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UNIT 2
CHRISTIANITY: PRACTICES

Life's journey – sacraments and key acts of worship.

Sacraments. (Baptism/ Eucharist/ Confirmation)

Baptism

KEY CONCEPT: Baptism
Baptism The sacrament is a rite of initiation through which people become members of the Church. The word 'baptise' means to immerse in water. Water is used as a symbol of the washing away of sin.

Christians believe that every person's sin can be cleansed away. Baptism is the ceremony that symbolises that 'cleansing.' Infant baptism is when the parents have chosen for their child. Believers baptism is when a person old enough decides for themselves.

What is baptism?
It is an initiation into the Christian church family. For some Christians (Anglicans and Catholic's) it is a sacrament and marks the entry of a child into the Christian family. Parents and God-parents make promises to bring them up in the Christian way of life. For others, it is a rite, and indicates a person's choosing to be a member of the Christian family, and showing obedience to the example of Jesus.

When does it happen?
For some Christians (Anglicans and Catholics), it is babies or young children who are baptised at a font. Sometimes this is called 'christening', and often takes place at the end of a service of worship, but can be arranged separately. For others, (Baptists and Pentecostals), it is usually a baptism by immersion, which takes place during a normal service of worship, and is for anyone old enough to decide for themselves that they want to follow the Christian way of life.

Why is baptism important?
Baptism is a rite of entry marking people's membership of the Christian Church. It is also believed by some to indicate the removing of sin. Jesus himself was baptised as an adult. For some tradition's baptism is a public show of personal faith. Those practising 'believer's baptism see the person being united with Christ, including in his death and resurrection. John 3:3-6- refers to a spiritual birth: 'born of water and the Spirit': this is essential to being 'born again'- not physically, but spiritually

Infant Baptism

Christians believe that the rite of Baptism must be carried out by an ordained minister or an authorised lay person, but different denominations have different practices. In most Christian Churches, including the Church in Wales and the Catholic Church, children and infants are baptised, celebrating the birth of a child and marking their entry into the Christian community. There are variations in the Baptism services of the different denominations, though Baptism in one Church is recognised by all the others. In all of them, parents agree to bring their children up as Christians and godparents promise to support them in this. The services include the Liturgy (or Declaration) of the

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Word, that is readings from the Bible, followed by the Liturgy of Baptism itself. This may be followed by the celebration of the Eucharist.

What happens in a Church in Wales Baptism?

- Priest makes a sign of the cross on the baby's forehead and prays
- Baby's parents make promises to turn to Christ, repent of their sins and renounce evil.
- Affirm their faith in the three persons of the Trinity.
- Baby may be anointed with Chrism (oil)
- Candle is lit for the baby.

Believers' Baptism

Some denominations, for example the Baptist Church, don't believe in infant Baptism because they think that a believer should be able to declare their own faith and obviously babies cannot do this.

As a result, babies and children are not baptised because this type of believers' Baptism' is only for those who are able to state their own faith and willingly enter into a relationship with God. Jesus himself was baptised as an adult.

Before the ceremony, the 'candidate' will usually attend classes with the pastor, minister or elder so that they know and understand exactly what Baptism is, what commitments they will make and what will be expected of them.

During the service, the candidate will have the opportunity to speak about how and why they became a Christian and why they want to be baptised. Friends will pray (and hold a towel!) while the candidate is fully immersed in a pool of water. The minister or pastor asks two questions: 1 Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord? 2 Do you promise with the help of the Holy Spirit to love and serve God for the rest of your life? The candidate answers, 'I do' in response to each question; he or she is lowered into the water to symbolise death to their old life and raised out of it to indicate birth to a new life with Jesus as their Lord.

Describe what happens at a Baptism service. [5]

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Explain the differences in a 'believers' baptism and an 'infant baptism.' [8]

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The importance of Baptism

Christians believe that Baptism is important because:

-it is a rite of entry that allows people to become members of the Christian Church

-many Christians believe original sin is removed through the action of Baptism.

- it follows the personal example of Jesus, who was baptised as an adult by John the Baptist.

-it is regarded as the first sacrament, acting as a covenant' or agreement between human beings and God

-believers' Baptism gives an individual the opportunity to proclaim publicly their personal faith

St Paul suggests that Baptism links us directly with the death and Resurrection of Jesus when he states:

We were therefore buried with him through Baptism into death in order that,just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

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(Romans 6.4)

Jesus himself was baptised. He gives the disciples a clear instruction to baptise people: Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28.19-20)

In Christianity, Baptism is regarded as a sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The baptised Christian becomes united with Christ, including in his death and Resurrection. Through being baptised Christians are able to enter heaven and live eternally with God after death, as the passage from John's Gospel shows (John 3.3-6)

Explain the importance of Baptism to Christians. [8]

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Eucharist

Key concept

Eucharist means thanksgiving' and is also called Holy Communion'. The service which celebrates the death and resurrection of Jesus. Bread and wine represent (or, as some Christians such as Catholics believe, actually become) the body and blood of Jesus. The Eucharist is a re-enactment of the Last Supper.

What is the Eucharist?

It is a service to remember the death of Jesus, and includes the bread and wine used by Jesus at the Last Supper with his disciples. Christians see the bread as a symbol of the body of Jesus, and the wine as a symbol of his blood. Some traditions, such as Anglican and Catholic, refer to it as a sacrament, and often call it Eucharist. Catholics refer to it as Mass. Other traditions, such as Protestant churches see it as an important memorial service, and often call it 'Communion', 'Breaking Bread', or The Lord's Supper.

Different views about the Eucharist.

Different denominations have different views about what happens when bread is eaten and wine drunk at a Eucharistic service. Jesus said that they should be taken 'in remembrance of me'. The word remembrance is a translation of the Greek word anamnesis, which also means 'memorial sacrifice'. There is a range of views about what this means.

Catholics – Believe that the bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Jesus (transubstantiation).
- Celebreation of the Eucharist is called Mass, Holy Communion is taking the body and blood of Jesus.

Protestants – 16TH Century teaching of Consubstantiation which rejects the Catholic teaching of transubstantiation but states that the body and blood of Jesus are somehow present ‘in, with and under’ the form of the bread and wine. E.g. metal rod placed in a fire. (both fire and metal are united, as it becomes red hot iron, YET they still remain separate they still remain fire and metal)

Many protestants believe that Christ is present spiritually not literally.

Others protestants e.g. Baptists – believe that Christ is not present in the bread and wine at all, it is simply an act of remembrance. This is known as memorialism. (Also, the Eucharist is not a sacrament to them it is an ordinance e.g they do it because Jesus told them to)

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Why is the Eucharist important?

It was instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper, and the bread and wine are symbols of the body and blood of Jesus given so that people could receive salvation (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Jesus told his followers to share the bread and wine in memory of his death for them. The word Eucharist' means thanksgiving, and is a thanksgiving for the life and death of Jesus and for the Christian faith. For Anglicans and Catholics, it is a liturgical service, and has a set pattern and structure that is followed each time Others also have patterns and forms of the celebration, but it is not necessarily set out and followed strictly each time it is celebrated.

Describe the importance of the Eucharist [5]

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Things to include:

- Act of thanksgiving for the life and death of Jesus
- Sacrament introduced by Jesus at the Last Supper
- Brings them closer to God
- Helps Christians remember the life Jesus led.
- Brings Christians together
- Re-enactment of the Last Supper.

Explain the importance of the Eucharist. [8]

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Different Eucharistic practices.

Catholic Church

The bread (called the Host) and wine are kept in a container called the tabernacle on or behind the altar. As worshippers enter the church, they bow before it, making a sign of the cross with their hand across their chest

- The service begins with prayers of penance. The congregation acknowledge that they have sinned and the priest absolves (forgives) them.
- The Liturgy of the Word follows. This part of the service consists of readings from the Old Testament, the New Testament epistles and the gospels. The priest gives a sermon, usually on the meaning and significance of the Gospel reading. This is followed by the recitation of the creed (statement of faith) by the whole congregation
- The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the preparation of the bread and wine on the altar. This is achieved through prayers said by the priest and the congregation. The prayers ask that God make the bread and wine the body and blood of Jesus. The priest recites the words of Jesus at the Last Supper, recounting the narrative. He lifts the plate (paten) of bread and cup (chalice) of wine in front of the congregation.
- The priest puts a piece of bread into wine and presents the transubstantiated substances to the congregation, saying, 'Behold the Lamb of God; behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb. ‘Thus, the bread and wine are referred to together as the Lamb of God'. The priest takes Holy Communion, then invites the congregation to. In silence, they approach the altar and receive both bread and wine standing up
- After the distribution of Communion, prayers are said, and the congregation is dismissed

Church in Wales

There is no fixed view or interpretation among Anglicans of what happens to the bread and wine during the Eucharist. The Anglican celebration of the Eucharist is usually called Holy Communion and the Eucharistic Prayer echoes that of the Catholic service:

Send your Holy Spirit on us and on these your gifts that they may be for us the body and blood of your Son.

Some Anglicans interpret this as meaning that the bread and wine are transubstantiated (bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Christ) into the body and blood of Jesus; others that Jesus is present spiritually; yet others that they are symbols of his body and blood. The order of the Anglican service is very similar to that of the Catholic Church. There are subtle differences, however.

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Whereas in the Catholic Mass, the bread and the wine are called the Lamb of God, the Anglican service uses the term to refer to Jesus.
Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper
In the Catholic Mass, communicants (people) stand to receive Communion; in Anglican Churches, they kneel out of respect.

Eastern Orthodox Churches.
The Orthodox Churches call the celebration of the Eucharist the Divine Liturgy. It follows the same basic order as the Catholic rites.

Methodist Church.
The Eucharist service in Methodist Churches is very similar to the of Anglican Churches. It is sometimes called the Service of the Table. Everyone is able to participate: Methodists emphasise that it is Jesus' table, not that of the Methodist Church. The congregation may stand, kneel or sit to receive Communion. It is common to use grape juice instead of wine, so as to include people who do not drink alcohol. It is distributed in individual cups, as opposed to the shared chalice that is used in the Catholic and Anglican Churches

Baptist Church
The Eucharist service is often called the Lord's Supper in Baptist churches. It is not thought of as a sacrament, but rather as an ordinance: a remembrance of Jesus' actions and words in compliance with his instructions. Communicants usually remain seated while bread and grape juice are distributed; they then consume them at the same time as each other.

The Religious Society of Friends.
(Quakers) Quakers believe that God reveals himself in each person and that there is no difference between religious and secular activity. Therefore, they do not have formal services or liturgies and do not celebrate the Eucharist.

Explain some differences in Eucharistic practices. [8]

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Confirmation

Confirmation is a rite through which a person who has been baptised (particularly one baptised as an infant) affirms their Christian belief and is recognised as a full member of the Church.

The service of confirmation is a ceremony that enables a person to confirm that they are now making their personal choice to follow the Christian faith.
The purpose of the confirmation service is to allow baptised children to confirm it is their own desire to follow Christ and grow in their Christian faith and practice. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13) and Christians believe this can be passed on through the laying on of hands. The bishop will place his hands-on candidates at a confirmation service.

Preparation for confirmation.
Someone who wants to be confirmed will usually attend confirmation classes, which will include prayer, Bible study, discussion and instruction. Classes are conducted by the priest or vicar of the church which the candidates for confirmation attend and may use a course guide published by the Church. The purpose is to ensure that candidates fully understand the commitment they are choosing to make.

Describe how a Christian prepares for confirmation. [5]

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Symbols of Confirmation

Confirmation is regarded by some, but not all, Churches as a sacrament. They would say that there are outward signs of the unseen and undeserved grace (love and mercy) of God. These are:

- Laying on of hands - the Confirmation is usually conducted by a bishop. He stretches his hands out over the candidates' heads and calls down the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Anointing with oil - the candidates are anointed with oil of chrism. This echoes the ancient Israelite king-making ceremony. The candidate is being prepared for an important role.
- Words - the words of the liturgy confirm the candidates' status as members of the Church.
- Sign of peace - all people present greet each other with a handshake or embrace to show their unity as a Church.

Explain the symbols of a confirmation ceremony. [8]

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Confirmation ceremonies.

Catholic:

- performed in the candidate's parish church
- conducted by the bishop
- bishop lays hands on candidate
- bishop makes sign of the cross on their forehead with chrism oil
- candidates often take on a saint's name
- Holy Communion will follow [it will be the first Communion for the candidates)

Methodist:

- conducted by ministers
- perform the laying on of hands, reciting a prayer.

Church in Wales:

- conducted by the bishop
- candidates renew the promises made for them at baptism
- bishop lays hands on candidates' head
- prayers are said
- sometimes water may be sprinkled on foreheads and/or anointing with chrism oil.

Baptists:

- confirmation is not performed as babies are not baptised, only those old enough to be aware of the commitment they are making.

Why is confirmation important?

- It is a sacrament (in the Catholic Church)
- sign of maturity, a young Christian has decided to enter the Christian faith as an individual.
- It completes the promises made at Baptism
- Candiates can be filled with the Holy Spirit e.g. passed on to the candidate by the bishop placing his hands on the candidate.
- It is an opportunity for individuals to grow in their Christian faith.
- Allows individuals to participate in the Eucharist (allowed to share in the bread and the wine)
- Shows a sign of commitment to Jesus
- Formal way of affirming faith.

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Explain the importance of Confirmation to Christians. [8]

Significance of a religious wedding.

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Key Concept

Marriage symbols are features of the wedding ceremony that indicate the purpose and meaning of marriage. For instance, the wedding ring, being a continuous circle of precious metal, symbolises the never ending, precious love between the bride and groom.

Today it is possible to have a civil wedding or a religious one. For religious people, marriage is a relationship in which God himself is involved and so is a binding and lifelong relationship. Jesus says, in Mark 10:7-9, 'therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate'. In most Christian wedding celebrations there are marriage symbols and vows. These indicate the solemn and serious nature of the commitments involved in a marriage. For Christians, marriage is an important relationship and ceremony in which God himself is involved, so symbols help to remind people of the important and significant aspects of what the commitment involves.

Because Christians believe that marriage is a God-ordained relationship and that it is a lifelong commitment, vows are said by the couple in the presence of God and witnesses, affirming that they understand the commitment and agree to it willingly.

Marriage Symbols	The symbolism (meaning)
Rings	The never-ending love of the couple for each other; a symbol of the lifelong commitment of marriage. (Often used but not essential in a wedding.)
Veil	The bride's purity in coming to the marriage; it is removed to symbolise the two individuals becoming one through the marriage.
Vows	The deep commitment the couple are making to each other - not just a promise, a lifelong commitment.
Crowns	The presence of God, and that a new family has been created, led by a king and a queen as it were. (In Orthodox marriages the priest places golden crowns on the heads of the bride and groom.
Candles	Lit candles held during the ceremony by the bride and groom symbolise their willingness to receive the light of Christ (in Orthodox marriages)

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Key concept
Vows are promises made between people or a person's promise to God. Wedding vows are promises the bride and groom make committing themselves to one another.

Marriage Vows	**What they mean**
To have and to hold	The couple will support and care for each other in their new life together
From this day forward	The wedding day marks a new beginning in the couple's relationship and life together, now as husband and wife
For better for worse	The marriage will involve good and bad times, and the couple's commitment to each other is to last through both those kinds of experiences
For richer for poorer	There will be times in marriage of wealth and good fortune, as well as times of financial testing and difficulty, and the commitment is to face these together
In sickness and in health	There will be times in their life together when one or both are not in good health and their commitment is to support each other at those times.
To love and to cherish	Their new life together is one of loving and caring for each other, practically, emotionally and sexually.
Till death do us part	The marriage is expected to be a lifelong commitment: the only thing to end it should be the death of one of the couple.
According to God's holy law	The marriage is ordained by God and involves God as well as the couple; it is part of his plan for human beings.
And this is my solemn vow	The commitment is a serious one and is not to be revoked or broken.

Describe Christian marriage symbols. [5]

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Explain the meaning of marriage vows. [8]

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Why is marriage important?

- It allows Christians to not only show their love for one another but for God as well.
- It allows the couple to express their love sexually, as sex outside of marriage is wrong.
- It is the right institution for raising children.
- It is a binding life long commitment with God himself involved.
- Jesus teaches that a man will leave his parents and marry his wife and the two shall become one. (Mark 10)
- It is a divine institution ordained by God and can never be broken.
- The couple can take solemn vows.
- It unites and grows the Christian community.
- It is a sacrament (in the Catholic Church, protestants only have 2 sacraments – Baptism and Eucharist)

'The Eucharist is the most important Sacrament' [15]

Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view (you must refer to religion and belief in your answer).

Plan

Step 1:
-Work out what the question is really asking/ wanting you to do.

Step 2:
-In this case you need to debate and mention the following things:

1. Why is the Eucharist important to Christians.

2. What other sacraments are there?
ANSWER = - Baptism – Confirmation – Marriage

Why is Baptism important?
Why is Confirmation important?
Why is Marriage important?

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Some people may agree with this statement because

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Some people may disagree with this statement because

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Christians may agree with this statement because

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Some Christians may disagree with this statement because

Your opinion