

Examiners' Report  
June 2018

GCSE Religious Studies A 1RA0 4A

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## Introduction

The paper contributes to 25% of the overall award. The assessment consists of two questions, candidates must answer both questions. The details of the assessment content are provided in the specification. Centres are to use this rather than other published resources when planning the course content.

## Question 1 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Who is Jesus? 1.4: The healing miracles in Mark's Gospel, the raising of Jairus daughter (Mark 5:21-43).

The question was asked as:

'Outline **three** ways the raising of Jairus' daughter is significant.'

A01 is assessed and can be awarded to a maximum of 3 marks in part (a) questions; a mark for each correct point identified.

The command word **outline** requires candidates to provide knowledge arising from a textual study of Mark's Gospel directly related to the question asked.

This question requires candidates to identify three ways specific to the account of the raising of Jairus' daughter and not about miracles in general or the healing of the sick woman.

This response was awarded 2 marks.

1 ~~(a)~~ Outline **three** ways the raising of Jairus' daughter is significant.

(3)

It showed Jesus' divine nature. It showed the Messianic secret attitude of Jesus. It showed that raising of the dead is possible with God.



The candidate has given two ways that are specific to the raising of Jairus' daughter:

- Shows the Messianic secret (1)
- Shows raising of the dead is possible with God (1)



- Centres are advised when studying the healing miracles in Mark's Gospel that the candidates know the specific details of each of the two miracles named in the specification.
- Candidates should read the question carefully this was a question about Jairus' daughter not about miracles in general.
- Candidates are advised to write **three** sentences each making a separate point.

## Question 1 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Who was Jesus? 1.7: The conflicts of Jesus in Mark's Gospel: The cleansing of the Temple (Mark 11:15-18)

The question asked was:

'Explain two reasons why the cleansing of the Temple is important'.

A01 is assessed and can be awarded a maximum of 4 marks. Candidates are required to give two reasons, and both need to be developed for 4 marks. An answer can be developed by giving a piece of extra information, a relevant quote/reference to a source of wisdom authority or a relevant example. The development must be of the reason given and to the question asked.

This question differentiated between candidates who had a knowledge and understanding of the account of the cleansing of the Temple in Mark's Gospel with those who relied on their general knowledge or reference to the incident in the other Gospels. Good responses were able to identify what the incident shows about Jesus and/or why this incident was important in the narrative of the Gospel. These answers were usually developed by referring to the specific details in Mark's account e.g 'you have made it a house of prayer for all nations' (11:17).

Responses that focussed on the incident showing Jesus' humanity because he got angry often struggled to see the wider significance, e.g of showing Jesus as the Messiah, and then give a second reason.

This response was awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain two reasons why the cleansing of the temple is important.

(4)

To begin with, one reason why the cleansing at the temple is important is because it showed Jesus as fully human as he got angry from all the people trying to make money in the temple.

Furthermore, another reason is because it shows the Jesus' Jewish authority, as the Jewish authorities were allowing it to happen, while Jesus was not and he had authority to do what is right and he cleansed the temple.



The candidate gives two developed reasons.

Reason one: 'shows Jesus is fully human' (1)  
developed by 'he gets angry' (1)

Reason two: 'Jewish authorities allowing people to  
make money (from first paragraph) to happen' (1)  
developed by 'Jesus did not and had the authority  
to do what was right' (1) .



Candidates can answer the question by showing  
what the cleansing of the Temple reveals about the  
person of Jesus but also why Mark included this  
incident in his Gospel; both ways are equally valid.

If there are insufficient lines for the candidates'  
answer it is acceptable to use the blank space  
below; as this candidate has done.

## Question 1 (c)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Who is Jesus? 1:1 The Messiah and the Son of Man; the use of the Son of Man in Mark's Gospel and what it shows about Jesus.

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** reasons why the title 'Son of Man' is used in Mark's Gospel.'

A01 is assessed and can be awarded a maximum of 5 marks. Candidates are required to give two reasons, both need to be developed for 4 marks and one of the reasons also needs to be supported with a 'reference to a source of wisdom'. If the 'reference to a source of wisdom' is credited as a development, it cannot gain a further mark; it is in addition to the reason and development.

Candidates tended to focus on the title showing Jesus' humanity but many found it harder to develop their answer or give a relevant source of wisdom. The specification highlights two Old Testament passages for study (Daniel 7:13 and Isaiah 53) but not many candidates used these in their response. Opportunities were missed to refer to Mark's Gospel itself as a source of wisdom and authority e.g when Jesus used the title of himself in 10:45.

The candidate gained 5 marks.

(c) Explain **two** reasons why the title 'Son of Man' is used in Mark's Gospel.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

(5)

Son of Man is used because it was chosen by God and he refers himself as a Son of Man, "And you will see the son of man, seated in the right hand of power and descending with the clouds of heaven." This shows that Jesus refers himself more as a human. Furthermore, Son of Man is used because Jesus doesn't want to consider himself as son of God because or Messiah because people will consider him blaspheming, like they did at Jairus' daughter. ~~This makes~~ Lastly, it portrays Jesus as a human and a suffering servant as he was scared of death. "Take this cup of suffering away from me."





The candidate gave two developed reasons and a source of wisdom and authority.

Reason one: 'Jesus refers to himself as the Son of Man' (1) this is developed by (1)

'and you will see the Son of Man, seated in the right hand of power' .....(1)

Here the source of wisdom and authority acts as a development. It is from Mark 14:62.

**Reason two:** 'It portrays Jesus as a human' (1) this is developed by 'and a suffering servant' (1) the reference to a source of wisdom is 'take this cup of suffering away from me '(1)

The source of wisdom is from Mark 14:36 some translations refer to cup of suffering others to just cup.



Candidates need to know and practise using references/quotes from Mark's gospel when answering questions.

Centres are advised that the skill of using the text and sources of wisdom and authority in written answers is an integral part of their teaching and learning programme over the course of study.

## Question 1 (d)

In part (d) questions candidates are assessed on AO2: analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief. This constitutes 50% of the overall mark for the paper.

The command word '**evaluate**' expects candidates to:

- interpret the given statement
- consider arguments for and against
- consider the perspectives stated in the bullet points of the question
- deconstruct the information/arguments or issue
- construct logical chains of reasoning
- make connections between different elements of the question
- appraise the evidence offered in the answer
- reach a justified conclusion.

For the higher levels candidates are required to:

- show some appraisal of the evidence/ arguments
- form a justified conclusion
- consider all the elements given in the question e.g non-religious points of view

This year many candidates just wrote answers giving reasons for and against but did not analyse/ deconstruct the reasons/arguments and evaluate them.

The use of formulas such as 'some people agree', 'other disagree' and 'in conclusion I think' tends to restrict the answer. As candidates often just state the different beliefs and views and the conclusion says which side of the argument they agree with without offering any justification. Therefore, the candidates' response is limited to gaining marks in the lower levels.

Part (d) questions are levels marked; a best fit approach according to the level descriptors is taken when marking candidates' responses.

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Who was Jesus? 1.3: Nature miracles in Mark's Gospel; a consideration of the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 6:32-44) in relationship to the divergent understanding of its significance, including Christian responses to non-religious arguments that maintain that this miracle can be scientifically explained and provides no proof of Jesus as divine.

The question asked was:

'The feeding of the five thousand proves Jesus is the Son of God.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Mark's Gospel
- refer to non-religious points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

A significant number of candidates choose to answer this question by comparing the feeding of the five thousand with either another miracle e.g walking on water or an event in Jesus' life e.g the Transfiguration and argued that these either provided better evidence or not. While this is a valid approach, this often resulted in them ignoring one of the key elements of the question; referring to a non-religious point of view.

Some candidates referred to the symbolic meaning of the miracle and explained in detail what it might mean but did not use this information to address the question that it either does or does not prove that Jesus is the Son of God.

This candidate achieved Level 2, was awarded 6 marks and then 3 marks for SPAG making 9 marks in total.

\*(d) "The feeding of the five thousand proves Jesus is the Son of God."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Mark's Gospel
- refer to non-religious points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

For	Against
- It is a miracle	- Story requires faith, atheist may say its fake
- God gave him ability to do that	- The resurrection is more (15) proven well
- Prove that Jesus is the messiah	- This is my son who I an well place - Baptism

Firstly, The Feeding of the Five thousand proves Jesus is the son of God as not mortal can perform such miracles. During the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus was able to multiply fish and bread from a couple to five thousand, this miracle solidified his position as the messiah and gave many people hope. Also, this event proved the omnipotent ability that God had granted Christ. Jesus was able to feed the people as he 'prayed to the Lord' before. This proves that Jesus was able to communicate with God and ask open his will he is in need; like a son would ask his father.

However, atheists may believe that the story is inaccurate as it is physically impossible to create five thousand pieces of bread and fish from a few loaves and fish. The story requires faith to believe it is true. Also, there are many other

events that directly prove that Jesus is the son of God. For example, in the baptism of Christ, the Lord spoke and said 'This is my son who I am well pleased'. This direct speech from God proves that Jesus is the messiah and not just a powerful sorcerer.

In conclusion, I believe the feeding of the five thousand is important in showing Jesus' power but it is not significant in proving that he is the son of God.

The candidate gained Level 2 because:

- There were superficial connections to some elements of the question
- There were judgements to a few elements of the issue
- There was a conclusion but it was not fully justified.

The candidate's answer provides evidence suggesting the top of the level because:

- There was evidence both for and against the statement
- It refers to both elements of the question Mark's Gospel and non-religious point of view
- Element of Level 3 i.e chain of reasoning in both the first and second paragraph.

The best fit for this candidate is Level 2-6 marks

In this example the candidate hints at starting to 'consider/appraise' the evidence/argument by saying 'it is not significant in proving that he is the Son of God' but does not develop this further.

SPAG was awarded 3 marks because:

- Spells and punctuates with considerable accuracy.
- Uses rules of grammar with general control of meaning overall.
- Uses a good range of specialist terms as appropriately.



Candidates are not asked if they personally agree or disagree with the statement but to weigh up the evidence/arguments on both sides of the argument and then make a judgement which evidence/argument is more convincing or persuasive and then justify this judgement; i.e reach a justified conclusion.

Centres need to encourage candidates to read and note all the elements (especially in the bullet points under the statement) they are required to refer to in the question before starting to write their response.

## Question 2 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: The nature of Discipleship 2.2: Parables, the Parable of the Sower, the nature of discipleship as shown in each group (Mark 4:1-20).

The question asked was:

'Outline **three** teachings about discipleship found in the Parable of the Sower'.

The question is asking for three teachings about discipleship from the Parable the Sower. Candidates were not awarded marks for retelling the parable. The focus of this question was on what the parable teaches about **discipleship**. However, many candidates did retell part of the parable then linked it to discipleship by explaining the meaning of the different types of ground; this is an acceptable way of answering the question but not necessary in part (a) questions.

This response gained 3 marks.

2 (a) Outline **three** teachings about discipleship found in the Parable of the Sower.

(3)

~~Firstly~~ Firstly, disciples must not ~~become~~ become distracted by worldly items (seed among thorns). Secondly, disciples must not renounce ~~or~~ or deny their faith when under persecution (seed on rocky ground). Thirdly, the disciples must hear Jesus' message in their hearts otherwise their faith quickly fades (seed on the path).





The candidate writes three sentences giving three teachings. This is written as a paragraph but each point is 'signposted' by using firstly, secondly and thirdly.

The marks were awarded for:

Disciples must not become distracted by worldly items (1)

Disciples must not renounce faith under persecution (1)

Disciples must hear the message in their hearts (1)



Candidates are advised to write three separate sentences and use a technique such as starting a new line for each point to encourage them to outline three teachings/ways/reasons/beliefs

## Question 2 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: The Nature of Discipleship 2.3: The story of the rich young man and how this shows the nature of discipleship (Mark 10:17-31).

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** ways the nature of discipleship is shown in the story of the rich young man'.

Candidates were asked to explain two ways how the nature discipleship is shown in the story of the rich young man found in Mark 10:1-17. This required candidates to link elements of the story with what it shows about discipleship.

A significant number of candidates incorrectly referred to the young man giving away everything he possessed as example of discipleship. Only responses based correctly on the story in Mark's Gospel can be rewarded. These candidates could have answered by saying:

'Being a disciple means giving up everything' (1) developed by 'as Jesus told the rich young man to sell everything give it to the poor and follow him' (1) (the development is a paraphrase of 10:21).

The candidate was awarded 4 marks.

(b) Explain **two** ways the nature of discipleship is shown in the story of the rich man.

(4)

~~Discipleship~~ The nature of discipleship is shown as

given up all possessions and following the Lord.

Discipleship can't be achieved when people are tempted

by materialistic possession. 'It is easier for a camel to

go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter

the kingdom of God'.

Also the nature of discipleship is shown as more than just following the commandments.

Jesus instructs the man of the importance of giving up money on earth to gain eternal riches in heaven. 'The first will be last and the last will be first'.



The response gives two developed ways:

One way: 'Discipleship cannot be achieved when people are tempted by possessions' (1) this is developed by 'give up your possessions and follow the Lord' (1).

The first way is an example of reverse development where the way is given after the example/extra information.

Second way: 'it is more than just following commandments' (1) this is developed by 'Jesus instructs the man on giving up money for eternal riches in heaven' (1).



In a question based on a passage from Mark's Gospel candidates are encouraged to develop the way/reason given by referring to the text where they can.

## **Question 2 (c)**

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: 2.8: Discipleship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century 2.3: divergent understanding of how discipleship is shown in the examples of the lives of either Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Oscar Romero or Mother Teresa.

The question asked was:

'Explain **two** ways discipleship was shown in the life of either Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Oscar Romero or Mother Teresa.'

The specification requires candidates to study the life of **one** of three named persons; Bonhoeffer, Romero or Mother Teresa. The question was designed to give candidates the choice of which person they would prefer to refer to.

In the examination, a number of candidates wrote about all three of the people named; marks could only be awarded for one of the named people the candidate wrote about. Some candidates wrote general answers about discipleship and did not refer to either Bonhoeffer, Romero or Mother Teresa, so, could not be awarded any marks.

The candidate was awarded 5 marks.

- (c) Explain **two** ways discipleship was shown in the life of either Dietrich Bonhoeffer or Oscar Romero or Mother Teresa.

In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.

Firstly,

(5)

✓ Dietrich Bonhoeffer showed discipleship by having the will to fight for his faith. Although he knew he would be in danger ~~when~~ when executing the attack upon Hitler, he still followed through with it, following Jesus' commandment, "deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me."

Secondly, Bonhoeffer also showed discipleship by fighting for his neighbour. Although he was a Christian, he did not hesitate to fight for Jews ~~and~~ through the attempted assassination, following the Greatest Commandment, "Love ~~thy~~<sup>your</sup> neighbour as you love yourself!"

"deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me"



The candidate has clearly identified they are writing about Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

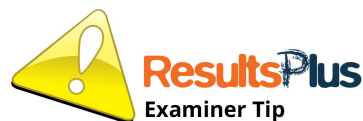
Way one: 'He was willing to fight for his faith although in danger' (1) developed by 'when executing the attack on Hitler' (1) the reference to a source of wisdom is 'following Jesus' commandment, "deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me"(1).

The source of wisdom and authority is relevant and is linked into the answer.

Way two: 'Willing to fight for his neighbour, the Jews'(1) developed by 'following the greatest commandment'. (1)

The reference to the Jews clearly links willingness to defend 'your neighbour' to the life of Bonhoeffer.

This candidate has written the source of wisdom and authority at the bottom of the response; if they had just done this and not included in their answer, even though it is appropriate it cannot gain the mark for correctly **using** the source of wisdom.



Centres are advised that the focus of the study of the life of either Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Oscar Romero or Mother Teresa is on how they are modern day examples of discipleship and not just knowing about life.

Candidates must link the reference to the source of wisdom and authority into their response not just write it out at the beginning or end of their answer.

## Question 2 (d)

Part (d) questions are levels marked. There are four levels, each level has a range of marks that awarded within that level.

The level descriptors can be found in the sample assessment material and mark scheme for this examination.

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: The Nature of Discipleship 2:7: Women in the ministry of Jesus as shown in Mark's Gospel. The specification refers to following three passages:

- the Greek woman (Mark 7:25-30)
- the anointing at Bethany (Mark 14:3-9)
- the crucifixion, burial and resurrection (Mark 15:40-47)

The question asked was:

'Women played an important role in Jesus' life and ministry.'

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Mark's Gospel
- reach a justified conclusion.

Most candidates answered the question by comparing the role of women in Mark's Gospel compared with that of the Twelve Disciples; which is a valid way of responding to the question. Many of these answers did not form a justified conclusion in relation to the given statement as they did not 'weigh up' up the evidence given. Opportunities were missed for appraising the evidence/arguments given e.g by reference to the status of the women at the time of Jesus.

A significant number of candidates referred to Mary and the Virgin Birth and Veronica wiping Jesus' tears; neither of which are in Mark's Gospel so cannot be credited.

The response was awarded 7 marks.

(d) "Women played an important role in Jesus' life and ministry."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Mark's Gospel
- reach a justified conclusion.

(12)

I agree with this statement as women in the life of Jesus ~~or were~~ showed great faith towards him. For example, the ~~women~~ woman with the haemorrhage who touched Jesus' cloak was healed by him - to which Jesus said 'Your faith has healed you'. Because she believed in Jesus and had faith in him - she was healed. Another way ~~Jesus~~ ~~women~~ women show great faith to Jesus is through the Greek woman, Jesus tells her that his salvation is only available to Jews, not gentiles to which she replies - 'but even the dogs eat the crumbs ~~that~~ ~~child~~ under the table that children leave' saying that because she has faith in Jesus - she should get his healing and salvation too, and to Jesus heals her daughter, because she showed great faith in him.

Another reason why I agree with this statement is because ~~at~~ they were present with Jesus in the last days of his life. In Mark's Gospel, ~~at~~ <sup>up</sup> the Annointing at Bethany, ~~for~~ a woman annoints Jesus with a 'very costly' perfume. ~~the~~ The men in the room became angry with her, to which Jesus defends her saying - 'she has ~~annointed~~ annointed me to prepare for my burial' and says that she has done 'a great thing', saying that she recognises Jesus as the Messiah - as Messiah means 'annointed one'. Women such as Mary Magdalene were also ~~with~~ with Jesus ~~the~~ on the cross and through his suffering - ~~saying~~ and were entrusted with the news of his resurrection.

However, some may disagree with this statement because all of Jesus' disciples were men. ~~If Jesus had~~ Some believe that if Jesus had wanted women as part of his life and ministry, he would have chosen some women as his ~~disciples~~ disciples. As well as this, ~~at~~ many of Jesus' key moments in Mark's gospel are centred around men and his disciples - for example, the transfiguration, which ~~showed~~ allowed Jesus to



revealed to Peter, James and John that he was the Son of Man. ~~It is~~ No women were present ~~in~~ during this important moment.

As well as this, some may ~~argue that~~ argue that ~~Jesus~~ ~~is~~ out of the whole bible - women played a ~~little~~ little role in the life and ministry of Jesus, and that if they had played a more significant role then the religious lives of women today would be more equal to the religious roles of men - for example women ~~could~~ would be able ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> become priests.

In conclusion, I agree with this statement ~~because~~ ~~because~~ ~~because~~, because even if there were ~~many~~ key events in Jesus' life shared by men, ~~there~~ <sup>there</sup> were also numerous accounts of women who shared great faith and love (Total for Question 2 = 24 marks)

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in Jesus and were present with him in his suffering death and resurrection which some say ~~is~~ are the most important events of Jesus' life. The only reason women don't have a bigger or equal ~~religious~~ role in ~~society~~ ~~not~~ catholic Christianity is due to society ~~not~~ rather than ~~the~~ ~~the~~ the bible.

**TOTAL FOR PAPER = 51 MARKS**

The response was awarded level 3 because:

- There is some logical chain of reasoning
- The response considers arguments for and against
- The conclusion is not fully justified
- Makes good use of the evidence from Mark's Gospel
- The candidate's response provides evidence suggesting the lower end of the Level 3 because:
- There is evidence of a 'judgement' leading to appraisal at the end of the answer, but it is not fully justified.
- Centres are advised not to point mark candidate responses for part (d) questions but to level mark them using the level descriptors in the mark schemes published by Pearson Edexcel.
- Appraisal of evidence is required for the higher levels and this can come at any point in the answer. For example, the candidate can offer the reasoning for holding one viewpoint and then use the opposing viewpoint to clearly indicate the weaknesses of the first argument.

## Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- This is a textual studies paper so candidates are expected to know and be able to use the passages from Mark's Gospel that are referred to in the specification.
- In response to the part (a) questions use **three** full sentences when answering the question. Each sentence should make one point or give one piece of information.
- In part (b) and part (c) questions the reason/way can be developed by either giving extra information, an example or a quote/reference to a source of wisdom and authority.
- The source of wisdom offered to support answers in part (c) questions must be relevant to the question and used in the answer to support the point been made.
- The part (d) questions require candidates to evaluate the statement, after considering the evidence. The higher levels are achieved if the evidence/argument given is 'considered' or appraised for its value as an argument, this is part of reaching a **justified** conclusion.
- On part (d) questions the bullet points indicate the viewpoints that can be awarded in the response. Candidates should read the question carefully and ensure they include the viewpoints other than reference to Mark's Gospel e.g non-religious points view.
- Rather than use extra sheets candidates should write on the blank space below the lines.

## Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>



