

## ***Christianity - An introduction***

**Christianity** is the largest religion in the world with over 2 billion followers. 42 million people in Britain today describe themselves as Christian, and there are 6 million who are actively practising.



Christianity is focussed on the life and teachings of **Jesus Christ**, who Christians believe to be the Son of God. Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the Middle East over 2000 years ago.

The Christian holy book is the Bible. It is divided into the Old and New Testaments.

The New Testament explains how God sent his only son, Jesus Christ, to restore the broken relationship between people and God which had been caused by human wrong doing.

Jesus was executed on a cross (Crucifixion) as a criminal by the Romans, and according to Christian teaching after three days he rose from the dead (the Resurrection)

Christians believe that there is only one God, but that he is revealed in three different forms:

- God the Father
- God the Son
- The Holy Spirit

Christians model themselves on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Jesus taught people to love God and love their neighbour.

Many Christians worship in churches. Some groups meet in homes and other buildings. 'Church' means the gathering of Christians as well as the building in which Christians worship.



Their leaders are called priests or ministers.

Different ways of understanding Christian teachings has led to groups of Christians worshipping in different ways. These denominations include the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church and many others.

Many churches hold a service called Communion, Eucharist or Mass, in which bread and wine are shared together, just as Jesus did with his followers before his death.

The most important Christian festivals are: [Lent](#), [Easter](#) and [Christmas](#)