

## Candidate 6 evidence

Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies National 5 Resource Sheet	
Candidate Name	Scottish Candidate Number
<p>Gathering = community. God = Purpose, antidote to hedonism. compass regardless.            Marx: "expression and protest, sigh, heart &amp; soul, opium." Right?</p> <p>Tyler. Reduced death. Depression. 30% reduced risk. Improvement. 12 million.            Harm or good? Proper Christians? Don't blame God.</p> <p>Sunday motto. Popular. Member. Ping's view. Can it work? Christians gather...            Corinthians! can't do anything without God. Theistic churches beneficial?            Matthew 10:8. 2 Milenia. social reforms.</p> <p>1949. template: Protagonist called Abraham. call to adventure. Likewise            Protagonist abandons comfort. Matthew 16:24. Christians: we must only look            to God. Cross. Sacrifice. one life? "There is no single 'ultimate'            meaning in life. Instead... "Making one's and others' lives happier and            healthier. Christians: Love and follow. Humanists: harder.</p> <p>compass? Values not dependant on religion? comes from humans and            decisions. Marx: Dread. Meanwhile John 14:6. source. solves the question.            Necessarily right. Peace. John 12:50</p> <p>coloured. Neglect centre of systems. cannot be bad. clear community to God's            house. Meaningful. Promise of adventure. firm compass. God is always right.            Morality is a clear path. can't be an opiate.</p>	

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N5 RMPS assignment: To what extent does the belief in God provide meaning in life?

one reason why it is important to discuss <sup>whether</sup> ~~whether~~ the belief in God provides meaning in life is because religious gathering, such as church, provides a sense of community to its attendees. A second reason why this discussion is important is because God is, to many, the source of life's <sup>purpose</sup> ~~purpose~~ and an antidote to ~~the~~ hedonism. A third reason why it is important to discuss whether the belief in God provides meaning in life is because it provides a moral compass, regardless of which answer one settles on. Karl Marx famously declared "religious suffering is at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people." Was he right to so boldly claim the falseness of religious meaning?

According to a Harvard study done in 2020 by Tyler Vanderweele, "those who attended religious services regularly were at considerably reduced risk (from) these deaths of despair" (deaths due to substance abuse or suicide.) Vanderweele also noted "those who attend regularly seem to be at about a 30% reduced risk of depression ~~over~~ over time, and, likewise, those who attend regularly who are depressed are more likely to recover from depression. From this, we can clearly see that the nature of church service directly correlates with an improvement in mental health. However, many humanists highlight the role of religion in wars, conflicts and crusades. For example, it is estimated that approximately 1.2 million people died as a result of the crusades and between 3,000 and 5,000 in the Spanish Inquisition. Many humanists and other atheists think religion does more harm than good. But

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is this justified? Those who argue this point of view normally point the blame at Christian endeavors, though I would argue that these Crusaders and inquisitors weren't doing their job as Christians properly, after all, one of the 10 commandments is against murdering people. Thus, God is not to blame for the people killed in his name, but instead, the people who carried out the actual killing.

Sunday Assembly is a secular organization that seeks to replicate the sense of community and comradeship felt in church, but designed for Atheists. "For the secular community... we needed at least one place to call home." said one member. Dr. Anthony Pinn, a religious studies scholar, calls the idea of 'church for the godless': "An opportunity to think through and celebrate high points of life and an opportunity to mourn with others the low points of life. To, in essence, make life meaningful." It is his view that God is not required to create a space in which people can find meaning in their lives, but that this is done through communicating with each other. But can a 'church without a god' really hold itself up? Meanwhile, Christians gather to worship God, learn about Him, and how He wants us to live our lives. ~~With~~ Atheists have no higher reason for gathering except to have a social club, whereas, with a Christian church: "Neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow." 1 Corinthisans 3:7. For Christians, this means, that we can do nothing without God's guidance and blessings. So are theistic Churches beneficial to the world around them? Jesus said "freely you have received. Freely give."

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Matthew 10:18. For nearly 2 millennia, the church has been involved in founding many of the world's institutions that ~~benefit~~ benefit society today, such as universities like ~~prince~~ princeton and Yale, and plenty of hospitals. In fact, many social reforms in the 19th century, such as the abolition of slavery, came from Christians such as William Wilberforce and John Newton.

In 1949, American writer Joseph Campbell recognized a common structural theme across mythological and contemporary stories which he named "the hero's journey" in his book, 'The Hero with a Thousand Faces'. This is the template of the most important and ~~my~~ recognized stories throughout history. The first step on this journey, 'the call to adventure' can be seen in many religious and non-religious stories. One example is Abraham, or Abraham, a key figure in western religion. Abraham is called by God to leave behind the comforts of home and see what God's plans for him are. Jesus says "whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." - Matthew 16:24. For Christians, this means that we should only do what is good in the Lord's sight, that is, sacrifice comfort. ~~as with~~ Humanists, on the other hand say "there is no single 'ultimate meaning' in life. Instead, it is up to us to make our own lives meaningful." Humanistic purpose in life is found in personal decisions on what is right or wrong. Christians have this already decided: purpose in life comes from loving God and following His commands, though for Humanists, finding purpose is often harder.

While religion provides a sense of community and

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purpose in life. Moral compass, does it also provide a moral compass? Humanists say "moral values are not dependant on religion, and it is a potentially damaging idea in an increasingly secular society to assert that they are." Marx compared religious meaning to nothing more than a short term cure to existential dread. Meanwhile, Jesus says "I am the way and the truth and the life," - John 14:6. Christians, including myself, believe goodness and morality come from a source, God. This solves the question of what morality is, because the path to eternal life is by necessity, the right one. If morality is nothing but a tool designed to get oneself and others into as good a position as possible, then Christians have the peace of mind that they've lived the best life they can. "I know His command leads to eternal life." - John 12:50.

Overall, I see that non-religious thinkers' views on what a person guided by religion looks like is colour by people who did evil in God's name, such as murder. They also seem to neglect the fact that many religions place at least the idea of a goodness, truth and beauty at the source of their systems. Belief in God clearly creates a sense of community to believers who seek to worship together as part of God's house. It further makes life meaningful, by carrying archetypal promises of adventure. Finally, belief in God provides a firm moral compass, as following God is always the right thing to do, thus making the path of morality clearer. Therefore, Religion cannot simply be an opiate as Karl Marx has it. I believe that the Judeo-Christian God is

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real, and that He is good. Personally, my church has become like my family and provides a strong sense of community. I further believe that all my purpose in life comes from God, and in honouring Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Everything I do, I do for Him. God has also guided my morality. I believe that in worshipping Him, I will learn how to conduct myself in the world and make moral decisions the same way that Jesus would.