“The death penalty should never be used.”

Evaluate this statement. [12 marks]

*Some religious believers agree with this statement such as Christians. Christians follow the teachings of the Bible which says ‘do not kill’. This is found in the 10 Commandments which is a book that tells them how to live their life. If a Christian is forced to go against these rules then that is a sin in the eyes of God therefore they will never agree with the death penalty.*

*Some religious believers might also agree with the statement such as Muslims. In the Qur’an it teaches Muslims that Allah is all merciful. This means that Muslims won’t punish others through the death penalty as Allah will be able to punish them mercifully. This brings more comfort to victims and victims families as they know that Allah can correctly punish them with His power.*

*Contrastingly some religious believers will disagree such as Christians. They believe that it is only fair that you punish someone equally to get retribution and comfort for the death penalty. They follow the teaching of ‘an eye for an eye’ in the Bible which allows Christians to punish equally to which they were harmed. This is also acceptable in Islam as in the Qur’an it states ‘punish equivalent of which you were harmed’. This can bring closure to the victims families knowing that their loved one has been given justice.*

*Some might also disagree because the death penalty is the safest way to ensure security to the public. If the criminal is in prison or given parole then they have the opportunity to hurt other innocent people. This isn’t a loving thing to do as you are letting innocents die as you keep a murderer living.*

*I disagree with the statement because I think it is the only way to bring peace and justice to victims. It also guarantees security to the community.*

*An argument for the statement would be that Christians believe in the decalogue and within it it states – thou shalt not kill. Therefore they believe you should follow this commandment to honour God. This in result means the death penalty should never be used as you would be breaking one of the 10 commandments. I believe this is a strong argument as I believe you should follow the 10 commandments. Another argument for the statement would be the death penalty is not an effective deterrent as despite it being a morbid punishment people still commit crimes and if they are crimes of passion the death penalty will not deter those crimes from happening. I believe the aim of a punishment such as the death penalty should be a deterrent and if it is not the case then it should in result never be used. I believe this is a weak argument as I believe although it may not be a good deterrent it is still a deterrent nonetheless.*

*An argument against the statement would be the death penalty should be used as it is the best form of providing justice for if a criminal takes a life it is just and fair that their life should be taken. As it says in the Old Testament ‘an eye for an eye’ the death penalty is the best way of providing a just sentence to a criminal who has committed crimes such as murder. It is also providing justice for the families the criminals crime has affected. I believe this is a weak argument as I believe murder is wrong and that is what the death penalty is; two wrongs don’t make a right.*

*Another argument against could be the death penalty satisfies 3 aims for punishment which therefore mean it should most definitely be used. It provides a very good deterrence as potential criminals may be too afraid to go commit a crime if they know the consequences. It provides retribution which may bring comfort to families. It also provides protection as the criminals would never be able to walk the streets meaning it is one of the best forms of punishment meaning it should be used. I believe this is a strong argument as I believe that the death penalty supports the greater good argument as it satisfies 3 aims of punishment.*

*In conclusion I believe the death penalty should not be used as I believe it breaches the 10 commandments and I personally believe in the sanctity of life.*