

Teacher Resource Bank

GCSE Religious Studies Specification A

Unit 5 *St Mark's Gospel*

Exemplar Scripts and Commentaries



Script 1

PART A

A1 Background to Mark's Gospel

- (a) Explain what is meant by the term 'gospel'. (2 marks)

Definition: God's spell or God's word. Good news.

Explanation: The bible is the word of God, and the spell he casts to allow people into his kingdom and make them believers. It is designed to give religion to newcomers. It is a religious message inspired by God.

Commentary

Marks awarded for 'good news' and the general tenor of the explanation; whilst not unique to the gospel, it is clear the candidate understands.

(2 marks)

- (b) Outline the story of the calming of the storm. (4 marks)

One evening Jesus said to his disciples "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they left the crowd and got on a boat. Suddenly a strong wind began to blow and waves began to spill over the sides of the boat so it was filled with water. Jesus was asleep, the disciples woke him and said "Teacher, don't you care we are about to die?" Jesus stood up and said to the wind "Be quiet" and to the waves "Be still". And they became calm. Jesus turned to the disciples and said "Why are you frightened? Do you have no faith?" But they were afraid and said "Who is this man?"

Commentary

Full marks for a detailed and accurate recall.

(4 marks)

- (c) How might the story of Jesus calming the storm help Christians facing persecution? (2 marks)

The story can help Christians facing persecution because it lets them know that as long as you have faith in Jesus and truly believe in him then he will be there in your hour of need and your faith will have saved you.

Commentary

Full marks for having faith in Jesus and him being there in times of need.

(2 marks)

- (d) 'Christians can learn more from today's religious leaders than from Jesus.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

People should learn directly from Jesus as his words were pure and are the original words of the Gospel. Jesus had only two commandments which to abide by. "Love thy neighbour as thyself" and "Love the one true God." Some people may prefer to take their teachings from religious leaders today because they can take Jesus' teachings and relate them to modern, every day life which some people find easier to understand. However, sometimes in doing this the pure message of Jesus can be lost

along the way. Also some religious leaders can be swayed by personal beliefs so their words are not the true words of Jesus Christ. In conclusion I don't agree with this statement because only the words uttered from Jesus' mouth carry the pure and true messages.

Commentary

5 marks because there is clearly a second argument. Some reference to the time gap, for example between Jesus and today, might have pushed it to level 6. As it stands, the answer lacks the quality and coherence of argument to reach the top level.

(5 marks)

A2 Discipleship

- (a) Name **two** of the fishermen Jesus called to follow him. (2 marks)

1. Simon
2. Andrew

Commentary

Correct identification.

(2 marks)

- (b) What did Jesus teach about the cost of being a disciple? (3 marks)

Jesus taught that the disciples would be making a great sacrifice by leaving their areas and choosing to follow him. He also says that they must be prepared for the day that Jesus dies and they must carry on his teachings – this shows that they must forsake their religion and truly believe in Jesus.

Commentary

Two marks for arguments about the commission and sacrificial nature of discipleship. Close reference to the text in the specification would have gained the third mark.

(2 marks)

- (c) ‘The twelve disciples make good role models for 21st century Christians.’

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

The disciples make good role models for Christians today because in today’s society faith has been lost or replaced by things we consider more important. Following the example of the disciples and working through difficult times in our lives with our faith and praying to God. However the disciples were alive over 2000 years ago, so some of the things they did are not relevant to modern life. Some people don’t believe in Jesus strongly enough as they have seen too much suffering in the world and others find that they do not have the time to do as the disciples did and spread the news of Jesus. In conclusion I agree with the statement and believe that if we followed the example of the disciples the world would be a more accepting and peaceful place.

Commentary

Strong argument in favour but the latter half of the answer talks about the difficulties of believing in a world of suffering. Not quite relevant. It would have been better if the candidate had developed an argument around the difficulties Christians might feel in regarding as role models those who let Jesus down on a number of occasions, and especially in the last 24 hours of his life.

(4 marks)

A3 Jesus' Suffering, Death and Resurrection

- (a) Who was set free by Pilate instead of Jesus? (1 mark)

Barabbas was a thief and a murderer who was set free.

Commentary

Correct identification.

(1 mark)

- (b) 'When he sentenced Jesus to death, Pilate was just being a coward.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

I agree with the statement. Pilate had a choice to crucify Jesus or Barabbas but he backed away from that choice and let the crowd decide who were influenced by the high priests to put Jesus to death. He could of made the decision himself as he knew Jesus was brought before him by the chief priests for envy, but he did not want the dislike of the public that came from setting Jesus free.

Commentary

Full marks – the argument is well supported with reasons (crowd, Pilate should have made his own decision, envy of Chief Priests).

(3 marks)

- (c) Outline the mocking of Jesus by the Roman soldiers. (3 marks)

Those who passed Jesus threw insults at him, shaking their heads and saying "So you who are going to destroy the temple and build it in 3 days, come down from the cross and save yourself." The chief priest also mocked him, saying "He saved others but cannot save himself! Let him come down from the cross so we can believe."

Commentary

Incorrect text used – no marks.

(0 marks)

- (d) 'The death of Jesus is the most important event recorded in Mark's Gospel.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

Some think that the death of Jesus is the most important event because it is the day when Jesus accepted his fate and did nothing to prevent it. This shows he was truly the messiah and the Son of God as he had total faith in his father's promise that he was going to the Kingdom of Heaven. However some do not believe this and think there are many more events which show and provoke strong faith. One of these is the Resurrection. This gives faith to the believers of Jesus and proves Jesus' almighty power on earth. It shows that he was truly there for his disciples and that he cares about his people. He rose from the dead to make sure the disciples carried on his work. In conclusion I do not agree with the statement. I think the Resurrection of Jesus is the most important event ever recorded as it shows who Jesus truly is.

Commentary

Well argued and good evidence on both sides of the argument.

(6 marks)

A4 Jesus' Relationships with Others

- (a) Why might the man with leprosy have been surprised at Jesus' response to his request for healing? (2 marks)

He might have been surprised because he was seen as an outcast and for almost all his life he was treated as a lower class citizen who was not worthy to talk to anyone. And suddenly Jesus is talking to him and touching him in front of crowds of people.

Commentary

Two good reasons given – outcast and Jesus being prepared to talk with him.

(2 marks)

- (b) Why was Jesus criticised when he ate with Levi? (2 marks)

Jesus was criticised when he ate with Levi because Levi was a tax collector and they were outcasts as many of them took extra money for themselves. He was seen as an outcast by the Jewish people. Jesus was supposed to be the Jewish Messiah so by eating with Levi, he was offending everyone else.

Commentary

Again two good reasons - a tax collector was an outcast and Jesus as the Messiah should have set a better example in the eyes of his critics.

(2 marks)

- (c) How might Jesus' concern for others influence the ways in which Christians treat other people? (3 marks)

Jesus' concern for others can influence people because when people found that Jesus was the Messiah he was stereotyped as a strong warrior who's purpose was to save the Jews. But Jesus was not like this, he went against many Jewish laws by being kind to those that were seen as unclean and generous to outcasts who asked for his help. People could follow his example by being kind to everyone.

Commentary

This answer misses the essential point of how Christians should treat people. It needed to be very specific about helping those in need, treating people with respect, accept people as they are. It does not need a discussion on the nature of Jesus as Messiah. The advice here is to keep the answer straightforward and simple.

(1 mark)

- (d) 'For Christians, discrimination is the greatest evil in the world today.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

I think this is correct. Until everyone in the world can learn to accept each other we can never truly have peace and Jesus' and God's vision can never be achieved. People discriminate because of the colour of skin, jobs and religion but Jesus accepted everyone and as Christians we should follow his example and set it for others.

Commentary

Three good points here: discrimination prevents peace, is based on negative evidence and Jesus set an example to not discriminate.

(3 marks)

Script 2

PART A

A1 Background to Mark's Gospel

- (a) Explain what is meant by the term 'gospel'. (2 marks)

Definition: Good news.

Explanation: The Gospel was thought to be the good news for the people who accepted it because it promised a new life on earth and also in heaven. It was good news to those being persecuted because it gave them faith.

Commentary

Full marks for good news and the promise it holds.

(2 marks)

- (b) Outline the story of the calming of the storm. (4 marks)

One the evening of that same day Jesus said to his disciples "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they left the crowd and got into a boat and left but other boats were there too. Suddenly a strong wind blew up and the waves began to fill up the boat. Jesus was sleeping at the back when the disciples woke him up and said "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to die?" Jesus stood up and commanded the wind "Be quiet!" and told the waves "Be still". There was a great calm. Jesus said to his disciples "Why are you so frightened? Have you still no faith?" But the disciples were very afraid and said to each other "Who is this man? Even the wind and waves obey him!"

Commentary

Accurate recall – full marks.

(4 marks)

- (c) How might the story of Jesus calming the storm help Christians facing persecution? (2 marks)

Because when Jesus calmed the storm he showed God's power over all evil. Christians could identify themselves with the ship which was a symbol of the church. They would have seen it sailing over the stormy seas (persecution) as if it was heading to heaven. It would have reassured them that they were safe with God.

Commentary

Full marks for three good points: God's power, church as the boat, safe with God.

(2 marks)

- (d) 'Christians can learn more from today's religious leaders than from Jesus.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

I disagree because the leaders of today have only become leaders and can only teach people by learning from the teachings of Jesus. If they learnt from Jesus then they won't be as perfect and knowledgeable as him because he created the rules and may not have taught some of the things he knew. The religious leaders may not be able to

teach all of the lessons Jesus taught because some of the lessons could have got lost along the way.

However I could agree because the religious leaders of today are present and living whereas Jesus is no longer here. Leaders of today provide and inspiration to people because they can watch, learn and observe their teachings and copy them. Whereas people understand that Jesus' teachings came from hearsay so they may not believe they are fully reliable. Religious leaders could also teach better than Jesus because in order to learn from Jesus people have to read and they may find that boring. Overall I disagree with the statement because I don't think that religious leaders could be as good as Jesus because they may not know all of his teachings.

Commentary

This is well balanced. There are clearly two viewpoints and each is backed up with reasons which are clearly stated and valid.

(6 marks)

A2 Discipleship

- (a) Name **two** of the fishermen Jesus called to follow him. (2 marks)

1. Simon
2. Andrew

Commentary

Full marks – correctly identified.

(2 marks)

- (b) What did Jesus teach about the cost of being a disciple? (3 marks)

Jesus taught that being a disciple was a big sacrifice because you have to give up your life and your religion. Put all your trust in Jesus that he was doing the right thing and be ready and prepared to continue his work once he dies.

Commentary

One mark for the idea of sacrifice and one for the last two sentences although carrying on the work of Jesus is not strictly a cost as such. The cost might have been leaving work or family to carry on the work.

(2 marks)

- (c) ‘The twelve disciples make good role models for 21st century Christians.’

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

I agree that the 12 disciples make good role models for 21st century Christians because when they showed their faith and were persecuted whilst doing Jesus’ work they demonstrated a good example for Christians who want to show their faith and pray through the discrimination of non-strict Christians. For example a young Christian who is bullied by peers for their religious views may take inspiration from the disciples to go to church and pray.

However I understand that to some, the 12 disciples do not make good role models for 21st century Christians because they lived in a different period and had totally different views on how life should be. It would be hard for modern day Christians to attempt to follow in the disciples’ footsteps because the modern world is more civilised and has a different way of living, it would be incredibly unlikely for someone in the 21st century to be prosecuted and meet someone like Jesus.

Overall I agree with the statement because I believe that the disciples demonstrate strength and perseverance in their faith which would be a good quality for any Christian of the 21st century or the 1st.

Commentary

This is a long answer. However there are two clear viewpoints and each is backed up with examples and argument.

(6 marks)

A3 Jesus' Suffering, Death and Resurrection

- (a) Who was set free by Pilate instead of Jesus? (1 mark)

Barabbas.

Commentary

Correct identification.

(1 mark)

- (b) 'When he sentenced Jesus to death, Pilate was just being a coward.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

I think this is true because Pilate decided to take the easy way out by leaving the choice to the public when he could have made the decision himself. Pilate knew that Jesus was only there as payback from the Jewish priests and so could have let him go because he did believe in the same religion however he was very cowardly because he put Jesus to death because he didn't want to be punished or discriminated by the public.

Commentary

Three good reasons for Pilate being a coward: the crowd was allowed to decide, Pilate knew that it was a conspiracy, he was avoiding punishment himself.

(3 marks)

- (c) Outline the mocking of Jesus by the Roman soldiers. (3 marks)

The people who passed him shouted insults and shook their heads, they said "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build in 3 days, get off the cross and save yourself!" The teachers of Law and High Priests did this too, they said "He saved others, but he can't save himself! Let this Christ, King of Israel come down off the cross so we can see and believe." His crucifiers also insulted him.

Commentary

No marks – wrong incident quoted.

(0 marks)

- (d) 'The death of Jesus is the most important event recorded in Mark's Gospel.'

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing that you have thought about more than one point of view. (6 marks)

I disagree that the death of Jesus was the most important event because I believe that the most important part of Mark's Gospel are the parables, miracles and teachings of Jesus. I think that they have provided a lot of inspiration, hope and guidance for the disciples and all of Jesus' followers in both the past and present day. They can use these to ensure their path to life after death.

I also understand how this statement can be agreed with because the death of Jesus was God's sacrifice which allowed us to be free of sin and to have life after death. This is very important to some Christians because it provides them with hope for their future.

Overall I disagree with the statement because I believe that the teachings of Jesus provide us with strength and shows us how to behave and be purely good.

Commentary

Stronger on the disagree side with some acknowledgment of a second argument that the death of Jesus was God's sacrifice which brings it to level 5 – reasoned consideration of two viewpoints.

(5 marks)

A4 Jesus' Relationships with Others

- (a) Why might the man with leprosy have been surprised at Jesus' response to his request for healing? (2 marks)

He may have been surprised because as he had leprosy he was an outcast and was thought to be punished by God. So by being healed and touched by an important man of God was surprising because lepers weren't supposed to interact with normal people never mind religious figures.

Commentary

Two good reasons given here.

(2 marks)

- (b) Why was Jesus criticised when he ate with Levi? (2 marks)

Jesus was criticised when he ate with Levi because he was interacting with an outcast who was also a sinner. They thought that this went against everything that Jesus said about not sinning if he was then to become friends and treat a sinner.

Commentary

Slightly vague answer – not clear that the candidate could remember who Levi was. 1 mark out of the 2 given.

(1 mark)

- (c) How might Jesus' concern for others influence the ways in which Christians treat other people? (3 marks)

Jesus' concern for others could influence others because he said, 'treat thy neighbour as you love thy self' which is what many Christians try to follow. They try to be kind to others by helping and doing good deeds however not all Christians are influenced by this and have no concerns for anyone but themselves.

Commentary

2 marks for the development of 'love thy neighbour...' (though the quotation is a bit muddled). The final comment may be true in some cases but does not add to the answer. The candidate did not need to find a different argument for a 3 mark question.

(2 marks)

- (d) 'For Christians, discrimination is the greatest evil in the world today.'

What do you think? Explain your opinion. (3 marks)

I agree with this statement because today although most people are not set as outcasts, some people do discriminate people in horrible ways. The best example of this is terrorism where terrorists discriminate people from other races and religious or political view by terrorising them by kidnapping, bombs, torture and threats.

Commentary

This would have been better if the candidate had stuck to discrimination rather than drift into terrorism. The argument was not convincing. 1 mark.

(1 mark)