

# Contributions of martin luther king



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Martin Luther was a controversial Christian theologian who made a significant contribution towards both the development and expression of Christianity. Luther questioned the widespread corruption of the Catholic Church, exceptionally prevalent during his lifetime. He preached that faith alone justifies salvation, as opposed to good works, an emphasis being promulgated by the clergy. Additionally, Luther highlighted the importance of Scripture as he believed that the message of Jesus had become misplaced amongst an overemphasis on ritual and symbolism. He quoted Romans (1: 16-17) “ For I am not ashamed of the Good News; it is the power of God saving all who have faith...” Accordingly, Luther believed that Jesus Christ was the ultimate model for human behaviour. These three key understandings were to ultimately shape the far-reaching contribution Martin Luther would provide to Christianity.

### **Evaluate the contribution of ONE significant person or school of thought in Christianity (6 marks)**

Martin Luther was a controversial Christian theologian who made a significant and far reaching contribution towards both the development and expression of Christianity. Born in 1483, Luther lived during a time of widespread corruption within the Catholic Church. Especially of concern to Luther was the sale of indulgences, simony and nepotism amongst church leadership.

The impact of the Black Death had left a largely uneducated clergy in Europe. These leaders utilised many forms of corruption to ensure wealth for the Catholic Church, and promised purchasers of indulgences and relics a ‘ ticket to heaven’.

In response to these problems in 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Wittenburg Church. Luther wished to reform the Catholic Church and to reassure Christian adherents that salvation was attainable through their faith, not through good works. Additionally, Luther highlighted the importance of Scripture as he believed that the message of Jesus had become misplaced amongst an overemphasis on tradition, ritual and symbolism. He quoted Romans (1: 16-17) “ For I am not ashamed of the Good News; it is the power of God saving all who have faith...” Accordingly, Luther believed that Jesus Christ was the ultimate model for human behaviour.

Luther’s actions and consequent excommunication (1521) from the Catholic Church were to ultimately shape his contribution to Christianity. Although the 95 these would be addressed at the Council of Trent (1545-63), the Council essentially dismissed Luther’s calls for reform. However, his impact remained. Luther inspired other reformers and ultimately a new Protestant variant of Christianity (and within it Luther’s own denomination – the Lutheran church) resulted.

### **Assess the contribution of ONE significant person or school of thought in Christianity (20 marks)**

Martin Luther was a controversial Christian theologian who made a significant contribution towards both the development and expression of Christianity. Luther was concerned with the widespread corruption prevalent within the Catholic Church during his lifetime, and the subsequent failure of the Catholic Church to address these issues. Three key understandings would lead Martin Luther to devote his life to transforming Catholicism.

Firstly, Luther reassured Christian adherents that salvation was attainable through their faith, not through good works. Secondly, he highlighted the importance of Scripture, as he believed that the message of Jesus had become misplaced amongst an overemphasis on tradition, ritual and symbolism. He quoted Romans (1: 16-17) " For I am not ashamed of the Good News; it is the power of God saving all who have faith..." This lead to Luther's third key understanding, that Jesus Christ was the ultimate model for human behaviour.

Christianity before Luther:

Simony

Nepotism

Indulgences (Salvation)

Priesthood

Corruption

Sacraments

Papal Authority

Black Death

Transubstantiation (Eucharist is the body and blood of Christ)

Wealth of Catholic Church - inequalities and ' spiritual shallowness' (Luther)

Unethical behaviour

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Expression/practices over ritualised

Luther's Actions:

1517 - 95 theses on church door

Defied the Catholic Church

Excommunication (1521)

Ultimately, the formation of new VARIANT of Christianity (but remember this was never Luther's INTENTION - he wanted to REFORM the Catholic Church).

Lutheran Church based on Luther's views of what individuals need to attain Salvation

Sacraments (2) Baptism and Eucharist

Consubstantiation (Eucharist representative of body and blood of Christ)

Salvation attainable by the individual, based on one's faith

Publication of Bible in local vernacular - German

Scripture - focus of religion

Authority - Jesus/God

Married clergy

Liturgy less formal and less ritualised

Christianity after Luther:

Widespread questioning of Catholic Church

Birth of new Christian variant – Protestantism

Development of Protestant denomination: Lutheran, Calvinist – Baptists, Church of England etc

Whilst Luther's protests started "...as an effort to purify the life and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, it eventually produced separate churches that grew into a third major strand of Christianity to stand alongside Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism." (Living Religion text p98)

Counter Reformation (the catholic Church's response to the Protestant Reformation)

Council of Trent from 1545-1563 upheld papal primacy by proclaiming that Scripture and tradition are equally important and complementary sources of God's revelation, and by clarifying the Roman Catholic belief in the seven sacraments.

The Evangelical Awakening – a dramatic spiritual renewal in Western Christianity

Vatican II – the twenty-first ecumenical council in the history of the Catholic Church (1962-1965). Three major aims – spiritual renewal in the light of the gospel, updating church teaching, discipline and organization, and the promotion of unity for all Christians (ecumenism)

## **Describe the contribution of ONE significant person or school of thought in Islam**

### **(3 marks)**

Imam Al Shafi is a significant and influential person within Islamic history. Undertaking a systematic revision and organisation of the existing Muslim law, Al Shafi established a system of interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence which he termed Usul al-Fiqh. This method incorporated the already existing sources of jurisprudence, the Qur'an and the Sunnah, however, it dictated additional authority to both the Ijma and the Qiyas. Shafi was inspired by the teachings of Muhammad, who believed in the importance of the scholar since "...the cure of ignorance is to ask and learn."

## **Evaluate the contribution of ONE significant person or school of thought in Islam**

### **(6 marks)**

Imam Al Shafi (767-820CE) is a significant individual within Islam. Shafi was born during a time when confusion and disorder over the Islamic law was creating social instability and corruption within society. Al-Shafi wished to resolve the differences between the two existing schools of thought in order to create a uniform response to situations which arose throughout the many new Islamised states, "...his historic achievement was to forestall the development of independent regional systems based on Medina or Kufa..." (Ruthven) Shafi dedicated himself to this task in his firm belief that the purity of the faith had to be maintained.

Al Shafi's creation of a unified system of jurisprudence subsequently allowed greater cooperation within the Islamic world. In the Kitab al-Risala, Shafi

outlined Usul al-Fiqh which emphasised the importance of the Qur'an, Sunnah, Ijma and the Qiyas. Of these he believed that the Qur'an as the divine word of Allah held the most significance.

Additionally, Shafi's commitment to determining the isnad, or chain of transmission of the hadith, earned him enormous respect amongst scholarly circles. Shafi's interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence eventually led to the creation of the third major Sunni school of thought. This interpretation of Sharia law continues to be followed by millions of Muslims in contemporary society.

## **Assess the contribution of ONE significant person or school of thought in Islam**

**(20 marks)**

### **INTROUCTORY REMARKS:**

Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi (767-820) significantly influenced the development of the Islamic faith. Responsible for establishing the four foundations of fiqh (usul al Fiqh), Al-Shafi is considered the founder of a unified interpretation of Islamic law or jurisprudence. Furthermore, through the consequent evolution of his own school of Islamic thought, Al-Shafi continues to make a significant contribution to the development of both the belief and practices of Islam in the contemporary world.

### **BASIC OUTLINE**

BEFORE Al-Shafi:

Social and economic tensions – problems raised by ruling and administering a diverse and rapidly growing empire

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Often geographic and cultural influences determined the response of the interpretation of the law - Al-Shafi believed that laws which were valid in one place were not necessarily so in another and therefore required systemisation to ensure the purity of the Islamic faith. Legal decisions had come to be based on tradition of the people not Muhammad this was because

Difficulty interpreting Islamic law following death of Muhammad - TWO schools of law already established - Imam Malik (700-767) and Imam Hanifa (716-795)

Rationalists based their beliefs on the teachings of the Qur'an. However, Qur'an had little legislative material (Hanifa)

Traditionalists based their beliefs on the teachings of the Sunnah. However, the model of living (Sunnah) encountered new challenges which needed to be addressed (Malik)

### **THEREFORE:**

A revision and systemisation of Islamic law needed. Shariah is not a clearly articulated set of rules available for immediate reference. Instead, it includes interpretations of revealed sources - the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Shafi insisted on an established set response to these situations which could be applied across the newly Islamised states

Shafi joined the Hadith scholars to determine the chain of transmission (isnad) and therefore the authenticity of the hadith

Shafi studied under Malik and combined his own interpretation, along with that of Malik and Hanafi to create a synthesised response.

According to Ruthven:

“ Despite the differences between the three principal schools... they were generally agreed in accepting the system of roots developed by Shafi. For that reason his role as the greatest systematiser of early Islamic law makes him more than just the ‘ founder’ of one of the four madhhabs. Viewed retrospectively, his historic achievement was to forestall the development of independent regional legal systems based on Medina or Kufa... this supreme intellectual achievement makes Shafi one of the great unifiers of Islam.”

## **RESPONSE:**

Shafi’s book – Kitab al-Risala Usul al-Fiqh (or al-Risala) cited FOUR sources of Fiqh (practical application of the Shari’a):

Qur’an – words of Allah

Sunnah – actions of Muhammad – Al-Shafi puritanical view – Muhammad words, not those of his companions. Isnads to be authentic (in accordance with the chain of transmission)

Ijma (consensus) – of the Muslim community. Previously the ijma of the scholars (ijtihad) had been consulted – the Qur’an and the Sunnah. Shafi insisted on the ijma of the people.

Qiyas (analogy) – strict systematic reasoning

Al-Shafi believed that because Allah had provided, in Sharia, a guide for all human life, it must be possible to extend, by use of analogy, the application of legal material in the Qur'an and the Sunnah so that they apply to other cases. An example of his contribution to the expression of Islam can be found in his interpretation of Sura 4: 43 which claims that men are unclean for prayer if they “ have touched women”. This was taken by Shafi to mean any physical touching including accidentally bumping into a woman. It was therefore further extended to apply to the practice of washing before prayer (ghusl).

This was Al-Shafi's system of determining Islamic jurisprudence. There are many different interpretations based upon the five different schools: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi, Hanbali (Sunni) and Jaffari (Shi'a). The School of Islamic Fiqh, established by Imam Al-Shafi's student's, provides interpretations of law which are used by all four Sunni schools of law. Islamic legal tradition practices pluralism that allows it to maintain that these schools may differ in their legal opinions, but remain equally valid (they have consulted the same sources to reach a legal decision).

### **Describe one significant practice within Christianity (3 marks)**

The sacrament of Baptism is a rite of passage undertaken by adherents symbolising their initiation into the Christian tradition. Although not all Christians identify with the physical nature of the rite, such as the age of the initiate and the rituals utilised, all Christians are marked with the sign of the cross. Similarly, all Christians are baptised with the recitation of the words, “ I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Spirit.” The belief in the Trinity, the rejection of Satan and the forgiveness of sins are common elements in the baptism ceremony across the Christian variants.

**Demonstrate how one significant practice within Christianity expresses the central beliefs of this religious tradition (6 marks)**

Baptism begins the spiritual journey for the adherent within their faith community emphasising the importance of being in touch with, and striving to understand, the transcendent. Baptism symbolises the divine nature of the Christian tradition and makes present the central beliefs through the repetition of sacred stories and ritualistic actions. The belief in the Trinity, the rejection of Satan and the forgiveness of sins are common elements in the baptism ceremony across the Christian variants.

In each of the Christian variants, baptism is the Church’s way of celebrating and enacting the embrace of God and the promise of salvation. ‘ Peter replied, “ repent and be baptised...”’ (Acts 2: 38-39). At the time of Christ it signified that the person being baptised became a follower of Christ and acquired a relationship with him. ‘...I (Paul) also baptised the house of Stephanas...’ (1 Corinthians 1: 16) Early baptisteries (the part of the church where baptism happened) showed that a person was led down steps to be immersed in water before emerging on the other side. There was, and remains, an identification with Jesus – dying and rising.

The Catholic Catechism recognises that ‘...From the beginning, the revealed truth of the Holy Spirit has been at the very root of the Church’s living faith, principally by means of baptism. Within Orthodox Christianity the rite of

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baptism has four roles. Firstly, to remove original sin, to remove all other sins committed before the time of baptism if the person is beyond the age of infancy, to unite the person to the community of believers and to open the door of salvation and eternal life to him or her.

**Analyse one practice within Christianity explaining its significance to both the individual and the faith community (20 marks)**

The sacrament of Baptism is a rite of passage undertaken by believers in celebrating, symbolising and making present the central beliefs of the religious tradition of Christianity. It is an experiential religious act involving the transformation of the individual.

Baptism as a rite of initiation welcomes the individual into the Christian tradition and links the individual, community and divine. However, not all Christians identify with the physical nature of the rite. Quakers believe that the whole of life is sacramental. To be a member of Christ's body involves no outward rite, it requires instead an inward transformation of one's whole life. While other denominations have differences involving the rituals used and the age of the initiate.

Baptism celebrates a family's and a community's love for the initiate who is welcomed into the community of believers. The candidate (infant or adult) is provided with a god-parent/ sponsor to help them with their initiation as a Christian. 'Baptise first the children, and if they can speak for themselves let them do so. Otherwise their parents or other relatives speak for them'.

(Hippolytus in the Apostolic Tradition c. 215)

For Catholics, the sacrament of Baptism is the first step in a lifelong journey of commitment and discipleship. It is followed by years of catechesis before being completed late by Confirmation and the Eucharist, the summit of Christian initiation. Baptism is the Church's way of celebrating and enacting the embrace of God and the promise of salvation. ' Peter replied, " Repent and be baptised..."' (Acts 2: 38-39) Baptism happens not only to the individual, but also the wider Church. At the time of Christ it signified that the person being baptised became a follower of Christ and acquired a relationship with him. '... I (Paul) also baptised the household of Stephanas...' (1 Corinthians 1: 16) The rite is celebrated with the community present and actively participating. It is the community, who will journey with them throughout their life.

Infant Baptism is the preferred form of the rite for both Catholic and Orthodox Christians. However, adult Baptism may also occur. The Christian initiation of adults for both Catholic and Orthodox Christians begins with their entry into the catechumenate and reaches its culmination usually at Easter in a single celebration of the three sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

Baptism symbolises the divine nature of the Christian tradition. It emphasises the importance of being in touch with, and striving to understand, the transcendent. This includes comprehending the purpose of life and the nature of life after death. Early baptisteries (the part of the church where baptism happened) showed that a person was led down steps to be immersed in water before emerging on the other side. There was identification with Jesus – dying and rising. On behalf of the child (infant

baptism) or as an adult the ceremony of initiation occurs. This includes the symbolism of water and oil and the declaration of faith. The water represents life and recalls the baptism of Christ by John the Baptist. The Baptismal candle symbolises Christian status as an 'Easter people', and signifies the passing on of faith to those being baptised. The white garment represents the Church's belief that Baptism sets them free from Original Sin and lets them 'put on Christ'.

Immediately following the baptism of the child in Orthodox Christianity Chrismation occurs. In this practice, the Orthodox Church differs from the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches where the two sacraments are often separated. Orthodox Christians believe baptism is a personal participation in Easter – the death and resurrection of Christ, and Chrismation a personal participation in Pentecost- the coming of the Holy Spirit as the children receive 'the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Romans 8). The child then receives new clothes. The Priest together with the Godparent and the child walks around the Font, three times. Each time he chants: 'As many of you as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia.' (Galatians 3: 27) The infant is then tonsured, where four pieces of the child's hair are cut in the sign of the cross. As the child is now recognised as a full member of the church he/she receives Holy Communion.

Baptism makes present the central beliefs of the Christian tradition through the repetition of sacred stories and ritualistic actions. Baptism begins the spiritual journey for the adherent. The lighting of the Pascal (Liturgical Year) Candle at the Catholic ceremony, links the initiated to a life of union with the Church. This candle is light for the individual at their Baptism and again at <https://assignbuster.com/contributions-of-martin-luther-king/>

their funeral service. The candidate is also marked with the common sign of the initiated – the sign of the cross and the recitation of the words, ‘ I baptise you in the name of t he Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.’ The belief in the Trinity, the rejection of Satan and the forgiveness of sins are all evidenced in the Baptismal ceremony. The catholic Catechism recognises that ‘...From the beginning, the revealed truth of the Holy Spirit has been at the very root of the Church’s living faith, principally by means of Baptism.’

Within Orthodox Christianity the rite of Baptism has four roles. Firstly, to remove original sin, to remove all other sins committed before the time of Baptism if the person is beyond the age of infancy, to unite the person to the community of believers and to open the door of salvation and eternal life to him or her. The Gospel read at the ceremony reinforces the belief in the presence of God. ‘ And Jesus came and said to them, “ All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”’ (Matthew 28 16-20)

The Baptist Church takes its name from the conviction that followers of Jesus should be immersed in water as a visible and public display of their faith. Baptists believe ‘ There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord’. Baptists emphasise a believer’s baptism by full immersion, after a public profession of faith in Christ as saviour. Unlike most Christian denominations Baptists do not baptise infants because of their belief that a person must be old enough to make a public profession of faith in order to be baptised.



Therefore, the foundational sacrament of Baptism unites the community of believers. It determines the spiritual life journey of the believer and reinforces the central tenets of the faith to those who witness the initiation of the individual.

### **Describe one significant practice within Islam (3 marks)**

The fifth pillar of Islam, Hajj, is seen as the ultimate expression of Muslim solidarity. Hajj draws together Muslims from all over the world forming one umma in order to worship the One God. The Qur'an states 'perform the visit and pilgrimage to Makkah for Allah' (Sura 2: 196) explaining that Hajj is a re-enactment of the trials and tribulations of the Prophet Abraham, his second wife, Hagar, and his son, Ishmael (linking believers to the central Islamic belief – rusula). The Hajj also re-enacts the journey of Mohammad and is hence "a metaphor for the journey of life". The ultimate goal of Hajj is to ensure the achievement of God consciousness (tawid).