.

Edexcel A & B

Christianity: Practices

The role and importance of the church in the worldwide community; the work of Christian Aid, what it does and why.

Glossary

Some of the terms used in this lesson plan may need a little explanation, as they are not commonly used in everyday language.

Justice can refer to the justice system and the rule of law, but in this instance, it means fairness.

Development is a word that can have many different meanings (such as child development or a housing development). In this context, we mean international development. This means long-term solutions that help countries to deal with poverty and inequality. Sometimes, these solutions could be new technologies or ways to help people earn money, but could also mean improving rights, tackling violence, addressing environmental issues, and other underlying causes of poverty.

Reverence means deep respect.

Liberation means freedom.

A **Denomination** is a recognised branch of the Christian Church.

Fellowship is a word that has several layers of meaning. Most simply, it means coming together, with others, for a common purpose. This might mean meeting up at a church coffee morning, but it could also mean a deeper coming together through prayer or, as in Rowan Williams' example, coming together to fight poverty.



Thinking about my own ideas

Describe yourself here in 20 words:

[Red dotted box for writing]

Recount an experience that has made you concerned or got you fired up about unfairness in the world today.

[Grey dotted box for writing]

What is your response to the idea that 'every human matters'?

[Yellow dotted box for writing]

'God is green', i.e. God cares about the environment. What is your reaction to this statement?

[Red dotted box for writing]

Thinking about my own ideas

How has your learning in school challenged you to care about fairness for everyone?

[Red dotted response box]

What is your favourite charity, and why do you like it?

[Grey dotted response box]

Liberation, or individual freedom, cannot be enjoyed by people who are too poor to live well. Imagine a world where more people are liberated. What does it look like to you?

[Yellow dotted response box]

Learning to do good: who has taught you how to live a good life? What have you learned so far?

[Red dotted response box]

Rowan Williams interview

Rowan Williams, Chair of Christian Aid

A Chair is the leader of an organisation.

Who is he? Rowan Williams was Archbishop of Canterbury, the most senior priest in the Church of England, for ten years, retiring in 2012. Since 2013, he has been the Master of Magdalene College at the University of Cambridge. His full title is The Right Revd and Right Honourable The Lord Williams of Oystermouth. He is also a poet.



Read the interview and respond to the questions in the student sheets on pages 11-17.

When you were a teenager, what led you to care about poverty, inequality and world development issues?

I grew up in the 1960s and when I was a teenager I became aware of diverse levels of development and inequality, perhaps first through the parish church that I was a part of in Swansea, which had international links with Christians in Africa. The atmosphere of the 1960s suggested that the world was changing. I noticed initiatives like 'Third World First', which campaigned to address the reasons why people were trapped in poverty.

By the time I was in the sixth form at my school in Swansea I was already interested in international questions. The school had a talk for students each year from the United Nations Association, and that widened my horizons, so I was challenged in both church and school to be concerned about something that has become an abiding interest in my life.

'Christianity says every human is made in the image of God so every person you meet has a claim on your reverence, on your attention'

What about when you left school?

I went to the University of Cambridge. On my second or third night in the city, I was walking home from something and a homeless person stopped me on the street, asking for money. We began a conversation, walking the night-time streets, that lasted an hour or more and he showed me a different side of Cambridge. Because of that encounter, I got involved in working with homeless people and fundraising for the charities that helped them while I was studying there, and later in Oxford.

This contributed to my Christian picture of the world: Christianity says every human is made in the image of God so every person you meet has a claim on your reverence, on your attention. To me, to be a Christian means that I will try to recognise that everyone is significant, and has a gift to give. This belief in the 'image of God' in humans means that Christians must prize justice and liberation for all people.

This time was the early days of the charity for homeless people called 'The Cyrenians', a charity with deep Christian roots, which took its name from Simon of Cyrene. He was the man who helped Jesus to carry his cross on the road to his crucifixion.

Rowan Williams interview

You were the Archbishop of Canterbury for ten years. When you finished, you must have had many offers, but you chose to become the Chair of Christian Aid. Why?

In my work as the Archbishop of Canterbury, I travelled all over the world, and encountered many of the needs of developing communities for myself. I was impressed that those I met in small, local Christian communities in Africa, Latin America and Asia were often working with Christian Aid in local partnerships. My work as Archbishop had also included creating a new international alliance for development within the global Anglican Church.

I liked the way Christian Aid showed themselves to be really in tune with their partners. They don't tell the poor what they need, but go to local groups in, say, Sudan or Bolivia and ask what is needed. They recognise that people in those countries don't need a Western agenda imposed upon them, so they ask communities what partnership could do for them.

At the end of my time as Archbishop, I was considering what I might do next, so when the charity asked me to be its chairperson, I was immediately attracted.

This connects to the idea I mentioned above when we were discussing homelessness. I believe that the image of God in humanity means every person deserves our reverent attention. The mysterious creativity of every human stops you from ever writing people off. If you might find God in another person, then it is good to pay attention to people, including of course those who are the poorest.

What do you think it is valuable for young people to know about Christian Aid?

First, that Christian Aid is about building up what poor people can do for themselves through partnership. This is not a charity that gives handouts, down from the top. We enable people who have been left out to find and build their own future.

Second, that Christian Aid is inspired by Jesus Christ and raises lots of funds in the Christian communities, but we work with and help people of every faith background and those with no faith background as well. I would like to think we are trusted by the Muslims and Hindus and others with whom we work, because we don't want to manipulate them.

A third point is that Christian Aid is a collaboration between all the different denominations of Christians in the UK, involving everyone from the Pentecostals, the Anglicans, all the different groups (Catholics have their own agencies, but we even work with them as well). It really draws Christian people together to get out on the streets and work in fellowship for justice.

'If you might find God in another person, then it is good to pay attention to people, including of course those who are the poorest.'

Rowan Williams interview

What does your vision of God imply about how humanity should deal with poverty?

One thing about the Bible is that it suggests God's presence creates community. Hebrew scripture – the Christian Old Testament – pictures a society being created where everybody can stand before God and, from that encounter, learn to make a difference. People are to reflect on Earth the community-making action of God. Wherever God is present, community life is made strong.

In the New Testament, I'd encourage students of GCSE RS to read from 2 Corinthians 8:1-15. Saint Paul encourages tiny communities of Christians to be generous to each other, those who are poor being generous in thankfulness, those who are better off being generous with money. It was, for its time, an extraordinary call to tackle poverty with cooperation. As Paul collected funds for the impoverished church in Jerusalem, he taught the early Christians to recognise that we have a natural duty to those in need: 'give, so that gratitude may abound!'

You could say that Saint Paul started the first Christian development agency, an ancient ancestor to Christian Aid.



'...God's presence creates community'

How does the charity's theology influence what you do?

Christian Aid Week, every May, is a good illustration. It is a practical outreach to the whole community in the UK by Christians working together. The money raised during the week has been falling a little, but it is still a vital thing: thousands of Christians get onto the streets to offer the whole nation a chance to work for justice in the world. It shows that Christian people are on the front foot in combatting poverty.

How do the Bible's ideas of salvation, being saved, connect to Christian Aid's work?

I think all Christians would agree that salvation, God's saving action, means liberation from sin. I think this includes the idea that we need to be freed, liberated, from the selfishness which stops us from seeing the need of our neighbour. This means salvation is always communal, social. It includes being saved into a community that cares.

Some of Christian Aid's recent work on the theology of development has emphasised this idea. We are not trying to overturn individualistic accounts of salvation, but to draw out the implications of what God's salvation means. For example, many evangelical protestant churches, who 50 years ago emphasised only individual salvation, getting to heaven, have had quite a shift and are now very active in development work. I like to think that Christian Aid may have helped to clear the path to this broader understanding.

Did you know? Every year thousands of volunteers collect money for Christian Aid by going from house to house, collecting money in their local communities.

Rowan Williams interview

Poverty and climate change are connected: the poor are most vulnerable to the changing climate. Do you think God is green?

Yes, God is green. Christians believe that God created the Earth. It is not ours, it is loaned to us. Christian theology teaches reverence not just for other people but also for this Earth and all its life. The concept of Jubilee in Deuteronomy and Leviticus (see Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 15) introduces an early idea of inequality and our exploitation of the land. In the New Testament Jesus often uses natural processes to illustrate spiritual life. For example, he describes the kingdom of God as a seed growing secretly. This reflects the purpose of our lives, the time it takes for us to grow spiritually and morally.

In the last five years, Christian Aid has made responding to climate change one of our three biggest priorities. We are campaigning to deal with the issues at a global level, and working with organisations in poor communities, our partners, to resist the worst impacts of climate change and 'natural disasters'.

This world is lent to us. All the way back in Genesis, we interpret the image of Adam the gardener as a good one. He is given a good Earth, to steward. That doesn't mean dominating the Earth, but patiently working, like a good gardener to care for the soil, to build up life.

In the Eastern Orthodox churches, they consider divine energy to be in all that has been created. Our Christian sacraments, where bread, wine or water become sacred, are really just the visible tip of the iceberg; everything that God has made deserves our reverence and attention.

'To steward...doesn't mean dominating the Earth, but patiently working, like a good gardener to care for the soil, to build up life.'

You wrote a book about the Narnia stories of C. S. Lewis, which has a story of creation (*The Magician's Nephew*), and of the end of the world (*The Last Battle*). Do you connect your ideas about this world to Lewis's fiction?

Yes. In *The Magician's Nephew*, the Lion Aslan sings the world into being. The Lion's song expresses creativity as something poured out from God, freely, for us all to enjoy. In Lewis's *The Last Battle*, his vision of the end of all things is not a distant heaven, but this world – only more so. This world, renewed. I believe that God is deeply involved in the fullness of life for all humanity.

Do you have an idea to share with RS students about connections between Christian visions and global inequality?

I most want to say that we don't completely control what is happening in either environmental issues or in relation to economic justice. But we don't have to control everything. Being human means recognising that we don't control it all, but we do have our relationships. If we then give our reverence and attention to others and to the Earth, this is how we can learn to do good.

'This world is lent to us'

Rowan Williams interview – response

1. Rowan Williams' church and school got him thinking about living in an unfair world. Where have your ideas about fairness come from?

1. Your answer

2. Why do you think Rowan Williams spent so long talking to the homeless person he met in the street? How do you respond if you see a homeless person?

2. Your answer

3. What do you think Rowan Williams means when he says, 'every person you meet has a claim on your reverence'? Why does he think this?

3. Your answer

4. Who was Simon of Cyrene (check Luke 23:26)? Why did a charity for homeless people take his name?

4. Your answer

Rowan Williams interview – response

5. Find out six facts about the group of charities called 'The Cyrenians'.

5. Your answer

6. What impressed Rowan Williams about Christian Aid?

6. Your answer

7. The book of Genesis gives us the idea that we are all made 'in God's image'. What does Rowan Williams think this means? How does this idea make a difference to what Christian Aid does?

7. Your answer

8. Sum up the main points Rowan Williams wants you to know about the charity Christian Aid in three sentences of your own.

8. Your answer

Rowan Williams interview – response

9. What does community mean to you? In what ways can a charity like Christian Aid make communities stronger?

9. Your answer

10. Generosity is important to the apostle Paul, to Rowan Williams, and to Christian Aid. What do you think would change if the world was twice as generous as it is? Is generosity only about giving money? Can it be about other things?

10. Your answer

11. Salvation is a key idea in Christianity at GCSE. What does the term mean to you?

11. Your answer

12. Find out about this year's Christian Aid Week. How many volunteers were there? How much money was raised?

12. Your answer

Rowan Williams interview – response

13. What does stewardship mean?

13. Your answer

14. Is Christian Aid demonstrating good stewardship?

14. Your answer

15. Rowan Williams believes that God is deeply involved in the fullness of life. What do you think a life fully lived means?

15. Your answer

16. 'Reverence and attention' should be given to every human and to everything in nature, according to Rowan Williams. What do you think this means? What difference would it make if you did this? What about if we all did it?

16. Your answer

Christian Aid leadership

Background information

- Christian Aid is a charity which works to help poor people and communities around the world to overcome poverty, lead full lives and have a safe place to call home.
- Christian Aid was set up by churches in the UK and Ireland, but it now has offices in many countries worldwide.
- The charity works to strengthen the poor through partnerships with local organisations in the most disadvantaged countries on the planet.
- Its partners help people overcome poverty in many different practical ways, including through gender empowerment, land rights, combatting violence, adapting to climate change, improved farming techniques, better access to healthcare and education, as well as disaster response.
- The charity also plays a role in campaigning to challenge injustice at a political level, by putting pressure on decision-makers to make decisions that benefit poor and marginalised people.
- Christian Aid helps people in need regardless of their religion or worldview, and works closely with members of other religions.
- Rowan Williams' leadership of the charity shows that Christian Aid is a major player in the Christian life of the nation, not least as he is the former Archbishop of Canterbury.

Christian Aid in numbers

- For over 70 years, Christian Aid has had the support of more than 40 denominations of churches in the UK.
- The annual Christian Aid Week in May raises more than £10 million each year and includes the biggest door-to-door fundraising collection in the UK.
- Christian Aid's annual turnover is £100 million.
- Christian Aid works in around 40 countries worldwide.



Where donations to Christian Aid go

45% to developing communities

29% to emergencies and disasters

15% on fundraising

11% on campaigning for change

Find out more at christianaid.org.uk

Christian Aid leadership

Read the background information on Christian Aid, then answer the questions below.

Imagine that Christian Aid wants a new leader. Describe the challenge of this job here in less than 30 words:

[Red dotted box for writing answer]

What is Christian Aid's aim? What does the charity set out to do?

[Yellow dotted box for writing answer]

It's a big job to lead a charity which raises £100 million a year and works in around 40 countries. What does a leader of Christian Aid need to have already done?

[Grey dotted box for writing answer]

What kind of personality would make a good leader for Christian Aid?

[Red dotted box for writing answer]

Christian Aid leadehip

Does the leader of Christian Aid need to be a Christian? Explain your thoughts.

How does the charity need to change, to keep up to date, to stay the same? What does a leader need to do to lead the charity through changing times?

A business with an £100m turnover might pay its CEO £250,000. But how much should a charity pay its leader? Why?