


Wilfred Owen: Investigating *Le Christianisme*

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Investigating *Le Christianisme*

- ❖ As an English Protestant who loved France, Owen would have been aware of the respect in which of statues Christ, the saints and the Virgin were held by French Catholics. Is Owen showing respect for religion here or mocking it?
- ❖ Compare *Le Christianisme* with *Exposure*, in which Owen says 'For love of God seems dying' l. 35. How do you interpret Owen's ambiguous phrases about faith?

Investigating language and tone in *Le Christianisme*

- ❖ The nature of the language used by Owen in *Le Christianisme* allows us to read this poem in two completely different ways. Look for evidence that Owen is being disrespectful of the plaster saints who have done nothing to prevent the destruction and death which surrounds Owen.
 - Look for evidence that Owen is associating the figure of the crucified Christ with the sacrifice and suffering of the men at the front.

Investigating structure and versification in *Le Christianisme*

- ❖ There is a sense of mockery in *Le Christianisme*. When you compare it to the 'mockeries' in line 5 of *Anthem for Doomed Youth*, how does that poem reflect Owen's views in *Le Christianisme*?

Investigating imagery and symbolism in *Le Christianisme*

- ❖ Owen uses the symbolic images of French Catholicism in *Le Christianisme* and also in *At a Calvary near the Ancre*. How does Owen's use of the image of the shelled Christ in *At a Calvary near the Ancre* compare with the Christ in *Le Christianisme*?
- ❖ How does Owen's use of the image of the disciples in *At a Calvary near the Ancre* compare with the saints in *Le Christianisme*?
- ❖ Owen creates powerful symbols in both *Le Christianisme* and *At a Calvary near the Ancre*. How do these symbols add to the pity of war which is so important in his poetry?

Investigating themes in *Le Christianisme*

- ❖ Is the theme of *Le Christianisme* about loss of faith or is that view too simplistic?