

# Examiners' Report

## June 2019

### GCE Religious Studies 9RS0 03

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# Introduction

The second sitting of this specification shows that overall, candidates and centres have risen to the challenge of the new style questions and the range of material required for the best outcomes. It was good to see some really excellent responses which clearly demonstrate the academic grasp of the subject. Centres across the country are to be congratulated for the clear success of their candidates.

There are still some areas to develop as candidates need to balance the amount of time spent on each question. Question 1 responses were far too long and it seems in some cases to have impacted on the time left for question 4. There are only 8 marks available for Q01 and paying close attention to the wording of the question would have helped candidates to focus their response in the limited space allowed. Question 2 demands the careful selection of material to weigh up a position and the 'analyse' aspect of question 3(b) requires the AO2 skill of using logical chains of reasoning to fully engage with the question. The 'clarify' aspect of Q03(a) demands more than simply 'translating' the extract because the AO1 criteria can additionally be satisfied by useful background knowledge. The trigger words indicate the balance of AO1 and AO2 required in each type of question and the amount of space provided on the paper indicates roughly how much time should be spent.

The two essay questions allowed candidates to showcase their knowledge of the ethical teachings of Jesus. Question 4, which includes the synoptic element of the course, did not preclude the use of valid material drawn from across the specification with its focus on the Kingdom of God. There were some very good responses that drew on a range of detailed and carefully selected knowledge to deconstruct the issues in the question, before offering a fully justified conclusion based on review and analysis of material. Some excellent examples of well-crafted and pertinent links made with other components studied demonstrated that this aspect of the question can be done without a 'bolt-on' paragraph approach. This is not an optional part of the question and the full range of marks cannot be accessed if this is omitted.

Some key lessons worth addressing include:

Firstly, centres are expected to teach the whole specification and should not make assumptions about what may or may not be tested on the exam paper or in what combination. There is no relationship between this paper and AS Religious Studies apart from the possibility of co-teaching similar content between AS and AL in Year 12. There should be no assumption that a co-taught topic will appear on an A Level paper although it is likely that in some sittings this might be the case. Candidates can be asked a question from anywhere in the specification and are best advised to ensure that revision covers the whole course because there are no options or choices of questions available.

Secondly, both the two-part essay question 3 and the extended essay question 4 represent a significant proportion of the marks for the whole paper and should be given sufficient time and attention. Candidates who spent far too much time on Q01 and/or Q02 would have been better advised to answer the essay questions first, whilst keeping an eye on timings, as cumulatively these add up to 60 out of 80 marks.

Thirdly, there is no substitute for accurate knowledge. Questions 1 and 2 could not be answered through guess work - given that question 1, an 'explore' question, attracts 8 marks solely for AO1, it can be expected that factual information is required for full marks because there is no requirement to discuss or analyse. In Q02 it was clear that some candidates did not know the topic and used other information instead that could not be credited. It is important to note that candidates who gave general responses to a topic rather than addressing the question tended to be less successful

as they could not answer the question fully. It remains the case that candidates invariably perform better when they are able to apply information they have carefully learnt to the specific demands of a question, rather than just reproducing a previous essay with no reference to the question.

Finally, one more general comment: centres would be well advised to ensure their candidates have a good awareness of what is in Luke and John. For example, the 'I am' sayings are only in John. The Good Samaritan parable is core ethical teaching, but NOT found in all four Gospels. The Walking on Water sign is not found in Luke's gospel.

Overall, the most successful candidates produced impressive responses that evidenced sound learning, engagement with the subject matter and accurate knowledge of the textual content and relevant scholarship.

## Question 1

The best responses understood the intended target of the question and were able to relate specific, detailed knowledge of the texts studied to the key ideas within Johannine Christology, including ideas like the incarnation, replacement theology and the Fourth Gospel's presentation of Jesus' messiahship. There were some excellent full, yet concise, structured responses to this question where key ideas about the Person of Jesus were extrapolated from more than one of the 7 Signs. Strong responses used technical terms fluently as candidates noted that the signs or '*sēmeion*' pointed to the divinity of Jesus with some developed responses engaging with the concept of 'High Christology'.

Quite a number concisely identified key ideas within Johannine Christology such as Jesus' power over nature from the sign 'walking on the water'; ideas about the divine Person of Jesus, with reference to replacement theology from the Wedding Feast of Cana; ideas about Jesus' messiahship from the healing of the blind man. Some candidates who identified where the 'I am' saying emerged from a sign, eg 'I am the Bread of Life' from the feeding of the 5000, produced very good responses.

Other strong responses were more general in tone, highlighting key ideas in regard to Jesus' identity, expanding upon them to a degree and then justifying the perspective with reference to the signs studied.

Responses that failed to achieve the highest levels often focused their attention on the question **they wanted** rather than the question **that was there**. Several responses gave lengthy, accurate and impressive examinations of the Prologue without making reference to the signs themselves. Others included elements from the synoptic gospels and this lack of precision hampered progress. Poor and weak responses retold the story of a sign, eg turning water into wine, without addressing the intent of the question and discussing how the sign indicated an aspect or characteristic of the 'Person of Jesus'. The main lesson to learn is that this question should be answered succinctly without any discussion or analysis.

The signs are significant to the fourth gospel of John and aim to explore Jesus as a challenge to the two realms according to Rivkin, of religious and political conflict. In the first sign, the wedding at Cana, Jesus is viewed as the provider of the new covenant and revised eschatology. His act of turning water into wine signifies Jesus as fulfilling his purpose by representing the change of Judaism into Christianity. Also, Jesus conformed to his role as the bridegroom of Israel as he provided the wine this was representative of Jesus' ministry. Furthermore, the ~~the~~ feeding of the 5000 represented Jesus through Salvation history as stated by Morna Hooker. This was because Jesus would ease away the spiritual hunger of the Jews and Gentiles if they followed him. Also, representing Jesus as living up to his title "I am the bread of life". Furthermore, the literal approach as taken by Aquinas would show the person of Jesus as being divine by providing 5000 people with enough food provided with 5 loaves of bread and two fish. Furthermore, the healing at the pool showed Jesus as accepting sinners enough universal salvation. People believed he was sinless this was why he was blind but Jesus said no. He upset the authorities by claiming to be the Son of God. (Total for Question 1 = 8 marks)

his crucifixion showing the person of Jesus to be the Son of God and that he was the Messiah through his life giving words of "I am?"



A classic response worthy of the full marks available. The candidate has included a range of scholarly detail and responded to the demand of the question.



Use the 8 marks wisely by including as much scholarly detail as possible. The candidate has squeezed as much onto the available space as possible without over writing.

1 Explore the key ideas about the Person of Jesus contained in the signs in the Fourth Gospel.

★ The Person of Jesus also shows to be inclusive as he heals and helps outcasts such as invalids and women(8).

Throughout John's Gospel Jesus performs many signs which emphasise his divine nature.

Jesus is portrayed to be a healer. This is shown when Jesus heals the blind man at the pool. Thus, also Jesus' compassion is shown through the signs. Moreover, Jesus heals a blind man which symbolically gives him 'light.' This reference echoes Luke 11:3 where Jesus is described to bring 'light to the world.' Thus, his power of healing is expected through the Old Testament <sup>prophecies</sup> ~~prophecy~~'s.

Jesus is also shown to be a provider. In the sign, 'Feeding of the 5000,' Jesus feeds everyone. This also echoes Moses in the <sup>Exodus</sup> ~~Deuteronomy~~ when feeding the Israelites in the wilderness. Thus, the Person of Jesus is portrayed to provide salvation through these signs. Moreover, ★ The wedding at Cana in John 4 also shows Jesus to provide for the people.

Futhermore, the signs show <sup>the</sup> Jesus Person of Jesus to <sup>reflect</sup> ~~be~~ the divinity of God on earth.

For example, the raising of Lazarus. Jesus symbolically brought him back to new life with Christ. ★

(Total for Question 1 = 8 marks)





Another strong answer and it also earns full marks. It is well organised, feels quite 'on point', and does enough to cover the question. The right approach, nevertheless, for a question with only 8 marks available.



Practise 8 mark answers on all the specification topics so they are ready to roll out in the examination.

## **Question 2**

This was also a well-received question, with many excellent answers that assessed effectively the arguments for authorship of John. A plethora of scholars were named to support the various theories of authorship including Brown, Smalley, Dodd, Morris, Culpepper and even the contemporary Köstenberger, etc. Many candidates offered a range of possibilities for the authorship including identifying the 'Beloved Disciple' (or not, as the case may be) along with John the son of Zebedee, Thomas, Peter, Lazarus, John the Elder, John Mark, Johannine Community, another Apostle or a mere literary device! Supporting evidence of various kinds contributed to some erudite answers. Some candidates deployed their knowledge of Papyrus P52 and assessed effectively its possible authorship against a range of possibilities before arriving at a conclusion about John the Beloved.

Weaker responses gave a brief account of John the 'Beloved Disciple' actually being the Apostle John and offered the usual quotes from the Gospel to back this claim up. Such responses were often characterised by either a lack of detailed knowledge of the specification or an overly simplistic interpretation of authorship. This question drew the broadest range in quality of response and suggests this area of the course has not been a priority for some centres to date. At its best, this was a clearly well taught and well prepared for topic.

- 2 Assess the view that the author of the Fourth Gospel might be John, the Beloved Disciple. → John, the Beloved Disciple  
→ The Community  
→ John the Apostle

There are many views concerning who the author of the Fourth Gospel may be. Some argue that John, the Beloved is a possible candidate for the authorship. Yet it could be argued that the John the Apostle being the author is the strongest argument due to <sup>more</sup> contemporary evidence, ~~however~~. Thus despite the Gospel being a possible community effort, John, the Beloved or other figures such as a disciple <sup>one could deduce that the</sup> ~~It is most convincing to conclude~~ author of the Fourth Gospel is most likely to be John the Apostle.

There are many factors to consider when addressing who the author of the Fourth Gospel could have been, and this most arguably factual details within the Gospel and the position of the author is most significant. In relation to John, the Beloved he arguably as a figure close to Jesus would be able to recount key information. For example Jesus having a meeting with the High Priest or how many fish were ~~it~~ Additionally great knowledge of the area of Judea and other local areas may support the notion of John, the Beloved being the author.

However, it could be argued that despite the strength in recalling factual instances, arguments such as strong geographical knowledge is weak. This is as this knowledge could be reflective of a local as opposed to John, the Beloved himself.

Another figure that is speculated to have written the Fourth Gospel is John the Apostle. Firstly, Irenaeus' Declaration as well as Polycarp's source is reflective and suggestive of this. There is reference to a John <sup>being the key figure</sup> the Apostle in the Gospels and in the latter John's relation to Ephesus is also explored <sup>in his letter</sup>. Additionally, Robinson in (1993) also argues that John the Apostle seems the most likely figure to have written the Gospel.

This view is very strong for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, the contemporary evidence, though potentially biased, is reflective of significant figures believing John the Apostle to be the author. This observation is only ~~not~~ further supported through Robinson, who as a modern scholar has the

benefits of critical evaluation. This is able to only add methodological strength to the argument that John the Apostle was the author.

Another proposition that has been speculated is whether the ~~to~~ Fourth Gospel was a community effort. Some believe that the repeated use of 'we' reflects this. However there is little factual evidence to support the notion that a group as opposed to an individual was responsible for the Gospel. Thus, despite group inquiries such as 'though Hellenistic and Jewish thought, it is argued that only an individual wrote the gospel. A group were only an influence, not a group of authors.

In Conclusion, it could be argued that the view that John the Baptist was the author of the Fourth Gospel is weak. Other figures such as John the Apostle, are more likely to have been the author.



This answer shows that the candidate knows exactly what the question is asking. Full marks.



There is no substitute for full learning and revision to be able to tackle anything on the paper.



~~Traditionally~~ Traditionally the authorship of the Fourth Gospel was ascribed to John, the Beloved Disciple. Evidence to support this, <sup>for instance,</sup> ~~is used~~ is the geographical knowledge of First Century Palestine where the Gospel accounts took place. John is known to have lived in this area which supports the claim that this is him writing the Gospel as it is so correct. Moreover, John includes Jewish festivals such as <sup>the</sup> Passover and changes Jewish 'Jesus' resurrection time twenty-four hours later so he is symbolically the perfect <sup>sacrificial</sup> Passover lamb. This supports the claim that this is John writing as it appeals to his Jewish community and listeners.

In addition, there are eyewitness accounts of John, the Beloved Disciple to be the author. For instance at the cross in chapter ~~20~~ 21. Also, John is the only disciple ~~not~~ who does not go fishing with the other eleven disciples. Some scholars believe this is because John was the one to write this down and that's why he was not involved.

Patristic church figures also claim John,

the Beloved Disciple to be the author of the Fourth Gospel. Papias (c. 130), Clement and Irenaeus all ~~say~~ claim that only John is the author. <sup>in their writing</sup> Thus, John, the Beloved Disciple is the author of the Fourth Gospel. \*

~~The scholar Brown~~ Many scholars also argue that it makes much more sense for John to be hiding his identity. They believe that John calls himself, 'the Beloved Disciple' out of humility. This is because he is not taking praise for his writing and his audience maintain all their focus on God. \* John was also known to have died at an old age in the same place which agrees with the text <sup>in the Gospel</sup>.

However, scholars such as Brown disagree. The theological depth and detail <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ too <sup>advanced</sup> ~~modern~~ for first century Palestine, <sup>therefore does not make sense to be in John's time</sup> Brown uses the example of the destruction of the temple. This is far more modern than the time John, the Beloved Disciple would've been writing in. Therefore, John, the Beloved Disciple could not have possibly been the author of the Fourth Gospel.

Due to this argument, many scholars have argued that there is a mixture of writers it could have been. For instance, many ascribe the authorship to be John the Elder who also was not present throughout <sup>the whole of</sup> Jesus' ministry. Thus, the



advanced theological detail would be understood as he was writing after Jesus was on earth. However, some ascribe that the Fourth Gospel was actually written by the Johannine community as a collective collaborative piece of work for the Gospel. This would also clarify why ~~so~~ so many Jewish festivals (passover) and themes occur in the Gospel, because it <sup>would have been</sup> ~~was~~ appealing towards the whole community.

In essence, many <sup>scholars</sup> ~~to~~ argue that the authorship of the Fourth Gospel is John the Beloved Disciple. This is due to the external evidence of Papias, Clement and Irenaeus. It is mainly contemporary scholars such as Brown who argue for a different explanation. Thus, it was most probably John, the Beloved Disciple.



This is an excellent example of a script earning full marks in this question. It has a great introduction, good content - the material on authorship is relevant, and it uses scholarship well. It is clearly structured and covers a wide range of material, assessing it carefully.



Questions will always be set on the specification content, and if it is well learned, candidates are able to do well.

## Question 3

### Question 3(a)

The strongest responses to this question recognised both the demand of the question in regard to its focus on AO1, and the need to clarify key ideas rather than regurgitate the text. Some excellent responses explored the breadth of interpretations that have been made in regard to the parable, including the allegorical, whilst others highlighted the implications of the parable in the social context of the first century with some detail regarding who the 'Samaritans' were. Some candidates also did well to add the overall context: Jesus in conversation with a lawyer. Some interesting responses were received exploring just why the Priest and Levite went by on the other side.

Unfortunately, the major failure for many candidates on this question was the inability to focus on 'clarifying the ethical teachings', and what they offered instead was a regurgitation of the passage itself, with some attempting to add a sermon along the lines that this demonstrated how Christians should 'Love thy Neighbour'. Important relevant historical detail about religious groups and context were lost in a 'translated' narrative as we were exhorted to 'do likewise', and the basic response was not enriched by salient further detail/comment/scholarship. It was this failure to explore or expand on elements of the text that led to some responses failing to progress beyond Level 2. The weakest responses either retold the parable with little or no discussion or explored a range of conclusions that cannot be sustained by this text or the wider texts studied within Luke. There was, again, some inaccuracy in regard to which gospel was cited by the candidates.

### Question 3(b)

The quality of responses to this question indicate that this is an area that candidates enjoy studying and centres deliver to an impressive standard. Many responses accessed Level 5 or high Level 4, and these answers were characterised by a detailed grasp of key texts within the unit such as the parables of the Lost. The majority of candidates were clearly able to quote directly from the Gospel and describe the various parables that related to the question. These candidates were then able to relate the meaning of these texts to the first century audience and the modern reader, and suggest some implications that the texts held for living.

Scholarly input was utilised well and drew upon a wide range of prominent contributors, including, but not limited to, Kenneth Bailey, Leon Morris, Howard Marshall, Herman Ridderbos, Don Carson, R. T. France, Peter O'Brien and Ronald Fung to name but a few! Many candidates focused on the word 'importance' in the question and managed to offer some sustained critical analysis. Other high quality responses took a broader approach, using the unit specific texts as a means to explore the wider theology of Luke and the imposition upon the reader to enact Jesus' ethical teaching in a range of contexts.

Those responses that remained in and around the bottom of Level 4 or Level 3 did not explore the application of Jesus' ethical teachings in the lives of believers today, or the potential range of interpretations offered by different critics and scholars. This lack of evaluative focus impaired their progress. The weaker responses were either very short (suggesting perhaps this question was left until last) or the candidates struggled to separate the parables of the kingdom from the ethical teachings of Jesus in Luke. This lack of clarity in regard to the knowledge of the candidates then led to them struggling to make valid and helpful evaluative comment. Some weaker responses relied on the material in the passage or extracts remembered from the Fourth Gospel, such as the woman caught in adultery, rather than some other material from **Luke** as demanded by the question.

Some responses offered knowledge of the parables of the Lost but few knew all of them – most were content to outline the Prodigal Son before moving on to analyse the ethical demands of the Kingdom of God. Material on the Kingdom of God was accepted as relevant if the candidate focused on its ethical content with support from Luke’s gospel. Others repeated narrative from part (a) and failed to note anything of significance in Jesus’ teachings regarding the poor, outcasts and wealth. Finally, much time was wasted by discussing a link to another paper that is the specific requirement for Q04. This is evidence of pre-learning a topic from Q04 without the skill for adapting elements of the topic for another question.

**Read the following passage before answering the question.**

10:30 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.

31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

33 But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.

35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

(Source: Extract from the Holy Bible, New International Version, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, International Bible Society, Luke 10: 30-35, Edexcel Anthology)

**3 (a) Clarify the ethical teachings illustrated in this passage.**

*You must refer to the passage in your response.*

(10)

The passage describes the parable of the good Samaritan, it describes the journey of a man who was "attacked by robbers" when on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. They beat him and leave him half dead, showing that he is in desperate need of help. Yet a priest ~~was~~ "passes by on the other side" and so too does a "Levite". Then a Samaritan (A Jew from Samaria) took pity on him, bandaged his wounds, "put the man on a donkey (C...)" and took care of him".

The passing by of the Priest and the Levite show the actions of immoral people. It shows their intentional neglect of the man who had been robbed as it says "when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side". This ethical teaching shows the immorality of neglect and the impracticalities of following mosaic law.

In contrast the Samaritan is shown as a compassionate figure who "took pity on him" and "bandaged his wounds" even though he did not know the man. This impersonal, agape love shown towards the man who had been robbed shows ~~an essential duty~~ that Luke is trying to show that we have a moral duty to act compassionately to others - regardless of who they are. This is supported by the 'golden rule', which states that Christians should love thy neighbour, and every, as thyself.

The passage also shows ethical teachings on wealth and materialism. The fact that the Samaritan "put the man on his own donkey" and "took out two denarii and gave them to the ikeeper", shows that we should set aside motivations to be driven by material gain - we should give what we have, to those that need it. This is shown as he pays the ikeeper to 'look after him'. This teaching allows Christians to



reach the Kingdom of God. This is ~~shown~~ ~~as~~ linked to the teaching of the rich man and Lazarus, which shows the rich man - who does not distribute his wealth - not reaching heaven. The ethical teaching of distributing wealth shows how we can live ethically and ultimately inherit the Kingdom of God.

(b) Analyse the importance of Jesus' teachings regarding the poor, outcasts and wealth in Luke's Gospel.

(20)

~~The Luke's Gospel's teachings regarding the poor is extremely~~

Jesus's teachings regarding the poor is incredibly important as shown in Luke's gospel. This is shown by the Parable of the rich man and Lazarus - which shows that the poor man at the rich man's gate inherits God's Kingdom, whereas the rich man - who is materially superior, is subject to hell as he does not give generously to those who are in need (the poor). This is incredibly important as the Kingdom of God is an ~~incredibly~~ essential concept for Christians, if ~~the~~ a futurist interpretation is used to suggest when the Kingdom of God will come, teachings on wealth are incredibly important in Luke's Gospel.

However, Riemann ~~is~~ - who takes a sociological approach to interpreting scripture - views Jesus as non divine, and merely a ~~political~~ political figure in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. The potentially political nature of Jesus ~~is~~ may suggest that the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus is not an ethical teaching on wealth - but is instead a ~~teaching~~ spreading of the message about the nature of the Sadducees. The Sadducees were a ~~group of~~ religious group of Jews in the 1<sup>st</sup>



century. Although small in number - compared to the size of the pharisees - they were considered more wealthy and politically powerful. (This is also shown as the Sadducees made up the majority of the Sanhedrin). By suggesting that the wealthy go to ~~heaven~~ hell, Reimarus is suggesting that this is a political attack on the Sadducees and therefore not an important teaching.

The parable of the lost son is also an important teaching on outcasts in Luke's gospel. This parable ~~shows the~~ describes the importance of repentance and celebration of return of those who had been lost (outcast). Two sons ~~receive~~ inherit money from their father, one son stays and works tirelessly for his father but the other son uses this money to live a lavish lifestyle - indulging in promiscuous activities and ~~was~~ working with pigs (which was viewed as unclean under Jewish laws). The son returns to his father and is sorry, to which the father is elated - he throws a party and slaughters the fattest calf in celebration. The brother who had worked tirelessly is distraught with his father's reaction as he himself had remained loyal and worked hard. This parable, if interpreted symbolically - shows God as the father, ~~and~~ rejoicing at the news of a repentant sinner - who now believes. The other son may represent Jewish groups of

the true - who believe they are acting ethically, under Mosaic laws. But they are not, the brother should show love to his repentant brother instead of feeling hard done by. This is an important teaching on outcasts as it shows that, every sinner has a future and is able to inherit the kingdom of God.

However, some may argue that this parable is not important as it glorifies acting immorally. The idea that one is able to act immorally, but will be accepted by God by repenting, is a difficult concept for many people to agree with especially from a post-enlightenment point of view. The rise of scepticism ~~leads~~, as a result of increases in scientific findings leads to a ~~lesser~~ lesser of a need to interpret scripture as a soul ethical guideline.

~~The~~ The parable of the Lost Coin is also a very important teaching regarding outcasts in Luke's gospel. This parable describes a woman with 10 silver coins, who has lost one - she lights her lamp and searches tirelessly for the lost silver coin. ~~This is significant~~ When she finds the coin ~~she~~ she rejoices and celebrates with friends. This is ~~symbol~~ symbolic of teachings of outcasts, it shows that God (symbolized by the woman) ~~never~~ does not ~~over~~ continually seeks to bring people to faith and

is willing to accept those who he has 'lost'. It also shows God's faith in those who do believe in him, as he she does not obsess over the 9 coins she has - but seeks the one she has lost. This is ~~the~~ an important teaching on outcasts as it shows that anyone is able to be at one with God (be found) so long as they allow themselves to be found.

However, this teaching may be seen as less important as it appears to confuse teachings on wealth in other teachings of Luke. The idea that the woman is not entirely satisfied with the 9 silver coins she has, but instead ~~yearns for~~ seeks the one she has lost - shows a lack of gratitude for things that you have. If, literally interpreted to be about money and materialistic possessions, it may contradict teachings that those who are blessed with material wealth should show gratitude and give to the poor. Therefore, suggesting teachings on outcasts in Luke's gospel are insignificant.

In an overall perspective I think that Luke's portrayal of Jesus's teachings on the poor, outcast and wealth are extremely significant as they offer an alternative approach to other gospel writers. <sup>eg.</sup> Matthew's gospel seeks to appeal to a Jewish audience, and John's gospel portrays Jesus as a ~~spiritual~~ means to achieve spiritual eternal life (Zoe). The

teachings on outcasts, poor and teachings on wealth are significant as it builds Christianity to be relevant to all members of society.



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Examiner Comments

In Q03(a) the candidate uses the passage well to clarify the ethical teachings found in the parable. The response in Q03(b) is a solid, detailed and scholarly response to this question. Both parts score full marks. The candidate is well prepared and able to draw on a range of effectively applied material.



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Examiner Tip

There are many legitimate ways of handling the extract question, but it is essential that you refer to the passage set. Ensure that you have scholarly material at hand when dealing with textual clarification and the analysis required in part (b) in order to earn full marks.



3 (a) Clarify the ethical teachings illustrated in this passage.

You must refer to the passage in your response.

(10)

To begin, the reference to the actual route being taken ('from Jerusalem to Jericho') is designed to contextualise the level of danger the man was in. Listeners would have known that this was a particularly dangerous route furthermore, the 'man' referenced is referring to a Jew/Israelite, as the Parable would have been spoken to a Jewish audience (as the man who asks 'who is my neighbour?' is asking in reference to Old Testament (OT) teachings).

The ethical teachings then begin. The reference to the priest,

someone who was supposed to be a leader of the Jewish community, is supposed to highlight the inadequacies of the Jewish leaders approach to morality (in the sense of abstaining from involvement/withholding help). Next, there is reference to a Levite, or a member of the tribe of Levi. In the OT, they had been tasked with being experts of the law and scriptures. Thus, the man is incredibly knowledgeable on the issue of morality and knows he should help. This negates the excuse of knowing no better from him. Furthermore, as a Jew, he should have helped the man out of religious solidarity at best, but he doesn't. This aims to highlight the blatant ignorance of the Jewish people in their approaches to helping people, ~~which~~<sup>like</sup> the man who asks 'who is my neighbour?' He is aiming for Jesus to place a limit ~~of~~ or quantitative value on neighbours, ~~but Jesus does not~~ such as 'follow Jews', or 'family'.

Jesus' choice of a Samaritan is not accidental. Jesus chose a Samaritan as traditionally they had been ~~at~~ hated by the Jews as inferior. This ethnic division is supposed to engage the Jewish audience, as the <sup>Samaritan</sup> ~~man~~ goes on to help the man despite background. ~~Furthermore, as well~~ As well as this unexpected choice of character, it is written that the man 'went to him'. This holds significance as the area was dangerous, and could easily still have been too dangerous for the Samaritan. Indeed, the man may have been

a trap set by the robbers to rob more travellers. Yet regardless, the Samaritan goes to him. ~~that~~ This is Jesus teaching us that we should go above and beyond, putting others before ourselves. Next, it is said that he 'bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine'. The reference to 'oil and wine' is significant, as at the time oil would have been particularly pricey. Thus, for the man to not just bandage (the bare minimum expected), but for him to go further emphasises this 'above and beyond' ethical teaching. This is only emphasised in him putting the man 'on his own donkey', showing that not only is the Samaritan willing to save his life, but move him further to his destination to a safer place.

Finally, the Samaritan leaves the man at the inn, but not before giving the innkeeper 'two denarii', covering immediate long term costs, but then states that 'when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have'. This is massively significant, as it shows a promise to return in the long-term, ~~not~~ meaning continuous, long-term material care to the Samaritan. Regarding ethical teaching, it is quite clear that Jesus is ~~is~~ instructing the men who has questioned him that all are his neighbours (asking 'who was ~~an enemy~~ to the man?') and that we should go above and beyond what is expected when helping.

Jesus' teachings regarding the poor, outcast and wealth are vastly important in Luke's Gospel for a multitude of reasons. Regarding wealth, there are two main parables, the parable of the Lost/Prodigal Son, and the parable of the Ten Minas. In the former, Jesus speaks of a son who ~~The reason that these two parables are important are their~~ contexts to their contemporary audience, but equally their relevance to a modern day ethical teaching. The same generally applies for most other parables, hence why they are so effective. Furthermore, the use of specific 'stories' to tell these parables illustrates ethical points without being burdened with details and questions. The prodigal son uses Jewish inheritance laws to illustrate what our approach to betrayal should be, with there being 3 main protagonists; the prodigal son, the forgiving father and the jealous brother. By the son asking for his inheritance prior to his father's death, he is essentially stating that he wish his father were dead. Jesus then makes a vague claim to the son's 'wild living' in a 'distant country'. This is purposely left general, as Jesus wishes for the audience to note this applicable to their own morality and perceptions, hence why this is so important (due to its robust versatility).

The turning point of the story comes when the son is forced to



'feed pigs' out of pottage. Luke's Gospel is mainly designed for a Jewish readership, ~~hence~~ and so his reference to swine (an unclean animal) is supposed to signify the lowest of the low to the audience. Then, the moment of realisation from the son that to be a servant under his father ~~is~~ is better living than his own life, signifies our own repentance to words. God or equally those who we have turned against recognising. When the son finally returns home, it is said that his father 'ran to him' and hugged him. ~~There~~ There are two contextual factors here designed for a 1st Century audience and any audience. The first & the fact that he 'ran'. This was an ordeal for 1st Century men, as we are told in the OT that when David 'runs', he must organise and tuck his robe in, etc. in preparation. However the fact that he simply runs shows his lowering of social status to run to his son. This is mainly for a 1st Century audience, yet the fact that he hugs him is for all. One could imagine that after feeding pigs, he is likely to be incredibly unclean and odorous, yet the father hugs him regardless. This is important in showing how we should value others before our dignity and our principles, liberally forgiving. Furthermore, not only does he just forgive, but he brings a robe, ring and sandals for his son, signifying power, wealth and comfort for his son once again, despite his past mistakes. The father then slaughters the fattened calf for his son and throws a feast in his honor.

At this point, the jealous brother is introduced, and he protests the injustice of the reward, as he slaves away in the fields for his father but is never allowed so much as a goat. This final son is supposed to represent those who have a meritocratic perspective on morality and forgiveness. However, Jesus is effectively arguing that this is wrong, and that we should forgive all and not envy or covet. ~~over~~

However, whilst this parable and others that can be translated into a modern context (such as the Good Samaritan or the parable of the lost coin) may be highly effective, there are a number of parables that seemingly are too set in their contexts to ever be used outside of their context. For example, the parables of the lost sheep and ten minas require some degree of contextualising for a present day audience. For example, the concept of the ten minas and the gifting of cities to slaves simply seems too abstract. Additionally, the concern over one sheep by one shepherd can seem irrational to a 21st century reader. However, these criticisms are not valid for various reasons. One such reason is the fact that realistically, one could translate both parables and parables like it into a modern context. The Ten minas can become money and modern investment, or with one popular alternative being 'talents', both as a 1st century currency.

and a 'talent' we possess. Arguably though, when one takes such a rational interpretation to scripture, it can cause us to stray from the original meaning of the text altogether. ~~but~~ Equally though, when one ~~the~~ sticks to a literalist or 'flat' interpretation of scripture, it can become unreadable for a 21st century reader. Overall though, Jesus' teachings regarding the poor, or cast and wealth in Luke's Gospel are still very important, as ~~despite~~ the use of parables is incredibly effective by being contextually appealing to a 1st Century Jewish reader, but also by being transferrable to a 21st Century reader. ~~partly~~ Furthermore, the parables summarise Jesus' attitude to strict rules and moral dilemmas incredibly briefly and understandably.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Another super full marks response, showing how a range of relevant material can be applied with equal success to this question.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Get your timing right. This answer is notionally allowed 30 minutes of writing, so it needs to be extensive, but you must practise regularly so you are fit for the pressure of the examination.

## Question 4

On the whole Question 4 was answered well, and the lack of very short responses suggested that centres have worked with candidates on how best to divide their time as they attempt the paper. There were a range of approaches to the question, with some candidates preferring to focus on specific texts and use them as a springboard to explore features of Luke's theology of the kingdom, while others chose to explore key perspectives in regard to eschatology and then sustain them from the text. The best candidates made effective connections to their other areas of study, including religious language (centring on discussions of 'meaning') and life after death (focusing on the discussion regarding the relationship between the body and the mind) from the Philosophy of Religion course, to concepts such as the categorical imperative and a range of theories regarding equality within the Religion and Ethics unit.

It is clear that many responses drew upon material used for Q03(b) but it should be noted that the material was relevant to the question as set. Many good answers explored the various aspects of eschatology including realised and inaugurated, etc. The OT/Jewish understanding of the term KoG and arising antecedents provided fruitful introductory material for good candidates. Some responses referred to how Jesus' concept of the KoG differed to that of the Jews in that it was not an earthly domain but a spiritual/metaphysical one. Schweitzer's theory on 'futurist eschatology' (*parousia*) featured heavily and top answers countered with Dodd's refutation of it with his theory on 'realised eschatology'. The theological significance of kerygmatic theologians such as Barth and Bultmann was included by some candidates to good effect.

Weaker responses were incomplete or dealt with general knowledge on what the Kingdom of God might be. The potential of this question was missed by candidates who had not grasped how the various scholarly interpretations of the term 'Kingdom of God' were linked to divergent eschatological models that borrow from these interpretations. Some glimpses of the theological significance of eschatological understandings of the Kingdom of God emerged if any of the scholarship was understood. Typically, lower level responses outlined the parable of the Sower and the Seed and gave an account of the demands of discipleship before rambling back to the parable of the Good Samaritan to stretch out the length of the essay.

Centres are to be congratulated, for the majority of responses to Q04 were well within the higher levels of achievement.



#### 4 Evaluate the theological significance of the Kingdom of God in Luke's Gospel.

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in New Testament Studies have been influenced by **one** of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and Ethics
- Study of Religion (excluding Christianity).

(30)

The Kingdom of God is an important element of Luke's Gospel, in that it depicts & how God's ~~grace~~ will be ~~acted~~ set upon Earth and establish his rule ~~to take~~. The Gospel of Luke, one of the Synoptic Gospels, does not seek to convert audiences, rather appealing to those already of Christian faith, teaching them to live better and offering numerous parables to establish the teachings of Jesus and thus methods of ethical living as a Christian. It is important to consider that there are various approaches to understand the Kingdom of God. Whilst realised eschatology is a convincing viewpoint, this contradicts the imminent or 'a future perspective' as that the Kingdom of God is yet to come. Overall, however, it is clear that the theological significance of the Kingdom of God is best understood through the paradoxical notion that the Kingdom of God is both present and coming at the same time, otherwise known as the inauguration tradition.

The idea of the Kingdom of God is established in Luke as simply the way in which this Kingdom & this message will be established through the ministry of Jesus, yet the Kingdom of God can certainly only be understood by following Jesus, and those who miss out on the opportunity to the Kingdom of God are thus judged to Hell in their ignorance of him. This notion is unique to Luke, however John does discuss the eternal life (zoe) in following Jesus' teachings.

Although the theological significance of the Kingdom of God is primarily clear through the notion of inauguration, we must first evaluate the realised eschatological approach. Scholars such as C. H. Dodd argue that the Kingdom of God is already upon us, as demonstrated through Jesus' parables. It is important to consider that parables were a common method of teaching in the First Century Palestine. Thus, C. H. Dodd would argue that the Parable of the Great Banquet demonstrates that the Kingdom of God is already upon us, as it states in Luke that the 'invitations have been sent'. This demonstrates that those who are welcome into the Kingdom are ~~not~~ already invited to the Banquet, which is thus symbolic of the Messianic Banquet in that Jesus is the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies for the Messiah (such as Isaiah 53, suffering

Servant) Therefore, as the invitations have been sent, it is clear that theologically we can understand God's Kingdom as present amongst us. Similarly, Leon Morris would support the view that the Kingdom of God is present rather than coming in an immediate or imminent sense. It is clear that through Luke 17, the Kingdom of God is 'all' around, demonstrating it is not yet to be established. Furthermore, when considering the Day of Beeldans, Jesus drove out spirits, and when confronted with accusations that he was a Satanic force, Jesus replied that when he drives out demons, we will witness the Kingdom of God. In light of this, it is clear that there is a clear message in Luke that the Kingdom of God is established in Luke, as the Gospel clearly establishes Jesus as a divine force even from conception in the Birth Narratives, and it is from his teachings of the parables that we can understand the Kingdom of God to exist through him as realised eschatology.

A strength of this position of realised eschatology is that there is clear scriptural basis for Jesus as bringing about the Kingdom of God through parables. Furthermore, realised eschatology is key to the foundation of the Christian Church as it is through Jesus' teachings that we can understand the Kingdom of God,



and perhaps diminishing their contemporary significance this diminishes their theological significance, as the Parables are a key source of ethical teachings.

However, the main challenge to the idea that the Kingdom of God is only evident as realised eschatology is the idea that this Kingdom of God is imminent or immediate, taking the perspective that this will be established in the future. Schweitzer takes a future approach, highlighting that the Kingdom of God is thus 'immediate'. Similarly, this approach uses the Parables in Luke's Gospel to support the notion that the Kingdom of God is coming, such as the Parable of the Sower. This parable is significant to the Kingdom of God theologically as it demonstrates that seeds must be sown and will flourish when the Kingdom of God has arrived, meaning it is not yet here. This parable is significant in establishing the Kingdom of God as the seeds that will grow are not those of the Jewish faith, where one follows a harsh strict legalism and neglects loving God or fearing Him, but those who accept the teachings of Jesus, as those who do not will not grow. Similarly, one can use the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus to explain the Kingdom of God as that which is inherently imminent rather than established already as



a realised eschatological approach. In terms of the parable, both Lazarus and the Rich Man die at the same time, with Lazarus as a servant and his flesh being fed upon. Due to his loyalty and worship of Jesus and thus acceptance of the Kingdom of God, Lazarus is sent to heaven whilst the Rich Man goes to hell for his greed.

In light of this parable, the Kingdom of God is imminent as it is predicted after death and thus not amongst us through Jesus. Another example supporting the immediacy of the Kingdom of God is the metaphor of the Narrow Door, in which it is Jesus who controls the entrance to the Kingdom of God and thus it is only through him and his parables that the Kingdom can be established in the future.

There is much scriptural support for the idea that the Kingdom of God has theological significance in terms of its nature of future Kingdom. ~~This is made clear from~~ <sup>However</sup> when the Pharisees ask Jesus what the Kingdom of God is, he replies that it is the Kingdom of God established by the Son of Man, and since Jesus refers to himself as this figure, it is clear that perhaps it does not hint to a future Kingdom, but rather the present and realised nature through Jesus' Ministry. Furthermore, another issue with the future Kingdom idea is that perhaps it has

been redacted or edited to include this notion, following from Mark. After Mark predicted the immediate coming of the Kingdom of God, which then historically did not occur, Luke overcame this issue by mentioning the Kingdom of God being established instead at a later date. Therefore, it is clear that we cannot fully appreciate the theological significance of the Kingdom in light of clear redaction changes to overcome elements of Mark, which simply ends with Jesus' resurrection.

Moreover, the Gospel of Luke as having a clear purpose of the individual author (redaction criticism) coupled with the idea of source criticism, the blending of source materials, overall diminishes its theological significance as it counters the view that the Bible is proportionally revelatory, in that it is the true Word of God written by the authors of the Gospel writers Luke, as it has been edited to serve a purpose. Luke's purpose, through parables and ethical teachings, is to instruct Christian audiences on how to act with their faith. Perhaps Luke's theological significance is furthermore diminished when we consider the concept of Markan priority, wherein 88% of Luke is similar to that of Mark, demonstrating perhaps it is not literally true.

However, despite the clear issues of Luke's Gospel, this does not diminish its theological significance as the whole, as there certainly are strengths to future Kingdom John Hick ([LINK TO NEW PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION](#)) would argue that we can theologically verify the existence of the Kingdom of God in life & after death, in that the presence of heaven/hell will prove verifiability of this kingdom as we will empirically view the Kingdom of God.

On the other hand, perhaps talking of both realised eschatology and future Kingdom has no theological significance when understood through a non-cognitivist or anti-realist lens. For Ludwig von Wittgenstein, this notion of the Kingdom only has theological significance for those inside the language game. In light of this, perhaps it is only through being introduced ([THIS IS A LINK TO NEW PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION](#)) into the rules of what it means for a religious believer to be part of the language game and thus have significance.

Therefore, as both <sup>realised</sup> eschatology and the idea that the future coming of God in terms of the Kingdom of God in Luke fail, we should instead look to the inaugural perspective.



The inaugural perspective is the most convincing and most theologically significant idea surrounding the idea of the Kingdom of God, as it combines bible conflicting passages that suggest the kingdom is here and coming. When considering the parable of the Banquet, the invitations have been sent but the food has not yet been consumed, demonstrating it supports this paradoxical notion. When considering the parable of the sower, the seeds have been sown yet the plants have not been grown or have bloomed. Thus, it is the inaugural approach that works, considering the other two perspectives and demonstrating we can learn the Kingdom of God through Jesus and there will also be a Second Coming of him, linking to the last book of the Bible, Revelations.

In conclusion, there are many critiques to bible realised eschatology and the future coming of the Kingdom of God due to their conflicting perspectives. Thus, we should consider bible perspectives we have theological significance, and appreciate the Kingdom of God through the inaugural tradition.



This is an example of a superb response that was awarded full marks. There is a good range and variety of material here, a clear structure, and a good link made with the philosophy that, whilst short, flows quite well. The candidate writes elegantly and this response is a very good example of one of the right approaches to the question.



To do well on this question it is essential to include scholarship and to keep exemplars tight and efficient. Generic answers cannot earn the same credit.



4 Evaluate the theological significance of the Kingdom of God in Luke's Gospel. -Preterist

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in New Testament Studies have been influenced by **one** of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and Ethics
- Study of Religion (excluding Christianity).

(30)

The Kingdom of God has several implications in Luke, beginning with when the Kingdom of God will actually occur. The early Christians believed it to be imminent, <sup>or</sup> with the Second Coming (Parousia) of Christ bringing about the Kingdom of God - as Jesus himself in Luke's Gospel states "none here" shall die before this happens. Embarrassingly, this obviously did not happen, leading some to believe it occurred during Jesus' ministry. This is evidenced by the phrase "the Kingdom of God is in your midst" - One of Jesus' miracles in Luke's Gospel is driving a demon out of a man's body, which he uses to tell the Parable of the Strong Man and the House; only Jesus can protect the 'house' (body of a human) from 'robbers' (demons), which suggests his ministry is the Kingdom of God and thus, <sup>present/preterist</sup> ~~present~~. However, some think it refers to the ~~best~~ great Kingdom of Israel in the past, under the rule

of King David, which will be brought about again by Jesus. Yet if this were the case, why does Jesus reference the Kingdom of God to be in the future, implying an afterlife?

In other parables, Jesus discusses the Kingdom of Heaven as something that will be achieved <sup>in time</sup>. He uses the Parable of the Sower to explain the seed that falls on fertile soil will grow - representing the attentive and believing Christian who will be granted access into the Kingdom of Heaven. This is ~~an example~~ <sup>an example</sup> of ~~an~~ <sup>an</sup> ~~then~~ Jesus however is unclear as to what the Kingdom of Heaven actually is (John interprets it as Eternal Life). ~~and~~ what it does mean, is that there are certain criteria one must fit in order to get into the Kingdom; essentially following Jesus and believing in him.

This belief extends to believing Jesus to be the Son of God. In one Parable, Jesus talks about going back to where he was sent from, which means returning to God. Jesus is an integral part of the Kingdom of ~~Heaven~~ <sup>God</sup>, which again suggests that the Kingdom itself is merely believing in him, which adds to the idea that it was something that

the First Century Palestinians who were following Jesus were in.

However, the urgency in tone of the Parable of the Sign of Jonah suggests an oncoming Apocalypse (mirrored by the repentance of the people of Babylon ~~has~~ resulting in God's mercy in the Parable). If this Apocalypse ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> not imminent, why is Jesus so desperate to make the Kingdom of God obvious by stressing the importance of ~~us~~ following him? The answer may be Jesus did actually think the Apocalypse would come ~~on~~ about immediately after his death, but ~~a~~ many have actually been prophesying the destruction of the Temple in ~~the~~ Jerusalem.

It may actually be that the Kingdom of Heaven will be achieved in the distant future, with the coming of Judgement Day (the Pharisees themselves believed in the Afterlife coming about at Judgement Day). This form of eschatology was used by Hick during the Verification Debate, as studied in the Philosophy of Religion, where he used Eschatological Verification to explain his parable of the Celestial City; only when we die will we know whether the Kingdom of God actually exists or not.

If the Kingdom of God did not exist, the theological impact would be immense. It would remove Christian ideas of the afterlife and even the idea of Jesus being the Son of God. For Luke however, the existence of the Kingdom of ~~Heaven~~<sup>God</sup> is solidly grounded in Jesus' teachings. He also establishes ways of ensuring a place in the Kingdom of ~~Heaven~~<sup>God</sup>, as explained in the Parable of the Banquet. In the Parable, ~~Luke~~ Jesus describes a ruler throwing a Banquet (God allowing his Kingdom to be entered by humans) but his guests choose not to attend which ~~is~~ represents those who choose to ignore the word/invitation of God. As a result, the ruler allows the poor and ostracised (a common point of focus in Luke's Gospel) to his banquet, representing how God will allow those who accept his invitation into heaven. Yet it is apparently quite vague as to how one will actually do this.

There is a theory however, that suggests by following the example of Jesus' life (being in a perfect and Holy relationship with God), that one will enter the Kingdom of God. It is known as Moral Example Theory, that harnesses the themes of Jesus' innocence to argue that people should be inspired by Jesus' death to live as he did, in order



to access the Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>2</sup> That being said, this approach of low Christology reduces Jesus himself to a mere man, or a person who was later exalted to Godlike status after his death due to his personal relationship with God. This has deep theological implications that many Christians would find troubling.

The Kingdom of God plays a hugely important role in Luke's Gospel, due to the amount of references and parables to it throughout the Gospel. That being said, the scholarly differences in whether it is ~~the~~ imminent, preterist or far in the distant future may possibly imply the theological importance is downplayed by the lack of detail. What is arguably more important in Luke's Gospel is the theological significance of Jesus being a Messiah for all, and that he is the key to accessing whatever the Kingdom of God actually is.





This is a shorter, very well ordered response that earned full marks. The candidate navigates their material very well and draws a clear conclusion.



A clear structure to the longer essays is very useful. Essays do not have to be eight pages long to earn full marks.

## Paper Summary

A very good year's work has been done by centres and candidates, in general equipping candidates to respond well to the demands of this paper. Candidates appear to enjoy the material they study and are able to respond with enthusiasm.

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

- Respond to the specific demands of the question by tailoring relevant information.
- Practise using the exam timing.
- Use the answer booklet correctly and avoid unnecessary attachments.
- Support points made with examples and relevant textual detail.
- Express your viewpoint clearly where AO2 is required.
- Continue to develop a good range of scholarship.
- Take care with subject specific spellings (terminology and scholars).

## 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>

