Now test yourself – answers

Chapter 1 Augustine’s teaching on human nature

1 If human nature is essentially flawed (as a result of the Fall) then this leads to concupiscence: the inclination to sin as a result of being less able to choose between good and evil.

2 They couldn’t have been anything other than just friends, because that would have meant that they were able to fall foul of lust.

3 Genesis, Chapter 3.

4 Paul is saying that (as a result of the Fall) we are not fully able to control our wills. Therefore, we end up doing what we ‘hate’ and not what we want to do (i.e. what we know is right).

5 Original Sin is not a sin that you ‘do’ (like any other sinful action) – so it is not committed. It is a sin that you inherit, that you ‘get’ without being in control of the situation – contracted. It is contracted through concupiscence and lustful sexual activity leading to procreation.

6 Evolution says that the world is adapting and working towards perfection. Augustine said that the world was moving away from perfection (because of the Fall).

7 The sumnum bonum is an ultimate aim for humans, which we cannot attain by ourselves, but which we can only achieve through God’s grace, given to us undeservedly. It is an ultimate sign that perfection does exist and that God is worthy of worship.

8 Grace shows us that redemption is given to us through Jesus’ death on the cross and through undeserving humanity being given it unconditionally. This means that Augustine has a more positive approach to life than some might think.

9 Humans are not created flawed or tainted by Original Sin: we are all created in the same state as Adam.

Chapter 2 Death and the afterlife

1 All nations – everyone.

2 The ‘beatific vision’ – a time of being in the eternal presence of God.

3 Revelation – also known as the book of the Apocalypse. (Note, the book isn’t called ‘revelations’!)

4 God doesn’t! Humans, through their own choices, bring that on themselves.

5 Annihilation.

6 If God is (omni)beneficent then why does God allow his people to suffer for eternity, however bad they have been? In addition, if God is omnipotent/omniscient, why does he let his people get to the situation where they are so evil they go to hell?

7 Identity is fundamental: whatever approach to the afterlife is taken, it has to be you that is rewarded or punished, otherwise it is not fair (or pointless acting morally) – our identity must continue into the next life without a gap.

8 Praying for the dead (2 Maccabees 12): forgiveness of sins in the age to come (Matthew 12); being able to be cleansed by fire (1 Corinthians 3).

9 Limited election: Augustine and Calvin; unlimited election: Barth; universalism: Hick.

Chapter 3 Knowledge of God’s existence

1 Natural theology: the process of exploring the idea of God or making statements about God using our reason and observations from what we experience in the world. Revealed theology: using the knowledge we gain from God’s revelation (in different ways) to make those statements and/or conclusions about God.

2 Innate human sense of the divine (sensus divinitas, conscience, aesthetics); the order of creation.

3 The Catholic Church fully endorses the use of reason as a way to know about God. Every single person has the ability to use it.

4 It is only by God’s grace that anything can be revealed.

5 According to Calvin, Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God and the most complete self-revelation of God – ultimately expressed through his role as Mediator and Redeemer.

6 Barth: the Fall completely corrupted human nature; Brunner: the Fall damaged people on some levels, but not on a spiritual level so we can still use natural theology to an extent.

7 The great ‘cop-out’: a reason not to use your brain and think.

8 The phrase ‘To an unknown God’.
Chapter 4 The person of Jesus Christ

1 Jesus is believed by Christians to be fully God/divine and fully human/man.
2 Jesus' magic had a greater purpose and was not just for show; Jesus often asked people to keep the miracles secret.
3 Abba – less formal than 'Father' – more like 'Dad'.
4 His baptism and transfiguration are the events we read about in detail in the Gospels.
5 The Law on the Sabbath; although arguably he said that about lots of Laws!
6 Matthew 5:17-48 (for an exam, make sure you know it's Matthew 5).
7 God's forgiveness is unconditional, complete, unassuming, total, and conditional on repentance.
8 Only God was meant to be able to forgive sins. But this also suggested that Jesus had authority that was unlike – and greater than – their own authority.
9 She had been haemorrhaging for some time. This flow of blood made her ritually unclean, but permanently so, which meant she couldn't engage as a full member of the local community – and was therefore an outcast.

Chapter 5 Christian moral principles

1 The theonomous approach.
2 A statement that gives information through a truth statement.
3 Against: it suggests that there may not be one author, i.e. God (though not everyone would agree. Some would say 'neither' – one author can have different styles).
4 One of the apostles.
5 Aquinas.
6 Agape.
7 Joseph Fletcher, who fully developed Tillich's thinking and was later himself developed by Robinson. Others also advocated it.
8 They need to be 'in' the world, not 'of' the world (counter-cultural or prophetic but certainly distinctive).
9 Personal – it allows ethics to be 'done' by individuals.

Chapter 6 Christian moral action

1 Ethics is about action, but only through the community can that action take shape.
2 In the moment of action.
3 Because, in the moment of action, Bonhoeffer realised that standing by and doing nothing was not the will of God! Even though it would involve civil disobedience, it was the right thing to do.
4 The structures and superstitions of religion were no longer relevant and people were unable to be religious any more. This means that the current institutions of Christianity needed to be changed or replaced – the 'rusty swords'.
5 The community is the source of spiritual discipline (though simplicity helps).
6 Grace requires a response – a costly response. This is suffering in some way – an engagement in Jesus' suffering, even if not in such an extreme sense as for Jesus. This allows the Christian full access to grace.
7 Injustice should be dealt with by solidarity. Solidarity means speaking out and questioning that injustice – true action.
8 The advantage of focused spiritual discipline might be that someone could become fully aware of how God is revealing himself in a given situation – or how Jesus might have acted in that situation. Spiritual discipline might be argued to lead to fewer mistakes in discerning the will of God.
9 According to Bonhoeffer, the start and end point should always be Jesus Christ.

Chapter 7 Religious pluralism

1 This specific phrase is found in the teachings of the Catholic Church, although the view is not exclusive to the Catholic Church.
2 Karl Rahner.
3 Anonymous Christianity.
4 As different lenses: different perspectives on the divine reality.
5 God (theocentric).
6 Relativism begins to suggest that different 'truths' are equally valid, or that 'truth' changes over time. This might challenge any suggestion that the Christ-event was the one truth.
7 Migration led the UK, especially Birmingham, where Hick was working, to become much more explicitly multi-faith, which led Hick to reflect on the people he was encountering and to become a pluralist.
8 The Church of England.
10 False: it is important to keep away from debates about truth.
Chapter 8 Gender
1 Second-wave feminism.
2 Men are superior to women; women are in some way ‘defective’.
3 Ephesians 5:22–33 (remember that you need to be able to recognise the passage in an exam).
4 Pope John Paul II.
5 Simone de Beauvoir (and others, if you used knowledge from class notes!).
6 The Roman Catholic Church.
7 Sophia.
8 Rape, genocide, war.
9 According to Reuther, change needs to come from within the Church, through the rethinking of core beliefs and practices.
10 According to Daly, the way forward is post-Christianism. Christianity should be abandoned as defective and change needs to be brought about by women.

Chapter 9 The challenge of secularism
1 Secularism is the idea that religious belief should not affect how the State is run; secularisation is about the process of making a society more secular – or completely secular.
2 A neurosis (plural is neuroses).
3 Science – rational thought – reason. There is no more need for religion.
4 One-third.
5 The ones named in the book are the United States and France.
6 Ultimately because the idea of truth doesn’t change. They would argue that just because society says something is right, it doesn’t mean it is right.
7 Christianity is a valid ideology, alongside other ideologies and so Christianity, alongside all other ideologies should be fully represented. Others might argue that it represents the traditions of the United Kingdom and shouldn’t just be discarded.
8 The Amsterdam Declaration.
9 The King James Bible.

Chapter 10 Liberation theology and Marx
1 Action (praxis).
2 Alienation.
3 Capitalism puts the quest for profit before all other quests; communism is the belief that everything should be shared equally.
4 Structural sin.
6 This is the idea that the poor should be prioritised over other groups when making decisions about where to allocate resources. In some Catholic thought, the ‘poor’ refers to the spiritually poor, but in others, especially those influenced by liberation theology, it refers to the materially poor.
7 Some Christians would argue that all there is to be known about fundamental ideas and doctrines can be found – and should be looked for – in the Bible and/or Jesus Christ, which are both direct revelations of God.
8 The main obstacle between the two is Marxism’s determination that God and religion are destructive.
9 Pope John Paul II.