

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCE
Religious Studies 6RS02 - Investigations
Paper 1G – The Study of Christianity and
the Christian Church

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AREA 1G Christianity

Introduction

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2015 examination season was another very successful season for candidates who presented inspirational studies in the Investigations Paper. The quality of candidates' work is a testimony to the high level of engagement with selected studies drawn from a very wide range of academic fields. The high standard of work evidenced in June 2015 was no exception to historical high standards as candidates demonstrated a very high level of independent enquiry which clearly demonstrated what their chosen area of investigation had meant to them as a learning experience. Candidates showcased their knowledge of a particular academic field in the way they identified a line of enquiry, clearly expressed their view, analysed key concepts and deployed evidence with coherent understanding of their task whilst fluently evaluating a wide range of source material that they had at their disposal. The enthusiasm for and knowledge of the chosen topic was clearly conveyed in many answers that were truly academic in their approach. A few centres continue to focus on the same or similar topics for all their candidates, whereas other Centres permitted considerable choice for individual candidates. Candidates were mostly very well prepared for the examination and it was evident that Centres used their specialist resources and interests to encourage candidates to research in depth a particular area of study. It is important to stress again that the 'Investigations' unit has a definite academic purpose. The aim is to involve students as active participants pursuing open-ended enquiries with an emphasis on independent learning. Questions were designed to be inclusive of all possible approaches to various topics and all valid answers were considered. At this stage in the life of the specification it is difficult to find new things to report because, in the main, centres possess a very high degree of expertise and this is clearly evidenced in the work that is produced on the day of the examination.

There are still a few areas for development that are reported similarly each year and once again 2015 showed evidence of a small minority of centres that need to take this on board. Centres are encouraged to review their performance in 2015 against all or some of the following points:

Whilst most centres had entered their candidates for the correct option there were still a few entries for particular Areas of Study where consideration regarding entry for a different Area of Study may have been beneficial to the candidate. It is important to ensure candidates know which area of their investigation is the best fit for the question they answer on the paper.

There was evidence of candidates choosing a different question on the paper to the question they had clearly prepared for before the examination. In some of these cases the candidate was using material suitable for Question 1 to answer Question 3 (or vice versa) and not really grappling fully with the demands of the question. This practice does not always work to the best effect as the candidate might end up answering neither question as fully as possible. It must be noted that each question was written for ONE of three topics within each particular Area of Study. Candidates were not penalised if correct entries were not made or a cross was put in a box that did not match the answer or if no box was ticked at all. However, evidence shows that candidates have decided that the question for a topic that they clearly had not prepared for looked more inviting and selected that question but that did not necessarily mean they were best prepared to answer that question. Whilst it is good to note that less candidates than 2014 attempted this approach there were still some candidates in this session who answered a question they had not prepared for and may need to be reminded which question their material is best directed at and be advised to answer that question. Examiners were encouraged to mark positively and to credit all valid material according to the mark scheme and question paper. Centres should ensure that candidates are entered for the option that matches their Area of Study and that candidates are clear about which question they have been prepared for on the paper. There is still evidence of Centres studying Papers 1B and 1F being entered for 1A. This might be an oversight regarding filling out the form – Centres must choose 6RS02 and then identify which of the seven papers from 1A to 1G is the specific entry.

Variation in achievement was related to the two assessment objectives. These objectives should receive prominent attention in the process of the investigation. Importantly there must be explicit attention to both objectives in the examination answer and also to the question that is intended to focus the answer. Each question consistently referred to the assessment objectives with the trigger word 'Examine' for AO1 and 'Comment on' for AO2. These dictated the structure of the question and helped candidates to plan their answers. It would be advisable for candidates to pay regular attention to the level descriptors for these assessment objectives as a way of monitoring their development and progress during their investigations. The phrase 'with reference to the topic you have investigated' will always appear in the question to ensure that the generic question can be answered with material from any appropriate investigation. The mark scheme itself is generic to all questions but the answer itself is not necessarily generic as candidates are expected to use their material to answer the question. The purpose of the question is to challenge candidates to adapt their material so that at the highest levels they may demonstrate a coherent understanding of the task based on the selection of their material. Widely deployed evidence/arguments/sources were evident in well structured responses to the task whereby a clearly expressed viewpoint was supported by well-deployed evidence and reasoned argument. There was skilful deployment of religious language in many answers and the fluency of good essays showed command over the material; such command makes for high outcomes and rewards the amount of hard work done by the candidate. Many candidates had clearly learned much in the process and their overall grasp of the issues involved and command over their material was highly commendable.

Candidates at the lower end of achievement struggled with the demands of the question. In preparation for this examination some candidates may find it useful to write up their investigation under exam timed conditions to a variety of different possible questions. They might build up a number of different essay plans to different possible questions. The important point in these activities is to enable candidates to develop their management of material

such as how to best structure their content to answer the specific question. However, success can be undermined by writing up a rote-learned answer which was not adapted to the question set or by answering a question that has been written for a topic they have not studied. In 2015 there was still far too much evidence of rote learned answers using the same structure and material inclusive of quotes; whilst much information was relevant to the topic and consequently was awarded in terms of AO1, there was a significant lack of engagement with the specific demands of the question and consequently marks for AO2 were low, with only generic evaluation provided. This approach is contrasted with another form where candidates were trained to answer the question; arguably, this is evidence of good practice but at the lower end some candidates thought it was sufficient to simply use the question stimulus at the end of each paragraph. The best answers were those which were guided by the statement as opposed to simply '*tagging it on*' to content that they were already anticipating to write about. A balanced approach to the question that meets the highest levels of achievement according to both assessment objectives is obviously desirable and the generic question accommodates many possible routes to success whereby any valid approach to the question was credited.

Finally, there is increasing evidence of poorly written scripts that are almost illegible – scripts are scanned onto software for marking and even though the examiner can enlarge the screen many scripts were still very difficult to read. Candidates are strongly advised to develop their practical handwriting skills and then practice writing under timed conditions. Candidates who cannot achieve legible writing may need to consider accessing the facility for word processing their answers according to the regulations. Centres are assured that much time was invested in attempting to decipher illegible answers but there is always the risk that a badly written word/phrase/paragraph could be misinterpreted and it is best to avoid the chances of this occurring. Examiners understand the time constraints that candidates are writing under but this problem regarding illegible handwriting seems to be on the increase. Centres need to address this issue because the current format for examinations requires candidates' ability to sustain handwriting and academic standards under examination pressure.

That said, the excellent work of centres and candidates in 6RS02 bears testimony to the academic potential of candidates that is a joy to behold when it is fully realised.

Specific Comments – Area 1G – The Study of Christianity and the Christian Church

Question 1 DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH UP TO AND INCLUDING THE REFORMATION

The majority of candidates did very well in this question and demonstrated detailed knowledge of the topic studied. Candidates are very well versed in Church History and diverse topics included studies of early Church History and the establishment of the Creeds, the Crusades, Calvin, Luther and Gregorian Reform. Other topics such as the Cathar movement, Monasticism (the desert Fathers) and the Anabaptist movement were investigated. The most popular topic was the study of Calvin or Luther's ideas. Most candidates paid close attention to the question and used the material they had investigated effectively. They were confident with their knowledge of Christian Theology and were able to draw out the significance of the material they were using. There was evidence of candidates who were following the same structure, used the same quotes and who missed opportunities for independent comment on their material. This approach to the Investigations Unit is to be discouraged as achievement can be depressed if candidates offer AO1 material that is not commented on. Candidates are not marked down for presenting similar material but they are expected to fulfil the demands of both assessment objectives.

This year it was remarkable that many very able candidates successfully studied Luther in great depth. They understood the complex problems of the Church in Luther's lifetime and could relate this in a meaningful way to their own experience of the Church in the modern world. The impact of their investigation had informed their opinions and made them examine their own commitment afresh. This form of evaluation emerging from a study reflects the best spirit of the Investigations Paper and the best answers integrated a

personal journey with sound academic reasoning based on a huge bank of relevant knowledge of the topic.

John Calvin (1509) had ~~planned~~ planned a life of quiet scholarship, but while travelling to Strasbourg in 1536 he was forced to make a detour through Geneva. His time in Geneva was marked by a series of long, bitter struggles over the independence of the Church from the State, and the discipline he tried to impose on the city as a whole. However, his influence reached ^{well} far beyond the city limits of Geneva and far from living the life of a modest scholar he ^{proved} to be 'a seminal figure in European history, at the dawn of the modern period, as Western Europe began to assume its characteristic form.' (MCGRATH)

The Church was of vital importance to Calvin. As Sandell notes, 'It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance Calvin attached to the church.' His

primary concern was church doctrine, 'If any reformer wrestled with the problem posed by the doctrine of the Church, it was Calvin.' (MCGRATH) For Calvin, the relationship between the Church and its members was akin to that of a mother and child, in the same way that a mother provides the only route to life on earth, so the Church provides the only route to eternal life. The Church, he thought, should rather be a loving mother who bears, nourishes and preserves her spiritual children. (BONHOTT) Calvin cited 'the two great ecclesiological maxims' (MCGRATH), of Cyprian of Carthage: 'You ~~cannot~~^{cannot} have God as your father unless you have the Church as your mother', 'Outside the Church there is no hope, of remission of sin nor any salvation.' Calvin saw the role of the Church as being divinely formed for the purpose of sanctifying God's people. The institution of the Church for Calvin therefore, 'exercises not a canonical, but a pedagogical authority in aiding her children to live the Christian life. Calvin therefore ascribes a ministerial task to the Church.' (SPYKMAN) Calvin

also distinguished between the church visible and the church invisible. The church ~~visi~~ visible consisted of all those who claimed to be Christians, including both the elect and the reprobate, while the church invisible were the true believers known only to God. This was an eschatological distinction in that the church invisible would only be revealed on judgement Day. This distinction also made it necessary to ask which of the visible churches corresponded with the invisible church, creating the need for a criteria with which to judge the marks of a true church. For Calvin, 'where the word of God is purely preached and the sacraments administered to Christ's institution, it can in no way be doubted that a church of God exists.' (CALVIN) Evangelicals were therefore justified in leaving the Roman Catholic Church which ~~failed to~~ failed to meet either of these criteria. 'It was the Catholics, not the Protestants who were the destroyers of true Christian unity.' (CRANDALL)

Calvin's particular attachment to the Geneva Church cannot be underestimated, to speak of Calvin is to speak of Geneva. (MCGRATH) while the phrase 'Calvin's Geneva' is potentially misleading, it does serve to highlight the close interaction between the man and the city. Many mischaracterised this interaction and perceived Calvin as a blood thirsty dictator, or in the words of Stephen Zweig, 'un homme sans cœur et entrailles.' Some of Calvin's ideas do however ~~seem~~ to have been developed with the Geneva situation in mind. His revision of the diaconate is a key example. By the end of the Middle Ages, the diaconate had come to be seen as little more than an apprenticeship for the priesthood. Calvin however, inspired by Acts 6:1-6 insisted that the deacons should be a separate body ministering with a particular set of responsibilities, mainly caring for the poor. Although inspired by the Bible, the development of the idea merely added to the work of a pre-existing Geneva institution, the Geneva

Hospital-General which was responsible for social welfare. 'It is scarcely remarkable that Calvin, made so anxious by disorder, was unable to purge himself of ideas which were, in him, sometimes more rigid than those of the papal church, and that he who had so vigorously denounced the 'tyranny' of Rome was sometimes perceived as the tyrant of Geneva.'

~~(HABER)~~ (PARKER) ~~...~~

After the breaking down of papal authority, the Reformed Church was left unclear on the authority of Christian ministry. ^{any} ~~any~~ authority amongst Protestant Churches lay with the prince or city Magistrate. Calvin however ~~was~~ believed in reasserting the independence of the Church from the State and the divine authority of its ministers. Like many reformers, Calvin believed that this could be achieved through a systematic reproduction of the practices of the primitive Church, as history and the New Testament disclosed them.

CEHADWICK) while for Luther Church doctrine was a matter of 'historical contingency' (MCGRATH), Calvin believed that the New Testament detailed specific instructions ^{for church government} ~~as to~~ what he referred to as 'the order by which the Lord willed His Church to be governed.' As McGrath notes this was 'a bold new step in the interpretation of Scripture.'

Upon return from exile in Strasbourg, Calvin produced a framework for a new structure of the Church and produced ~~and~~ drew up his Ecclesiastical Ordinances. The Ordinances described two main ~~studies~~ ~~+~~ a four-fold order of ministry - pastors, elders, doctors and deacons - and the Consistory, which was responsible for ecclesiastical discipline. The essential task of the pastors was to preach the Word of God, to administer the sacraments and to assist in the exercising of discipline. The elders, who were laymen, were responsible for the machinery of discipline. The role of the doctors was to instruct

believes in the doctrine and to dispel heresy. The deacons were responsible for the collection and distribution of money to the poor and the sick. Many have labelled discipline within one church as Calvin's chief work but as W. G. R. Beardon notes, 'Discipline was but one part of the settlement. Nor did it exist in its own right. It was designed to make practically and personally effective the preaching of the Gospel and the administering of the Sacraments.' ~~The survival and development~~ The priesthood with its special status to forgive and damn on God's behalf and with authority passed down from Peter was replaced by a well-organized and well-disciplined church. ~~The survival and development~~ This was incredibly important to later Calvinism. While humanism got advanced through the sympathy of monarchs, who were probably aware of their important ecclesiastical role in Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms, Calvinism generally advanced in noble

situations where monarchs were opposed to the church. The survival and development of Calvinism into 'one of the most potent intellectual forces history has known', ^(MCGRATH) depended on a well-organised church, void of ill discipline.

The Ecclesiastical Ordinances also addressed the relationship between the church and the state, the magistracy and ministry. While ^{Calvin insisted that} ~~for Calvin~~ 'the office of priest is distinct from that of prince. They are so different that they cannot come together in one man', their responsibilities were complementary rather than competitive.' (MCGRATH)

~~What~~ Calvin believed that the political authority should not be allowed to abolish the spiritual authority but also rejected the Anabaptist view that the spiritual authority abrogates the political authority. 'Calvin proposed to abolish this mixture of the wickedness of men with heavenly things by distinguishing sharply between the ~~heavenly~~ spiritual realm of piety and reverence, God and the

temporal or political realm.' (CHAMBERS) ^{PRATIKER}
Calvin however believed that church discipline ~~believed~~ was a matter of public concern, under the authority of the Magistrates, while the Anabaptists believed it was a matter for the Church alone. Calvin believed that both the political and spiritual authorities should use their different God-given resources for the disciplining of the same body. The political authority should use their right to coercion, which would usually take the form of threat of exile or excommunication, in order to promote virtue. The spiritual authority on the other hand should use their preaching ministry for the promotion of virtue within the Church. While there were tensions between the two authorities, Mandell notes that 'the strong sense of social organisation that became vital to later Calvinism, traces its roots to Geneva.'

Another key contribution was of Calvin's was his Institutes of the

Christian Religion. It was first published in 1521, and ~~consisted~~ it consisted of 6 chapters, the first of which being modelled upon Luther's lesser catechism (1519), ~~was~~ although it discussed questions in more detail as it was not a catechism to be learned by rote. ~~The~~ The second edition ~~was~~ ~~published~~ was 3 times as long, and added 6 chapters, moving from a catechism to "well on the way to becoming a definitive statement on the nature of the Christian faith" (Bonherra). Its purpose was as a study guide, Calvin himself stated that "My object in this work was to prepare and train students of sacred theology for the Word of God so that they might have easy access into it and be able to proceed in it without hinderance." The third edition added two significant chapters on the doctrine of the church but it was poorly organised. The fourth edition subdivided chapters into paragraphs in an attempt to aid organisation ~~fourth~~ the fundamental New Testament, the ~~1549~~ edition must

be considered a remarkably poorly organised work.' (MCGRATH) The fifth edition involved a complete reorganisation of the material, finally becoming a fully coherent and organised work, ~~the~~ split into 40 'books'. Although some small additions were made, they generally just reflect Calvin's growing irritability towards his opponents. The 1559 edition ^{also} helped to ~~clarify~~ ^{clarify} other partial statements on Christian doctrine from Evangelicals such as Philip Melancthon, Huldrych Zwingli and Guillaume Farel. 'Calvin had done what no other theologian, nor even Melancthon, could do at the time. He not only detailed the cardinal doctrines of the Reformation, but moulded those doctrines into one of the classic presentations of the Christian faith.' (CHADWICK) The success of the 1559 edition can be seen through it being cited extensively in other works, including study guides, ~~indexes~~ summaries and compendiums. 'Through their medium, Calvin's

teaching was made more comprehensible and accessible to an ever-widening circle of readers.' (MCGRATH)

~~***~~ insert asterisked paragraph here.

Calvin is today noted as the most important figure of the second generation of the European Reformation. The influence of Calvinism spread throughout the western world, giving rise to Presbyterianism in Scotland and the Reformed Church in the Netherlands.

'The Calvin's influence proved capable of transcending the limits of his human location and personal characteristics.'

~~***~~
→ The ^{popular} ~~common~~ pre-conception of Calvin's thought as 'a rigorously logical system based on predestination' (~~etc.~~) (NANDALL), 'bears little relation to reality.' (MCGRATH) Yet, as Meardon notes, 'The objection has been urged against Calvin's predestination that since election to blessedness lies in God's eternal decree, the atoning work of Christ is rendered obiose or unnecessary.' However, later Calvinists Calvinists

Orthodoxy's preoccupation with ~~and~~ predestination has been read back into the ISSA Institutes. Calvin in no way suggests Christ has a limited role in ~~salve~~ the scheme of salvation, rather it is his 'insistent teaching' (MCGRATH) that it is through Christ alone that Man can know God. If there were in fact to be a central doctrine to Calvin's thought it would be the Christologically grounded formula of 'distinctio sed non separatio', which asserts the distinctive yet inseparable natures of the hypostatic union. Therefore, if there was to be any centre to Calvin's theology, it would be Christ himself.

* continued from Page 8

- His ideas were likely influenced by Martin Bucer. Bucer also distinguished between the churches visible and invisible but disagreed on the marks of a true church, believing that ecclesiastical discipline was key.

* The structure and substance of the
edition.
work indicate the extent to which
Calvin has drawn upon his
major educational work of,
12 The German Reformation,
(MCGRATH) //

The candidate in this essay demonstrated coherent understanding of the task; based on selection of material to demonstrate emphasis and clarity of ideas. This was a well-structured, fluent response to the task that was expressed cogently through skilful deployment of religious language. The argument was substantiated and clearly reasoned. A very impressive piece of work that shows exemplary control over the topic.

Question 2 THE MODERN PERIOD

There were some interesting studies on Thomas Merton, the Catholic Church in Ireland, Black Theology and Liberation Theology; as also studies on social justice through the perspective of the Rights of Women. The studies on Black Theology and Liberation Theology were well informed and at the higher end candidates addressed the question. There was a tendency for weaker candidates to make sweeping statements about the nature of Jesus as a model for Black Theology and opportunities to contrast this contribution with other theologies were missed as there is a case for considering the influence on and place for this theology in mainstream Christianity. It was good to see that the majority of responses to this question used a range of material that was well suited for this unit. There were few problems addressing the question as most candidates had a solid grasp of their material.

There were not enough entries for this question to provide an exemplar.

Question 3 CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE

There were a variety of traditional responses to this question such as homosexuality and sexual ethics, or Bonhoeffer in the context of Nazism as an exemplar of Christian belief and practice. The range of topics studied for this unit remains lamentably narrow and an original topic on Christianity and sport that was introduced in 2012 did not reappear. However, this year has seen more work on social justice that was very well executed. It is good to see the expertise that the best candidates have in their investigation and the best answers are full of contemporary scholarship. There is not much evidence of mid-range answers for this question and the following point is to be strongly made for weak candidates who might have fared better if they were entered for a different paper.

Issues that are noted each year continue to persist at the lower range of achievement; it is worth noting that some topics share generic ideas across a number of different areas and it is vital that candidates know the distinctive features of their investigation for example the material on homosexuality could also be used to address Area 1C Question 1. A feature of Area 1G would be the emphasis on Christian Theology and whilst candidates are free to choose their material the answer must show specific knowledge of Christianity and the Christian Church. Candidates who expound ethical theory at the expense of Christian theology are not meeting fully the distinctive demands of this unit.

The following extract appears to be an example of a candidate answering their own question.

Chosen question number: [Question 1](#) [Question 2](#) [Question 3](#)

Views on homosexuality by different Christian denominations:

Controversies over sexual ethics have pervaded the Western world in our century. The Bible has been a significant factor and the issue of homosexuality and Christianity is a subject of ongoing theological debate. Some main biblical passages mention same-gender

It is important to know clearly the demands of the question and set about answering it. The question is not there to be ignored.

The next example is a very good essay packed full of Christian teaching drawn from a wide range of sources. The first page gives a good idea of what sort of study this promises to be and 10¼ pages of solid exposition resulted in a very impressive piece of work. The question was answered very well.

Christian practice concerning LGBTQ homosexuality too often fails to live up to Christian belief.

Christian belief on homosexuality is incredibly varied and differs from denominations and people. Christians take their love of their beliefs on homosexuality from the Bible, of which there are 8 references that are believed to refer to homosexuality, known as the "Older passages".

Among the Older passages there are 4 from the Old Testament (Genesis 19:1-5, Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13 and Deuteronomy 23:17) and 4 from the New Testament (Corinthians 6:9-10, Timothy 1:9-10, Romans 1:21-31 and Jude 1:6-7). However, there is much debate about whether any of these specifically address homosexuality due to difficulties with translation. The original text was written in Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament) and only later translated into English. This has caused difficulty as words often change their meaning over time as

stream with 'sterminate' changing its meaning to
~~sterminate~~ 'effeminate'. Furthermore, the English language
is far more restrictive than Greek, for example in
Greek there are 3 different words for 'love',
yet in English there is only 1. Thus we can see
that mistranslations may have occurred and
~~the~~ passages taken on unintended meanings.

The story of Adam and Eve is traditionally used
to condemn homosexuality as homosexuals cannot pro-
create yet God commanded us to 'be fruitful and
multiply'. However, there are many other references in
the ~~old~~ Bible which stress how God wants us
to find a partner with corresponding strengths
which can complete us. ~~St~~ St Paul argued
'if we must eat let him devour them they
should remain celibate. But if God wants us
to be together then how can ~~the~~ this be true?
Furthermore, ~~the~~ this story also says how God made
us in his own image. This poses the question that
how, if homosexuals are made by God, could God
have made them 'wrong'?

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah is used to
condemn homosexuality as the men wanted to 'know' the
angels and this had sexual connotations. Yet, it

is now generally accepted by Modern scholars that this is actually referring to immortality. This is proven by Ezekiel 16: 49-58 which condemns the Sodomites for their pride, egotism, lack of hospitality and ignoring God. Thus we can see how the sin wasn't the method of rape, but the mind intent behind it.

Many, including the Jewish radio talk show host Janice Schlessinger, believe homosexuality to be sinful as Jewish law states 'do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman', however there is a great change in opinion concerning this among scholars. These laws were to be followed until the Messiah came and the new covenant was ^{formed} ~~formed~~, therefore as Jesus is believed to be the Messiah, these laws are no longer relevant. Furthermore, many think that these laws are no longer relevant in the modern world, such as eating shellfish, approaching the altar of God if you have a defect in your sight, or planting more than 1 type of crop in the same field. On top of this this law may actually be referring to property. In those times it was seen as natural to own a woman, but it would be against the natural order to own a man.

Corinthians 6:9-10 and Timothy 1:9-10 have caused great debate & opinion due to difficulties in translation. The word 'arsenokritais' has caused difficulty as it is loaned and used rarely. This has led to ~~many~~ many interpretations: pederasty, those who share themselves with mankind, soldiers and homosexuals. As Corinthians 4:33 states that God is not the author of confusion, this is merely a signature interpreting signature. Paul R. Johnson argues that 'the the Greek compound term arsenokritais literally means the male who has many beds', meaning multiple bed partners (a promiscuous man). Hence, these passages are not referring to homosexuality but simply sexual immorality.

Romans 1:21-31 is used to condemn those who commit sin and knowingly reject God, one of which is to 'exchange the natural function for that which is unnatural'. Conversely many people nowadays argue that they are naturally attracted to the same sex. This can also equally be applied to Jude 1:6-7 which says 'Angels who did not keep their positions' and left to consort with women. I.e., many soldiers may ~~also~~ interpret this act as homosexuality, but the natural order of things.

Leviticus, Deuteronomy 23:17 has caused confusion due to misinterpretation. It is now accepted the the passage means 'no Israelite man or woman is to become a shrine prostitute', as the Hebrew word 'qedesh' means 'a devotee by prostitution'. Yet, previously it was interpreted as 'sodomit', thus, for those who believed the sin of the sodomites was homosexuality this appeared to condemn homosexuality.

Shrine prostitution was a problem at the time as it was believed that having sex with a temple priest or priestess conveyed a blessing from the God of that temple. This went against the commandment to worship the 1 God. Thus, we can see how ~~mis~~ mistranslations ~~there~~ have resulted in ~~a~~ strange unintentional meanings. As modern scholars ~~re~~ re-interpret these ideas we begin to see a change in opinion.

Frankham; Jones never actually refers to homosexuality. On the contrary, he stresses the importance of love and forgiveness (as shown with the saying 'Love thy neighbor' and the story of the woman adulteress.) Therefore, the negative opinion in the Church may have been society's influence. The Bible has been used in the past to justify multiple acts we now see as ~~evil~~ wrong, such as slavery,

oppression of women and societal mistreatment of Jews. In the time of the Roman Empire, it was seen as natural for a man to take a young boy as a bed partner. This was condemned by the Jews who wanted to distance themselves from Gentile ~~to~~ behaviors as they were 'God's chosen people'. This negative opinion of homosexuality was later carried into the early Church. Thus, as society changes over time we can see a gradual change in her ideas.

~~Perhaps~~ Belief regarding homosexuality is still incredibly diverse. In the Catholic Church ~~too~~ there is great emphasis on the fact that homosexual inclination is not a sin but the act itself is. It is seen as 'ordered towards an "intimate end"' but not as sinful as homosexual acts ^{which} ~~is~~ is a 'moral disorder' and contrary to the natural law as ~~sex~~ sex should be for the purpose of reproduction. Yet, there is still stress on ~~that~~ how homosexuals should be treated with 'respect, compassion and sensitivity' which ~~he~~ follows the saying 'love the sinner, hate ~~the~~ the sin!'

Pope Francis is an example of the change in opinion in the Catholic Church. He recently said that

The Catholic Church should help ~~support~~ parents to support their gay children and that gay people have 'gifts and spiritual qualities' to offer. This is a great change in opinion from the late prelates such as ~~Pope~~ Pope John Paul II who regarded gay homosexual activity as 'morally wrong' and Pope Benedict who said in 2008 that the Church ~~was~~ considers the distinction between male and female as central to human nature and that to deviate from this ~~was~~ would be a 'violation of the natural order' (this was said shortly after the states Maryland and Washington legislated same sex marriage). Yet there are some who disagree ~~with~~ Rev. Franklin Graham insisted Pope Francis on this line view, stating that being gay was a sin in the eyes of God.

In the Church of England the traditional stance is that 'homosexuality is incompatible with scripture' yet we can see great changes within the Church. For example, the Episcopal Church of Brazil allows gay ordination and the Episcopal Church of the USA allows blessings of gay marriages. Furthermore, the Queen (Head of the Church of England) pardoned the Alan

Taving (who was convicted of homosexual activity in the 1980s) on 23rd December 2013. Perhaps most significantly, on the 13th March 2014 ~~gay~~ same sex marriage was made legal. This change is reflected in other areas such as the first woman Bishop Lily Jane who was made Bishop of Stockport 26th January 2015, however the ~~same~~ service at York Minster was interrupted by a protesting Vicar, again showing the controversy in these areas.

The Orthodox Church's traditional stance is that homosexuality is wrong as they cannot pro-create. This opinion is reflected in ~~the~~ Modern times as Fr. Thomas Hyslop wrote 'true love in marriage supposes the bearing of children' Many believe homosexuality to be an insult to God, as it attempts to alter the laws regulating creation, and maintain that it should be treated by society as immoral and a dangerous perversion and no religion as a ~~great~~ sinful failure. This opinion is reflected by Evangelical Patriarch Bartholomew who stated in 2008 September 2013 that homosexuality was 'unbearable and condemned' by Jesus. The teachings of the ~~Orthodox~~ Orthodox Church are deemed inflexible as they derive from sacred scripture, holy traditions and select writings of the Holy Fathers. However, there is ~~an~~ some change of opinion with people such as

David J. Dunn (Eastern Orthodox lay theologian) actively campaigning against the idea of homosexuality being a sin.

Many key religious figures are also starting to change their opinion. An example of which being the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, who recently described gay marriage as 'good' that the Church must accept it is ~~not~~ ^{now} the law and aims to publish new laws for Church of England schools with the aim of stamping out homophobic bullying. This is a great change from last year when he voted against David Cameron's same sex marriage bill saying he feared it 'weakened' the family which would undermine the 'cohesiveness' of society. Many others share this change in attitude, such as the Episcopal Church's first openly gay Bishop Gene Robinson and the famous ~~atheist~~ Christian singer Vicky Beeching who is campaigning to help the Church accept gay marriage. However, there still are many who believe their sexual orientation to be incompatible with their faith, such as Sean Roberts who turned down being Archbishop of Reading after people discovered he possessed his sexual orientation.

In contrast, we could argue that the Christian Church is advancing faster than other religions. Homosexuality is condemned in Islam (and is punishable under Sharia law), Orthodox Judaism (although Reform Judaism accepts it more) and Sikhism (yet we still believe the Sikh principle of universal equality suggests the acceptance of same sex relations). This shows that the Church is adapting ~~and~~ to the society. However, there are some who still think the Church is 'stuck in their ways', as shown by the Catholic Church still not participating in the World Council of Churches, showing how they are reluctant to change.

While there is obviously great changes in opinion within the Church there are some who hold steadfast to old beliefs, such as the Western Baptist Church in the USA which is known for its anti-homophobic beliefs and runs the website 'Godhater.org' which they maintain expresses condemnation of homosexuality by asserting that every tragedy in the world is related to homosexuality. The group maintains that since God hates homosexuals, that they are 'sinners' and that it should be a capital crime. However, with under 50 members, this most certainly does not represent the whole of the Christian Church. As we can see

a re-interpretation of certain texts there is a clear change in opinion which reflect the views of society today. As the beliefs concerning homosexuality change, there is an obvious change in practice concerning homosexuality. Whilst the the ~~area~~ topic is still very sensitive and diverse in opinions, it is obvious that there is rapid change within the church and a re-emergence in the true meaning to be Christian.

'This is my commandment: that you love one another as I have loved you'

John 15:12

Paper Summary

Key Points to Remember:

- Do not ignore the question.
- A generic question is not best answered with a generic answer. The question is made up of two parts. The question itself and the generic phrase 'Examine and comment with reference to the topic you have investigated.' Answer the question.
- Use appropriate sources and, if possible, include recent scholarship.
- Well deployed material will show how well you understand your topic and how you are using your material to answer the question.
- Do not forget to comment on your material in relation to the question.
- Use your evidence to substantiate your argument.
- Comment on alternative views if you know them.
- Express your viewpoint clearly.
- Practice writing under timed conditions as part of your preparation.
- Do not spend too much time on your essay plan to the detriment of the essay itself.
- Write legibly.

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