OCR H573 | INDEPENDENT REVISION

A* Model Essay

Challenge of Secularism

Christian Thought

Does secularism show that Christianity should be confined to private life?

1,643 response words | Complete annotated PDF | Individual topic edition

What is included

A complete original response, an argument plan, paragraph-level AO1/AO2 annotations and source works for further reading.

A* describes the intended style of this teaching model. This is independently written, not an OCR-marked script or a guaranteed grade.

Use this model to study argument and evaluation, then write your own answer. Do not submit it as your own assessed work.

Individual-use digital edition | 10 November 2026

Argument plan

Does secularism show that Christianity should be confined to private life?

Thesis: Secularism offers strong reasons to remove coercive religious privilege and submit public decisions to shared scrutiny. It does not establish that religious citizens, ethical arguments or voluntary Christian service should disappear from public life. Freud and Dawkins challenge Christianity's credibility and harmful forms, but their arguments do not justify excluding every Christian contribution in advance.

1. Secular institutions can protect freedom and equal citizenship in a diverse society.

Counter-argument: Neutrality may become an exclusion of religious voices rather than a limit on religious coercion.

Interim judgement: Removing privilege is justified more readily than confining all religious expression to the private sphere.

2. Freud and Dawkins expose wish fulfilment, intellectual insulation and social harm.

Counter-argument: A belief's psychological origin or harmful use does not settle every truth claim or social consequence.

Interim judgement: Christian contributions need critical assessment, but cannot be rejected solely because they are Christian.

3. A Church without automatic privilege can contribute through argument, education and service.

Counter-argument: Service and education can conceal pressure or reproduce unequal authority.

Interim judgement: Public participation is defensible when rights, evidence and freedom of conscience constrain its practice.