



Examiners' Report

June 2023

GCSE Religious Studies A 1RA0 4A

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Introduction

GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies Religious Studies A – Area of Study 4: Textual Studies – Mark's Gospel

The paper contributes to 25% of the overall award.

The assessment consists of two sets of questions consisting of four parts. Candidates must answer both questions.

There are two sections:

- Who is Jesus?
- The Nature of Discipleship.

Candidates should explore the themes and teaching of Mark's Gospel in depth. 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.

In some questions, marks are available for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Please note:

- AO: Assessment Objective
- SPaG: Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

Question 1 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Who was Jesus? Bullet point 1.3 Nature miracles in Mark's Gospel: what they show about Jesus, including the calming of the storm (Mark 4:35 – 41); **the feeding of the five thousand (Mark 6:32 – 44)** and the walking on the water (Mark 6:45 – 52) and divergent understandings of their significance for different Christians today; Christian responses to non-religious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that miracles can be scientifically explained and provide no proof of Jesus as divine. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Outline **three** features of the feeding of the five thousand.'

This question was generally answered well. The most successful answers were able to outline that:

- there were five loaves and two fish
- Jesus looked to heaven and gave thanks
- the crowd ate and was satisfied
- the crowd was divided into groups of fifty or one hundred and
- there were twelve baskets of food left

Those that did not achieve full marks often referred to information found in other Gospels eg the boy with five loaves and two fishes from John 6:9 or gave incorrect information eg two loaves of bread and five fishes.

This is an example of a response where the candidate uses information from another gospel.

1 (a) Outline **three** features of the feeding of the five thousand.

(3)

- A kid offered Jesus 5 loaves and 2 fish ~~just~~ because that is all he had.
- Jesus looked up to heaven, gave thanks and broke the bread and shared it with the ~~5~~ five thousand people.
- At the end, there was still 12 baskets full of food.



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This candidate is given marks for:

- Jesus looked to heaven, gave thanks, and broke the bread (1)
- There were still 12 baskets full of food (1)



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Examiner Tip

Make sure that the points given are based on Mark's Gospel in this paper.

It is acceptable to paraphrase the text found in Mark, when answering a question.

This is a good example of the candidate making three clear points, by starting a new line for each point and using full sentences.

1 (a) Outline **three** features of the feeding of the five thousand.

(3)

1. Jesus fed the five thousands through 5 loaves and two fish. of bread
2. There are 12 baskets left after people are full.
2. "Jesus took 5 loaves of bread and two fish and look up to the sky."



In this response, marks are given for:

- Jesus fed the five thousand through 5 loaves and two fishes (1)
- There were twelve baskets left after people were full (1)
- Jesus took 5 loaves and two fishes and looked up to the sky (1)

Total: 3 marks

Question 1 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Who is Jesus? Bullet point 1.4.

The healing miracles in Mark's Gospel: what they show about Jesus, including **the healing of Legion (Mark 5:1 – 20)**; the raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:21 – 43) and divergent understandings of their significance for Christians today. (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Explain **two** reasons why the healing of Legion is important.'

Candidates could refer to what the healing of Legion showed about Jesus, or why this healing is important for Christians today.

Some candidates were able to give a valid reason for the importance of this miracle and link it directly to the healing of Legion, usually by referring to Mark 5:1-20. Common reasons given were:

- it shows Jesus is the Son of God
- it shows Jesus has power over evil spirits
- highlights Jesus' divinity
- demonstrates that Jesus has the power to transform lives
- the significance of the healing taking place in Gerasenes
- the importance of evangelism for Christians today.

Some candidates gave reasons about why miracles in general are important and did not link their answer to the healing of Legion. Others referred to the healing of Jairus' daughter and the spirit cast out of the boy (Mark 9:14-29).

This is a good example of a candidate giving two developed reasons and linking their answer to the healing of Legion.

Candidates are advised to develop the given reason by referring to the specific miracle, event or teaching asked about in the question.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why the healing of Legion is important.

(4)

The healing of Legion is important as it is proof Jesus has divine power, no ordinary man could heal cast out demons without divine help.

It ~~st~~ teaches shows how Jesus is so powerful that even the demons recognise him, they were aware of who he was as they asked for mercy from him.



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Examiner Comments

This response is given marks for two developed reasons.

Reason 1

- Jesus has divine power (1)
- developed by... as no ordinary man could cast out demons (1)

Reason 2

- The demons recognise Jesus' power (1)
- developed by...they ask for mercy from him (1)

Total: 4 marks

This is a good example of a candidate giving one reason based on what it shows about Jesus and another on the importance for Christians today.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why the healing of Legion is important.

(4)

The healing of Legion shows Jesus' power over evil spirits. This shows that he is God as even the demon in Legion obeyed Jesus.

After Legion was healed, he went around telling others about what Jesus did for him. This is an example of evangelism that Christians should follow.



This response receives marks for two developed reasons.

Reason one

- it shows Jesus' power over evil spirits (1)
- developed by...Jesus is God as the demons obey him (1)

Reason 2

- This is an example of evangelism that Christians should follow (1)
- developed by ...Legion went around telling people what Jesus did for him (1)

In the second reason the candidate gives the development, the reference to the healing of Legion, before the reason. This is a valid way of answering the question.

Total: 4 marks



Write two paragraphs: it helps to separate the reasons given.

Question 1 (c)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Who is Jesus? Bullet point 1.6

The transfiguration (Mark 9:1 – 10): **what this event shows about Jesus**; the reasons and importance of the appearance of Moses and Elias in relation to Moses' role as lawgiver and the Old Testament prophecy of Elias; divergent understandings of its significance for Christians today; Christian responses to nonreligious arguments (including atheist and Humanist) which maintain that visions, such as the transfiguration, provide no proof that Jesus is the Messiah. *(Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was: 'Explain **two** things the Transfiguration shows about Jesus.'

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

This question was generally answered well, with many candidates being able to make links between the details of the transfiguration and what it shows about Jesus.

The most common points made were about:

- Jesus' divinity
- Jesus as Messiah
- Jesus as the Son of God
- Jesus referring to himself as Son of Man
- Jesus as the fulfilment of the Old Testament
- the messianic secret
- the foretelling of his death and resurrection.

Many candidates used the text in Mark about the transfiguration to both develop their answer and used it as the source of wisdom and authority (SOWA).

Some candidates confused the transfiguration with Jesus' baptism or Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (Mark8:27-33)

This is a good example of a candidate using the text correctly to develop their answer.

(c) Explain **two** things the Transfiguration shows about Jesus.

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

(5)

Firstly, the transfiguration ~~is~~ demonstrates his connection with God as similar to Baptism, a cloud appears and from it a voice says "This is my Son, listen to him". The voice from the clouds is God from heaven, claiming Jesus as his Son. He is also seen wearing "glissening, white robe" which couldn't be bleached on Earth as it was so white.

Secondly, it also emphasises how Jesus is worthy of the title Messiah as he is seen with Moses and Eliyah, ~~who are~~ Moses is an important figure in Jewish faith as he was given the Law of the Torah therefore by "conversating with Jesus" it proves him as a Messiah, even for ~~the~~ Orthodox believers.



This response is given marks for:

Point 1 –

- Jesus as the Son of God (1)
- developed by..... a voice from the clouds, God's voice (1)

SOWA ... 'This is my son, listen to him' (1)

- Emphasises Jesus worthy of the title Messiah (1)
- developed by ... he is seen with Moses and Elijah (1)

Extra correct information is given but the candidate has already achieved full marks.

Total: 5 marks



Details and or quotes from the text can be used to develop the point made.

This is a good example of a candidate demonstrating both knowledge and an understanding of what the Transfiguration shows about Jesus.

Candidates are advised to identify two points/reasons/ways and then select the information and source of wisdom and authority that best support that particular point.

(c) Explain **two** things the Transfiguration shows about Jesus.

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

(5)

The transfiguration confirmed Jesus as the son of God and showed his divine nature. 'He was transfigured before them, his clothes became glistening, intensely white' (Mark 9) He glowed white which showed his divine purity, and ~~a voice~~ God the father said spoke "This is my beloved son; listen to him" (Mark 9) This confirmed Jesus as the son of God and that he has authority to speak for God the father as he is God the son.

It also showed that Jesus was not a break from the old testament, but he fulfills it. The appearance of Moses by his side showed that he fulfills the Law and the appearance of Elijah ^(a great prophet) by his side showed that he fulfills the prophecy, as it was through that the ^{return} appearance of Elijah would herald the coming of the messiah.



The candidate is given marks for two developed points and a SoWA.

Point 1

- Confirms Jesus as the Son of God (1)
- ... 'This is my beloved son; listen to him' (SoWA) (1)
- developed by...Jesus has the authority to speak from God (1)

Point 2

- Jesus is not a break from Old Testament but fulfils it (1)
- developed by ... the appearance of Moses, fulfils the law, Elijah, fulfils the prophets (1)

Total: 5 marks

Question 1 (d)

Candidates were assessed on Section One: Who is Jesus? Bullet point 1.8

The last days of Jesus' life: reasons for his arrest; **the Last Supper (Mark 14:12 – 31)**; the prayers in Gethsemane (Mark 14:32 – 42); the betrayal and arrest (Mark 14:43 – 52); the trial before the High Priest (Mark 14:53 – 65); the trial before Pilate (Mark 15:1 – 15); the Passion (Mark 15:21 – 39; 16:1 – 8), what these events show about the purpose of Jesus' life, and how they may differ from other Gospel accounts, what these events show about Jesus; **divergent understandings of the significance of these events for different Christians today.**

The question asked was: "The Last Supper is the most important event during the last days of Jesus' life."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Mark's Gospel
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

Most candidates knew why the Last Supper is important for Christians. Many referred to the Last Supper as the beginnings of the Eucharist, the prediction of Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial.

The majority of candidates presented a counter-claim, arguing that Jesus' death or resurrection is more important.

Some candidates referred to events that did not occur during the last days of Jesus' life, eg the baptism of Jesus, which could not be taken into account when giving a mark.

While the use of writing frames may be helpful to some candidates, in many cases it can detract from the flow of the argument or adds nothing to the argument.

For example, the writing frame of giving arguments for, then arguments against, and then a personal conclusion, often leads to candidates just stating why some agree and some may disagree with the statement and not evaluating the points made or the arguments given.

This is an example of a Level 2 response where the candidate has a good knowledge and understanding of elements of the Last Supper and the significance of the death of Jesus (AO1), but evaluation (AO2), which is what is being assessed, is more limited.

'Evaluate the statement' means the candidate should use their knowledge and understanding to underpin the arguments and judgements made in their answer.

*d) "The Last Supper is the most important event during the last days of Jesus' life."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Mark's Gospel
- refer to different Christian points of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

Firstly, many Catholics ~~may~~ may agree with this statement, because this is when the first eucharist takes place. This is evident in Mark 14 when Jesus says "This is my body... This is my blood... Poured out for many". This is important because Jesus is teaching his disciples how to connect with him and remember him after he dies on the cross and ascends into heaven to achieve salvation. This is also significant for Catholics today, as they believe in transubstantiation, which means that the bread and wine literally transform into the body and blood of Christ.

On the other hand, many Christians may disagree with this statement and argue that Jesus's death on the cross was the most important event during the last days of Jesus' life as this is when he achieved salvation. This is shown as Mark says "he came to earth to achieve salvation and restore the relationship between God and the people that has been lost through sin". This is a strong argument because for this is the moment that Jesus took away all the sins of the world, allowing others to be saved from sin and enter the kingdom of God.

In conclusion, while I think the last supper is a very significant event, I feel that the crucifixion of Jesus is more important because this is the moment that he achieved salvation, therefore I disagree with the statement.



The question is asking if the Last supper is the most important event during the last days of Jesus' life. To answer this the candidate has used the formula of: 'some agree, others disagree and I think'.

Within the response there is/are: –

- superficial connections about the importance of the Last Supper compared to Jesus' death
- reasoned judgements made about the importance of the Last Supper for Catholics and the significance of Jesus' death for Christians
- a conclusion that is superficial because it does not go beyond agreeing with the reason already given; it is not developed further

To gain a higher mark the candidate needs to use 'logical chains of reasoning', to evaluate the statement, and form a justified conclusion.

This is a good example of a level 3 response where the answer is focused on AO2 and goes beyond arguing for and against, the Last Supper being the most important event. The candidate uses their knowledge and understanding of the Last days of Jesus' life and the Last Supper to evaluate the given statement.

*(d) "The Last Supper is the most important event during the last days of Jesus' life."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

- refer to Mark's Gospel
- refer to different Christian points of view Protestant
- reach a justified conclusion.

(15)

The Last Supper is the most important event during the last days of Jesus' life, because many important events, including establishing the new covenant and Jesus foresees the future are revealed during the Last Supper. Firstly, Jesus said during the last supper "Take it, this is my body... this is my blood, poured out for many, which will become the (new) covenant". The share of the bread and wine establishes the ~~True~~ Eucharist, which is still practiced by all Christian churches during liturgical worship and the Eucharist is seen as one of the most important part of worship, as it reminds Christians Jesus' salvation and sacrifice. However, Protestant Christians reject the idea of the bread and wine actually turning into the body and blood of Christ. They believe in transubstantiation which the bread and wine are solely symbols. Consequently, it does arguably reduce the importance of the Eucharist, and therefore the Last Supper becomes less important as it is less often reminded during the practice of the Eucharist. On the other hand, some Christians argue that the importance of Last Supper is not reduced as it is also, ^a very important

event to remind Christians the omniscience of Jesus. This is shown through Jesus' ability to foresee the future, including predicting Peter's denial and Judas' betrayal.

This further indicates that Jesus is following God's plan, and fulfilling the prophecy, which is ~~becoming~~ ^{being} a suffering servant and remove sins of humanity. The Last Supper is extremely important to prove that Jesus' death is not by accident but already planned.

However, other Christians argue that other events such as the death and resurrection of Jesus is more important. For instance, the death of Jesus "teared the curtains ~~away~~ apart" which indicates the opening of heaven and people are able to enter the kingdom of God. Moreover, the resurrection of Jesus freed all sins from humanity which suggest that it is more important than just the 'planning' of ~~the~~ or the previous days drawn up to the death.

On the other hand, many Christians ~~with~~ rebukes the idea that only the death of Jesus is important, however without the Last Supper, Jesus' death will seem like a betrayal rather than God's plan. #

As a conclusion, not only does the Last Supper suggest shows that the death of Jesus is part of God's plan.

It also establishes the new covenant and the Eucharist which are important to even today. Therefore, the Last Supper is the most important event.



The candidate received level 3 – 9 marks plus 3 marks for SPaG.

Top level 3 is the best fit because the response:

- Deconstructs the significance of the Eucharist for different Christians and importance of the prediction of Judas' betrayal.
- There is evidence of coherent and logical chains of reasoning.
- Is underpinned by an accurate understanding of the Last Supper, the importance of Judas' betrayal, the significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- Judgements are made about the importance of the Last Supper and the significance of Judas' betrayal.
- A partially justified conclusion is supported by the evidence/argument in the given response.

The Candidate spells and punctuates with consistent accuracy and uses rules of grammar with effective control of meaning overall. The Candidate uses a wide range of specialist terms as appropriate.



A way to appraise the evidence is to explain a viewpoint or argument, then evaluate its validity by giving reasons why others may not accept this as a valid point, concluding with which is the most convincing point/argument.

Question 2 (a)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: The Nature of Discipleship. Bullet point 1.8.

Discipleship in the 21st century: divergent understandings of how discipleship is shown in the lives of individual Christians today; specific examples should show how a person's life reflects on the demands of discipleship outlined in Mark's Gospel, including Mark 8:34 and the **examples of either Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Oscar Romero or Mother Teresa.** (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Outline **three** ways discipleship is shown in the life of **either** Dietrich Bonhoeffer **or** Oscar Romero **or** Mother Teresa.'

This question was generally well-answered. Most candidates were able to outline three ways discipleship was shown in the life of the named person. The most popular example used was Mother Teresa.

Some candidates gave one example from each of three people mentioned in the question, or two from one person and one from another; therefore, they could only be awarded one or two marks.

This is an example of a response where the candidate does not follow the instructions in the question.

2 (a) Outline **three** ways discipleship is shown in the life of **either** Dietrich Bonhoeffer **or** Oscar Romero **or** Mother Teresa.

(3)

-Discipleship is shown in the life of Mother Teresa as she helps the poor.

-It is also shown through her life as she gave up everything she had to serve.

Discipleship is shown in the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer as he refused to deny his beliefs.



In this response Mother Teresa is identified in the first two ways given:

First way

- she helped the poor (1)

Second way

- gave up everything to serve (1)

The third way, about Bonhoeffer, is correct, but cannot be credited because the candidate needed to refer only to one person.

Total: 2 marks

This is an example of candidate who outlines three correct ways in three sentences.

Candidates are advised to read the question carefully and highlight the key parts of the question, in order that they answer the question set.

2 (a) Outline **three** ways discipleship is shown in the life of **either** Dietrich Bonhoeffer **or** Oscar Romero **or** Mother Teresa.

(3)

* This suggests the cost of discipleship is persecution.
(1) Oscar Romero spoke out about the suffering and missing Christians in El Salvador. *

(2) Oscar Romero provided for the poor (shows service as a disciple).

(3) Oscar Romero was assassinated and martyred for his faith during mass of the consecrated host (shows it cost his life)



The response receives marks for outlining three correct ways.

- spoke out about the suffering and missing Christians in El Salvador (1)
- provided for the poor (1)
- assassinated for his faith (1)

Total: 3 marks

The candidate makes it clear that they have selected and outlined relevant information, by making three clear points.

Even though it is not necessary to number the points it may prompt the candidate to select just three pieces of relevant information.

Question 2 (b)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: The Nature of Discipleship. Bullet point 2.5

Jesus' teachings on service (Mark 10:41 – 45); the purpose of discipleship as shown in the command to serve; **its implications and significance for Christians today.** (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: 'Explain **two** reasons why Jesus' teachings on service are important for Christians today.'

Candidates needed to give two developed reasons as to why Jesus' teaching **on service** are important today. A significant number of answers did not refer to the teachings about service. They gave very generalised answers, or referred to teachings from other Gospels.

Most candidates who based their response on Mark 10: 35-44 or passages about the cost of discipleship, were more successful.

In this response the candidate gives one correct developed reason.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why Jesus' teachings on service are important for Christians today.

(4)

Firstly, Jesus teachings are important to Christians today, because they show how Christians should love. This means that Christians can honour God with their lives.

Secondly, Jesus' teachings on service are important for Christians, because it humbles them. This means that they put others above themselves, staying humble, and not prideful.



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The candidate is awarded 2 marks for one developed reason.

In this response the first reason is not about service but love, so does not answer the question.

Reason 1

- it humbles them (makes them humble) (1)
- put others before themselves (1)

Here the candidate has explained why the teaching on service is important for Christians today: because it makes them humble and develops by giving extra information by putting others before themselves.

Total: 2 marks

This is an example of a candidate that bases their response on Jesus' teachings about service.

Putting the stem of the question before the answer may help candidates to see if the reason and information given, answers the question and makes sense.

(b) Explain **two** reasons why Jesus' teachings on service are important for Christians today.

(4)

One reason is that Christians understand in order to enter the kingdom of God, they have to give up their comforts and serve others, as this shows love towards God.

Another reason is ~~the~~ that Christians understand from James and John that the kingdom of God is ^{not} earthly, but ~~is~~ spiritual. ~~Jesus~~ ^{Jesus} had taught them that ~~God~~ ^{Jesus} himself come to earth to serve others, and they should ^{do} the same as Jesus.



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Examiner Comments

This response receives marks for two developed reasons.

Reason 1

- they need to give up their comforts and serve others (1)
- developed by ...in order to enter the Kingdom of God (1)

Reason 2

- Jesus himself come to earth to serve others (1)
- developed by...and disciples should do the same (1)

Total: 4 marks

Question 2 (c)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: The Nature of Discipleship? Bullet point 2.7

Women in the ministry of Jesus as shown in Mark's Gospel: the discipleship and **importance of women including the Greek woman (Mark 7:25 – 30); the anointing at Bethany (Mark 14:3 – 9); the crucifixion, burial and resurrection (Mark 15:40 – 47, 16:1 – 11)**; divergent understandings of its significance for Christians today. *(Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.)*

The question asked was: 'Explain two occasions when women played an important role in Jesus' ministry. In your answer you must refer to a source of wisdom and authority.'

This question was generally answered well, with many candidates being able to explain the importance of two separate occasions when women played a role in the ministry of Jesus.

The most common occasions explained were those outlined in the specification.

Some candidates referred to occasions not found in Mark's Gospel eg Mary and the birth of Jesus, Martha and Mary, or Veronica wiping Jesus' face, all of which are not creditworthy.

These are two good example of responses that explain two occasions where women played at important role in Jesus' ministry.

(c) Explain **two** occasions when women played an important role in Jesus' ministry.

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

(5)

The woman at Bethany showed her love and faith towards Jesus by anointing him before his death. This is unlike his male disciples who criticised her actions.

Mary Magdalene and Mary were the first witnesses of Jesus resurrection and were constant throughout his death revealing their love and devotion towards him. They went to his tomb, found it empty and were told, "he is risen." So they would share the news to the disciples who were not present.



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Examiner Comments

This response receives full marks.

Occasion 1

- The woman at Bethany anointing Jesus before his death (1)
- developed by...unlike his male disciples who criticised her (1)

Occasion 2

- Mary Magdalene and Mary were the first witnesses to the resurrection (1)
- developed by...they went to the tomb and found it was emptied (1)
- SoWA...they were told 'he has risen' (1)

Total: 5 marks

This response shows how a candidate can receive full marks without needing to write beyond the given space.

The reference to the SOWA can be used anywhere in the answer, but it needs to be an integral part of the answer.

(c) Explain **two** occasions when women played an important role in Jesus' ministry.

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

(5)

The Greek woman was important because she demonstrated ~~excellent~~ excellent faith. She said "Even the dog ~~under the~~ eat the child's crumb under the table" in Mark 7, meaning she is willing to believe Jesus despite the Jews rejecting him.

The anointing in Bethany was also important. The woman broke her expensive perfume to anoint Jesus which shows her faith that he is Messiah, but also foreshadows Jesus' death and burial.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response receives full marks.

Occasion 1

- The Greek woman demonstrated excellent faith (1)
- SOWA 'even the dogs eat the children's crumbs under the table' (1)
- developed by meaning she was willing to believe Jesus despite the Jews rejecting him (1)

Occasion 2

- the anointing at Bethany – the woman broke the expensive jar of perfume to anoint Jesus (1)
- developed by...shows her faith that he is the Messiah (1)

The reference to this foreshadowing Jesus' death is also creditworthy as a development but the candidate has already received full marks.

Total: 5 marks

Question 2 (d)

Candidates were assessed on Section Two: The Nature of Discipleship? Bullet point 2.2

Parables: the Parable of the Tenants (Mark 12:1 – 12): how this story shows the potential cost of discipleship in and its relationship to Christians today; the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1 – 20), how each group shows different types of Christians; the nature of discipleship as shown in each group and in the role of the sower; its significance for Christians today; **the importance of these parables with reference to the Kingdom of God and divergent ways in which that is variously understood as realised and in the future.** (*Bold indicates the part of the bullet assessed by the question.*)

The question asked was: "Mark's Gospel teaches the Kingdom of God is in the future."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

There was a wide variety of responses, with candidates using as evidence the parables from Mark's Gospel, the story of the rich young man and the nature of discipleship at the time of Jesus and in the 21st century.

Some candidates showed that they understood that the Kingdom of God can be seen as being in the present (realised) or as a future event and used this to argue for and against the statement. A significant number only focussed on the Kingdom of God as heaven, therefore often limiting their responses to the lower levels.

The question asked if **Mark's Gospel teaches** the Kingdom of God is in the future, not whether the Kingdom of God is a future event. Some candidates based their answer on SOWA or modern-day examples. Unless answers are based on Mark's Gospel such evidence cannot be taken into account when assessing the level and mark.

This is a good example of a Level 3 response where the answer is focussed on AO2 and the response is underpinned by an accurate understanding of Mark's Gospel.

A 'chain of reasoning' is seen when a candidate makes a point and then develops it several times. This can be done by giving examples, extra information, or SOWA.

(d) "Mark's Gospel teaches the Kingdom of God is in the future."

Evaluate this statement considering arguments for and against.

In your response you should:

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

(12)

Mark's Gospel teaches that the Kingdom of God is in the future as throughout it, Jesus says how to get in. This argument is strengthened by the story of the Rich Man, as Jesus says, "how hard it will be for a ~~Rich Man~~ rich man to get into heaven!" This shows that the Kingdom of ~~Heaven~~ God is heavenly, which Christians must live good lives for - sacrificing material possessions - in order to reach in future.

Additionally, the disciples can be considered to be working towards the Kingdom of God for the future as they do missionary work, helping Jesus. ~~For ex~~ This missionary work can be seen in the feeding of the five thousand as Jesus preaches to a crowd and provides food for them as well. Also, in the Healing of Legion Jesus says, "tell them what the lord has done for you" once he has cast spirits out of Legion. Thus, by missionary work, it is suggested the Kingdom of God can either be heaven which we reach through following Jesus, or perhaps even a world we do good for others.

On the other hand, some could argue the previous argument is weak, since the miracles Jesus performed show that the

Kingdom of God could actually be the world of today. Jesus brings reconciliation, as we are closer to God through his work. For example, the Walking on Water and Calming of the Storm show that we are in the Kingdom of God now as Jesus has been on this Earth. Also, his teachings mean Christians can be close to God, as he provides comfort. The disciples are frightened by the storm, and think Jesus is a ghost when he walks on water, but Jesus said "take heart, it is I." By walking on water, Jesus is symbolic of goodness over evil, and with his comforting words he helps Christians in the modern world. Therefore the Kingdom of God is today, as Jesus has already done good and established it through sending out missionaries and evangelists in the Great Commission (the sending of the 12.)

In conclusion, it depends on what you interpret the Kingdom of God to mean; Heaven that we must follow Jesus to get into or future, or a world that is close to God. If it is the latter, it is in the present, since the sacrifice of Jesus has brought reconciliation. Since Jesus has died for humanity's sins, it is today that the Kingdom of God exists, and the work of modern disciples such as Mother ~~Theresa~~ Teresa who helped the poor in Calcutta show that discipleship today - helping others - proves we are in the Kingdom of God as we benefit from his love and Jesus' sacrifice. (Total for Question 2 = 24 marks)



The candidate is given marks because:

- there is evidence of logical chains of reasoning throughout the answer
- there is an accurate understanding of Mark's Gospel that underpins the reasoning and judgements given
- they construct coherent and reasoned judgements when giving arguments for and against and link the Kingdom of God being in the future
- they give a partially-justified conclusion based on the evidence

This candidate makes good use of the material they have studied; reference is made to the story of the rich young man, the healing of Legion and the calming of the storm, the sending out of the disciples and discipleship in the 21st century.

The candidate uses terms and phrases such as: additionally, this is strengthened by, this shows, thus, therefore, previous argument is weak because, depends on, to help develop their 'chains of reasoning' and arguments.

To gain a higher level and mark the candidate needed to reach a fully-justified conclusion, by referring back to the statement and considering if Mark's Gospel itself teaches that Kingdom of God is in the future.

Total: 8 marks

Level 3

Paper Summary

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

- When answering the (a) items, use three full sentences
- In (b) items two developed reasons, and no more, should be given
- In (b) and (c) items the development should link to the reason and question
- In (c) items the source of wisdom and authority can be paraphrased but must link the point being made and the set question
- In (d) items candidates are asked to evaluate the given statement, after considering the evidence and the arguments for and against
- In (d) items the bullet points after the statement indicate to what the candidate should refer in their answer. Only this can be considered when awarding the level and mark
- Candidates should plan their time in the examination to ensure they leave enough time to answer all of the questions fully
- Centres are reminded this paper is a textual study of Mark's Gospel and questions are based on the passages given in the specification

Grade boundaries

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

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

