**KAIRI BOYS SECONDARY SCHOOL**

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES

CRE DECEMBER HOLIDAY ASSIGNMENT

FORM 3

READ AND MAKE GOOD NOTES ON THE TOPIC:

**INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

**HUMAN SEXUALITY**

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**FORM FOUR NOTES**

**CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN LIVING**

Form four work deals with social issues in society. We shall compare the issues in the following communities – The Traditional African Society ,Christian community and the contemporary one. By the end of it the student should be able to understand the meaning of life and live to its fullest.

**INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

**Instructions**

Form four work covers contemporary issues in a Christian’s life. You are advised to read newspapers, listen to radio news, watch television news and current affairs and any other relevant news source. Work in twos. Give yourself topics to study and then give a presentation to your partner or co learner.

Ethics are moral principles, which influence a person’s behavior. Ethics are defined as the systematic study of human actions and behavior. We use ethics to judge, determine and assess the right and wrong of human behavior. Morals refer to human character, which is the inclination to behave in one-way or another. Ethics is the study of morals and they determine and influence personal and societal behavior. Christian ethics is the study of human conduct or behavior from a Christian point of view.

**b. Basis of Christian ethics. Sources of Christian’s ethics: -**

1. The bible, teachings of Jesus Christ

2. Human reason and experience

3. Natural law

4. The Christian community – the church

5. Situation ethics

6. Authoritative Christian literature – based on the bible

7. Gods revelation – through prophets

**i. Human reason**. These are internal thoughts that guide us when we are making decisions and taking actions. We use our minds and thoughts when confronted by situations. They also rely on internal thoughts in their life experiences.

Internal guiding thoughts have many parts. One is our Conscience. This is our inner self that tells us and lets us know what is right and wrong. There are four types of consciences; doubtful conscience, sensitive conscience, certain conscience and perplexed conscience.

For a Christian, rights and wrongs are in the Bible. God gave the Law of Moses to Israelites. Jesus came and explained the Old Testament and taught new scriptures in the New Testament. These teachings, which we have covered from Form one to three, explain very clearly what is right and wrong. When doubtful of the morality of an action, Christian consults the Bible to know if a decision is right or wrong.

**ii. Human Experiences:** – these are internal and external guides

When confronted by situations, Christians use their minds i.e. human reason and their life experiences in making decisions.

They rely on internal guides, (Human reason) and experience (external guides)

**Internal guides**

(**i) Conscience**: – Mind, aspect of knowing right or wrong. When right, there’s’ approval when wrong it registers guilt. When doubtful of the morality of an action we should not do it if conscience is perplexed then make us decision. A decision should be based on a certain conscience.

**Types of conscience**

- Doubtful conscience

- Sensitive conscience

- Certain conscience

- Perplexed conscience

**2. One can also make decisions based on knowledge and free will**

**To make a decision one should have**

- Facts about the act, its aims, circumstances.

- One should be free to perform

A decision ought to be thoughtful

**3. Intuition:inner feeling, insight**

It’s an internal moral sense to do good or avoid evil. Intuition is important in situations that require quick and immediate that requires quick and immediate action.

**4. Feelings**

Feelings are subjective e.g. it feels good to do so this, hence will do…” it can be dangerous to make decisions purely based on feelings especially in marriage friendship etc.

**Eternal guides**

**Experience**

Guides here include authoritative persons such as parents, teachers, police, civil leaders’ philosophers, and religious leaders.

Rules from secular, religions, and African traditional culture are part of external guides.

**The bible**

The bible, quoted in the text but now out of text guides Christian behavior. God communicates to his people through the Bible. The Bible offers answers to questions in relation to the life of a Christian.

Today, there are ethical issues not found in the bible e.g. HIV / AIDS, sexual and reproductive health rights, contraceptives, abortion, globalization, cloning, environmental degradation, genetically modified foods, terrorism, international trade etc. this gives reason and other sources / factors are basis of Christian ethics in addition to the bible.

**Moral principles in the bible**

- They are mostly found in the teachings of Jesus and the Ten Commandments, sermon on the mountain

- Christians are also encouraged to have

**Faith**

- The virtues encouraged include generosity, love, kindness, faithfulness, patience, humility, peace, mercy, loyalty etc.

Christian community – church

Church leadership can make decisions, which touch on their followers. They guide people on ethical issues e.g. politics, land, justice, abortion, contraception etc.

Church organizations give rules on those conducts of their members.

**Natural law**

- The awareness that one has to choose good and avoid evil

- If one studies human nature and reflects upon it he/she will discover natural laws of human behavior

- Natural law, natural rights such as right to education, life own property many etc. are incorporated into the constitution of any nation.

- The constitution then guides the behavior of list citizens; Christians being citizens of a country are guided in their behavior by the constitution.

**Situation ethics**

One should reason out the rightness or wrongness of an act. The rightness or wrongness of an act depends on its uniqueness, the circumstances

- Christians are warned against making decisions based on circumstances or the situation e.g. a pregnant student seeking abortion as the option so as to continue with education. God’s revelation

God reveals himself to people through prophets, natural events, the law, dreams and visions. Through such ways God guides Christian on how they should approach certain issues. God’s revelation does not contradict with the bible.

**Revision questions**

1. What is the meaning of Christian ethics?

2. What is the basis or source or foundation of Christian ethics?

3. List the basic life skills that one needs to be able to lead a better life

**CHRISTIAN APPROACHES TO HUMAN SEXUALITY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**

**INTRODUCTION**

Christian approaches refer to how Christians view and handle issues of human sexuality, marriage and the family in accordance with Christians ethics. Through marriage, the family is formed.

**HUMAN SEXUALITY**

**a. Human sexuality.**

This is a sacred gift from God. It was given to Adam and Eve. Human sexuality is that which makes us male or female. It is our biological or physiological differences associated with the state of being male or female. It is part of our biological make up. Males and female have different body structures, features, appearances and biological characteristics. In terms of physical strength more men are stronger than females. Besides the biological make up, we have an emotional side, which includes our attitudes, and feelings. Females are said to be more emotional and talkative than males. Human sexuality is also in our brain and mind and it is what makes us human beings. If you look at animals they also have different physiological features based on sexual differences.

**b. Christian teaching on human sexuality.**

Males and females are God’s creation. Men and women were created for many reasons. These are (1) to be fruitful and to multiply; and (2) for companionship. In Genesis we learn that men and women share the image of God because God intended man and woman to play complementary roles and both are equal before God.

Sex in marriage is a sign of love and it is sacred. In marriage man / and woman become one flesh. Both of them have the ability to control their sexual desires. Christian teaching forbids: sex before marriage, adultery or unfaithfulness, and other unnatural sexual behaviors like lesbianism, homosexuality or being gay, and incest. God created human body and it is to be kept holy. Chastity is encouraged while unfaithfulness in marriage is discouraged. Husbands / wives are to respect one another and give to each other in mutual love.

**c. Traditional African understanding of human sexuality.**

Human sexuality is highly valued in traditional African communities. It is understood in terms of marriage and parenthood. Procreation was the sole purpose of sex. Sex was to be practiced in marriage and it was regarded as another sacred duty.

Adultery was discouraged and offenders punished.

Irresponsible sexual relationships were forbidden. Virginity before marriage was highly valued. If a girl lost her virginity before marriage, she was treated with scorn and punishment. If a boy impregnating a girl, he was fined.

In traditional African society it was a taboo to discuss openly sex matters. Grandparents taught sex education to their grandchildren. Sex education was taught during initiation stages. Free mixing of girls and boys was not allowed except under supervision. Girls were married off immediately after initiation to avoid temptation of engaging in pre-marital sex. To reinforce self – discipline in relationships between the opposite sexes the African traditional society instilled the fear of supernatural curses through myths, marital status. Husbands and wives were expected to relate to each other, their parents, and in laws according to the community customs. Conflicts between a husband and a wife were resolved through intervention of relatives.

**d. Gender roles.**

There are specific chores and duties for either male or female in African traditional societies. Roles were therefore according to gender. Boys went hunting, herding, while girls fetchedfirewood, and helped in cooking. At an early age, girls and boys would mix freely as they played together. Mature boys and girls however, were restricted from mixing freely without supervision by elders. But there was gender identification. The boys identified with their fathers and other male adults, while girls identified themselves with their mother and other female adults. Education. Children belonged to the community and not just to their biological parents. At the adolescent stage; 13 – 18 years education was given to the adolescents and intensified at initiation stage. Boys and girls were taught traditional rules and secrets of the society during initiation. Learning was informal. Knowledge was communicated through songs, stories and riddles among other forms of presentations. All adults acted as parents to the young ones.

**Socialization:**

Men were socialized to be superior, while women were socialized to accept their subordinate position and role. Everyone knew and accepted what he/she was culturally supposed to do.

Division of labor was based on sex. In the African communities, despite their differences, there were many common customary roles, rules, regulations, taboos and beliefs that governed the practices related to male – female relationships from early childhood to old age. These traditional African practices relating to male – female relationships existed at various levels. In all of them, man held superior positions when compared to those of women.

**Age:**

Old women and men were accorded respect. They were consulted for advice and counsel. Kinship system was emphasized.

**e. Christian teaching on male- female relationships**.

We learn that the husband is the head of the house and should love his wife like Christ loved the church. Once a wife is loved, she should submit to her husband. We also learn that both male and female are equal and co – creators with God. Adam and Eve were created to complement each other. Likewise men and women should love each other. Jesus taught that each man should have one wife and vice versa. Once married, the husbands’ body belongs to the wife and hers belong to him. If that is the case, wife and husband should avoid immorality.

Males and females are to relate freely. But the youth are to avoid the passions of youth. These are sexual sins. There are no specific chores or duties for either male or female. Relationship between sexes should be governed by love, chastity, respect, self-control, and self-discipline. Parents are to love their children, while children are to obey and honor their parents. Parents are asked to bring up their children in a Godly way.

**CHRISTIAN TEACHING ABOUT HUMAN SEXUALITY**

**a. Christian teaching on responsible human sexuality**.

Christianity teaches us about responsible sexual behavior. Beingrespon-sible means that one is exercising self control or self-discipline in matters of sexual behavior. Self-discipline is necessary when we have a relationship with the opposite sex (Read, 1 Cor.7: 9 1 Peter 5:8). It is called responsible sexual behavior, which is obedience to God’s commands.

Christians promote healthy social relationship between boys and girls, men and women, and husbands and wives. Responsible sex is between male and female. Sexual intercourse is allowed only between married couples (1 Cor.7: 3 – 5). Married couples are obliged to be sexually faithful to one another

(Heb.13: 4) adultery is condemned (exodus 25:14). Relationship between a husband / wife should be one of respect faithfulness, love, care, mercy, submission, tolerance, and forgiveness