

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCE Religious Studies
6RS04_1D
Christianity

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1D Christianity

Congratulations are due to many candidates who achieved success in their thorough understanding of the selected passage and for their commendable examination techniques. It is essential for candidates to examine the passage on the exam paper. Candidates must relate what they have learned and apply it to the extract. What is essential is an explicit focus on the text, whatever method is used to examine it. There was evidence of some candidates inserting several paragraphs of material not linked to the question.

The division on the paper into the two assessment objectives is intended to assist candidates to structure their answers and to enable them to make sensible use of their time in the allocation of material. In most cases candidates had the required examination technique to make effective use of their material. There is no necessary requirement to follow the structured division as seen in the question. However, for candidates creating a holistic answer, there is a tendency to pay inadequate attention to AO2, especially in relation to the implications aspect of part (b).

Most candidates seemed to grasp the central point from the passage that the ethics of Jesus was radically new. Some missed the point and thought that reciprocity was actually what Jesus was teaching. Too many seemed to miss Ronald Preston's point of quoting Paul who also saw this new ethic, and were caught up in the nineteenth century separation of Paul and Jesus without seeming to question either that Paul's writings were earlier than the gospel or concerning the issue relating to the difficulty of separating the ethics of Jesus from those churches that actually produced the gospels. Preston goes on to say (six pages later) that "St Paul grasped that the basis of Jesus' ethic is a joyful response in life to the overflowing graciousness of God." Although one can certainly disagree with Preston but at least his point of view should be put.

Candidates were able to express their views with good reasoning. Some agreed with Klausner's notion of agape being unattainable or unreasonable and its generosity being open to exploitation from non Christians. Implications were often in the realm of sexual ethics and debates relating to how the church today could show the radical approach of Jesus.

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