

## **Introduction**

I chose the unit, religion and spirituality because I'm interested in all types of arts. I have visited very many art galleries in spare time, and seen a wide range of various styles and genres of paintings. One famous gallery I have visited is the Uffizi gallery in Florence, Italy. This gallery has many original religious painting by many, famous artists. I have seen a wide range of artists work, that is then reason I am doing this unit so I can research more about the ways religions understand paintings, and the ways they decorate the churches. While visiting Italy I have seen many cathedrals and churches with the painted ceilings and great statues of saints. So this will help me understand more about religion and spirituality.

## **Describe and explain the part in which art plays in worship and spiritual life of a Christians.**

Spirituality can be anything specifically religious to do with god or a human religious experience at depth where spirituality is found in human spirit. Art and spirituality are concerned with inner life; an artist would draw based on their inner life and experiences and show this creativity. Arts are used for expressing feelings and emotions in drawing, paintings and sculptures. A reason and planning are needed to do this even though the viewer may look at the piece and only see a feeling or emotional response, which could be one of awe wonder or empathy at the pain and suffering in the world.

### **“Art gives people a way to show their spirituality”**

Art contributes to spiritual life because, it expresses human longing and develops the imagination, and it shows reflection on deep human experiences, it searches for a meaning and truth. Art often transforms something ordinary into something with more meaning. Art gives people a way to show their own spirituality. In a painting a person may see what is painted as a whole where as the artist has captured much more meaning and is waiting for us to be formed.

### **“...It’s hard to know where one ends and the other begins.”**

Art has always been used in religion, religious art used in the past medieval times were stain glass windows with religious authorities and saints, and people then were not into literacy so bible stories were pictorial. In the modern day art is used as an aid to devotion to the bible. Art visualises experience and hopes. Religion inspires creativity in the arts. Art is a way of communicating and can challenge beliefs and values; it is a means of religious advertisement. Sometimes art and religion are separate and detached from each other but other times art and religion are so attached it is hard to know where one ends and the other begins.

Art can be religious because it may represent a religious symbol or teach part of a belief through images and symbols. Both art and religion use analogy, this means they use a metaphor and symbol rather than science and logic. The painting or sculpture may become religious because of where it has been placed, or may be religious because it has been blessed by a religious authority, like a lot of caravaggios paintings had been blessed by the pope.

### **“...see them as symbols to deepen faith”**

There are a lot of differences of tradition in art and Christianity. There had been many great paintings and decorations until they were neglected by a protestant movement. Muslims will not have any form of visual representation of Allah, instead they have arabesques for decoration. Roman Catholics use art and statues a lot, they do not idolise them but instead see them as symbols to deepen faith.

## **Explain how Christians may feel that the building they worship in and the type of worship itself may assist them in life and belief.**

Most Christians worship in churches, these buildings are said to be the houses of God and therefore Christians will want them to be as magnificent as possible, with many icons. Churches are built in special ways all icons and the font and the altar is placed peacefully. This would give the building a religious atmosphere. There are often crosses and crucifixes hanging in churches. Often this is a large cross above the altar. There is often an important painting or stained glass window above the altar depicting a scene from the life of Jesus.

People go to churches to praise God in song and in word, to learn church teachings, to ask for forgiveness, to pray to God, for help (sanctuary, physical needs or spiritual guidance). Some people go to churches to socialise, some people go for the wrong reasons, to be seen!

There are many different types of churches:-

- Cathedrals – only used for denominations that have bishops and priests. E.g. orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican.
- Church – general word used for buildings that are designed for Christian worship.
- Chapel – name given to meeting place of some Protestant groups or part of church that is dedicated to a saint.

When a Christian is praying it would help them visualise and focus, when there is an icon or a statue of religious meaning. In high Anglican and Catholic churches Christians follow a set of pictures depicting stages of Jesus on his last day in Jerusalem, called the stations of the cross. Christians may pray before each picture and try to imagine Jesus' sacrifice.

The way in which a Christian worships will assist their beliefs, because prayer is a way of listening to what God has to say to him or her. Prayer is a way of strengthening faith. Prayer is a way of focusing on the important things in life.

Christians pray by using A.C.T.S:

- Adoration, way of saying how great God is and giving him praise.
- Confession, to say sorry to God for all the sins one has done.
- Thanksgiving, thanking God for the way he has blessed people.
- Supplication, asking for forgiveness.

Our father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name;  
Thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done;  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive  
those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,  
The power, and the glory  
Forever and ever. Amen.

“All worship is a waste of time because people cannot be sure god exists”

Do you agree?

For this question I could answer yes or no! so what I have done, is i ask a few people the same question to see what they have to say, and after these opinions I still found it hard to make up my mind. (They are all written exactly what the person said.)

David’s answer - No not at all, because religion, by definition is a matter of faith, we can never know in this life that god exists. We can never prove god exists. Christian ethics requires that believers should believe in God; therefore Christians will never regard worship as a waste of time, because one of the underlined philosophy of the ‘belief system’ is the acceptance of the existence of God, without the knowledge of the existence of God.

Rick’s answer – I do believe in God or a higher force, but in this day in age communal worship is not necessary and ‘new religions’ seems to be emerging in the world, with new hedonistic ethos. Spirituality is a personal subject and I do not feel that it is necessary to worship God in today’s society.

Sara’s answer – No it is not a waste of time. The human body is and amazing thing so something has the power and knowledge which is far better than any machine in science to make the human body or any thing in the world. And worship gives people comfort.

My answer – This question I cannot give the answer yes or no because I believe that worship gives people comfort, and I think it is best not to know whether God exists or not. Sometimes I think it is a waste of time and not right to believe in God, because if there were no religions there could be more peace, but we’ll never live to know.

## **Conclusion**

I have found that all Christians use art to worship god, as well as other things. I have enjoyed working on this topic; while I was doing this I had the time to visit some art exhibitions, I went to the national gallery to see some very good pieces of art and to Salvador Dali's art exhibition. I wasn't surprised of what I had found out I did expect that art was used in worship, but I was interested in how Churches and cathedrals are built in special ways.