



Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Religious Studies

Unit RST3H World Religions 2: *Christianity*

June 2011 Examination Candidate Exemplar Work



2011 (June) Unit RST3H World Religions 2: Christianity

Example of Candidate's Work from the Examination

Grade B

01 Examine the role of the church in the wider community

(30 marks) AO1

The role that the church plays in the wider community could be said to be very varied, ranging from spiritual matters to political matters. The parish system in the UK gives the church a key responsibility to priest within that parish. The priest within that parish is responsible for the care of people's souls within his/her parish no matter what religion they are. The priest is there to offer support in times of need e.g. loss of a loved one or to support a young offender. The parish system makes pastoral care a central role within the church and the wider community. Many priests feel a vocation towards parish ministry e.g. working in the inner-city to improve peoples lives such as the 'slum priests'.

Apart from offering support in various different situations a key role of church in the wider community could be said to be the spiritual development/education of people. A way the church broadens spiritual development is through courses such as the 'Alpha courses', which help people into Christianity and broadens their spirituality as well as furthering their knowledge about the religion.

A major role of the church in the wider role can be seen in politics and education. Many priests get involved with politics or the church can inspire people into politics. During the 1980s under the Thatcher government their politics caused much hurt to the poorest in society, and so the church set up the 'church urban fund' to enable communities to do special projects and increase the bond of the community. Apart from politics many parish priests are governing at local state schools, and so a key role of the church in the wider community could be said to be education.

Many churches put on groups; this is an essential role of the church in the wider community. These groups can be things such as mother and toddler groups to self-help groups. These groups are an essential role as it supports people and helps bind a community together.

A final possible role the church has in the wider community is making links with other churches and other religions. This is essential as it can break down racial barriers and reduce racial tension e.g. the Bradford riots, but in Sheffield at the same time all local religious teachers got together and organised a march to prevent the same thing happening in Sheffield. And so this may be called community cohesion and it is a key role of the church in the wider community.

To conclude there are various different roles the church has in the wider community.

Commentary

The candidate identifies in the opening paragraph how varied the role that the church plays in the wider community. The candidate mentions both spiritual and political areas which is a good start. Clearly, 'wider' may be taken as locally, nationally or world wide and credit can be given for any or all of these. Certainly, at the local level, the candidate's response is fulsome with sound exemplification, a range of activities including support to those in need, the homeless, asylum-seekers, language classes etc. could be included though the candidate chooses to specialise in the church's involvement with work in and through schools. Cultural and artistic activities could also have been included more as the churches are often now venues for such events.

There is also some mention of the church and its work nationally and the way campaigning on issues such as the above could happen with a brief mention of working with national statutory and voluntary bodies to campaign for justice and equality. Perhaps environmental issues could have also been included.

On a worldwide scale the response from the candidate is less successful in terms of perhaps some inclusion of the work of Christian Aid, CAFOD, Tearfund etc. in working with the poor in LEDCs. The candidate could have also gone on to mention the work of the World Council of Churches, and the causes with which they have been identified.

For marks of Level 5 and above, there needs to be some breadth of approach. Whilst there is some exemplification in the response as a whole, there needs to be more breadth to achieve a grade A.

Level 4 – 19 marks

02 'Christian churches have become irrelevant in the 21st century.'**(20 marks) AO2**

In this essay I will look at possible ways the church may be seen as irrelevant, but also see how they are not.

Originally Jesus was against priests and the temples, and so it could be suggested he was against having that type of structure. And so by having Christian churches you are going against Jesus' original form. Most of the time Jesus preached outside e.g. the Sermon on the Mount, and so by not having Churches you might be getting to a more original form of the religion.

However people do need a place to worship and so Christian churches remain essential to the religion. Originally people continued to meet in the Synagogues, and so showing a religious building as being central to the religion. However after a few years early Christians were expelled from the synagogues and so they worshipped in their houses. Therefore showing that Christian churches are irrelevant, and by getting rid of them you are more free to worship in your own way.

But there is a small need for organisation and structure. By having organisation and structure e.g. the parish system this provides a constant presence. Also this means that professionals are doing the job of preaching, and so the expertise might be better than if there were no churches.

Even so in many ways churches are becoming increasingly irrelevant to an ever increasing secular society, certain wings of the church serve people better such as pentecostal churches.

On balance in many ways Christian churches are becoming irrelevant to society as seen in the decline in society and that only around 5% of the population attend regular worship. However in many ways Christian churches are still important to the religion as people have a place to meet and worship in any religion.

Commentary

There is certainly some semblance of balance in the candidate's response where some support of the statement is seen with reference to an ever increasing secular society as well as other views expressed such as people still needing a place to worship today along with the structure and organisation of worship. The candidate only achieves level 4 because there is little depth offered in for example an assessment of how some churches do not actively seek the well being of the culture in which they are immersed. Perhaps also, how scripture is seen as irrelevant to some alongside how there is little time for Church – going in today's society.

Some aspects regarding belief in what churches preach, and how language or dress or perhaps music and maybe rituals are often seen in the styles of a former age.

In thinking about the argument against the statement maybe the candidate could have included how the church's message is consistent and this shows a relevance for today. Also how the church does many charitable and good things and without it, society would be a 'poorer' place.

There is also as with many evaluation statements an opportunity to link the response with the first question and maybe give examples of involvement of the church in the wider community. It is useful to conclude as the candidate does but a better summary would be applicable for the higher levels here.

Level 4 – 11 marks

05 Examine examples of Christian action in the international arena.**(30 marks) AO1**

In this essay I will look at different ways in which people may do Christian action in the international arena.

A major example of Christian action in the international arena would be Christian Mission. Christian Mission has many different understandings but to many this is seen as conversion of people. This belief of Christian mission stems from the great commission in Matthew 28:18-20. Through the great commission people are inspired to go convert people and this often happens internationally. This was particularly prominent during colonial times as many people want to convert the people in these 'new' countries e.g. the Spanish in South America and the British in India and many parts of Africa. Many people feel a vocation in Christian mission and they go and try to convert people. A more modern version of this would be the Wycliffe Bible translators, who translate the Bible into every language in an effort to make Christianity more accessible to people, and potentially resulting in conversion of more people.

However Christian mission on an international scale is not always about converting people now, but rather doing something in the name of God and not expecting anything back in return. This is particularly seen in Charities such as Christian Aid and CAFOD, who concentrate on helping people in need e.g. in Cyclone Nargis Christian Aid were there to try to ease the suffering and impact of the event. These charities believe Christian Mission to be more about helping others and not conversion. Although as a result of these actions people may then wish to convert due to the compassion shown by Christians.

Christian action in the international arena is often seen through politics. Many Christians use politics to stop or change certain things such as William Wilberforce with the abolishment of slavery. Or many diplomats may feel their calling in this area e.g. negotiating treaties such as the Paris treaties after WWI. However people may see terrorists as Christians in the international arena, this was seen with the IRA, as they did not want the British in Ireland anymore they used terrorist activities such as car bombs to get their message across to the British government.

In some ways they were successful but in others they were not e.g. there is now a Northern Ireland assembly which gives them some political power. Another example of Christian Action in the international arena could be said to be in Wars. In particular the Quakers who are pacifists and against war, were stretcher carriers in WWI and risked their lives just to save others without killing anyone. Another more extreme example of Christians in war would be the crusades; many Christians joined these as they believed Christianity to be the one true religion, and as a result killed many Muslims in battle.

To conclude there are many different examples of Christian Action in the international arena, with most of it stemming from Christian mission. However it is peoples understanding to what Christian mission is, is what determines what they do e.g. conversion (stemming from the initial belief the end of the world was coming it wanted to accept salvation) or to just helping people in the name of God or fighting for something in the name of God e.g. the liberation theologians such as archbishop Oscar Romero.

Commentary

The candidate begins the evaluation response linking Christian action with Christian Mission work and relates their point to the relevant passage in Matthew. This is a good start and the historical references regarding colonial times provides good and relevant exemplification. Charities discussion reveals that the candidate has a sound knowledge and understanding of the current situation and there is information offered that is accurate and relevant. Diversity of viewpoint is expressed through references to politics and again, the candidate offers good exemplification. Maybe for the higher levels the candidate could have discussed more detail and depth on developmental work, health and sanitation, population control and involvement with refugees. Equally the 'commitment for life' programme could have been touched on. Greater breadth of examples would have seen this response score a grade A as it is well written and clear.

Level 5 – 23 marks

06 Assess the view that Christian action is more effective in the local community than in the international arena. (20 marks) AO1

In this essay I will look at how Christian Action maybe successful in the international arena and how it is not.

Christian Action in the international arena can be seen as very successful particularly in the field of conversion. In South America, Africa and large parts of the Far East many people have been successfully converted by many international Christian mission agencies particularly starting in colonial times. However this conversion starts from the grass-roots and is started in a local community, and so in reality for Christian Action to work on an international level it first needs to be successful at the local level.

Another way in which Christian Action may be seen as successful in an international arena is the ending of slavery. The ending of slavery meant working together with different countries to close it down. If you just worked on a local level they would not be able to achieve this. However to achieve something such as the abolishment of slavery you would still need to work at a local level, and national level, in order to gain support, but this would be needed to be done in different countries to achieve success. Therefore showing that for Christian Action to be successful in the international arena you needed to work on these levels: local, national and international.

However in many ways local Christian Action can be seen as more effective than Christian Action in the international arena. This is because it is more likely to effect people and change things, for example the liberation theologians in South America who believed in educating people what Peace and Justice were in order to sow the seeds for change. Another example could be said to be the Church urban fund set up by the Church of England in the 1980's, to help the poorest communities keep on giving.

On balance I think it is clear that in many aspects for Christian Action to be successful on the international arena there needs to be work at local level first in order to change anything.

Commentary

It is pleasing to see the main issue being addressed by the candidate. There is some supporting evidence regarding the nature of conversion in South America and parts of Africa and this is addressed with exemplification though perhaps a little superficial in places. The candidate acknowledges that perhaps the main area of Christian action tends to be more localised but perhaps the candidate could have given some examples of face to face contact and its effectiveness where appropriate and the directness with which many perceive local action to be most successful. Perhaps for the higher levels there may have been some reference to local action being more direct and efficient because of its nature and maybe less admin costs. On the other hand the candidate does suggest that the international problems are on a much bigger scale and more needy in terms of the impact globally. There needs to be a little more suggested in terms of seeing the evaluation statement in the broader context but the response fits with level 4 descriptors well, hence the mark of 12.

Level 4 – 12 marks

Grade A

01 Examine the role of the church in the wider community.

(30 marks) AO1

The Church's role in the wider community is seen as prolific in spreading the Gospel message and is also seen as having a pastoral care role (particularly in the C of E in England). These two roles can be expressed differently according to individual people's vocation of ministry, which from the times of the early Christian Church, has been seen as the duty of Christians, and Paul acknowledges that each Christian is called to his or her own ministry.

On an evangelical level the church is perhaps at its most influential and effective. There is often a view that a Christian's vocation is to open up God's call to others and are responding to that call in their daily life. The monastic tradition in particular has been a way for the church to affect the wider community through living examples. Monastic orders have sought to emulate the lives of early Christians as described in Acts 2. They achieve this by living according to what is known as 'The Rule of St Benedict', which orders poverty, chastity and obedience. This way of life which they try to reflect has been viewed positively throughout the church's life. For example Tertullian famously quoted the Roman Reaction to Christian virtue: 'see how these Christians love one another'. The Emperor Julian also observed that Christians were taking care of their own fear as well as the Romans. In this way the church has indeed affected the wider community from its beginning, and its impact is still seen in the work of the Franciscan's care for the poor, as well as the monastic emphasis on education, as seen in Worth Abbey and Ampleforth schools, thus fulfilling Christ's order in Matthew 28:18-20 to 'Go and make disciples of man everywhere'.

The pastoral care role is seen as equally important, as it ultimately serves the same function as evangelism. However, rather than seeking to flood an area with the Gospel message with intent to convert, this follows a Biblical standard of morality which is seen as part of living a moral life. For example, The parable of the Great Banquet serves to show how the poor and outcasts are included in the Kingdom of God, so should be cared for as equals in society. Thus Christians would seek to care for the community through equalitarian behaviour, thus treating everyone equally, and achieving a sense of the Kingdom of God on earth.

In secular ministries both clergy and lay members of the church can reach out to the wider community, and each is taught to have a calling to a ministry. For example, military chaplaincy, which is typically done by a clergyman, serves to provide pastoral care for soldiers and their families. There is often a call for them to work with an Imam or Rabbi, and will seek a dialogue between the three faiths so they can preach similar messages. Thus they have a role in the pastoral care and other faiths (to an extent).

Overall, the role of the Church in the wider community is that of opening up of God's message of salvation to others by living out their vocation, and there are indeed countless possibilities in ways this can be carried out.

Commentary

The candidate identifies in the opening paragraph how prolific the Church's role is in both spreading the message of the Gospels and in pastoral care. This is a good opening, particularly as the candidate then goes on to discuss evangelical work too in a further development of their response. Vocation is an important aspect, mentioned again by the candidate. There is pleasing exemplification and the candidate is well on the way to achieving level 5 for the information offered being both accurate and showing a good grasp of the material. There are clear references to background supporting information which offers both breadth and depth, again another quality of a candidate's response that is level 5. The conclusion needs more depth and the drawing together of the ideas in a decent end paragraph may have helped the candidate achieve a level 6 overall, but the top of level 5 is a fair assessment of this response.

Level 5 – 23 marks

02 'Christian churches have become irrelevant in the 21st century.'
Assess this claim.

(20 marks) AO2

There is no doubt that some aspects of the Church have indeed become irrelevant to contemporary society. In an increasingly scientific age, teachings such as Transfiguration, Resurrection and the Holy Spirit seem more and more like myths. Indeed, many modern commentaries, for example by prominent scientists such as Richard Dawkins, have cast religion in a very negative light as a backwards institution. Society is also moving to a more secular trend, as seen in the decreasing vocation to Holy Orders not to mention the 5% church going population as seen in 2005 statistics. This is also seen in A.C Graylings new 'Secular Bible', which is a pastiche of the Bible of Christianity to give secularism a voice and vocabulary similar to faith. Certain Christian actions are also seen as unnecessary and outdated, most obviously mission programmes. In a modern, multi-faith and multi-cultural society this is seen as a divisive measure since it seeks to convert people and reject their past beliefs. Often this is done by protest marches such as those organised by the Westborough Baptist Church in America, which denounces homosexuality and many other practices. Because of this we can see clearly how Murray and Gibb's statistics of 95% of anarchical people have no desire to go to church.

However, this statistic also shows that these people have an already favourable view of Jesus, so a Christian may argue that God is simply calling for another path.

Searle has said that the Holy Spirit may be guiding people to other vocations which emulate Christian teachings, and that Christianity needs to look back at ancient paths to find signposts for the future.

The church also has other roles which cannot be ignored. The II Bishops which sit in the House of Lords certainly shows the church being relevant, as they have a part in the legislation of Parliament. In this role they seek to speak up for the down trodden of society as is taught in the Bible to be the responsibility of those in political office. This aspect of speaking for the down trodden is also reflected in various modern Christology's, particularly liberation, black and Feminist Christology's.

On balance, the church is irrelevant in some ways, and certainly should not exercise a role of absolute authority as with mission, but it has a role in spiritual wellbeing of those affected by the Gospel message and acts as a voice for the weak.

Commentary

The candidate offers a well focused response to the issue of whether churches have become irrelevant in the 21st century. Different views, including where appropriate those of scholars or schools of thought are discussed well with some good exemplification. There is also some critical analysis in the middle section of the first paragraph though maybe something on whether scripture is still relevant and what the churches actually preach would have enhanced the overall quality of the evaluative comment. The candidate does offer some reasoned argument in the penultimate paragraph and it is clear there has been some reading and study on the candidate's part with the examples used, alongside a brief foray into some statistics. The broader context needed to achieve level 6 in the AO2 objective is touched on and therefore, just into the level 6 boundary is appropriate here.

Level 6 – 16 marks

03 Examine different views about Jesus found in the Christian churches today.
(30 marks) AO1

Christian views about the person of Jesus are viewed in Modern times with very different perspectives, which in the end boil down to the ancient argument of balance between his two apparent natures: human and divine. These are reflected in various denominations as well as modern interpretations of Christology.

In our modern age, it is more comfortable to think of Jesus in terms of being a human who experienced things we do. In the Enlightenment, this portrayal of Jesus as a man of reason 'cynic sage' have led into the quest for the historical Jesus. This was an attempt to separate the 'Christ of Faith' from 'Jesus of Nazareth', who is often seen as a political figure. This image (which has carried its weight in modern debate) also has a Biblical foundation. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke in particular show Jesus as an itinerant Rabbi who travelled and spread a message of good will by leading a moral life.

Some churches put an emphasis on Jesus' humanity with a particular dedication to his crucifixion and passion. In this way Jesus is shown to be a man doing God's work, not so dissimilar to the Ebionite interpretation from centuries before. By emphasising the death, Jesus of Nazareth is shown to have experienced in the same way that we have.

However, the image of a messianic Christ as the saviour of mankind from sin rather than a physical, political situation to propagate a message (as the original questers asserted) is seen as equally if not more important. The Roman Catholic church and many conservative Pentecostal churches would be keen to emphasise his place as the Son of God and second person in the Trinity, citing instances of his miracles in the Bible. High church architecture can be said to be a reflection of the God-nature of Jesus, as it reflects the idea of a victorious Resurrection and coming again in glory.

The C of E and RC churches also are keen to show how these two natures are combined, as the Early Church Fathers did in first expression of the Trinity, most notably Tertullian, who gave the doctrine of the Trinity its first vocabulary and structure. The emphasis is on the words of the Nicene Creed, which were established in 325 A.D to dictate what the Christian Church believed about the person of Jesus. This had to be reaffirmed at Chalcedon (451) due to the lack of agreement, though today it is still used in church services.

So different views on the person of Jesus are expressed in 'Christocentric' (Jesus of Nazareth) and Theocentric (Christ of Earth) terms. Using the vocabulary established throughout Christian history, it has been shown to be impossible to separate these two ideas, which is why the Quest for the Historical Jesus had lasted, though views will continue to change as time goes on.

Commentary

The candidate offers a generally thorough treatment of the topic with both breadth and depth in places. He or she uses information accurately and certainly in a relevant way needed for a level 6 mark. Understanding is demonstrated through use of relevant evidence and examples such as Jesus as a man of reason and emphasis on Jesus' humanity which are clearly credit worthy examples. Where appropriate, the candidate offers alternative views and the reference to Christocentric vs Theocentric is a useful addition here. Some reference to scholarly opinion which the candidate explains adds another dimension ensuring the response reaches level 6.

Level 6 – 24 marks

04 Assess the view that Jesus is only popular today because he is a role model for good behaviour. (20 marks) AO2

There is no doubt that the trend is moving from the view of the 'Christ of Faith' to the more reachable 'Jesus of Nazareth' figure. As said before, in our modern age it is very difficult not to think of Jesus in human terms and interpreting many of his 'divine acts' of allegory for how to live a better life, for example 'healing the blind' and 'calming the storm'. This approach has influenced modern denominations of Christianity, notably Methodism, to have a 'do's and don'ts' approach to living. This would certainly be influenced by such Bible passages as the Golden Rule in Matthew's Gospel, which tells us to 'love our neighbour' as we love ourselves, and the Beatitudes, which speak of the rewards that those who live by a certain moral code will receive. In Methodism this approach is seen in practices of temperance and restraint, particularly from alcohol and gambling, which in the 19th century (when it was established) was linked to family breakdown. Actions are also seen as being of paramount importance for the Salvation Army, which acts as an evangelical church and humanitarian agency. The Salvation Army was set up by William Booth in 1890 to help the poor because he believed that it is only through acts that salvation could be reached and undoubtedly this was founded on the example of Jesus as a role model. Murray's and Gibb's report that 95% of anarchical people already have a favourable view of Jesus also tells us to what extent Jesus' influence as a role model has outside of the church itself.

However, the roles of Jesus as 'saviour' and 'Son of God' are undeniably present in modern views about Jesus. Einstein said that the Jesus story was so compelling that you could 'feel' his words coming out of the page as if spoken aloud, and clearly reflect the idea of Jesus as divine and Gospel's being the 'Word of God' (John 1:1-18). Also the Sermon on the Mount preaches unsustainable standards so that Christians would lead God-reliant lives. Jesus is also shown as not avoiding simple pleasures, for example in Luke 7:39 he is accused of being a glutton and a drinker, so the 'do's and don'ts' approach is unfair.

On balance, it would appear that the view of Jesus as a good role model is the more popular of the two today. However throughout history Christianity is defined by the times and either the humanity and divinity of Jesus will be emphasised over the other at some stage, as seen in the Reformation when divinity was asserted, and Enlightenment, when the opposite was. And a Christological debate will continue to develop in each generation of Christians.

Commentary

This evaluation response is well-focused and the candidate offers sufficient balance and depth on both sides of the issue to warrant a level 6 being awarded. There are some excellent reference points made by the candidate in the opening paragraph getting straight to the nub of the evaluative statement made and giving some reasoning and explanation as to why the candidate expresses the views they do. Perhaps to reach level 7 the candidate could have offered some modern day scholar interpretation of whether Christians have moved away from the debate about the 'Christ of faith', 'saviour' and 'Son of God' and more to a humanity about Jesus which might make him a better role model for Christians today. There is plenty of discussion by the candidate and critical analysis too. Appropriate evaluation is supported by reasoned argument throughout and this clearly supports a level 6 mark. There is also some evidence of independent thought.

Level 6 – 16 marks