



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2023

**AS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES - COMPONENT 1
OPTION A: AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY**

B120UA0-1

INTRODUCTION

This marking scheme was used by WJEC for the 2023 examination. It was finalised after detailed discussion at examiners' conferences by all the examiners involved in the assessment. The conference was held shortly after the paper was taken so that reference could be made to the full range of candidates' responses, with photocopied scripts forming the basis of discussion. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners.

It is hoped that this information will be of assistance to centres but it is recognised at the same time that, without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation.

WJEC regrets that it cannot enter into any discussion or correspondence about this marking scheme.

Marking guidance for examiners, please apply carefully and consistently:

Positive marking

It should be remembered that candidates are writing under examination conditions and credit should be given for what the candidate writes, rather than adopting the approach of penalising him/her for any omissions. It should be possible for a very good response to achieve full marks and a very poor one to achieve zero marks. Marks should not be deducted for a less than perfect answer if it satisfies the criteria of the mark scheme.

Exemplars in the mark scheme are only meant as helpful guides. Therefore, any other acceptable or suitable answers should be credited even though they are not actually stated in the mark scheme.

Two main phrases are deliberately placed throughout each mark scheme to remind examiners of this philosophy. They are:

- “Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant points should be credited.”
- “This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.”

Rules for Marking

1. Differentiation will be achieved on the basis of candidates' response.
2. No mark scheme can ever anticipate or include every possible detail or interpretation; examiners should use their professional judgement to decide whether a candidate's particular response answers the question in relation to the particular assessment objective.
3. Candidates will often express their ideas in language different from that given in any mark scheme or outline. Positive marking therefore, on the part of examiners, will recognise and credit correct statements of ideas, valid points and reasoned arguments irrespective of the language employed.

Banded mark schemes

Banded mark schemes are divided so that each band has a relevant descriptor. The descriptor provides a description of the performance level for that band. Each band contains marks. Examiners should first read and annotate a candidate's answer to pick out the evidence that is being assessed in that question. Once the annotation is complete, the mark scheme can be applied. This is done as a two stage process.

Banded mark schemes stage 1 – deciding on the band

When deciding on a band, the answer should be viewed holistically. Beginning at the lowest band, examiners should look at the candidate's answer and check whether it matches the descriptor for that band. Examiners should look at the descriptor for that band and see if it matches the qualities shown in the candidate's answer. If the descriptor at the lowest band is satisfied, examiners should move up to the next band and repeat this process for each band until the descriptor matches the answer.

If an answer covers different aspects of different bands within the mark scheme, a 'best fit' approach should be adopted to decide on the band and then the candidate's response should be used to decide on the mark within the band. For instance if a response is mainly in band 2 but with a limited amount of band 3 content, the answer would be placed in band 2, but the mark awarded would be close to the top of band 2 as a result of the band 3 content.

Examiners should not seek to mark candidates down as a result of small omissions in minor areas of an answer.

Banded mark schemes stage 2 – deciding on the mark

Once the band has been decided, examiners can then assign a mark. During standardising (at the Examiners' marking conference), detailed advice from the Principal Examiner on the qualities of each mark band will be given. Examiners will then receive examples of answers in each mark band that have been awarded a mark by the Principal Examiner. Examiners should mark the examples and compare their marks with those of the Principal Examiner.

When marking, examiners can use these examples to decide whether a candidate's response is of a superior, inferior or comparable standard to the example. Examiners are reminded of the need to revisit the answer as they apply the mark scheme in order to confirm that the band and the mark allocated is appropriate to the response provided. Indicative content is also provided for banded mark schemes. Indicative content is not exhaustive, and any other valid points must be credited. In order to reach the highest bands of the mark scheme a learner need not cover all of the points mentioned in the indicative content, but must meet the requirements of the highest mark band.

Awarding no marks to a response

Where a response is not creditworthy, that is it contains nothing of any relevance to the question, or where no response has been provided, no marks should be awarded.

AS Generic Band Descriptors

Band	<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment Objective AO1 – Part (a) questions 25 marks</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching</i> - <i>influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies</i> - <i>cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice</i> - <i>approaches to the study of religion and belief.</i>
5	<p style="text-align: center;">21-25 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough, accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • An extensive and relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates extensive depth and/or breadth. Excellent use of evidence and examples. • Thorough and accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	<p style="text-align: center;">16-20 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A detailed, relevant response which answers the specific demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth. Good use of evidence and examples. • Accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">11-15 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainly accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. • A satisfactory response, which generally answers the main demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates depth and/or breadth in some areas. Satisfactory use of evidence and examples. • Mainly accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">6-10 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Basic level of accuracy and relevance. • A basic response, addressing some of the demands of the question set. • The response demonstrates limited depth and/or breadth, including limited use of evidence and examples. • Some accurate reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-5 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited knowledge and understanding of religion and belief. Low level of accuracy and relevance. • A very limited response, with little attempt to address the question. • The response demonstrates very limited depth and/or breadth. Very limited use of evidence and examples. • Little or no reference made to sacred texts and sources of wisdom, where appropriate. • Some grasp of basic specialist language and vocabulary. <p>N.B. A maximum of 2 marks should be awarded for a response that only demonstrates 'knowledge in isolation'</p>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant information.

Band	Assessment Objective AO2- Part (b) questions 25 marks <i>Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.</i>
5	21-25 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident critical analysis and perceptive evaluation of the issue. • A response that successfully identifies and thoroughly addresses the issues raised by the question set. • Thorough, sustained and clear views are given, supported by extensive, detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Thorough and accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
4	16-20 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposeful analysis and effective evaluation of the issue. • The main issues raised by the question are identified successfully and addressed. • The views given are clearly supported by detailed reasoning and/or evidence. • Accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
3	11-15 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory analysis and relevant evaluation of the issue. • Most of the issues raised by the question are identified successfully and have generally been addressed. • Most of the views given are satisfactorily supported by reasoning and/or evidence. • Mainly accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
2	6-10 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some valid analysis and inconsistent evaluation of the issue. • A limited number of issues raised by the question set are identified and partially addressed. • A basic attempt to justify the views given, but they are only partially supported with reason and/or evidence. • Some accurate use of specialist language and vocabulary in context.
1	1-5 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic analysis and limited evaluation of the issue. • An attempt has been made to identify and address the issues raised by the question set. • Little attempt to justify a view with reasoning or evidence. • Some use of basic specialist language and vocabulary.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant analysis or evaluation.

GCE AS RELIGIOUS STUDIES – COMPONENT 1
OPTION A: AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIANITY
SUMMER 2023 MARK SCHEME

To be read in conjunction with the generic level descriptors provided.

Section A

Either,

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- (a) **Outline the differences between the Eastern Orthodox Church and Western churches' celebrations of Advent and Christmas.** [AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- In the Western church, Christmas is preceded by four weeks of preparation known as the season of Advent (from the Latin word *adventus* = coming). Traditionally Christians would fast during this time but this is no longer an expectation.
- In the Eastern Orthodox Church, the equivalent of the season of Advent is observed, but it is known as the Nativity Fast. The Nativity Fast lasts for 40 days up to the Eve of the Nativity (6 January). Believers do not consume red meat, poultry, egg and dairy products, fish, oil and wine. The Eve of the Nativity is a strict fast day, known as *Paramony* ('preparation'), on which no solid food should be eaten until the first star appears in the evening sky.
- Advent is the beginning of the Western church year. It is not the beginning of the year for the Eastern Orthodox Church.
- Advent in the Western church allows Christians to anticipate two events:
 - The celebration of Jesus' First Coming to earth as a baby boy. ^[17 SEP]
 - Jesus' Second Coming at the end of time (*parousia*).
- Biblical readings and hymns during Advent are usually about the *parousia*.
- There is no emphasis on the *parousia* in the Eastern church.
- In the Western church, the liturgical colour during Advent is traditionally violet or purple (some Protestant churches now use blue to symbolise hope). On the Third Sunday of Advent, known as *Gaudete* Sunday, a rose colour may be used. In the Eastern church the liturgical colour red is used, with gold as an alternative.
- There are several customs adhered to during Advent in the Western church. Churches, and some homes, have an advent wreath comprising 5 candles. An advent calendar is another custom. The calendar windows for each day open to reveal an item relevant to the preparation for Christmas. Christmas decorations are often set up in homes at the beginning of Advent.
- During the course of the Nativity Fast, a number of feast days celebrate Old Testament prophets who prophesied the incarnation. Two Sundays before the Nativity, the Sunday of the Forefathers commemorates the ancestors of the church. The Sunday before the Nativity (Sunday of the Holy Fathers), commemorates all the righteous men and women who pleased God from the creation of the world up to Saint Joseph, husband of Jesus' mother, Mary.
- In the Western church, preparation for Christmas can include singing carols, putting on nativity plays and having a nativity crib scene on display in the church.

- Christingle is a popular children's service in the Western church. Attendees receive an orange with a candle in (representing Jesus as the light of the world), a red ribbon surrounding it (representing Jesus' sacrifice) and four cocktail sticks with sweets or raisins on (representing the people from around the world). Carols are sung and the nativity story read or acted out.
- Christians in the Western church have the option of celebrating Christmas as it arrives by attending a midnight Eucharist service. They could also choose to go to a Eucharist on Christmas Day. These are usually more family-friendly services.
- In the Eastern Orthodox Church there are many services held on the Eve of the Nativity to parallel those celebrated on Good Friday (to show the theological significance of the incarnation in the overall plan for Jesus' life). These services include: The Hours; Vespers; the Liturgy of St Basil the Great; the Vigil which begins the Great Compline and Matins. In these services, members of the congregation will sing hymns, listen to readings from the Bible and venerate an icon of the Nativity.
- In the Eastern Orthodox Church, white linen on dinner tables symbolises the cloth in which the baby Jesus was wrapped, and straw may be placed on the linen to symbolise the stable where he was born.
- In some Orthodox cultures, people walk to seas, rivers and lakes as part of the Christmas Day liturgy and make holes in the frozen ice to bless the water.
- While Christians in both churches will celebrate with family and friends on Christmas Day, members of the Eastern Orthodox Church place little significance on the giving and receiving of gifts.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘Christmas is the most important festival for Christians.’**
Evaluate this view.

[AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ: the incarnation (God becoming flesh). It could be argued that this is most important, as without the incarnation, Jesus is just a great teacher but not someone worthy of worship.
- The popularity of Christmas in secular society is an opportunity for evangelism. This may be considered most important as Christians can use this as an opportunity to follow the commandment given at the Great Commission to, *“Go and make disciples of all the nations...”* (Matthew 28:19).
- The popularity of Christmas often has little to do with Christian belief and so while it may be an important secular festival, it is not seen as the most important religious festival for many Christians.
- Easter has always been the most important Christian festival because it celebrates the fundamental Christian belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ by which God redeemed his people. Without the resurrection, there is no hope of eternal life, as victory over death has not been won.
- Easter has also become commercialised with many non-Christians celebrating it. Therefore this is another great opportunity for Christians to evangelise; Christmas isn’t more important due to an opportunity to practice evangelism.
- For Christians, all festivals are important. Christmas and Easter are of equal importance because they show God breaking into his world first as an innocent infant in the person of Jesus (the incarnation), and then as a mighty power raising the dead Jesus to life (the resurrection). The resurrection guarantees that God has accepted Jesus’ death as an acceptable atonement for human sin, thus making eternal life possible for human beings.
- It may be argued that Easter is most important because it is about Jesus’ ultimate mission rather than just his birth. Without Easter, Christmas would be insignificant since it would just be about a birth of a good teacher that had little significance, if the death and resurrection of Jesus are not true.
- Accept answers referring to other festivals that candidates feel Christians would view as most important.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

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 (a) **Examine the case for infant baptism with reference to Augustine and Zwingli.** [AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Baptism, as opposed to circumcision, provides salvation. Infants should not be excluded from this. New Testament scripture supports infant baptism.
- Augustine believed infant baptism was a '*tradition received from the apostles*' as a way of removing original sin. He stated that it had been practiced since the apostles and therefore was something the universal church had '*always held*'.
- For Augustine, there was a need to rid all, including infants, from original sin as we are all guilty of this sin due to being '*seminally present in the loins of Adam*'.
- Augustine believed that baptised infants, who are not yet able to imitate Christ, are 'ingrafted' into his body. Christ gives to believers the grace of his Spirit, '*which he secretly infuses even into infants*'.
- Infants who are baptised believe '*through the Church's faith communicated to them*'. They do not need to be able to declare their faith for themselves in front of the congregation; the congregation and the '*whole company of saints and faithful Christians*' present them as worthy.
- For Augustine, baptism is a sacrament. He wrote that the North African Christians of his time called the sacrament of baptism 'salvation' and the sacrament of the Eucharist 'life', and supposed that this derived from apostolic tradition, which asserted that '*without baptism and participation at the table of our Lord, it is impossible for anyone to attain either to the kingdom of God or to salvation and life eternal*'. He concluded that '*the sacrament of baptism is most assuredly the sacrament of regeneration*'.
- Huldrych Zwingli supported many of Augustine's arguments. He differed in that he regarded baptism not as the means of regeneration or cleansing of sin but as a sign and seal. As circumcision for Jewish people is a sign of their covenant with God, baptism for Christians is the sign and seal of their faith in Jesus Christ as the one who provides salvation. Children can participate in this if their parents promise to raise them in the Christian faith.
- The sacrament is divinely instituted, and efficacious to aid and strengthen faith and to confer spiritual blessing. It is a sign of belonging to the new covenant, just as circumcision was a sign of belonging to the old. He states that sacraments are a sign of starting a life of faith, like a soldier pledging at his enlistment. '*Baptism is an initiatory sign or pledge initiating us to a lifelong mortification of the flesh and engaging or pledging us like the soldier at his enlistment.*'
- Baptism, according to Zwingli, does not wash away original, or any other, sin. '*They are wrong ... therefore who thinks that sacraments have any cleansing power.*' This would point to justification by works, which Zwingli as a Protestant Reformer denied.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘Baptism is for adult believers not infants.’**
Evaluate this view with reference to Christianity.

[AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Some Christians believe that the gift of baptism should be consciously accepted by the person who receives it; an infant is incapable of doing this.
- Evidence from the New Testament supports adult or believers’ baptism: Acts 8:35-36, the Ethiopian eunuch is baptised; Acts 9:18, the apostle Paul is baptised; Acts 10:44-48, Peter baptises Cornelius and his household; Acts 16:14-15, Lydia and her household are baptised; Acts 19:5-6, the disciples of John the Baptist are baptised. People hear the message of the disciples and voluntarily express the commitment to be baptised.
- Adult baptism is only for people who are old enough, mature enough and therefore, responsible enough to make their own decision. Having made this choice they will be more likely to remain faithful than those who have not expressed the commitment to be baptised.
- Believers’ baptism is a conscious response to, and acknowledgement of, faith. Baptism should always follow belief.
- Barth’s argument that baptism does not bring about human salvation, but bears testimony to salvation and is therefore a response that reflects an individual’s faith. For Barth, the only true baptism is believers’ baptism, as the adult has to be able to express the commitment to be baptised and accept Jesus as Saviour.
- The Council of Carthage (418) confirmed baptism as forgiveness of original sin i.e. *‘what they have received by birth’*. It would be unfair to deny this to infants purely because they cannot express a commitment to be baptised.
- There are many New Testament passages to support infant baptism: John 3:5 *‘no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit’*; the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19) *‘make disciples of all nations, baptising them...’*; Acts 2:38-39 *‘Repent, and be baptised every one of you ... For the promise is for you, for your children’*. In general, the apostles baptised whole *‘households’* (Acts 16:33; 1 Corinthians 1:16). The term indicates a family as a unit, including children and infants.
- Augustine argued infant baptism was a *‘tradition received from the apostles’*. If the apostles baptised infants then so should Christians today.
- Augustine believed that baptised infants are not able to profess personal faith but believe *‘through the Church’s faith communicated to them’*; baptism is a sacrament – a religious rite that imparts spiritual grace and so infants cannot be excluded from God’s grace.
- Zwingli argued that during infant baptism, the divine promise is guaranteed to infants on the basis of their parents’ pledge to bring them up in the Christian faith. In this way, it is the parents who express the commitment for their children to be baptised and have faith. The parents, godparents and congregation raise the child in the faith.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

Section B

Either,

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(a) Explain ways in which the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke differ.

[AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Matthew focuses on Joseph whereas Luke focuses on Mary.
- In Matthew's account, an un-named angel announces to Joseph that Mary is pregnant through the Holy Spirit. The angel tells Joseph to marry Mary and name the child Jesus. He does this and Matthew writes that this fulfills the prophecy (Isaiah).
- Luke's account begins with the angel Gabriel visiting Mary, not Joseph. The angel conveys the same message as in Matthew: that the Holy Spirit will come upon her and bless her with a child to be named Jesus. In this account it is clear that the child will be the Son of God. There is no mention of Joseph marrying Mary in Luke's account but it is said that they are engaged.
- Matthew next writes that (an unknown number of) Magi from the East follow a star to find Jesus, whom he calls the Messiah. They visit King Herod on the way but are warned in a dream not to return to him as he asked. They bring gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the house where Jesus and Mary are and they bow down to worship him.
- Matthew then records how the Wise Men duped Herod, and how Herod reacted by killing all the children in Bethlehem under two years old. Joseph is forewarned in a dream and flees with Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Matthew references Old Testament prophecy twice here to show how Jesus fulfills prophecy and is the Messiah (Hosea and Jeremiah). After Herod's death, they return to Israel and go to live in Nazareth.
- Luke doesn't mention the Magi or King Herod. Instead, the next part of Luke's account is Mary going to stay with her also-pregnant cousin Elizabeth. On greeting Mary the baby in Elizabeth's womb leaps for joy as she is filled with the Holy Spirit. Mary expresses her joy in a famous hymn known as the Magnificat. She stays for three months. Elizabeth gives birth to John the Baptist, whereupon her husband, Zechariah, makes a famous prophecy known as the Benedictus. This is a miracle as he was previously dumb, but upon writing that his child should be called John his '*tongue was set free*' (Luke 1:64).
- Luke then tells of a census called by Caesar Augustus, which made it necessary for Joseph and Mary to travel to Bethlehem to be registered. Luke states that they had to go to Bethlehem because Joseph was from the line of David. This shows fulfillment of prophecy although Luke does not explicitly mention this. The baby is born and is wrapped in cloths and placed in a manger because there was '*no guestroom available for them*' (Luke 2:7).
- In a nearby field, some shepherds are informed by angels of Jesus' birth, and go immediately to Bethlehem to visit him. When they return they tell others what they have seen and they praise the Lord. They do not worship Jesus himself as the Magi in Matthew's account do.
- Luke's account ends with Jesus being taken to the Temple to be circumcised. Simeon had had a revelation that he would not die before seeing the Messiah and he instantly recognises Jesus as such. A very devout prophet, Anna, also recognises Jesus and '*spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem*' (Luke 2:38).

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **'Redaction criticism is essential for understanding the birth narratives.'**
Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Redaction criticism is the theory that New Testament writers altered existing material about Jesus to suit their own agenda. This may pose a problem for some literal Christians in understanding the birth narratives as it would mean that the gospels, including the birth narratives, are not the direct word of God as the authors have not been verbally divinely inspired.
- If each gospel writer made significant additions and omissions and changed the wording of existing material in order to make a theological point then this creates a problem in understanding and relating to the gospel accounts as accounts of Jesus' incarnation, life, death and resurrection.
- It shows that the gospels are not primarily concerned with chronological accounts of historic events, but have theological agendas. They must be read primarily as theology, not history. If this is the case, then how can Christians understand them as infallible accounts of the birth narratives?
- Redaction criticism may undermine the credibility of the birth narratives if there is a problem with the redactor or the scholar identifying the possible redaction. For example, has every relevant part of the original narrative been removed and is every aspect that has been removed relevant? If the credibility is undermined then this poses a problem in them being understood.
- In favour of redaction criticism, it may be said that it treats the gospel writers as individual authors and so does not undermine the credibility of the accounts or create any difficulty in understanding them. This would point to an understanding of the Bible as being revealed through divine inspiration rather than verbal divine inspiration.
- There is an understandable reason for the texts being written the way they were, e.g. that Matthew is writing for Jews and Luke for Gentiles, and that Matthew's audience needed more proof from the Hebrew Scriptures than did that of Luke.
- Redaction criticism is a useful reminder that the gospel writers were writing theology, not history and that they had a variety of potential audiences. If Christians have an understanding of redaction criticism when reading the birth narratives this will help in their understanding of these accounts.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

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 (a) **Examine the New Testament community of believers as a model for churches today.** [AO1 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- The New Testament community of believers refers to the acts of the early church after Pentecost. This is described in Acts 2:42-47.
- In this passage, Luke describes the fellowship of the early Christians and the practices they adhered to: they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship; they broke bread; they prayed; they were all together and had all things in common; they sold possessions to aid the poor; they met together in the temple; they ate together and praised God.
- Acts 2:47 states that *'the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved'* implying that the disciples were following the commandment in the Great Commission to *'Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'* (Matthew 28:19). Churches today continue to follow this as a model of evangelism as churches use baptism as a means of welcoming new believers to the faith.
- The Acts passage refers to the community of believers devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship. C.H. Dodd calls this the kerygma. These teachings include belief in Jesus fulfilling Old Testament prophecies; the resurrection and ascension and that Jesus will judge the living and the dead, meaning all need to be baptised and repent. The contemporary church reaffirms belief in the kerygma through their affirmation of faith during services. The Nicene Creed includes these key proclamations and is the only ecumenical creed as it is recognised by the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican churches.
- Also in the passage describing the New Testament community of believers it states that they *'broke bread'*. Further on in the passage it is stated that they broke bread when they ate together. These can be seen as two separate practices. The first time it refers to the breaking of the bread at the Lord's Supper, the sacrament that Jesus himself had established as his memorial rite. This is continued as a sacrament in Christianity today. The second time, it refers to the dividing of the loaves at a communal meal. Many denominations today offer food for the poor and lonely at communal meals and some have communal meals at times of celebration.
- The early Christians prayed and had all things in common. We can infer that this means that they followed some set practices as churches today follow set liturgy and set prayers, including the Lord's Prayer.
- The New Testament community of believers sold possessions to aid the poor. While contemporary churches do not expect followers to live in communes all denominations teach followers to follow biblical teaching and *'Give generously'* (2 Corinthians 8).
- The passage in Acts describes how the early community of Christians met together in the temple courts and praised God. It is clear that this is a model for churches today as believers meet together in church buildings and praise the Lord.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘The main role of the Church is to provide religious teaching.’**
Evaluate this view. [AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Some would argue that the Christian Church is more concerned with its teaching – its dogma and doctrines – than it is with people. This is because the main role of the Church is to provide religious teaching.
- In Jesus’ teaching, the commandment to love each other comes second to the commandment to love God. Love for people is simply a way for Christians to show their love to God who loved them enough to give them his Son as their Saviour. So the main role of the Church is to provide religious teaching but in following that teaching they also place a large focus on caring for others. In other words, it is the doctrine that gives rise to the love for people. The church’s main role is to provide the doctrine.
- The Christian gospel is pro-active: Jesus and Paul teach people to act in a Christian manner. There is a strong argument, therefore, to suggest that the teachings of the Christian Church are essential but only in so far as they deliver a message that is life-changing and impacts upon the poor and needy and those who suffer in both spiritual and physical terms. Religious teaching that is delivered and has no visible impact upon the lives of others is no business of the Church.
- It can be argued that the role of the Church is to provide the religious teaching and offer support and guidance on interpreting it, but what people do with this when they understand it is up to each individual Christian.
- The Church has always been concerned with the correct interpretation of Scripture, and the fact that different people have interpreted Scripture in different ways has led to its fragmentation. If churches cannot agree on the correct interpretation of Scripture, then this should not be the primary role of the Church.
- Some traditional Christian teaching (e.g. on the ordination of women, birth control, marriage of divorced or homosexual people, etc.) seems to be insensitive and some would argue unloving. The Church’s main role is to care for the marginalised rather than promote teaching that might cause them further marginalisation.
- The Church has always sought to help those in need; this is the priority of the church, not promoting religious teaching. It takes as its example Jesus’ great emphasis on caring for the weak, the poor, the suffering, the marginalised, and the vulnerable. Contemporary Christianity puts love for people into practice through encouraging fair trade, charity work, the pursuit of peace, care for the environment, etc. Churches of different denominations often find ways of working together on humanitarian projects and lobbying on behalf of the underprivileged.
- For some churches, this is far more important than doctrine, and follows the key teaching of Jesus not simply about refraining from activities that hurt another but for positive action that benefits another.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.

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 (a) **Outline the conflict between the wrath and love of God in theories of the Atonement.** **[AO1 25]**

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- Candidates may begin with a definition of the Atonement. Atonement is the process by which men and women are reconciled with God through the death of Jesus on the cross after the separation through original sin. The New Testament presents different models of atonement, however there is no universally agreed doctrine of atonement in Christianity that gives an absolute definition of what the death of Jesus means.
- Penal substitution: Jesus set human beings free from being punished for their sins by taking that punishment upon himself on the cross, thus satisfying the justice of God.
- This model portrays God as a vengeful God who insists that his Son suffers physically and spiritually. It also shows God to be unjust as he is punishing an innocent to save the guilty.
- This model shows the conflict of God's wrath with his love as the love of God through Christ is shown when Jesus chose to sacrifice himself for humans.
- Satisfaction: Anselm proposed the Satisfaction model of the atonement, a modification of the Ransom model. He argued that human sin had so offended God's honour that he could only be satisfied by the death of the God-man, Jesus.
- God requires justice to be served as he has been dishonoured; he is unwilling to forgive before a ransom is paid and this ransom must be worthy of God's forgiveness. This shows the wrath of God: he is so angry with sin and humankind that only the sacrifice of his fully-God-and-fully-human Son could redeem them.
- But this model also shows the love of God, as he is willing to allow his only Son to die for sinners who had earned his contempt. The debt owed by humankind was too great for them to pay so God became man to satisfy his offended honour and pay the debt himself. The wrath and love of God are in clear conflict in this model.
- Moral example: This model proposes that Jesus died, not as an appeasement for God through punishment or to demonstrate victory of good over evil, but rather to show human beings the depth of God's love for them. The purpose was to lead people to repentance. Thus, the atonement is not aimed at the appeasement of God's justice, but at the moral improvement of humankind.
- This model clearly shows God's love for humans but could be argued to belittle God's wrath against sin.

This is not a checklist, please remember to credit any valid alternatives.

- (b) **‘Christians can accept all three theories of the Atonement.’
Evaluate this view.**

[AO2 25]

Candidates could include some of the following, but other relevant responses should be credited.

- The three theories propose totally different means of salvation. The Moral Example model teaches that salvation can be achieved through personal moral effort. The Sacrificial and Penal Substitution theories teach that salvation can be achieved only through the death of Christ and our faith in him. Liberal theologians and more conservative theologians would likely argue that Christians cannot accept all three theories.
- There are distinct areas of focus for the exact meaning and purpose of the Atonement that give very different understandings of Jesus’ death and resurrection.
- From this one could argue that the statement is correct. This is a problem for Christianity as the Atonement is the key belief upon which their faith rests.
- All three theories involve overcoming the problem of sin whether it is through conquering evil, atoning for evil or leading believers to repent from evil. In this way Christians can accept all of the theories in order to enhance their understanding of the act.
- The Christian church sees the three theories as complementary as they all help to bring out different aspects of the Atonement. All three may be different but part of the whole story of atonement and are accepted. All three can be justified with reference to scripture or to the history of interpretation of the Bible within Christianity.
- Supporting this view, the evangelical theologian John R.W. Stott proposed that the Moral Example model can be seen as part of the Penal Substitution model. Whereas the Penal Substitution theory focuses entirely on the death of Jesus, the Moral Example theory sees Jesus’ death in the wider context of his ethical teaching. Jesus was sentenced to die because of what he taught. Thus, Moral Example and Penal Substitution are interconnected within the larger story of Jesus’ incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection.
- In this way, Christians can and should accept the three theories of the Atonement to help to clarify, deepen and strengthen faith.

Overall, candidates should engage with the debate and come to a substantiated evaluation regarding the issue raised.