



GCSE

RELIGIOUS STUDIES B

8063/2B Paper 2 Section B: Perspectives on faith (textual studies)
Report on the Examination

8063
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General Comments

In light of the many challenges caused by the pandemic it was pleasing to see how well that centres had prepared their students for the examination this year. Many responses showed a good knowledge and understanding of the set texts. There were some well - argued responses to evaluation questions which showed that students had the ability to apply what they have learned. The paper appeared to be accessible to a wide ability range as most students attempted all questions. However, weaker responses showed that those students did not understand the question or lacked knowledge of the set texts. Many good responses to the five mark questions failed to give a source of authority thus lost out on the fifth mark. Centres need to make students aware that there has to be an attribution of the source of authority, not just give a quotation, e.g. 'St Mark tells us...' / 'the Bible says...' / 'Jesus taught us...' or put the source of the quotation in brackets e.g. 'The Kingdom of God belongs to such as these' (Mark).

Theme D: St Mark's Gospel – the life of Jesus

Question 1

Question 01.1

Most students knew that the event which took place in the wilderness was The Temptation.

Question 01.2

This question asked for two statements Jesus made to his disciples on the way to Jerusalem when he predicted his passion. Overall this question was fairly well done with many students achieving 2 marks.

Credit was not given to statements from the conversation at Caesarea Philippi e.g. 'Get behind me, Satan!'

Question 01.3

This question was generally well answered with many students achieving 4 marks. The most popular responses compared Jesus being weak by praying to God to take away his suffering as he was afraid to die to Jesus being strong by accepting his fate as he knew it was God's will that he had to die. Some compared Jesus being calm or courageous by facing his arrest and not running away to Jesus being weak by not putting up a fight and just giving himself up.

References made to Peter cutting off the ear of the slave of the High Priest and Jesus healing him which are not incidents in Mark 's Gospel were not credited.

Question 01.4

This question overall was not well done. Some students knew this set text very well and were able to explain two teachings about service that Jesus gave to his disciples when James and John asked for seats of honour in God's Kingdom. The most popular teachings of Jesus given were 'whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant' / 'the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve' / 'whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all.' Development of these teachings included being prepared to put others before yourself / being selfless / following the example of Jesus whose whole life was based on serving others / focussing on helping other people, rather than seeking the best places in heaven. Unfortunately, many of these responses failed to attribute a source of authority and did not achieve the fifth mark.

Some gave one teaching of Jesus about his suffering, 'Are you able to drink the cup that I drink?' / and developed this by referring to Jesus paying the price for the sin of all people / his death would save humanity / Son of Man linked to the Suffering Servant(Isaiah) thus achieving 2 or 3 marks.

Those who did not know the text, misread the question, failed to give a teaching of Jesus or make a reference to his teaching about service gained no marks.

Question 01.5

Some well-argued level 4 responses were given which showed reasoned consideration of different points of view, logical chains of reasoning and a justified conclusion (10-12 marks).

Arguments in support explained reasons why some Christians believe that the miracles recorded in Mark's Gospel actually happened. For example, popular answers included Mark was inspired by God, therefore his miracle accounts were accurate / they are historically reliable / they happened just as they are described by Mark / e.g. that Jairus' daughter was dead and Jesus brought her back to life / many explained that Mark got his information from eyewitnesses e.g. Peter, who was a close disciple of Jesus / and was present at many of Jesus' miracles / e.g. Jairus' daughter /. Many referred to the response of the crowds present e.g. the paralysed man'they were all amazed and glorified God, saying we have never seen anything like this!'

Arguments in support of other views explained reasons why some Christians believe the miracles recorded in Mark's Gospel may not have actually happened. For example, popular answers included Mark's Gospel was written 35 years after the events happened and since there was a long period of oral tradition, memories might not be entirely accurate / although Mark was inspired by God, he was human and humans make mistakes / Mark's stories are challenged by science / impossible to feed 5,000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish / perhaps the miracles were just stories used to teach about the power of God / to help persecuted Christians to keep the faith and not give up / that Jesus fed the 5,000 with spiritual food / that Jesus will come to people in their time of need, e.g. the woman with the haemorrhage / that Jesus came for the disadvantaged e.g. the leper / modern medical understanding has shown that there may be natural explanations for some of the miracles e.g. Jairus' daughter was in a coma and Jesus woke her up / the epileptic boy had a seizure and was not possessed by demons / and that the paralysed man's condition was psychosomatic.

A justified conclusion explained how both arguments are relevant and important to Christians today followed by their own personal opinion.

Level 3 responses showed reasoned consideration of different points of view but lacked the development needed to reach level 4 (7- 9 marks).

Many level 2 responses were either one sided or only showed a recognition of different points of view supported by relevant reasons (4-6 marks).

Level 1 responses gave a point of view with reason(s) stated in support. (1-3 marks).

Theme E: St Mark's Gospel as a source of spiritual truth

Question 01.1

Most students knew that the statement Jesus made to the Greek(Syro-Phoenician) woman after she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter was
'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.'

Question 01.2

This question asked for two statements that Jesus, at a meal in Levi's house, made to the scribes of the Pharisees when they criticised him for eating with sinners and tax collectors.

Overall this question was fairly well done with many students achieving full marks. 'I have come to call not the righteous / but sinners' was the most popular answer given.

Credit was not given to statements given from the conversation at Caesarea Philippi e.g. 'You are the Messiah!'

Question 01.3

This question was generally well answered with many students gaining full marks. The most popular responses compared the seed falling on the thorns - representing the people who hear the message of Jesus but it is choked by their greed for materialistic pleasures to the seed that fell on the good soil - representing the people who hear, accept and act on the message of Jesus.

Marks were lost by those students who confused the meaning of the seed that fell on the path with the seed that fell on the rocky ground and those who did not make reference to the parable of the Sower.

Question 01.4

Many explained that Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God in parables with the Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Parable of Growing Seed the most popular examples given. They explained that the Parable of the Mustard Seed is concerned with the growth of the Kingdom of God, e.g. Jesus taught that the Kingdom of God is just like the Mustard Seed which started off small and grew to be the largest shrub / with branches to nest the birds / the reference to the birds nesting in the branches is an indication that the Kingdom of God is spreading and is open for all people. Many explained the Parable of the Growing Seed as a second teaching of Jesus to show that the Kingdom of God is still growing, e.g. the sower did not understand how the seed grew, but he knew it did, because harvest time arrived / the seed grows whatever the sower does / the sower has waited faithfully for the seed to grow and his patience has been rewarded / Christians should have faith in the steady growth of the Kingdom that will come, as long as they keep their confidence in God.

Many responses did give an attribution to a source of authority and achieved the fifth mark, e.g. Jesus taught... / naming and explaining the parable e.g. the Parable of Mustard Seed... / in the Bible... / or Mark's Gospel.

Jesus told the scribe he was not far from the Kingdom of God when he said that loving God / and loving your neighbour were the greatest Commandments (2 marks).

Jesus said the Kingdom of God belonged to the children (1 mark).

Marks were lost by those who misread the question and failed to give a teaching of Jesus.

Question 01.5

Some well - argued Level 4 responses were given which showed reasoned consideration of different points of view, logical chains of reasoning and a justified conclusion (10-12 marks). Arguments in support explained reasons why some Christians believe that Jesus' teachings about the rewards of discipleship are more important for Christians today than his teachings about the costs of discipleship. For example, Jesus taught that those who whole-heartedly decide to follow a Christian way of life will be rewarded many times over in this life and in the life to come after death / that sacrifices would be more than compensated for in the Kingdom of God / they would receive more than they have given up / one hundredfold more / e.g. houses, brothers, etc. / eternal life / first last, last first / inspires faith / offers guidance on how to live, etc.

Arguments in support of other views explained reasons why some Christians believe the teachings about the costs of discipleship are more important. For example, Jesus taught that disciples must 'deny self' / 'take up the cross' / and 'follow me' / be willing to make sacrifices / to put other's needs first / leaving everything to follow him / to face persecution / to give up riches.

A justified conclusion explained that for many Christians today both teachings are equally relevant and important and that many Christians today are willing to make the sacrifices that Jesus stated to achieve his promised rewards in the next life.

Level 3 responses showed reasoned consideration of different points of view but lacked the development needed to reach level 4 (7-9 marks).

Some students gave a very good general answer but did not specifically refer to the 'rewards' or 'costs' mentioned in Mark's Gospel and lost marks (5-7 marks).

Many level 2 responses were either one sided or showed just a recognition of different points of view supported by relevant reasons (4-6 marks).

Level 1 responses gave a point of view with reason(s) stated in support (1-3 marks).

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.