The Just War Theory

Put forward by **St. Thomas Aquinas**. He created 6 criteria for war to be justified:

1) War must be the **last resort**. All other peaceful options (e.g. peace talks and negotiation) must have been tried.
2) War must be a response to a **serious threat**. So your country must be under threat of being invaded or attacked.
3) There must be a **reasonable chance of success** – you need to know you have a chance of winning before you start a war.
4) **Weapons must be used proportionately**. So you should not use more force than is necessary and you should not harm civilians (none soldiers).
5) The decision to go to war must be declared by a **legitimate authority** e.g. a government or the United Nations.
6) The **aim** of the war should be to restore peace.

Quotes to Support War:

- ‘Beat the cutting blades of your ploughs into swords and your pruning hooks into spears.’ – Use whatever you have available and turn it into a weapon to fight with.
- ‘If there is a serious injury you are to take a life for a life and a tooth for a tooth.’ – If someone does something to you, you are allowed to get revenge and fight back.

Quotes/Examples Against War - Pacifism:

- ‘Thou shall not kill’ – killing is wrong under any circumstances because all life is special and should be protected.
- *Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God* – God is pleased with those who make peace. We should therefore find peaceful ways of resolving conflict e.g. talking and negotiation.
- **Martin Luther King** – he used peaceful methods to try and achieve equality for black people in America. For example, peaceful protests, speeches and bus boycotts.

Nuclear Warfare:

The first nuclear bomb dropped was on Hiroshima by America in 1945. 65,000 people were killed.

The number of countries in the world with nuclear weapons is increasing, this is known as **nuclear proliferation**.

Some agree with nuclear weapons because they are a **deterrent** – the more countries that have nuclear weapons the more countries will be put off using them for fear of retaliation.

Some disagree with nuclear weapons and think that all countries should give them up, this is known as **disarmament**.

Terrorism:

This is when people use violence or the threat of violence to achieve their aims. For example, the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers.
Causes and Effects of Crime:

**Causes:**
- Boredom
- Lack of education
- Upbringing
- Poverty

**Effects:**
- Fear
- Loss of life
- Loss of property/money

Types of Punishment

**Prison** – protects society as it prevents the criminal from committing another crime. However, a majority of prisoners reoffend after they have been released.

**Community Service** – Requires the criminal to repay society for what they have done. However, it can be seen as a soft option and not a good deterrent.

**Fine** – The money raised can be used to help society. However, this is not a problem for the rich.

**Suspended Sentence** – Gives a first time offender a second chance. However, it does not protect society.

Quotes on Punishment

*Thou shall not kill.*

Killing is wrong because life is sacred. God has not given humans the right to decide when life should end. It is one of the 10 Commandments

*God disciplines the ones he loves.*

God wants us to be punished so we can learn from our mistakes and become better people.

*An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.*

It is ok to get revenge. We can therefore get revenge on the criminal and make them pay for the crime they committed.

Forgiveness:

**Quotes:**
- ‘Father forgive them for they know not what they do.’
- ‘Your heavenly father will forgive you if you forgive those who sin against you; but if you refuse them, He will not forgive you.’ – If you expect to be forgiven, you need to show you are willing to forgive others.

**Example:** Anthony Walker – he was an 18 year old boy killed in a racist attack. His mother, Gee Walker a Christian, chose to forgive her sons killers.
Aims of Punishment:

**Retribution:** Getting revenge on the criminal. A quote to support this is ‘An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.’ The death penalty is a good example as if someone kills someone their life is taken. Prison is also a form of revenge as the criminal has their freedom taken away from them.

**Protection:** This aim is about protecting society from a dangerous criminal so they cannot commit another crime. Both the Death Penalty and Prison achieves this. A quote is ‘love your neighbour as yourself’ as it is compassionate to protect innocent people.

**Reformation:** This aim is about changing the criminals behaviour so they don’t commit the crime again. E.g. If someone has committed a crime due to a drug addiction, they would be given rehabilitation. A quote to support this is ‘God disciplines the ones he loves.’

**Deterrence:** If you know you are going to get punished it will put you off (deter you) committing the crime in the first place or committing the same crime again.

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Capital Punishment/Death Penalty:

This is when someone is executed by the state for a crime they have committed, e.g. murder.

**Arguments for:** ‘An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth’ – if someone has killed someone, they deserve to be killed themselves. This is about revenge so meets the aim of retribution.

‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ – it is compassionate to the relatives of the victim as they feel a sense of justice. Joanna Yates’ parents wanted the death penalty for their daughter’s killer.

**Arguments against:** ‘Thou shall not kill’ – we should not kill under any circumstances, humans do not have the right to take life away, only God does.

‘God disciplines the ones he loves’ – the death penalty does not give the criminal a chance to reform and change their behaviour (reformation). It does not give them a second chance.