

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations

General Certificate of Secondary Education

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (WORLD RELIGIONS) (SHORT COURSE) 2391/1
PAPER 1 – Christianity through a Study of *either* Luke *or* Mark

MARK SCHEME

Specimen Paper 2003

SECTION A

LUKE

Answer question 1 and **one** other question from this section.

- 1 (a) **Describe the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, including the visit of the shepherds. [8]**

Description of the events at the birth of Jesus from Luke ch 2 v 1-20. Bethlehem (census) - manger - shepherds and angels.

- (b) **Explain why the stories of the birth of Jesus are important to Christians today. [7]**

Explanation that the story is the basis of Christmas celebrations e.g. carol services, nativity plays etc. to remember the birth of Jesus as special because the stories are evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus. Christmas is celebrated as a season of peace and goodwill. There is a public holiday. Also emphasis is placed on the evidence for some of the virgin birth. The role of Mary as the mother of Jesus is emphasised and exalted. Central to Christian belief and stated in the creeds. The shepherds emphasise the universal nature of the Saviour.

- (c) **'Only Christians should celebrate Christmas.'**

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

Evaluation focusing on following points: agree: Christian festival – so not important to those who do not have Christian beliefs. A lot of hypocrisy about Christmas from those who do not recognise Christianity at other times. Disagree: Public holiday time - so people should celebrate. People can get value out of family gatherings and gifts even if not Christian. Jesus is universal Messiah. Influence of Christmas is beneficial to society; encourages love, family values, sharing etc.

- 2 (a) **Describe the temptations of Jesus in the desert and show how each temptation was a test for Jesus. [8]**

Description of the Temptations of Jesus in the wilderness. Luke ch 4 v 1-13. Stones into bread - to use his power to feed himself or satisfy the hunger of the world, which he resisted. 'Man does not live by bread alone.' Spirituality more important than hunger. Kingdoms of the world rejected - Jesus was not to be an earthly king or be corrupted by power. 'Worship only God not the Devil.' Falling from the pinnacle of the Temple - Jesus would not put the power of God to the test by attempting to fulfil any of the spectacular prophecies to prove to himself (and others) that he was the Messiah.

- (b) Explain how Christians today might use the story of the temptation of Jesus to resist temptations in their own life. [7]**

Answers should demonstrate understanding of how the different types of temptations Jesus suffered can be mirrored in people's lives today. People satisfy their own cravings for material things and forget to worship God. There are temptations to behave badly, commit dishonest acts, crime, drugs, abusing other people or positions of power, acting selfishly etc. People consider fame and fortune important. Jesus remembered that we should worship God not the devil. There is the temptation to question and test God - asking for miracles or for God to prove his existence as a condition for believing in him etc. Jesus resisted the temptation to put God to the test. Jesus resisted temptation and chose a spiritual and honest life even though it would be less comfortable and he would suffer hardship.

- (c) 'A Christian life is a good life but too strict for most people.'**

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

An evaluation of the strength and satisfaction which can be gained from living by Christian principles compared with the demands made for self-discipline and restraint - not always understood by others in contemporary society. All relevant comments (which may be subjective as well as objective) should be rewarded.

- 3 (a) Give an account of the Parable of the Sower. [8]**

The Parable of the Sower Luke ch 8 v 4-15. A detailed description of the parable is required.

- (b) Explain how this teaching might influence Christians today. [7]**

Candidates might consider how Christians should shape their lives so that they live according to God's wishes and develop and strengthen their faith. They might also consider whether it is a Christian's duty to spread that faith to others.

- (c) 'Reading Luke's gospel will change people's lives.'**

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

Evaluation of the inspirational nature of Luke. Agree: Reading the gospel could inspire people to change their lives and live better lives or even become Christians because the stories and principles are universal; showing compassion and caring for others. Forgiveness of sins. Salvation for all. Jesus is presented as a human figure etc. Luke provides proof that Jesus was the Son of God etc. Disagree: Often only studied as a text and presents problems for a modern day reader. Complicated references to O.T. background and prophecies. Need to know historical background of Jesus' time. Language and vocabulary difficult etc. Not relevant to today etc.

4 (a) Describe the events of Pentecost. [8]

Description of the events of Pentecost. Acts 2 1-15, 37-41. Upper Room - wind - fire - gift of tongues - Peter speaks, advises repentance and baptism. Disciples now given gift of Holy Spirit. Able to preach boldly of the resurrection and salvation for all and baptize people. 3000 people baptized on this day.

(b) Explain why the Holy Spirit is important to Christians. [7]

Explanation of the importance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God's power on earth. In the absence of Jesus, after the Ascension, the Holy Spirit filled the hearts and minds of the Apostles. The Apostles were able to do what Jesus had done because they were full of God's power. Christians believe they also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (at baptism) (the laying on of hands) which makes them strong and powerful in faith.

(c) 'The Holy Spirit is the only guide Christians need.'

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

Answers will probably consider the importance of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the way in which he continues to guide Christians and the Church today. Candidates may also consider the role of the Bible and authority in the Church whilst some might argue that these themselves are manifestations of the working of the Spirit.

SECTION B

MARK

Answer question 5 and **one** other question from this section.

- 5 (a) Describe the Transfiguration of Jesus. [8]**

Mark 9: 2-8 Description could include the people present (Peter, James and John) and the context after Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi. Details of the story could be given: Jesus' clothes becoming dazzling white and his face shining like the sun, and the presence of Moses and Elijah; the voice from heaven confirming Jesus' Sonship. Candidates could give some interpretation of this story, although those who tell the story without comment should still be able to be awarded full marks.

- (b) Explain how and why the story of the suffering and death of Jesus might influence Christians today. [7]**

Answers might include an explanation of the ways in which knowing that Jesus suffered might help Christians who are suffering to feel that God has not abandoned them. Christians might be influenced to try and eliminate suffering in others whenever they encounter it; they might become more compassionate. The story of the death of Jesus might make some Christians aware of their own sin and need of forgiveness.

- (c) 'Mark's gospel shows Jesus to be a very different kind of leader (Messiah) from the one the Jews expected.'**

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

Ideas about the Jewish expectation of a political Messiah or strong king might be explored, with the ways in which Mark tries to show that Jesus was the fulfilment of scripture, confirmed by God at the Baptism and Transfiguration. They might also want to point out the ways in which Jesus surprised people, by for example healing on the Sabbath. The similarities and differences between Jewish expectation and the figure of Jesus in Mark could be discussed.

- 6 (a) Give an account of the Parable of the Sower. [8]**

Description could include reference to Jesus telling parables from a boat, as described in Mark 4; the details of the parable might be given, with seeds falling onto different kinds of ground, some growing and others failing. The meaning of the parable is not expected for a high-level response, but some candidates might want to give an interpretation, which should be credited.

- (b) Explain how this teaching might influence Christians today. [7]**

Candidates might consider how Christians should shape their lives so that they live according to God's wishes and develop and strengthen their faith. They might also consider whether it is a Christian's duty to spread that faith to others.

- (c) **'Reading Mark's gospel will change people's lives.'**

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

Candidates could discuss the impact of the gospel when it is read as a whole, perhaps agreeing that it is such a powerful story that it will change whoever reads it, or perhaps arguing that it has become so familiar that people find nothing more in it. They might challenge the way in which the statement suggests that the gospel will have the same effect on everyone.

- 7 (a) **Describe the event in which Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, and the answer he gave.** [8]

The context of this question, as an attempt to test Jesus, might be given, perhaps as a trick, perhaps someone who was genuinely impressed. The words which were spoken should be described, and the way in which the scribe understood that love of God and of one's neighbour was more important than sacrifices.

- (b) **Explain how the teaching Jesus gave in answer to this question might influence the behaviour of Christians today.** [7]

Candidates could demonstrate understanding of how Christians today might try to love God – by following the commandments, by regular worship, through prayer etc.; and their neighbours – by giving to charity, behaving kindly, being unselfish and so on.

- (c) **'It is impossible for ordinary people to do what Jesus said, so there is no point in trying'**

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your answer and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

Arguments might include the difficulty of living up to the commands completely, such as selling all you have and giving to the poor, which might be seen as impractical as well as impossible. It could be argued that even if a goal is impossible to attain, it is still worth working towards it. Some might argue that part of the point is that Christians have the help of the Holy Spirit.

- 8 (a) **Describe two occasions in Mark's gospel when Jesus taught about giving money to the poor.** [8]

Candidates could describe the event concerning the widow's offering, where she was praised for giving all she had in contrast to those who gave more but kept back plenty, and the story of the rich young man, who was told to give all he had to the poor and was unable to do so.

- (b) Explain how these occasions might influence Christians today. [7]**

Candidates could demonstrate understanding of the ways in which Christians might be inspired to give more to charity; they could note how for Christians there is not a fixed proportion of wealth which must be given, but that the ideal is to give everything. They might give examples of those who have chosen to give everything to serving the poor, such as Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

- (c) 'It is wrong to spend money on churches; Christians should give it all to the poor.'**

Do you agree? Give reasons to support your opinion and show that you have thought about different points of view. [5]

Arguments could include the view that Jesus did seem to say that Christians should not have any possessions, but should give everything to the poor. It could also be argued that churches are necessary for people to worship together and to further the kingdom of God. Perhaps some money should be spent on churches, but only the minimum. Some candidates might want to draw attention to the amount of land and treasure owned by some churches.

