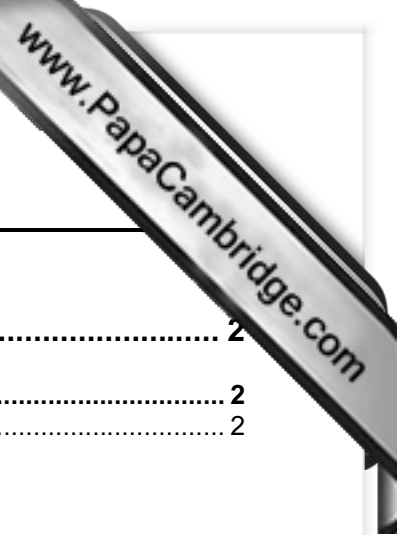




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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

DIVINITY

GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Please note that this syllabus is examined for the last time in 2005.

Paper 8041/02 The Four Gospels

General comments

The overall performance of the candidates was good. The standard of answers suggested good overall exam preparation, and candidates generally displayed a good use of language and of key words and terms.

The answers were on the whole well structured and informed. Some Centres showed much evidence of wide reading. Attempts were made to address past weaknesses and/or comments made in the Examiner's Report.

Candidates seemed to use their time well as there was some evidence of planning. There were only two or three rubric misunderstandings; a few candidates merely answered the gobbets and no other question or only two questions. The standard of work under exam conditions was impressive.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Once again, these gobblet questions were very popular and were answered well, indicating good preparation and understanding.

- (a) This was very popular and well answered, with appropriate comments and context.
- (b) This was not as popular, but again, those who attempted this recognised the context and made reasonable comments.
- (c) Again, this was not so popular. There was some muddling of context but most recognised the disciples as the ones being addressed.
- (d) This was a very popular question, with the majority of candidates realising this was the Transfiguration; a few, however, thought it came from Jesus' baptism. There was good comment on Moses and Elijah, although no one commented on the possibility of it being a misplaced appearance story.
- (e) Fewer candidates chose this and found it quite challenging.
- (f) This was very popular, with good answers and correct context and comment.
- (g) This was popular, with sound answers on the Prologue of John.
- (h) This was also very popular and was correctly identified and with very good comment.

Question 2

Explain how and why Matthew used the Old Testament when writing his gospel.

This was a popular question, but some candidates fell into the trap of restricting their answers to the Old Testament Narratives and not the whole of Matthew. There was little comment on Matthew's use of Mark and no comment on the idea that Matthew possibly defended Christianity against the claim that it had abandoned the Jewish Scriptures.

Question 3

Discuss the view that Matthew's gospel is dominated by the concept of judgment.

This was not a popular choice, and those who did attempt this question did not do well. There was little mention of specific passages, except the Five Wise and Five Foolish Virgins. Hardly any responses mentioned the passages 22:13; 24:51 and 25:30.

Question 4

Discuss the authorship of Mark's gospel.

This was a popular choice, but a few candidates misunderstood this to be about Mark's interest rather than authorship. Peter's influence and the Papias tradition were mentioned by some.

Question 5

Assess the view that Mark shows Jesus as both human and divine.

This was not a popular choice, but for those who attempted it their answers were sound and gave a balanced reference to narrative appropriate to both sides of Jesus' character.

Question 6

To what extent can it be said that Luke's gospel shows a special concern for women?

This was very popular. There were very good answers with most candidates remarking that women were only one concern of Luke's gospel and that there are other concerns as well. Most mentioned the attitude to women in the first century and made reference to specific incidents.

Question 7

Examine and discuss the way Luke uses miracle stories.

The danger here was many candidates recounted mere narrative without looking at how and why Luke uses miracle stories. There was little mention of the 'salvation message', or the 'arrival of the kingdom', though there was some mention of showing Jesus' power.

Question 8

'Jesus' conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman make an important contribution to the theology of John's gospel.' Discuss.

For candidates who were fully prepared, this question on John's gospel was very well answered. Some chose this question unwisely, as they did not seem to have detailed knowledge of John's gospel.

Question 9

Examine the view that John's main aim was to interpret the synoptic gospels.

This was not a popular question, with very few knowledgeable answers.

Question 10

Discuss whether there are any acceptable solutions to the synoptic problem.

This was a popular choice, and candidates had clearly been prepared for 'the synoptic problem', providing a good discussion.

Question 11

Assess critically Jesus' relationship with the Scribes and the Pharisees.

There were some acceptable answers, with an attempt to show a clear understanding of who the scribes and Pharisees were. There was a lot of narrative based on the various conflict stories. Only a few candidates recognised Jesus' own Jewishness and made appropriate comments.

Question 12

Discuss the part played by Simon Peter in the gospel writings.

This was not a popular choice, but again, those who attempted this commented on the appropriate stories involving Peter – for example, background and calling, leading voice in disciples, his confession, his denial, and the inner circle.

Question 13

Consider the problems presented by the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist as portrayed in the gospels.

Again, this was not a popular choice, and those who attempted it merely recounted the narrative involving each character.

Question 14

What is a gospel?

Good ideas were produced by candidates, but they needed to develop their discussion further. Many did not give answers beyond the stories of Jesus' life. There was little mention of statements of faith by the gospels' authors, although there was some mention of the purpose and situation of the authors.