



OUNDLE

School

2019 Academic Scholarship

Theology, Philosophy and Religion

Time Allowed: 1 hour and 30 minutes

- Answer Section 1 and **two** questions from Section 2

Section 1: Comprehension - 20 marks

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow. In this extract the author is introducing the reader to the issues surrounding the relationship between morality and religion:

On one level it seems a rather silly question to ask: Can you be good without being religious? Or to put it another way, what might be the grounds for a secular [non-religious] morality? The answer to the first question is clearly yes, if the evidence of everyday life is anything to go by.

The answer to the second question is that there certainly are grounds for a secular morality. They can be criticized of course, but then the religious grounds for ethical behavior have been subjected to close scrutiny too. So why is our question one that people even bother to ask?

Well, here are at least two reasons. One is that the 20th century was possibly the first century in human history in which very many people, and arguably entire nation states, sought to speak about an ethical vision of life without reference to God. It is worth asking how successful that project has been – not least since the same century was undoubtedly characterized by horrors, as well as progress; it will be remembered for the death camps as well as for the United Nation's declaration of human rights.

Second, if we have embarked upon a period of human history in which religious and morality are not automatically tied together, it is also worth asking how morality is faring after the split. If people believe that they are answerable to no-one but themselves, might it be that over time they become more self-indulgent and selfish? There is at least some reasons to be concerned about that possibility. The 20th century ended with a colossal and growing gap between the rich and the poor, for example.

Dostoevsky [a Russian writer] writes "Without God, everything is permitted". The suggestion is that following the so-called death of God, people will lose their moral compass. With the disappearance of clear notions of sin, evil will become confused with good, and individuals will lack the motivation to aspire to holiness, for the simple reason that holiness exists no more.

Written by Dr Mark Vernon in his article: 'Good without God'.

- a) In relation to any religion you have studied, explain what that religion teaches about reasons why followers of that religion should be good. 6 marks
- b) “Without God, everything is permitted” – Dostoevsky. In your own words explain what this quote means. 7 marks
- c) “Religious people are more likely to be good than non-religious people”. Do you agree? Give reasons for your ideas and show that you have thought about different points of view. You may refer to some of the ideas found in the above article. 7 marks

Section 2: Essay writing – 10 marks each

Choose 2 questions from the following choice of 4:

- 1 - “Children should freely choose their own religion rather than be made to follow the religious beliefs of their parents”. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. (10)
- 2 -- “People living in multi-religious societies are more likely to be in conflict with one another”. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. (10)
- 3 - With reference to any one religion, explain three key beliefs about God. (10)
- 4-- “Religious people resident in the UK should be able to follow the laws of their religion even when those laws contradict British law”. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. (10)

Section 1: 20 marks

Section 2: 20 marks (10 marks for each of the two essay questions)

Total: 40 marks