



**General Certificate of Education**

**Religious Studies (2060)**

**RSS07 New Testament**

**Report on the Examination**

*2010 examination - June series*

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## General Comments

There were some very good answers that reflected a high level of knowledge and understanding of the course topics. However, some candidates did not seem to be aware that the first parts of the question (01, 03, 05, 07) are AO1 and the second parts (02, 04, 06, 08) are AO2. For instance, some candidates gave criticisms of the evidence of the Gospel of Mark being the first gospel to be written, in answer to 01.

Candidates continue to struggle to present high level AO2 answers and fail to reason and critically analyse. Far too often, answers drift into listing arguments for and against a view/claim with no attempt at weighing up how successful those arguments are.

The common structure of “on the one hand... however, on the other hand...” is not an ideal template. Although it does provide at least two contrasting views there is no evaluation of those views. Such an answer is more AO1 (information) than AO2 (evaluation). There needs to be some analysing of the argument that shows some reasoning and weighing up. In other words, there needs to be some engaging with the information rather than just listing various arguments.

Question 3 was the least popular question answered and question 1 was the most popular.

### **Question 1 *How the synoptic gospels came into being***

#### **Part 01**

This was generally well answered. Weaker candidates tended either to just give a summary of the four source hypothesis, or to list the evidence almost in bullet point form for the Gospel of Mark as the first to be written. It should be noted that the trigger word “examine” requires candidates to explain and deal in some depth with the evidence, and to support with appropriate illustrations from the text.

#### **Part 02**

It is important that candidates identify the focus of the debate/claim. In this question it was the claim that understanding how the gospels came into being was of little help in understanding the gospels themselves. Surprisingly, a number of candidates failed to see any connection with part 01. However, there were some good answers which debated the value of the transmission history of the gospels in terms of “help in understanding”.

### **Question 2 *Aspects of Jesus’ teaching and action, parables and healings***

#### **Part 03**

There were some good answers displaying good knowledge of the theology and teaching found in the accounts of the healing of Legion. The weaker candidates tended to recount the miracle, with a brief commentary. The higher level answers focussed on both the theology and the teaching and alluded to the text to illustrate their point.

#### **Part 04**

There were some very good evaluative answers that analysed and assessed the extent that the candidate agreed with the claim given in the question.

### **Question 3 *The arrest, trial and death of Jesus***

#### **Part 05**

Surprisingly, a significant number of candidates did not seem to understand which text they were meant to be considering, and so answered on the arrest of Jesus whilst others included Jesus' crucifixion and death. The question focussed only on the teaching about the person of Jesus in Matthew's and Luke's accounts of Jesus' trials. Once again, good candidates alluded to the text to support their answer. Some candidates drifted into a general commentary on the trials but failed to focus on what they taught about the person of Jesus.

#### **Part 06**

Responses here were a little disappointing given the wide range of material available. There seemed little evidence of knowledge of background, such as that the trial was consistent with the Mishnah.

### **Question 4 *The resurrection of Jesus***

#### **Part 07**

Candidates were aware that there were more differences than similarities. The trigger word was "examine"; that demanded more than just listing the similarities and differences.

#### **Part 08**

Most answers tended to be one sided (can be explained) and therefore had limited reasoning and critical analysis. There were numerous attempts to harmonise the accounts. Weaker candidates tended simply to repeat material from part 07.