

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations

General Certificate of Secondary Education

RELIGIOUS STUDIES A (WORLD RELIGIONS) PAPER 2A – Christian Perspectives on Personal, Social and World Issues.



MARK SCHEME

Specimen Paper 2003

They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more.

(Micah 4:3b)

[8]

(a) Describe Christian teaching about war.

1

Candidates might refer to general biblical teachings such as the Ten Commandments e.g. Do not commit murder, or to other suitable texts such as the Micah stimulus. There might also be reference to 'Just War' theory and possibly to differing views within the Christian churches.

(b) Explain why some Christians have used non-violent protest when working for justice. [7]

Candidates might focus on a particular person such as Martin Luther King Jr. as an example of non-violent protest or write generally about Christian pacifism. It would be helpful to include teachings such as 'Blessed are the peacemakers...', whilst some might consider the view that Jesus was a pacifist.

(c) 'Christians are not respected when they use violence.'

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

This is a question which could produce a very wide variety of views and responses. Mark according to the quality of the discussion.

2 (a) Describe Christian attitudes towards remarriage after divorce.

Candidates need to consider the basic principle that the marriage vows declare that only God can end a marriage, 'let no man put asunder'. Remarriage in e.g. a church after divorce is therefore generally not permitted. Candidates may mention denominations where this is permitted.

(b) Explain how a Christian couple might find the support of other Christians helpful in keeping their marriage together. [7]

The question is expecting a response based on the support and love of the Christian community for its members and, perhaps, the idea of the church as a family. Strength might come from the common goals and beliefs based on Christian teaching.

(c) 'Friendship is just as important as love in a marriage.'

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

The argument might centre on the difference between love and friendship and consider the need for friendship within a marriage. Other views might be that in the marriage service people do attest to their love for each other. Mark on quality of discussion.

2

[8]

3 (a) Describe biblical and Church teaching about euthanasia.

Candidates need to explore the basic texts which are used in discussions about euthanasia but should be aware that there are no specific texts which relate to the topic. In addition they should look at one or more expressed church views.

(b) Explain how Christians might put their beliefs about euthanasia into action. [7]

The most likely answer will be a discussion about hospices, their work, and support for them. Other responses might, of course, argue that, based on the concept of agape, a Christian might be moved to help someone who wished to end an intolerable life.

(c) 'Only God has the right to take a life.'

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

The view, as expressed, is a standard Christian view but expect discussion to consider alternatives based, possibly, on material from (a) and (b). Mark on quality of discussion.

4 (a) What do Christians mean when they say that people are stewards of the earth? [8]

This is based on the ideas in Genesis 1:28. Candidates need to explore the idea that although people are part of creation, nevertheless they are in a special position because God gave them dominion over the rest of creation.

(b) Explain why many Christians work to get rid of hunger and disease in the world. [7]

Candidates might decide to use any suitable texts in order to address this question e.g. Matthew 25. Other answers might concentrate on the need for this work and Christian responsibility for others.

(c) 'Christians should not send money to other countries when there are so many poor people in their own.'

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

This is an open question about charity, giving and responsibility for others. Mark on the quality of argument and discussion.

3

5 (a) Describe Christian teaching about the relationship between men and women. [8]

There are various issues which might be addressed here. Some candidates may look at both biblical and Church teaching and question whether Jesus' teaching does imply equality of the sexes and how this is borne out by Paul. Some may consider the question of women priests. Others may see the question as relating to the relationship between men and women in e.g. a marriage and approach the question from this perspective.

(b) Explain how a couple's Christian faith might affect the way they bring up their children. [7]

Expect responses along two lines of approach: one is that these parents would bring their children up according to Christian principles of love and the family; the other is that these parents may wish to bring up their children to follow the Christian faith, baptism, teaching about Christianity etc.

(c) 'Christians need the support of others to keep their faith strong.'

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

There are two clear sides to this discussion as to whether some Christians might feel that they have a unique personal relationship with Jesus / God, whereas others might feel the need for the support of a Christian community and its minister or priest. Mark according to quality of discussion.

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