

# Key Terms: Religion & Life



## Origins and Value of the Universe



**Origins of the Universe:** Includes religious teachings (e.g., creation stories) and scientific theories like the Big Bang.

**Big Bang Theory:** Scientific explanation for the universe's origin; some see it as compatible with religious beliefs.

**Creation Stories:** Religious accounts of the universe's origin, such as Genesis in Christianity, describing God as the Creator.

**Stewardship:** Religious belief that humans have a responsibility to care for the world as God's creation.

**Dominion:** The idea that humans have authority over the Earth, sometimes interpreted as permission to use resources.

**Awe and Wonder:** Feelings of respect and amazement at the beauty and complexity of creation.

**Environmental Responsibility:** Duty to protect the planet, reduce pollution, and conserve natural resources.

**Pollution:** The contamination of the environment, seen as a moral issue by many religions.

**Sustainability:** Using resources in a way that preserves the environment for future generations.

**Animal Experimentation:** Using animals in research for medical or scientific purposes; debated ethically and religiously.

**Animals for Food:** Religious and ethical discussions about eating meat versus vegetarianism or veganism.

## Origins and Value of Human Life

**Origins of Life:** Includes religious teachings (e.g., Adam and Eve) and scientific theories like evolution.

**Evolution:** Scientific explanation for the development of life; some see it as conflicting with, others as compatible with, religious beliefs.

**Sanctity of Life:** The belief that all life is sacred and given by God, influencing views on abortion and euthanasia.

**Quality of Life:** The well-being and happiness of a person, often weighed against the sanctity of life in ethical decisions.

**Abortion:** The deliberate termination of a pregnancy; debated in terms of morality, sanctity of life, and women's rights.

**Pro-Life:** Belief that abortion is morally wrong as it ends a human life.

**Pro-Choice:** Belief that women should have the right to decide whether to have an abortion.

**Euthanasia:** Assisting someone to die to relieve suffering; debated in terms of morality, quality of life, and religious teachings.

**Voluntary Euthanasia:** When a person chooses to end their life with assistance.

**Non-Voluntary Euthanasia:** When someone else decides on behalf of an individual who cannot choose.

**Assisted Suicide:** Helping a person end their life, often due to terminal illness.

**Death and Afterlife:** Religious beliefs about what happens after death, such as heaven, hell, or reincarnation.

**Impact of Afterlife Beliefs:** How beliefs in life after death influence attitudes towards life's value and moral decisions.

## Ethical Arguments and Perspectives

**Ethical Theories:** Principles like utilitarianism (greatest happiness for the greatest number) and situation ethics (love-based decisions).

**Moral Absolutism:** Belief that certain actions are always right or wrong, regardless of circumstances.

**Moral Relativism:** Belief that morality depends on context and situation.

**Sanctity vs. Quality of Life:** Ethical debates weigh the inherent sacredness of life against considerations of suffering or well-being.

**Free Will:** The belief that humans can make their own moral decisions, influencing debates on abortion and euthanasia.

**Religious Authority:** Teachings from sacred texts and leaders that guide decisions on life and death issues.

**Conscience:** Inner sense of right and wrong, often influenced by religious and ethical teachings.

