



# THE PUZZLE OF CHRISTIANITY

Event for students of Christianity for  
AS/A Level Religious Studies  
With Dr Peter Vardy

- London, Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024
- York, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024





**Dr. Peter Vardy** was Vice Principal of Heythrop College, University of London (1999-2011); he is internationally well-known as a leader in the fields of Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics and Values Education. Peter's many books – including the best-selling "Puzzle of" series for HarperCollins – demonstrate his ability to communicate complex ideas with clarity, accuracy and humour. For more than three decades schools and colleges have looked to Peter to provide outstanding conferences, resources and CPD / INSET, both to support their work in RS and Philosophy and more broadly.

**Did you know?** Peter was awarded an honorary doctorate for his work in promoting Religious Studies in schools by the University of Chichester in 2021.

## **"The Puzzle of Christianity LIVE" is Candle Conferences first live event specifically designed for students of Christianity for A/AS Level Religious Studies and, at least in Dr Vardy's opinion, one of the best events we have run!**

Exploring content specified by ALL ENGLISH EXAMINATION BOARDS the event aims to get students really excited about the content, enriching and extending their knowledge and understanding as well as supporting them in analysing, evaluating and making informed, well-reasoned academic judgements.

- Tickets to the live event come with access to an exclusive online resource-area, which provides participants with video-clips, detailed notes on each topic as well as activities, model-essays, revision-tips, reading lists and more.
- Participants also get FREE access to our A Level Masterclass for the academic year 2023-24 (worth £5 per student) and providing 4 hours of expert online tuition designed to improve writing skills and improve grades.

### **1. The Nature of God**

This first session will explore the concept of God in Christianity, considering the status of Jesus, the significance of the doctrine of the Trinity as well as the meaning and implications of attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience and omnibenevolence. Is the Christian concept of God coherent and to what extent is it compatible with the "God of the Philosophers"? The ideas of Boethius, St Anselm, St Thomas Aquinas, and Richard Swinburne will feature in this session and Dr Vardy will set students a short activity at the end of this session, which they can try during break.

### **2. Christianity and other Religions**

After a short break, Dr Vardy will consider whether being a Christian is necessary for salvation, and if so, being a Christian in what sense. Are universalism, inclusivism and/or pluralism compatible with the Christian concept of God, Scripture and Doctrine? If not, what does this mean for inter-faith relations? The ideas of St Augustine, Karl Rahner, Hans Kung, John Hick and Gavin DaCosta will feature in this session and the morning will end with a group discussion and opportunity for Q&A.

### **3. Secularism and Secularisation**

After lunch, the third session moves forward to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, outlining how secularisation has changed Christianity in the developed world and evaluating both a range of arguments for secularism - including those associated with Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Richard Dawkins - as well as different Christian responses to those arguments. Dr Vardy will set students a short activity at the end of this session, which they can try during break.

### **4. A Theology of Liberation?**

After a short break, the final session of the day will explore how the Roman Catholic Church responded to the emergence of Liberation Theology and the implications of this response for understandings of Jesus and of Authority in the Church, the interpretation and use of the Bible and the relationship between Religion and Politics. The ideas of Karl Marx, Gustavo Gutierrez, Leonardo Boff and Alistair Kee will feature in this session and the event will end with a group discussion and opportunity for Q&A.



"Dr Vardy and Charlotte never disappoint, both deliver content with passion and are the experts in the field.

Students found the conference to be intellectually challenging and important to their A Level studies." Teacher, 2020

"They are really excellent conferences- clear, coherent and extending talks upon all subjects linked with courses. A must for aspirational sixth formers."  
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## **To Book**

Student tickets to attend the LIVE "The Puzzle of Christianity" event cost £20.

- We offer a 10% discount if you book 10+ tickets together online (e-mail for your ACCESS CODE)
- You can buy a COMBINED ticket to both of our A Level events (God & the Good and The Puzzle of Christianity LIVE) for just £30, when booked online and subject to t&cs.
- We offer one free teacher-place per 10 students, otherwise accompanying teachers cost £20
- Teachers attending alone for CPD purposes cost £100
- Trainee teachers and extra adults supporting individual students to access the event attend for free.

[buytickets.at/candleconferences](http://buytickets.at/candleconferences)

With Candle you get:

- Up-to-date scholarly content made engaging and tailored to the real needs of A Level students.

- Sessions and resources designed by practicing teachers with a record of engaging students of all abilities.

- Easy, secure online bookings and social media support on twitter @PuzzleVardy & facebook @CandleConfs

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