

## THE STUDY OF THE PRE-GOSPEL PERIOD

The pre-gospel period refers to the period of believers that existed before the gospels were put into writing. It was called the pre-gospel period because it was a period that gave a foundation to writing of gospels.

The gospel / message that was proclaimed during this period also referred to as **“the gospel before gospels”**. It is also noted that during this period there was a team of serious Christian believers who used to proclaim the gospel and they came to be known as early church believers and hence the pre-gospel period can also be known as;

- (a) The period of early church. Because it was the first church of Christian believers that existed immediately after Jesus' resurrection.
- (b) A period of eye witnesses. Because most of the gospel preachers during this time were those individuals who witnessed the life ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus to heaven.
- (c) A period of apostolic age/church. Because it were the apostles whom Jesus had appointed before he left the world that were busy proclaiming the gospel.
- (d) The period of oral proclamation/preaching. This was because it was a period during which the good news/word of God was proclaimed orally (using word of mouth).
- (e) The inter-statemental period. This is so because it was the period that preceded the writing of the New Testament. Therefore period between Old Testament and New Testament. The early church/apostolic church and its activities.

## THE EARLY CHURCH/APOSTOLIC AND ITS ACTIVITIES

What were the activities of the apostolic church/early church?

In the early church there were many activities conducted by eye witnesses or apostles and include the following;

- They preached the gospel (good news). After Jesus' resurrection, he gave a great commission to his disciples to always preach the good news.
- They also got involved in baptism. Those who were converted to Christianity were baptized in the name of the father, son and the Holy Spirit.
- The early church also conducted missionary journeys and these were mainly apostles who moved from one place to another preaching the word of God. For example Paul moved to Corinth, Roma and Antioch.
- The early church also celebrated the Lord's Supper. This was done in order to remember Christ who had died for them. For example in the church of Corinth, this was recorded (1 Corinthians 11:17ff)
- They also settled problems among the believers. It was mainly apostles who provided solutions to problems. For example Paul provided solutions to the problems in the Corinthian church about incest, food offered to the idols, women veiling heads.

- They also carried out communal fellowship as believers. Believers used to gather and fellowship in an assembly. For example they used to fellowship in the house of Mary mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12)
- They also used to pray on a daily basis and hence praying became a culture. They could pray in the upper room until the Holy Spirit came.
- They also used to provide guiding and counseling services in form of encouragement to their believers who were suffering because of their faith for example Peter advised the suffering.
- They also appointed church leaders like deacons who acted as elders and therefore would guide the believers in the word of God. For example Paul appointed many deacons in the church of Corinth and Galatians.
- The early church also used to praise and worship God on daily basis and that also helped to proclaim the good news.
- They also interpreted scriptures to their members. This was done in order to guard against false preachers.
- The apostles also carried out catechism. This was where the strong believers used to teach the young converts fundamental basics about Christianity/Jesus Christ and this helped to fight against back sliding.
- Some believers used to conduct income generating activities to support their evangelism for example Paul was a tent maker.
- They also carried out charitable activities. For example apostles could help the needy, the poor, orphans, widows in form of giving them food, visiting them among others.
- The early church members also performed many miracles in the name of Jesus. They also planted and established churches as centres of worship. For example Peter established a church and also Paul in Corinth and Galatia.
- They conducted and organized theological debates. Leaders like Peter and Paul would always be in public gatherings, synagogues to guide people about the word of God.
- They also repented their sins. They would organize services for repentance so that when Jesus come back finds them pure and ready to go to heaven.
- As time went by the early church members started writing down gospels and letter especially when Jesus had prayed to come back.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EARLY CHURCH**

The early church was characterized by the following;

- It was characterized with numerous prayers; to the early Christians prayers were on a daily basis like when they were repenting.

- The church was characterized with many missionary journeys where apostles were ever moving from place to place preaching the gospel.
- Worshipping was a common feature in the early church. They worshipped on daily basis like the apostles creed formed the basis of their daily worship.
- It was characterized with eager expectation of the Parousia (Jesus' second coming)
- It was characterized with performance of miracles. Signs and wonders since they had strong faith in their God Jesus Christ.
- It was characterized with marriage break up. This is because the converted Christians especially women opted to separate with non-believing husbands.
- It was characterized with numerous working and manifestation of the gifts of Holy Spirit.
- It was characterized with great love among believers. They would care for one another's problem, pray for each other, help the needy both materially and spiritually hence they lived a practical demonstrated love to one another.
- Sharing material property in church was a common feature in church.
- They shared together as brothers and sisters so it helped to expand their fellowship.
- It was characterized with strong unity and fellowship. Members regularly fellowshiped themselves together in strong bond in fellowship in different places.

#### **THE ORAL PERIOD IN RELATION TO THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**

**Examine the period of the oral tradition in relation to the gospel message.**

**How was the good news spread, preserved and maintained in the early church?**

- It was a period of continuous repentance, reconciliation since people were assured of God's forgiveness.
- It was a period of practical love by showing care visiting each other especially the sick, encouraging those in problems and such practical love became a gospel message.
- Baptism was also the tradition in the oral period and the more they baptized the more the message.
- It was also a period of missionary journeys and the more they moved to different places the more they spread the message.
- Performing of miracles was a tradition or culture of the early church. The more miracles performed the more people were converted hence the gospel message spread.
- Appointing of church leaders was the tradition of the early church these church leaders helped in spreading of the good news.
- The early church was also characterized by catechism giving basic teaching to new believers and in the process the message was proclaimed.

- Theological debates were carried out in the early church during which answers were given to questions and this became a basis for preaching the gospel.
- There was a tradition of interpreting scriptures to the public and this became the oral search for spreading the gospel.
- There was endurance of many trials, persecution and members endured and this displayed a sense of gospel knowledge.
- Sharing resources as brothers and sisters was a tradition in the oral period. This also led to spread of the good news. It was characterized with holistic living. Members struggled to live a holy life So that when Jesus comes back he finds them ready to enter heaven.
- Continuous guiding and counseling was the tradition of early church. This encouraged the persecuted and through these encouragements the good news was spread.
- Celebrating the Lord's Supper was the common tradition in oral tradition. This was done to remember the death of Jesus Christ.

### **THE MESSAGE PROCLAIMED IN THE EARLY CHURCH**

- The message proclaimed in the early church is also regarded as the original proclamation.
- This message of the oral proclamation was all about the origin birth the life ministry the death resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.
- Therefore the original message of the full life of Jesus Christ was originally referred to as the **Keresian** which was a Greek word to mean the good news. The word **Keresian** was also borrowed from English and spelt to mean kerygma.

### **THE KERYGMA**

The kerygma can be explained as the original message of the good news proclaimed by early Christians (eye witnesses) about the origin, birth, life ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

### **CONTENTS OF THE KERYGMA**

1. **Examine the contents/major teaching of kerygma/early church.**
2. **Discus the message of oral proclamation.**
  - They taught that Jesus was a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies for example this was foretold by prophets like Elijah and Isaiah.
  - The kerygma contained a message that Jesus came from the lineage of King David. That is to say, Jesus is a descendant of King David.
  - They kerygma also taught that Jesus was the only son of God and so God is his father though he appeared in a human form.

- They also preached the belief in only one God, the almighty being, the creator of heaven and earth.
- The message of the kerygma was that Jesus was born by a Virgin Mary.
- They proclaimed that it was the power of the Holy Spirit that made Mary to conceive. That is to say, Jesus was conceived by power of the Holy Spirit.
- The kerygmatic message was that Jesus lived on earth like any other human being.
- They also preached that while Jesus was on earth, he taught the message about God's kingdom in parables and performed miracles.
- There was a message that Jesus was arrested bribed by his enemies.
- The good news was that when they tried Jesus was sentenced to death and hence he was crucified.
- After crucifixion, Jesus died and was buried in the grave.
- They proclaimed that Jesus rose again on the third day as it had been prophesized.
- The kerygmatic preaching was that Jesus appeared to his disciples and to many other people after resurrection. For example Mary Magdalene.
- They also preached about Jesus 'ascension to heaven after he had resurrected and appeared to his disciples.
- Another message was he is sited at the right hand of the father in heaven.
- Jesus is coming back the second time (Parousia).
- He is coming to judge the living and the dead.
- They also taught that they believed in the holy trinity. That is to say, father, son and Holy Spirit.
- They also proclaimed the belief in the whole universal church of God that is to say Christ was for all and hence universal message.
- They also taught that the saints of God should be in one union as the union of the trinity.
- They also proclaimed the good news about the forgiveness of sins.
- They also preached the message about the resurrection of God. That is to say, they believed that believers will resurrect.
- The original proclamation was about the eternal life that is to say they believed in life after death and preached to their audience.

### **IMPORTANCE OF KERYGMA TO EARLY CHURCH**

The good news about Jesus Christ which the early apostles proclaimed became important and useful to them in the following ways;

- It helped them to worship only one God since the content was that they believed in one God.
- It portrayed to the members that Jesus was the messiah and was the real fulfillment of the Old Testament prophets.

- It helped members to accept Jesus whole heartedly since they knew that he was the only son of God and savior of people from sins.
- It encouraged members to repent since they were assured for the punishment of their sins and this was in kerygma.
- It helped members in early church to live a holy life since it was preached that Jesus Christ never sinned besides they feared judgment on Jesus' return.
- The Kerygma helped the early church members to baptize many members as they converted them because they were eager to enter God's kingdom.
- The message strengthened the early church members because of the message Jesus performed miracles.
- The kerygma kept church members in prayers all the time since they were expecting Jesus' second coming to find them holy.
- It gave hope and expectation of eternal life since Christians proclaimed that God will resurrect after death.
- Believing in life after death helped members to believe in all persecution, troubles and death without any fear since they knew even if they die they will get eternal life in God's kingdom.
- It helped members of early church to unite since they believed in the union of saints and union of the trinity.
- It helped the early church to endure suffering since they believed that even Jesus their Lord suffered under Pontius Pilate.
- Through the message preached the church members expressed their love for one another following the example of Jesus who loved man to extent of dying for his sins.
- The message assured the early church members of the reality of God's kingdom since they preached that he is seated at the right hand of the father.
- The message influenced members to share with one another because even Jesus shared out body on behalf of believers.
- The kerygma became the basis of the apostolic teaching just because they believed in the universality of Jesus.
- It became a basis for the process of canonizing the New Testament books.

#### **RELEVANCE OF THE KERYGMA TO THE MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- 1. What is the importance of the kerygma to modern Christians?**
- 2. Explain the relevance of the Kerygma to the modern Christians.**
  - Modern Christians should repent since the Kerygmatic gospel emphasized repentance of sins.
  - Modern Christians should pray since the kerygma taught the importance of prayers in believers' lives.

- Modern Christians should share just as Jesus shared his body for the believers.
- Modern Christians should wait and expect upon the second coming of Jesus Christ as the Kerygmatic gospel proclaimed the return of Jesus Christ.
- Christians should love one another just as Jesus loved all mankind by dying for their sins as it was proclaimed in the kerygma.
- Christians should preach the gospel to all mankind just as the gospel stressed about Jesus' teaching/preaching to all mankind.
- Christians should endure every form of suffering just as Jesus endured every form of suffering in under Pontius Pilate.
- Christians should live a holy life as they prepare for the judgment day which Jesus would do when he comes back as it was preached in the kerygma.
- Christians should be baptized just as Jesus was baptized.
- Christians should forgive each other because the Kerygmatic teaching stressed the forgiveness of sins.
- Christians should be noted just as the kerygma taught and encouraged the union of saints and the trinity.
- Christians should accept and trust in Jesus Christ as their savior.

### **WORSHIP IN THE EARLY CHURCH**

The term worship refers to the different ways in which man expressed honour, glorification or exaltation to the almighty God his creator either by actions or words.

Worship was therefore one of the major and common activities in the early church because it was done on daily basis.

### **WAYS OF WORSHIP IN EARLY CHURCH**

The following are the ways of worshipping in the early church;

- They worshipped God through singing different hymns and songs to honour the name of the Lord as being great, holy among others.
- They also worshipped God by kneeling down.
- They also worshipped God through repentance. They repented on daily basis and asked for forgiveness.
- They worshipped God through laying hands and appointing church leaders.
- They worshiped God through speaking in tongues of different languages. These were believed to have been given to them.
- They worshipped God through expression of love like visiting the sick, helping the needy as a symbol to glorify God.
- They also worshipped through clapping hands to the Lord.

- Through celebration of the Lord's Supper. This was done regularly as people gathered with their offerings and shared together in the name of father, son and Holy Spirit in remembrance of Jesus Christ.
- They also worshipped God through fellowship. They would give offertory to God.
- They also worshipped through catechism. This was done by teaching the young converts the basics of Christianity.
- They also worshipped through making missionary journeys and planting of churches as centres of worship.
- At a later time they worshipped God through reading scriptures.

## **WORSHIP IN MODERN CHURCH**

### **Examine the different ways Christians worship today.**

- Through praying for example overnights on Sundays.
- Through organizing fellowships . For example in schools, hospitals, prisons etc
- Through organizing crusades with open air preaching.
- People today worship through the use of modern instruments like keyboards, guitars, modern drums etc.
- They worship through giving testimonies that glorify what the Lord has done for them.
- Through performing religious rituals like baptism, confirmation etc.
- Through composing gospel songs . For example gospel music of Pr. Wilson Bugembe.
- Through giving tithe and offerings plus other church dues "endobolo" in catholic churches.
- Christians also worship today through repentance especially in lent period.
- Celebrating the Lord's Supper is the other way of worshipping God in early church.
- Christians worship through dancing, clapping and jumping for the Lord.
- They also worship God through fasting . That is to say, they deny food for a specific period of time.
- They also worship through carrying out and reciting of rosaries.

## **THE PRESERVATION AND TRANSMISSION OF THE GOOD NEWS IN THE EARLY CHURCH**

Preaching the good news/gospel was the major duty and commission of the early church believers and so they did all their best of the early church believers and good news about Christ.

### **Examine the methods of preserving the good news before it was put into writing**

The following were the ways in which the good news was preserved especially before it was put into writing;

- Through open air in form of crusades.
- Through baptism in the name of the father, the son and the Holy Spirit.



- Through performing miracles, signs and wonders in the name of Jesus. Such people who were healed like the lame crippled became the good news to the society.
- Through the testimonies of the believers the good news was preserved and spread. As people gave testimonies others were encouraged and also believed.
- Through planting churches to different places the good news was spread.
- Through prayers which were made especially for the sick in the name of Jesus.
- It was preserved through sharing resources especially to poor, needy, orphans, widows etc.
- Through the celebration of the Lord's supper where all believers gathered, fellowshiped and remembered the death of Jesus Christ as their savior.
- Through organizing for repentance services and assuring those who repent of God's forgiveness.
- Through making missionary journeys whenever they made these journeys they preached the good news.
- Through theological debates where questions were answered and this also led to preserving of the good news.
- Through expression of love and care in form of charitable work was another way of preserving good news.
- Through counseling and guidance.
- Through appointing church leaders.

## **HOW THE GOOD NEWS IS SPREAD TODAY**

### **How is the good news spread today?**

- The good news today is spread through catechism . For example people who are going to be confirmed first pass through a stage where people are preached to and ready to change their ways.
- The good news is spread through mass media . For example TV, radios.
- It is spread through preaching on gatherings . For example on burial places as people gather together.
- It is also spread through missionary journeys like some people move to go to Namugongo on 3<sup>rd</sup> June every year.
- Its spread through celebration of Lord's Supper. For example taking Holy Communion.
- Through appointing church leaders . For example pope, arch bishops, bishops, priests who help in spreading good news.
- Through expressing love and care by helping the needy through charity organizations like scouts and guides at Kaazi.
- Through organizing repentance services and assuring those who repent of God's blessings and forgiveness.

- Through performance of miracles . For example in catholic charismatic renewal miracles are being performed . For example blind can see, lame can walk all performed by Fr. Bashobola in name of Jesus hence good news.
- Though open air preaching the good news is spread today.
- Through baptism . For example in church today many have been baptized and all this has led to spread of good news.
- Through gospel music . For example songs of Mary Asimwe “okujunwani kumara” meaning salvation is enough.
- It is spread through prayers for the sick, words of encouragement to the needy.
- It is spread through organizing fellowships . For example in schools, hospitals, prisons among others.
- Its spread through musical instruments like keyboard, modern drums.
- Through reciting rosaries . For example during lent season.

### **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ORAL PREACHING**

The effectiveness of oral method refers to how advantageous or disadvantageous the method was. The method therefore was both positive and negative

#### **Advantages of Oral Preaching**

- It was quick and a faster method of preaching gospel because one person would preach to very many people at the same time.
- It involved performance of miracles which strengthened faith of the believers as the preachers performed miracles.
- It led to easy expansion of the church numerically (in number) since it encouraged everyone to participate.
- It was cheap and even free because it didn't involve expenses of writing.
- It was easy to convince the audience.
- It led to easy understanding of the news because it encouraged question and answer system.
- The method benefited different categories of people like blind, over aged, illiterates.
- It saved time because it allowed many different people to preach the gospel and one person could address many people at ago.
- This method encouraged sharing. This is because apostles could share material property with the poor and needy they found.
- It involved direct counseling, guiding and hence helped to encourage those in trouble.
- It was easy for follow ups and hence minimizing backsliding . That is to say, preacher would know different people they preached to and in end make a follow up.

- It encouraged strong fellowship and unity in the society because people would always gather for the good news.
- It involved baptism. those who believed were directly baptized.
- It was advantageous in a sense that it was a way to follow Jesus' example because he also preached orally.
- Receiving spiritual gifts like speaking in tongues because the preachers would lay hand directly on the converts.

### **Disadvantages**

- It was tiresome because it involved moving place to place and talking.
- It left no room for future reference and so it could easily be forgotten.
- It didn't favour some categories of people like the deaf.
- It exposed preachers to direct insults, persecution, abuses and others hence putting the life at stake.
- There was language barrier which could hinder the preaching in that not all people knew the same language.
- It would lead to death of some creatures . For example Steven was stoned directly to death.
- It would lead to destruction of the original message. It would be repeated and hence boring at times.
- It involved contradiction because different preachers could preach differently since they didn't give a common book for reference.
- It gave a chance to false preachers because everyone was free to preach and in end pretenders would also come in.

### **Questions**

**Comment on the effectiveness of the oral preaching method.**

**How effective was the oral method of preaching?**

**Examine the effectiveness of the oral method of preaching the gospel.**

### **PROBLEMS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH**

In the apostolic church, they faced a number of problems some of which were geographical, social, political and material as seen below;

- Faced a problem of direct persecution and a times killed by political leaders . For example political leaders stoned Steven to death.
- There was a problem of language barrier since they were using oral means to proclaim the good news. The apostles came from different places.

- They faced a challenge of fading memories. As time went on the information accumulated and started forgetting and this was a problem since they had no reference.
- They faced the problem of death of the eye witnesses who had the original information. This scared the new converts.
- There was a common problem of regular arresting and imprisoning apostles. This brought more attention to church member. For example at one time Peter was imprisoned.
- They also faced a problem of opposition from religious leaders like Pharisees, Sadducees who opposed Christianity and Jesus.
- There was a problem of unfavourable weather conditions for spreading of the good news. Sometime it would rain and sometimes it was sunny. This affected their movements from one place to another hence hindering spread of good news.
- They also faced a challenge of limited man power. This is because they were very few and were to cover a large area of the whole world.
- Besides, there was a poor and undeveloped means of transport.
- They faced a problem of limited resources or poverty. This prevented the writing of the gospels. Poverty was caused because most of their time was busy preaching and never carried out any activity.
- They faced a problem of the delayed Parousia (second coming) Jesus had promised to come back very soon but he has been waited soon didn't happen and non-believers got a chance to abuse them.
- There was a problem of backsliding. This was caused mainly due to persecution and delayed Parousia.
- There was a problem of false preachers (agnosticism). Many false preachers used the opportunity of oral proclamation but also pretended to be Christians and preached wrong gospel.
- There was also a problem of divisions based on many factors. For example someone divided because of different spiritual gifts because of following different gospel preachers like Peter and Paul. This was common in the church of Corinth.

#### **ATTEMPTS MADE TO OVERCOME PROBLEM IN APOSTOLIC CHURCH**

- The early church leaders did not sit back, they sought or made attempts to address problems they faced and that are why they were successful.
- They started writing letters and gospels which solved problems like continuous movements for longer journey, fading memories and misinterpretation of scriptures.
- They resorted to free sharing of resources as brothers and sisters and this solved poverty and limited resources.
- They also carried out catechism which strengthened the faith of believers and this reduced on backsliding.

- Members also resorted to continuous praying together and in process encouraged one another and this re-strengthened their hopes and became more determined and reduced amidst persecution.
- Counseling and guidance was adopted which also minimized the problem of backsliding and strengthened their faith.
- Church leaders always came in to settle different disputes and conflicts which the church had faced and in process divisions were minimized and unity was forged.
- Church members decided to form a canon which was a standard measure by which would eliminate false preachers and their writings.
- There was continuous fellowship among members in different places and through this regular fellowship fear of persecution and disunity was overcome.
- Leaders adapted to living a poetic life to help them overcome opponents.
- They also carried out regular theological debates which enabled them answer many question and solved misinterpretations and false preachers.
- The roman government developed technology which helped members overcome problems like language barrier, illiteracy, poor transportation and communication.

#### **FACTORS FOR EXPANSION OF THE EARLY CHURCH OR REASONS FOR WIDE SPREAD OF GOOD NEWS IN THE EARLY CHURCH**

- The role of the Holy Spirit led to expansion of the church. It gave wisdom and spiritual strength for members to preach the gospel.
- It also influenced the performance of many miracles which attracted many people join the church.
- Influence of persecution contributed to rapid growth of the church. This forced many people to scatter to different places and as they scattered they continued preaching the gospel.
- The eager expectation of the Parousia influenced expansion of early church. This is because Jesus had promised to come back repent and judge both living and the dead. This made people repent very fast hence Christianity.
- The conversion of great men who later joined the apostolic church led to the expansion. As time went on great men like Paul, Steven were converted and during the preaching.
- The age of literacy also contributed to the expansion of the early church. Since any people had learnt how to read and write and this made the writing of gospel easy and interpretation.
- The influence of Jesus' resurrection also contributed to the rapid growth/expansion of the church. When Jesus resurrected many non-believers got attracted to Christianity and the faith of the believers was strengthened. This made them preach the gospel with confidence and one equal to Christianity.

- The influence of great commission speeded up the gospel preaching and hence expansion to the church. The great commission was the final command/ instructions Jesus gave to his followers to go to the whole world to preach the gospel and baptize. This made apostles to move to different places/ parts of the world preaching good news.
- The culture of practical love and sharing from members influenced wide spread of good news. This practical love attracted many people to Christianity and eventually the church expanded.
- The Roman law of freedom of worship also speeded up gospel preaching and hence expansion of the church. When the Roman Empire passed the law declaring freedom of worship and legalizing worshipping, the gospel preachers preached very fast to different parts of the world.
- The impact of false scriptures contributed to spread of good news. There were many false scriptures and this made the gospel preachers to preach very fast to counter fight them.
- The impact of missionary journeys made the church expand geographically and numerically as the preachers reached different parts of the country like Paul to Corinth, Galatia, Philip, Ephesian, Peter to Asia liner they preached the gospel and people got converted.
- The presence of synagogues. These served as worshipping centres for regular worship. Fellowship and hence centres of spreading the gospel would gather there.
- The performance of miracles speeded up growth Christianity. These miracles. For example healing the blind to see, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear attracted others to gain Christianity since they would be healed free of charge.
- The modern development in the roman empire also contributed to expansion of the church such development included modern transport network system like the use of canoes and ships which enabled preachers travel to different parts.
- The influence of Greek language helped Christianity spread very fast. The Greek language was finally made a universal language official. This simplified communication of the gospel and eliminated the hindrance of language.
- The universal approach of Christianity also contributed to the expansion of the church unlike other religious which used to discriminate people. For example Judaism but Christianity never discriminated it instead it embraced anyone like the outcasts, sinners and so people joined Christianity.
- The unity of the gospel preachers was a strong factor to growth of church, apostles were united that they joined material physical and scriptural efforts to spread the gospel.
- The early church expanded because of canonicity. This was a period and process when the true gospels were to be written to eliminate the false ones.

- The unpopularity of other religions like Judaism gave an opportunity for Christianity to spread worldwide. For example, the law of an eye for an eye (revenge), stoning the adulterous women to death etc. which became unpopular and people evaded it.

### **Questions**

1. **Account for the rapid spread of the gospel/good news in the apostolic church.**
2. **Examine the factors that contributed to the growth and expansion of the early church.**

### **HOW PERSECUTION CONTRIBUTED TO THE SPREAD OF THE GOOD NEWS**

- It made believers to scatter to different parts of the world and so whenever they scattered they spread the good news hence expansion of the church.
- It created fear that believers/ eye witnesses could all die and so they spread the good news very fast before they could die.
- As the strong eyewitnesses started dying, they started to write all the information which helped in spread of the good news.
- Persecution influenced Christians to live unphonetic life to act as good examples and defend the good news before political leader who thought that Christianity was against the government.
- Some apostles preached the gospel even in prisons where they had been put to their fellow prisoner and fellow prison wardens.
- Christians decided to baptize very fast people since they knew anytime Christians could die.
- Due to persecution, apostles speeded up catechism which strengthened the faith of believers and helped to guard against backsliding.

### **THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EXPANSION OF THE EARLY CHURCH**

- The Holy Spirit gave believers power to perform miracles and the more miracles they performed, the more people were attracted to Christianity and hence good news.
- The Holy Spirit gave believers wisdom/knowledge to always answer difficult questions in public and it were the answers which satisfied people and ended up believing the good news.
- The Holy Spirit guided the gospel preachers on what to preach to whom and where so the Holy Spirit made the preachers to move to different people and in the process many were converted.
- The Holy Spirit gave believers special gifts which were influential in spreading good news. Some believers were given gifts of speaking in tongues other prophesying and all these attracted many people to Christianity.
- It gave sharp memories to gospel preachers to remember all what Jesus had done and they were also able to teach others hence the good news.

- It was also the power of the Holy Spirit that convicted the non-believers to repent their sins and when they repented they joined Christianity and the church expanded.
- The Holy Spirit strengthened the faith of the believers and helped them to grow hence expansion of the church.
- It helped to guard against backsliding and since people became too loyal and trusting in God Christianity expanded.
- It influenced unity of preachers and the more they became united physically the more they spread good news.
- It empowered the preachers to endure all forms of suffering and persecution and more they endured such persecution, the more they preached the gospel with goodness.
- It enabled preachers to interpret and even understand false preachers and as they interpreted the scriptures well they won many people to Christianity.

#### **ROLE OF JESUS' RESURRECTION TO THE SPREAD OF GOOD NEWS**

- It made many people to join Christianity since they knew that there was life after death in following Christ.
- The resurrection of Jesus provided hope and confidence to Jesus' followers which confidence made them spread good news very fast.
- It became everlasting testimony to whole world that the one crucified Jesus of Nazareth resurrected and so people accepted him and good news was spread.
- Jesus gave a great command to his disciples after resurrection which was to go to the whole world spread the gospel and baptize many who believed.
- Jesus' resurrection became good news and broke the fear that disciples had and so they preached the gospel with total confidence, boldness and the good news was spread.
- His resurrection became a basis of forming the New Testament canon. It was this canon which circulated widely hence expansion of the early church.
- It became a foundation upon which Christianity is built up to date.
- Jesus' resurrection is one of the pillars upon which Christianity bases its doctrines different from other religions.
- Jesus' resurrection gave a form of trust that all whatever he had promised, whatever had been written about him were completely true and hence people joined Christianity very fast well assured that it is the true religion.



- When Jesus resurrected, he promised to come back very soon to judge the living and the dead and this made very many people to repent very fast.
- His resurrection raised the faith of his followers and so guarded against backsliding.
- It provided assurance that there is life after death and so preachers endured all forms of suffering and in the process they preached the good news.

### **THE ROLE OF PAROUSIA IN THE EXPANSION OF THE EARLY CHURCH**

Parousia means the second coming of Jesus Christ. As Jesus resurrected he later ascended to heaven however as he was living he told his followers that he will come back very soon and even told them that he had gone to prepare for them rooms, places in his father's house and so they needed to be worried of anything (John 14:1-2). The Parousia therefore to a larger extent contributed to the spread of Christianity in the following ways;

- The expectation of Parousia made the people to repent very fast hence expansion of the early church.
- It encouraged people to live a holy life of Christianity since they were expecting judgment very soon.
- It influenced believers to share the material property in wealth freely even with the non-believers since they knew that such properties would be left on earth.
- Very many people accepted baptism and were baptized so as to be ready the Parousia.
- Due to Parousia, the apostles preached the gospels very fast and tirelessly hence many people were converted.
- The church members lived a very good life of examples which made non-believers admire them and be converted to Christianity.
- Due to Parousia, oral proclamation became the method of preaching which encouraged everyone to participate in preaching the good news.
- Parousia created fear among many sinners that they would be judged and so they accepted Christ as their Lord savior so as to escape judgment.
- Parousia made the apostles to intensify catechism which strengthened the faith of the non-believers to converts.
- It influenced believers and others to love one another as brother and sisters and it was practical love that drew many people to Christianity.
- Parousia meant that there is life after death and it was the influence of hoping for eternal life when Jesus comes back.
- Parousia influenced believers and non-believers to live a life of preparedness, alertness, readiness and eager expectation to receive the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **THE ROLE OF PAUL'S CONVERSION IN THE EXPANSION OF THE EARLY CHURCH**

The spreading of the good news was quite hard during the time of Paul. It was until his conversion to Christianity that the spreading of the gospel became easier. For St. Paul, he was originally known as Saul and a great persecutor of the Christians until the Lord Jesus appeared to him and converted him to become a gospel preacher and an apostle. He played a great role in the expansion of early church as seen below;

- He became an apostle of the Lord and so when the Lord appointed him an apostle to the gentiles (non-believers) he therefore preached too many of those Gentiles.
- Paul made different or several missionary journeys to different parts of the world and whatever he went and he preached and converted many people into Christianity hence expansion of the church.
- He used to plant or establish churches which became centres of worship and spreading the good news such churches include the Corinth church, Galatians and Rome church.
- He participated in writing Christian letters which had good news about Jesus Christ and these letters circulated to many parts of the world hence wide spread of the good news.
- Paul used to baptize those who accepted the good news and through this baptism, many people came to Christianity and the good news was spread.
- He used to settle disputes among believers in different churches and by doing so unity and peace prevailed which helped in wide spreading of the good news.
- Paul's conversion became a testimony and hence an encouragement too many non-believers to also believe in a forgiving God and in a process many people joined Christianity.
- St. Paul lived a committed and devoted life of teaching and preaching the good news. He also leaved his privileges like marriage and became a celibate for the sake of spreading the good news.
- St. Paul became a tent maker and through this income activities supported preaching of the gospel helped the needy which encouraged people become Christians.

### **BAPTISM IN EARLY CHURCH**

- 1. Discuss the importance of baptism in the early church.**
  - 2. Explain the importance of the sacrament of baptism during the apostolic age.**
- It was a way of following Jesus' example by his eye witness since Jesus himself had been baptized.
  - Through the sacrament of baptism the gospel preachers expressed their obedience to God.
  - Baptism was a way of fulfilling the great commission by those early believers Jesus told them to go to the whole world spreading the good news and baptized those who believed.
  - Through baptism the believers expressed their repentance and so they believed in forgiveness of their sins. That is to say, it was a sign of washing away their sins.
  - It acted as a symbol of purification/holiness of water symbolized the blood of Jesus Christ.

- It distinguished Christianity from other religions.
- It made believers to put a new character and measure of Christianity. That is to say, it was a form of acceptance to follow only Jesus Christ.
- Through the sacrament of baptism members of the early church were a bit to be identified from the non-believers and other religions like Judaism.
- It strengthened the faith of the early church members and hence acted an expression of faith in Jesus Christ.
- During baptism to early church members expressed their faith to God.
- It helped members to fellowship because they could gather during the sacrament.
- It acted as a form of worship hence it was another spread time for worshipping the Lord.
- During baptism members would pray both themselves and the church because they believed that on the ascension the Lord visited them.
- Miracles could be performed during baptism .g. people would heal the sick, demons would be cursed out.
- Baptism meant special resurrection from death as it was a signified by coming out of water.
- The sacrament of baptism meant the death of Christ emersion into water.
- It was a sign of unity and togetherness among the Christians of the early church.
- It signified the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures.
- It was important because it created the new converts into the community of believers.

#### **HOW BAPTISM IS PRACTICED TODAY**

- In today's church, the practice of baptism varies from one Christian domination to another.
- Today some churches only baptized people who are mature enough, this I done in order to understand the purpose of baptism; this is done by seventh days.
- In some churches like catholic infants are also baptized.
- In today's church, candidates are accepted to dress with clothes to symbolize holiness.
- In some churches, the candidates should have the God parents in addition to their biological ones.
- In today's church, baptism is presented over by the clergy like priest and deacons in case of the Catholic Church.
- In the baptism of today a special name is given to candidate.
- During the baptism hymns are sung by the congregation to accompany to the occasion.
- In some churches especially the Catholic Church the candidate is baptized simply spreading water in the fore head by the clergy.
- In some churches like born again baptism is by emersion.
- In today's church, in baptism there is anointing with oil on the forehead.

## **THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER IN THE EARLY CHURCH**

### **1. What role did the Lord's Supper play in the early church?**

### **2. What was the significance/importance of the Lord's Supper to the Christians?**

In the apostolic church the Lord's Supper was a major and regular activity and it was therefore celebrated as one of the major sacraments with the following importance or significance;

- It was a way of following Jesus' command because Jesus had commanded them to always do it in commemoration of him.
- It helped believers to remember the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and the good things he had done for them.
- It helped believers to repent their sins because nobody could share of it without repenting.
- It also helped the church members to live a holy life because they believed to be washed by the blood of Jesus Christ during this sacrament.
- It promoted sharing among the members because they will gather with different items to eat and then share the Lord's Supper.
- It promoted members together and hence promotes unity to both the poor and the rich even to the young ones and elders could all gather to share the Lord's Supper.
- It was a form of worship and glorified the Lord for having died for our sins.
- It strengthened the faith of believers and hence checked their faithfulness to the Lord.
- It was a sign of acceptance to share in suffering the Lord Jesus Christ since they were remembering how he suffered and died for sinners.
- It implied the disciples' commitment, devotion and dedication to follow Jesus Christ who shed his blood for their sins.
- The Lord's Supper served as a spiritual meal which was aimed at maintaining the spiritual lives of Christians.
- It was an earthly meal that symbolized something of the future.
- It signified the presence of Jesus in the daily life of Christians.
- It helped Christians to sustain hope in the second coming of Jesus whom they expected anytime.
- The Lord's Supper also pointed at the future resurrection which all believers are expected to attain.

## **THE END OF ORAL METHOD OF SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS AND THE BEGINNING of THE WRITTEN METHOD**

The apostles of Jesus Christ depended on oral preaching of the good news for a very long period of time due to a number of factors. However, as time went by they also started writing gospels.

## **Reasons why they delayed to write the gospel or why they depended on oral preaching for a long time**

Many factors and circumstances influenced the early church to delay in writing the gospel and instead preached orally for a long period of time. The following factors hindered the writing of the gospel;

- The expectation of Parousia led to the delayed writing of the gospel. They believed that Jesus is coming soon and so there was no need to write the gospel.
- Writing was tiresome and time consuming. It was easy to preach than sit down and write the gospel.
- The influence of poverty hindered the spreading of the gospel. Church members were so poor because initially most of them were not working because they expected Jesus to come back anytime and so could not afford the writing materials.
- The high level of illiteracy also led to the delay in writing of the gospel. Both believers and non-believers did not know how to read and write therefore writing could be useless.
- There was intensive persecution which delayed the writing of the gospels. The apostles were always on the move running away from the enemies and therefore had no time to sit down and write the gospel.
- The apostles and eyewitnesses had strong and sharp memories especially the first years after Jesus' ascension so there was no need to write.
- Jesus' commission for the disciples to go to the whole world preach the gospel but not to write hence delaying of writing.
- The apostles critically had some few scriptures of the Old Testament to refer to those few scriptures together with the fresh message they had about Jesus were used for reference.
- Preaching orally was the tradition of the time. The whole society was not used to writing as a form of communication but instead preferred oral preaching.
- The church was still small both in number and geographically preaching orally could satisfy people.
- Initially the level of technology needed for writing the gospel was not yet developed there were no machines like printing press and therefore.....
- The Holy Spirit had not inspired and guided the witnesses on what to write so they could not write because they were not guided.
- There was a belief that the eye witnesses by then were the last generation this was because they were expecting the second coming of Jesus Christ and the whole world would come to an end.
- The apostles were copying Jesus' example of teaching orally and so they also depended on the preaching as Jesus had begun.
- There had existed some conflicts, disunity and misunderstanding in the church and so they could not come together and write the gospels.
- They lacked specific languages to use in writing the gospels so they depended on oral preaching.

- Originally writing was only authorized to special groups of people called the scribes who were not interested in writing about Christianity.

### **WHY THE GOSPELS WERE WRITTEN**

- As time went by there developed technology and so the process of writing became possible using technological inventions like printing machines.
- The delay of Jesus' return provoked the apostles to start writing the gospels. This was done in order to guard against backsliding which had started.
- The eye witnesses had started dying as years went by. This created fear that they would disappear with the original information and hence hurried to write before all of them could die.
- There was need to express the University of Jesus' mission on earth and since oral preaching could not reach the whole world the apostles had to use written methods that would cover the world.
- They wrote the gospels to lay a firm foundation for the future generation which would use such gospels for reference.
- The influence of the false preachers prompted the eyewitnesses to write the gospels. They did so in order to counter fight the message of the false preachers.
- The age of literacy came up after a long period of time. Since many people knew how to read and write including the apostles themselves they started writing.
- Improvement of the economic status of the church members led to the writing of the gospels. With time, the church's economic status improved and so people were able to afford the writing exercise.
- The gospels were written to be used for gospel transmission to different parts of the world. Oral preaching could be limited to nearby places.
- The gospels were written because the eye witnesses had weakened in their memories and could not remember everything.
- Persecution and martyrdom had intensified and so Christians gathered in hiding places and started writing the gospels as they feared to appear in public preaching.
- The gospels were written down to be used as reference both in their preaching and in the future time. That is to say, they wanted written information for guidelines.
- The Holy Spirit had finally inspired them on what should be written and so they also started writing the gospels.
- The gospels were written to help in preserving Jesus' work, life, death and resurrection and finally ascension in a written form.
- The Greek language had become universal and it solved language barrier which had hindered the writing of the gospel.

- The writing materials had become available and affordable. For example ink hence influencing the apostles to write the gospel.

### Questions

1. **“The end of oral tradition had become inevitable by 64AD” justify could not be avoided why.**
2. **Account for the eventual writing of the gospel.**
3. **“It took a long period of time before the gospels were written.” Explain why this trend of affairs took place.**

### CANONICITY/CANONIZATION/NEW TESTAMENT

The term canonicity is spelt in English from the original Greek word known as Canon which means the following;

- (a) Measuring rod
- (b) Yard stick used to measure the length of the width of a dot of land correctly.
- (c) An instrument used to measure and provide correct accurate measurements.

In the bible therefore, the canon refers to the yard stick, the principles, guidelines on the correct basics used by the church elders to select the correct 27 books of the new testament s real, correct, authentic and accepted canonization therefore is the process by which the 27 books of the old testament were formed and justified as authoritative with perfect information about good news of Jesus Christ.

### REASONS FOR THE FORMING OF THE CANON

- There was need to eliminate false literature which was circulating alongside true Christian books. Out of the many books which were in circulation some had false information.
- The canon was formed in order to have a manageable and portable volume of the book. There were many books in circulation that would make it a very big volume and not easy to be carried.
- There was need to eliminate contradictions. The many books in circulation were contradicting each other and even those which had true information would contradict.
- The need to eliminate unnecessary repetitions accounted for the formation for New Testament canon. The many books in circulation were repeating each other.
- The church leaders wanted to get a standard book volume for evangelism. Some books had substandard information and the only way to eliminate this was by forming the New Testament canon.
- They formed the canon for liturgical purposes the church elders needed a specific volume of books that would be used in their daily liturgical worship, devotion etc.

- They wanted to eliminate miss-interpretation of the gospels hence setting up a specific standard for what to be included.
- The canon was formed to preserve the basic Christians fundamental doctrines. Some books had avoided the basic doctrines of Christianity such as salvation, baptism, Lord's Supper etc.
- The canon was formed to preserve Jesus' mystery works, death and resurrection in a correct way.
- There was need to preserve correct scriptures for the future generation since some books in circulation had false information.

#### **THE PROCESS OF FORMING THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON (HOW THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON ACQUIRED ITS PRESENT FORM)**

- The New Testament canon is composed of 27 books, four which are gospels 21 are letters, one book of Acts and one book of Revelation.
- The current form of the New Testament canon was developed and acquired through different stages or steps which were mainly three. That is to say, the oral stage, the written stage and the selection stage which involved choosing which book is right and which one is wrong.
- It started with the oral stage whereby the apostles or eye witnesses were proclaiming the message about Jesus Christ.
- The proclamation of the apostles about Jesus Christ became the good news and was adopted as the kerygma.
- The kerygma which was proclaimed during the oral stage became the original message and it was recommended to circulate in different parts of the world.
- When the Kerygmatic gospel accumulated during the oral stage three major problems occurred. That is to say, fading memories, false preachers and persecution was at climax.
- These problems plus others influenced the apostles to start writing the gospels and then a canon was beginning to join a form of a written book.
- The apostles and eye witnesses used the context of the kerygma since it was the original message of the good news to write gospels and letters which were later compiled to form the canon.
- It is believed that the first letter to be written was the letter to Galatians, first and second letter to the Corinthians were the first Christian literature to be written and adopted in Christian churches for moral instructions.
- All St. Paul's letter circulated to Christian communities. They were approved and used in prayers and worship and so they were approved, accepted to be included in the canon. Other eyewitnesses like St. Peter also started writing his letters around 62AD and were mainly dealing with crisis of persecution



Against Christians, so the purpose of these letters was to encourage/give hope and instill faith to those suffering.

- Other eyewitnesses and close associates also started writing the gospel. For example Mathew, Luke, Mark and John. It is said that Mark was a close associate of Peter and also a secretary. Mark started writing his gospel getting information from Peter between 60 – 70AD therefore Mark's gospel has a formula  $Mk = Mk + P + Q$
- After Peter then Luke also wrote the gospel basing on mark first and his independent source. It is believed that Luke has 320 verses of Mark's gospel and hence the formula  $Elk = Elk + Mk + Q$
- John's gospel which is the fourth one was the last to be written and it was accepted in the Christian activity because it has the theme of practical instructions of Christian's holy, then of salvation by faith and connection between Old Testament and New Testament.
- The book of Acts of the Apostles was written compiled by the church elders confirming what the apostles had done and was included in the canon.
- John the apostle and the writer of the fourth gospel also wrote the gospel of Revelation and it was easily accepted by the Christian community since it had been written by an eye witness. It talks about the resurrection and the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- In the process when these letters and gospels written by eyewitnesses were in circulation and were being used by the Christians, false literature like the books of Apocrypha, Tobi started circulating so they brought confusion, bad morals which created an agency for the church elders to sit down and set conditions, guidelines, yard sticks that should be followed to qualify any book in the community.
- The church elders especially bishops like Ignatius Augustine Cyprian Athena made regular meetings in specific centres like cathage and Rome during which they finalized the qualification/criteria they formed and selected the 27 books and others were left out.

### **CRITERIA USED TO SELECT THE 27 BOOKS**

The church leaders and elders in the cathage and put up the following as the basic yard stick in selecting which books to be included or excluded in the New Testament canon.

- The author. Writer of the book mattered in the information of the canon. The book which was written by eyewitness or a known apostle was easily accepted and included in the New Testament canon.
- The book that was written by a close associate to an apostle was easily approved and hence included in the New Testament canon. For example Mark's gospel was accepted because he was a close associate to peter.
- The books that were written in the apostolic age were proved as authentic and hence included in the New Testament canon. That is to say, books written in between 30s to 100AD were accepted.

- The books that taught about Christian moral values like holiness, humbleness, obedience were accepted in the new testament canon for example Peter's first letter to Romans.
- Books which stressed the Acts of the Apostles like their preaching, miracles, missionary journeys and all their activities were regarded authentic and hence included in the New Testament canon for example the book of Acts of apostles.
- Any book which stressed the contents of the kerygma was quickly accepted because it was treated as the original message/gospel.
- Any book that talked about Jesus as the only son of God the promised messiah, the savior of mankind was approved as authentic and hence included in the New Testament canon.
- Books which reflected on the Old Testament teachings/ scriptures were regarded authentic in the New Testament for example Paul's first letter to the Galatians was first rejected but because it had many scriptures of the Old Testament it was later accepted.
- Book which were already in use in the Christian churches by the time of selecting were regarded as authentic easily included in the canon.
- The books which were in line with the apostolic books or online with those that had been accepted were considered authentic.
- A book that stressed strong Christian doctrines like baptism, confirmation, resurrection, repentance, Lord's Supper were included in the new testament canon.
- Any book that carried the message of strengthening faith, hope, and courage among the Christians was taken as authentic and hence included in the canon.
- A book to be included in the canon had to reflect on the existence of the trinity of God the father, son and holy spirit as being one.
- Books that survived the destruction/fire sent by Emperor Nero were accepted as inspired/guided by the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **Questions**

1. ***Examine the criteria followed in the selection of the New Testament canon.***
2. ***How did the New Testament books come to be approved as authentic?***
3. ***Discuss the authenticity of the New Testament canon.***

### **FACTORS FOR THE ELIMINATION/EXCLUSION OF SOME BOOKS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT**

There were some books which were left out/rejected as the New Testament was being formed. The reasons for eliminating some books were as follows;

- Books written in the period outside the apostolic were left out. And in those books that were written before 30s and after 100AD were rejected because they were outside the apostolic age/error.
- Books which contradicted with the already existing books and accepted books of the eye witnesses were excluded from the New Testament canon for example the letter of St. James was first rejected because it seemed to contradict with S. Paul's letter about faith.
- Some books which encouraged immoral behaviors were rejected. They were books which encouraged immortals like drunkardness, polygamy, so they had to be eliminated.
- Books that defined the Christian doctrines like baptism, Lord's Supper, resurrection, repentance were eliminated.
- Some books which opposed the teaching of the Old Testament and did not refer to them were eliminated from the Old Testament.
- There were books which doubted Jesus' resurrection, death and even his miracles. This was enough reason for such books to be eliminated since Jesus' mystery and life were the center of Christianity.
- Some books which were written directly from philistine which was a center of Christianity for Christian's persecution and a center of Emperor Nero's activities were rejected.
- The character, personality, integrity and morals of the author were a ground for some books to be eliminated.
- There were some books written by people whose morals in society were poor and so the church elders rejected the books.
- There were some people who encouraged discrimination for example discriminating women and children from the public, discriminating the leper, the Jews against Gentiles such books were eliminated because Christianity was for every woman.
- Books that were written by unknown people were excluded.

### **Questions**

1. ***Discuss the factors that made some books to be eliminated from the New Testament canon.***
2. ***"There were many books in circulation but the church leaders selected only 27 books:***
  - (a) ***Why were some books left out?***
  - (b) ***Explain the authenticity of the canonized books.***

### **THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE EARLY CHURCH MEMBERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON**

The team of early church members that included apostles, church leaders like bishops, deacons, priests played a great role in the formation and acceptance of the canon as follows;

- They provided the first hand information to the gospel writers. Most of the gospel writers got the information from those eyewitnesses who could not write.
- The early church leaders/members are the ones who approved which books had sound doctrines and were accepted and those who had false doctrines were eliminated.
- The church leaders also provided writing materials.
- The church members studied the behaviors, characters and hence proved the author who was morally upright and his gospel was worthy for acceptance.
- The early church members also set the standards upon which were written first and used them in their daily worship.
- The church members helped to eradicate false preachers and their false writings and hence formed the canon with only true information.
- The early church members especially the Gentile Christians raised questions and problems which created agency/need for writing the canon in the correct way.
- Some of the church members participated in writing the gospels and letters which were included in the New Testament canon like St. Mark, St. Paul.

#### **COMPARISON BETWEEN EARLY CHURCH CHRISTIANS AND THE JEWS/PHARISEES (Christianity and Judaism)**

- The early church Christians believed and followed Jesus Christ as their messiah but the Jews rejected to be their messiah and instead followed the teaching of king pharaoh.
- To the early Christians, Jesus Christ their messiah had already received him whereas the Pharisees/Jews were still waiting for their messiah to come in a glorious way.
- The early Christians believed in direct forgiveness and reconciliation whereas the Jesus believed in first sacrificing before in order to be forgiven.
- To the Jews, forgiveness was only for God while to the early Christians forgiveness was by God through Jesus Christ in the both Jesus and God had the power to forgive.
- To the Christians all people were equal before God but the Pharisees leaders were very superior and children and women were inferior and not allowed in worship.
- To the early Christians, God was universal and even his kingdom was universal that it was for everyone but to the Jews the kingdom of God belonged to only themselves.
- To the early Christians salvation was by faith in Jesus Christ yet the Jews' salvation was by obeying the Mosaic Law.

- To the Jews salvation was only for those who practiced the Mosaic Law and its customs like circumcision yet to the early Christian salvation was for all those who believed in Jesus' teaching.
- To the early Christians baptism was important as an external sign of purity to enter God's kingdom yet to the Pharisees circumcision was external sign of purity for one to enter God's kingdom.
- To the early Christians they were waiting for the second coming of Jesus their messiah to judge the living and the dead but for the Jews were waiting for the first coming of their messiah who would be political.
- To the early Christians, all days were equal and free for worshipping the Lord but to the Jews, the Sabbath was more special and was their holiday for worshipping.
- Christians would gather, worship and pray to God from any place anytime on a regular basis while to the Pharisees worshipping took place only in synagogues and on Sabbath.
- Early Christians preached the gospel through missionary journeys to anyone like in markets and prisons while the Jews preached there to only the Jews and in synagogues.
- Early Christians welcomed everybody associated with everybody while the Jews discriminated other people like lepers, tax collectors etc whom they regarded as sinners.
- To the early Christians suffering of any kind was part of serving God and following his example and so they endured it but to the Jews suffering was seen as a curse and punishment from God.

### **Similarities**

- They all believed in the concept of salvation from God.
- Both believed in purity and holiness to enter God's kingdom.
- They all believed in one God and worshipped him (monotheism).
- They all uphold the value of the temple as God's special house for worship.
- They all believed in the messiah only that the Jews believed in the political messiah.
- They all believed in God's authority to forgive sins.
- They all believed and referred to the Old Testament teaching especially the Ten Commandments.
- All believed in the judgment day by God and it is only the righteous who could escape judgment and enter God's kingdom.

### **COMPARISON BETWEEN THE GOSPEL PREACHED BY JESUS AND THAT TAUGHT BY THE DISCIPLES**

- Jesus' message was directly from God his father but the disciple's message only promised to forgive through Jesus.
- The disciples baptized with water while Jesus baptized with Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ preached in parables for example the parable of the sower while his disciples preached ordinary message with ordinary statements.

- Jesus' message involved the performance of miracles directly from the power of God or Holy Spirit but the disciples performed miracles through the name of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus' message was full of his death where he used to say that the real son of man will die and resurrect whereas the disciples message was full of Jesus' coming.
- In Jesus' teaching he always quoted the Old Testament scriptures or the teaching of the Old Testament prophets like Moses while the disciples quoted Jesus' resurrection.
- Jesus in his message used to hide his messiah ship while the disciples preached openly and made Jesus' messiah ship open and declared him as a messiah.
- The message preached by Jesus was totally oral (not written) while that preached by the disciples was both oral and written.
- In Jesus' teaching he proclaimed the message (good news) of God's kingdom, its good news and joy while the message of disciples proclaimed Jesus as the good news of salvation the redeemer of salvation of mankind.

### **Similarities**

- Both proclaimed the message of salvation of mankind which is received through repentance.
- Both performed miracles in the teachings like healing the sick, casting out of demons among others.
- Both preached the gospel orally.
- They all encouraged repentance, forgiveness of sins and hence living a holy life.
- They all stressed that there is life after death to those who lived faithful lives.
- Both preached using missionary journeys after his resurrection, he would move from place to place preaching the good news.
- Both proclaimed a message of reconciliation and peace within the society.
- Both proclaimed a universal message that the kingdom of God is for all mankind.
- They all accepted suffering as a way of following God, serving him, testing one's faith hence encouraged endurance.
- Both preached a message of love for all mankind irrespective of one's background or status.
- All preached about the unity of believers for example Jesus told his disciples to be united just as him and his father is one.
- Both stressed the message of perfect monotheism. That is to say, they all preached in believing in one God.

## **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK**

### **THE AUTHORSHIP OF MARK'S GOSPEL**

The question of authorship tries to answer the question as regards a person who wrote the gospel according to the available evidence therefore, Mark's gospel was written by;

- It was written by a man called John Mark.

- It was written by John Mark who is believed to have been a close associate of the eyewitnesses of all apostles especially Peter.
- John Mark who wrote this gospel is the Mark who is believed to be a personal secretary to Peter the senior apostle and this is believed to have been the major source of his information.
- He is John Mark in whose mother's home the apostles ran away naked when Jesus was arrested and so from his childhood he started getting associated to eyewitnesses of Jesus Christ.
- He is Mark whom Saint Peter refers to as his son. This implies that Mark the author was a spiritual son to Peter.
- He is the only person known by the name in the whole bible which confirms he is the author.
- In the gospel according to Mark some Greek words are interpreted in Aramaic language. John Mark qualifies to be Saul since he had a Jewish background. Words like "TalithaKoum" meaning young girl wake up, "Eloi Eloi" meaning my God my God.
- The author presents many direct events about Jesus 'mystery'. For example use of parables, Miracles etc. This implies that he got information from a direct eye witness and hence it was John Mark because the source of information was Peter.
- The gospel presents some agency which implies that the writer must have been a secretary of Peter and this was John Mark.

#### **PURPOSE/AIMS OF MARK'S GOSPEL**

The author of Mark's gospel could have aimed at the following;

- He wanted to put the good news of Jesus Christ in a written form. Probably this is why he begins his gospel with statement that 'this is the good news about the Lord'
- He wanted to preserve the information about Jesus Christ for the future generation. And this could only be in written form.
- The aim was to show that Jesus is the real savior of man's sins and real promised messiah and son of God.
- The author's purpose was to call all people repent and live a holy and acceptable life in God that's why John the Baptist ran calling people to repent.
- The purpose was to show the Universality of God's kingdom. The author in his gospel shows that God's kingdom does not discriminate the Jews and the Gentiles, children and adults made.
- The purpose was to show the salvation mission of Jesus Christ on earth that Jesus came to save sinners and he was sent by God since he had authority to forgive sins.



- The aim was to show reality of everlasting life through following and believing in Jesus Christ. This is because Jesus resurrected people who are dead like Jaures' daughter and even Jesus himself who had resurrected.
- He aimed at strengthening people's faith in God. He wanted his followers to have strong faith in God through Jesus Christ the redeemer.
- Mark wanted to show that Jesus' coming was a fulfillment of Old Testament scriptures. This is why he refers to the teaching of Id. testament prophets like Isaiah (Mark 1; 2ff).
- The author aimed at showing the greatness of God's kingdom and its reality comparing to satanic kingdom. This is proved by many miracles of casting out demons and use of parables.
- It was to establish a strong relationship between mankind and god through love.
- The author shows God's love for mankind and calls upon the audience to endure suffering, trials, temptations etc.
- The author wanted to present the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ which were a divine plan.
- Mark also aimed at showing the growth and understanding of God's kingdom as gradual but not sudden.
- The author also intended to show that the kingdom of God had come down among many people who believed. This is because John the Baptist advised people to prepare the way to obey and repent because kingdom of God was at hand.
- The aim was to show continuous battle between God and satanic powers that victory and greatness belong to God's kingdom. For example Jesus on many occasions casted demons and ordered them to keep quiet which showed some kind of battle.

### **THE AUDIENCE OF MARK'S GOSPEL**

Audience is the word used to refer to the congregation to whom any author addresses his message/written literature.

The author of mark's gospel had a specific guidance or type of congregation which he aimed at addressing his message/teachings.

According to research of scholars, the author seemed to have two different categories of people to whom he addressed his gospel and these are/were

- (i) Gentiles
- (ii) Jews

**Proof/ evidence that he wrote to the Gentiles itself, Mark could have addressed the congregation of the Gentiles due to the following;**

- He uses very few Old Testament scriptures because some of them could not be understood by gentiles since they were not considered by the Jews.
- He tries to explain some Jewish cultures, practices and customs implying that he was addressing people who didn't know such cultures and hence were the Gentiles.
- The author tried to show that the gospel is for all mankind. For example Jesus told his disciples to go to the whole world and preach the gospel. This implies that even Gentiles were considered.
- The author allows even women to participate in public matters like serving God but this was not allowed in the Jewish culture because women were not supposed to talk in public so since even women participated in public matters and serving the lord, this means that the letter was written to gentiles.
- Jesus' genealogy/background is rejected and completely omitted in mark's gospel implying that the author was writing to gentiles since for them Jesus' background would not be of value and would not be understood.
- Mark could have written to the Gentiles because Jesus Christ performed some miracles in gentile land, he also had his gospel centres in the Gentile land for example feeding of 400 men took place in the Gentile land.
- In the gospel Jesus served or attended to the needs of the commanded their faith to benefit them in God's kingdom for example the woman with continuous blood flow.
- Jesus also helped to heal and save Gentiles and this means that he had great concern for them as the audience for example the Phoenician whose daughter was about to die begged Jesus to heal her and she got healed.
- In this gospel Jesus associated with all categories of people. For example outcasts, tax collectors, lepers etc which was not accepted in the Jewish culture. This implies that Mark was addressing gentile nation.
- John Mark labored to interpret Aramaic words for example "Eloi" meaning my God my God "TalithaKoum" meaning young girl wake up that implied that was communicating to Gentiles.
- However on the other hand, he always intended to address another group of believers especially the Jewish Christians because of the following;
- Mark refers to Jews as god's children for example his experience with a Phoenician woman whom he told that "we can't give food of children to dogs".
- When Jesus was crucified and hanged on the cross, on his cross, they wrote" king of the Jews" which meant he was addressing the Jews.
- In the gospel Jesus tried to remind the Jews about the teaching of the mosaic laws for example when he taught about marriage and divorce (Mark 10:1ff)

- During the triumphant entry, Jesus was riding a donkey and found people gathered and they praised him as the one coming from David's kingdom.
- Some audience used to refer Jesus as son of God. For example the blind Bartimaeus.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL**

The gospel according to Mark is characterized by the following;

- It is characterized by messianic secrecy. That is to say, the gospel Jesus hides his identity as a messiah in that he does not want people to know him.
- It is characterized by use of many parables. For example the parable of mustard seeds.
- It is a very short gospel compared to others. For example it has 16 chapters yet other like John have 21, Mathew has 25.
- The gospel is too brief in reporting about certain events such as there was urgency with the author. For example he describes Jesus' temptation in any two verses (Mark 12:1-3).
- In the gospel there is disciples' lack of understanding is shown (spiritual immaturity). For example the disciples called Jesus a ghost when they arrested Jesus they all took off.
- It is characterized by the universal approach. It's concerned with all mankind both the Jews and gentiles, women and men, adults and children among others.
- The gospel shows a continuous battle between divine forces and powers of darkness. For example Jesus gave authority to the disciples to cast out demons and even when he was crucified darkness fell over the world.
- The gospel is characterized with Jesus' passion. Narrative that is a lot of Jesus' suffering is indicated.
- It is characterized with the kingdom of God being a future reality. For example Jesus' ascending to heaven shows that God's kingdom is a future reality.
- It is characterized with opposition against Jesus or Jesus' rejection by the Jewish leaders.
- It is characterized with Jesus' humanity in many occasions the author represents Jesus as an orderly human being. Jesus himself got anointed he was angry; he slept and ate with sinners like Levi.
- It also presents Jesus' divinity meaning appeared a super ordinary way below man understands. For example transfiguration.
- It is characterized with performance of many miracles as compared to other gospels of other nature life, healing, feeding. The gospel of Mark presented the kingdom of God for example powerful.

## **THE PORTRAITS OF MARK'S GOSPEL**

### **Characteristics of Jesus**

The author of Mark's gospel portrays or shows Jesus in many identities or characterized as shown below;

- In Mark 1:1 the author shows Jesus as the son of God.
- He is presented as the messiah who had been promised to come as a messenger from God. The messiah whom the Old Testament wrote about.
- He is presented as the lord. For example John Baptist came telling people to prepare way for the Lord.
- He is presented as a savior of mankind from sin. For example he used to forgive people's sins like the paralyzed man whom he said "my son your sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:2-9)
- He is presented as a healer or a doctor. He healed many people including Phoenician woman, blind Bartimaeus among others.

During transfiguration he told Peter not to tell anybody of what he had seen until the son of man is risen (Mark 9:9)

- He is a provider. For example he fed the hungry people/ multitude of 4000 and 5000.
- He is presented as a son of Mary and a son of a carpenter. For example the people of Nazareth rejected him saying he is just a son to a carpenter.
- He is presented as Jesus of Nazareth for example at his crucifixion they referred to him as Jesus of Nazareth.
- He is presented as prophet (foretellers). For example his betrayal, denial, arrest all took place.
- Jesus is the source of life or giver of life. For example he resurrected the dead like Jairus's daughter.
- Jesus is portrayed as the king in the gospel of Mark. For example during his crucifixion on the cross, they wrote "Jesus the king of the Jews" during the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, they were singing Hosanna, the one coming in the name of King David.
- He is portrayed as a victor or conqueror for example conquered death, overcame the devil's temptation.
- According to Mark Jesus is a human being. That is to say, he is shown with many characteristics of humanity. For example he ate, slept, cried etc.
- He is presented as a divine being that is in many ways Jesus got his powers from his father God. For example he calmed the storm.
- He is a universal redeemer. That is to say, redeems all people without discriminating any. For example he allowed the children, women all to participate in God's kingdom.
- He is a master/ teacher. In many occasions his disciples referred to him as a teacher for example when they were asking him who would be the greatest among them in God's kingdom.
- He is presented as a judge. For example when they questioned him why he had healed on Sabbath he gave an answer that proved him as a judge...
- He is portrayed as a humble servant of God. Jesus portrayed characters of humbleness throughout the gospel. For example he humbled himself before the religious leaders and even to his disciples.

- Jesus is presented as a suffering messiah as it had been written about him in the Old Testament books. For example he suffered during his crucifixion, he was mocked at.

### **THE PROLOGUE OF MARK'S GOSPEL (Mark 1:1-13)**

A prologue refers to any introduction and in this case, it refers to the introductory part about Jesus as reported by Mark. It has following content or message.

- This introductory part about Jesus begins with the idea that this is the good news about Jesus Christ.
- The message is that Jesus is the son of God.
- It shows that Jesus' coming was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies especially Isaiah.
- John the Baptist came as a fore runner but he wasn't a messiah.
- Jesus is the messiah who is so great that even John the Baptist cannot even untie his sandals.
- John the Baptist told people to get ready for the lord and make a straight path for him to travel.
- John came from the desert preaching and baptizing.
- John the Baptist was baptizing with water but Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit.
- John the Baptist told people turn away from their sins and be forgiven.
- The message is that many people came from province of Judea and Jerusalem to listen to John the Baptist and those who accepted the message were baptized in river Jordan.
- The content is that John the Baptist used to put on clothes made from camel's hair and leather belt around his waist.
- According to this prologue Jesus came from Nazareth in the province of Galilee and was baptized in River Jordan (Mark 1:9).
- John the Baptist used to eat locusts and wild honey.
- After being immersed in water he came out of it and then saw heaven opening.
- The spirit of God came upon Jesus in form of a dove.
- Jesus heard a voice from heaven saying "you are my own dear son I am well pleased of you".
- Jesus was tempted in the desert according to the prologue.
- Satan the devil tempted him for 40 days but he overcame temptations.
- Wild animals were there when Jesus was being tempted but the angels of the Lord attended to him and helped him.

### **THE BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION OF JESUS IN MARK'S GOSPEL**

The author of Mark's gospel presents Jesus Christ coming from Nazareth in the province of Galilee and went to river Jordan where he was baptized by John the Baptist and was baptized by immersing him in deep water.

Four major events took place during baptism of Jesus

- The Holy Spirit came to Jesus in form of a dove.
- Heaven opened
- Jesus moved out of water
- Voice came from heaven saying “you are my own dear son I am pleased with you”.

#### **IMPLICATION OF JESUS’ BAPTISM**

- The opening of heavens meant the fulfillment of the Jewish expectation. Right from the time of old testament, the Jews always expected heaven to open and God their father would visit them.
- The message in the voice was also a fulfillment of Old Testament scriptures showing a connection between the Old Testament and New Testament. For example this very voice had been recorded in Psalms 2:7.
- The coming out of water of Jordan it implied the Israelites experience of crossing the Red sea hence Jesus was the new Israelite.
- By coming out of water also meant Jesus’ resurrection.
- It also meant Jesus’ victory over death just as he came out of deep waters it symbolized that he would come out the grave victoriously.
- It acted as an example that every human being has to undergo baptism in order to enter the kingdom (heaven).
- The coming of the Holy Spirit meant strength of the trinity. That is to say, the father spoke in the voice, God the spirit in form of a dove upon Jesus God the son.
- It also symbolized Jesus’ humanity, humbleness because a dove was a symbol of humbleness.
- The dove was also a symbol of peace implying that Jesus’ mission was peaceful for all mankind.
- The event confirmed Jesus son to God because the voice said “you are my son”.
- His baptism signified the need for repentance, purity, holiness in order to enter God’s kingdom.
- By Jesus being baptized, he was repenting on behalf of mankind and was showing way to heaven through holiness.
- It meant that Jesus recognized the work of John the Baptist and hence John was a true messiah of God.
- It also showed that Jesus’ humanity since he was also baptized as a human being.
- Jesus’ baptism confirmed him as a suffering messiah because he accepted to go under humiliation, shame of being baptized as if he was a sinner.
- It also symbolized that God’s kingdom is powerful and living because heaven opened and voice spoke to Jesus Christ.
- The baptism showed that all mankind must accept the good news and receive Jesus as their Lord. For

example john the Baptist had to accept and received Jesus for baptism.

- Going to the land of Galilee for baptism meant that Jesus was a universal savior who had come to save sinners. This is because Galilee was a land known for pagans but Jesus went there to be baptized.
- It also shows that Jesus was a promised messiah who had come to die for the sins of mankind.

### **Questions**

1. ***Discuss the meaning of Jesus' baptism.***
2. ***How relevant is his baptism?***
3. ***(a) "Jesus was not a sinner but he went to John to be baptized." How can you justify Jesus' action?  
(b) Why did Jesus have to go to John to be baptized?***
4. ***What can Christians learn from this?***

### **WHY JESUS WENT TO JOHN THE BAPTIST TO BE BAPTIZED**

- It was an act of obedience to the father because he had to be baptized for the sake of mankind.
- It was an act of fluffiness to the father since he had to do the mission of saving mankind so whether he was not a sinner he had to be baptized.
- He was laying a foundation for all mankind to be baptized to enter heaven.
- He had to be baptized in order to exercise his victory over death as a way of proclaiming his resurrection.
- It was a way of demonstrating his humanity and so showing that mankind should be humble.
- It was a way to prove or confirm that John the Baptist was carrying out the right baptism so Jesus recognized his ministry.
- He wanted to fulfill the Old Testament scriptures.
- He did so in order to express his love for the sinful mankind on whose behalf he accepted to be baptized.
- He wanted to show an example to all others that baptism is divine.
- He was confirming the idea of the suffering messiah. He was ready to suffer for the sinners.
- Jesus wanted to repent for sinners.

### **BAPTISM IN MODERN SOCIETY AND ITS IMPORTANCE**

In different church denominations baptism is carried out differently though with the same purpose and aim.

Among the Catholics, baptism is conducted in quite or similar way but different from how the Pentecostals and SDAs conduct it.

### **BAPTISM IN PENTECOSTAL AND SDA DENOMINATIONS**

- In SDA and Pentecostals baptism is organized and conducted by church leaders called pastors.



- In these denominations they only baptize mature people who can decide for themselves and who can repent for the sins they have committed.
- Before one is baptized in water, he/she is subjected to intensive teaching of the value and meaning of baptism.
- It is through teaching that candidates are taken for baptism ceremony.
- In the Pentecostal faith baptism is by emersion. The person is taken in deep water where he is immersed and made to face upwards while in water. This is done to emulate the way Jesus Christ was baptized.
- They baptize in the name of the father, the son and Holy Spirit.
- During baptism ceremonies, intensive praises, worship and other forms of hymns are sung in honour of the Lord who forgives man's sins.
- Intensive prayers are also made for the baptized candidates aimed at delivering the candidate from the poor history of demon attacks and usher him/her in new life of peace, joy holiness and purity.
- In the Pentecostal faith people's names remain unchanged. It is only when the candidate wishes her named to be changed.
- In most cases, baptism in SDA faith is conducted out of church building but taken to an open place where there is enough water where a person can be deeper.

### **JESUS' TEMPTATION (Mark 1:12-13)**

In the gospel according to mark the ways in which Jesus was tempted were neglected. He was tempted by Satan in the desert.

It is the spirit of God that led Jesus to wilderness where he stayed for 40 days being tempted but he overcame temptation because the angel of God helped him.

### **Implication of Jesus 'Temptation**

- It implied his human nature because he was exposed to the temptation like any other human being.
- It showed the struggle between satanic powers and God's kingdom since it was Satan tempting Jesus.
- It implied that Jesus is the suffering messiah because he suffered under Satan's temptation and was even fasting.
- The 40 days Jesus spent in the desert symbolized or represented 400 years the Israelites spent in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land.
- It meant that Jesus is the new Israelite because he was tempted just as Israelites were tempted in the wilderness.

- It implied the victory God's kingdom had over satanic forces because Jesus overcame the satanic temptation.
- The experience demonstrated the divinity of Jesus Christ because he overcame, fasted for 40 days and it is the spirit of God that led him to the desert.
- It meant that suffering is part of mankind and part of saving God no matter whether one is a sinner or not.
- It showed the connection between the Old Testament and New Testament. This is because it was written in Old Testament that the baby was with wild animals but they could not harm him, angels attended to him.
- His temptation was a sign that the devil exists and its work is to tempt believers and off track (mislead) them from ways of God.
- It showed the power and need of prayers in order to defeat Satan. It was because of the power of prayer that Jesus defeated Satan.
- It implied his willingness and readiness to save mankind through suffering.
- It meant that Jesus' mission on earth would be victorious because he overcame the temptation of Satan right from the start.
- It meant that Jesus was being equipped or trained or prepared by the presence of the Holy Spirit for the next battle that he would undergo.

### **Relevance of Jesus' temptation to modern Christians**

- Christians should love one another and suffer on one another's behalf as Jesus showed his love for mankind by accepting to suffer on man's behalf.
- Christians should draw closer to God in times of temptations because he is the source of hope just as the angel protected Jesus in the wilderness.
- Christians should guard against temptations and defeat such powers as Jesus did in the wilderness.
- Christians should accept suffering when it comes their way as part of saving God because even Jesus accepted suffering through temptations.
- Christians should seek God's protection in times of trouble because even Jesus was protected by God's angels.
- Christians should obey the Holy Spirit just as Jesus obeyed the Holy Spirit as he led him to the wilderness.
- Christians should stand strong against trials of the enemies just as Jesus stood firm and overcame Satan's temptation.
- Christians should be willing to follow God's direction and guidance when it means suffering just as Jesus willingly followed experience in the deserts.

### **THE CALL OF THE FIRST FOUR DISCIPLES (Mark 1:14-20)**

As Jesus was beginning his earthly ministry officially, he went to the province of Galilee preaching the good news, calling people to repent because the kingdom of God had come and was at hand.

He met the fishermen at the lake Galilee and the first two were Simon and Andrew and the last two were James and John the sons of Zebedee.

By this time John the Baptist had been in prison and when Jesus saw the last fishermen, he called them to follow him “come follow me, I will make you to catch men.”

Immediately these fishermen followed Jesus and the other two left their father in the boat.

### **Significance of Call of Fishermen**

- The call implied that Jesus' ability and authority to change man's background and career this is because he was able to change these fishermen to be preachers of good news.
- The call implied that Jesus' earthly ministry had officially begun because John the Baptist his fore runner had been imprisoned and himself was preaching the good news as he got the fishermen.
- It portrayed the Lord's love for every mankind and that the Lord loves everyone the way he is regardless of one's status. This is because Jesus called the fishermen who were despised.
- It implied that Jesus is the real savior of mankind because he had gone to Galilee land of sinners and was preaching the good news and managed to get fishermen and forgave their sins.
- It implied that God's kingdom is a future reality because Jesus told his people that the kingdom of God is near and so people should turn away from their sins.
- It showed a need for repentance and holiness in order to enter God's kingdom. Jesus came telling people to repent their sins which would therefore prepare them enter God's kingdom.
- The call of the first four disciples implied that.....and even Jesus' mission on earth is universal. This is because Jesus was calling everyone to repent and get prepared for his kingdom.
- The event helped Jesus to prepare/equip his disciples for future spreading of good news.
- Jesus' humanity was revealed on the call of the first four disciples he walked from Nazareth to Galilee; spoke to people all of which were characteristics of humanity.
- The call signified Jesus' divinity because he had authority to forgive sinners and at the same time he was able to teach them how to catch people.
- It implied that the vocational and choice of the Lord for anyone does not depend on his background. This is because he called fishermen regardless of their background.

## **Why Jesus called the four disciples**

- The experience and background of these people being fishermen was the reason for Jesus' call. This is because fishing is as tiresome and challenging as preaching and leading people which therefore made Jesus to call them to use the fishing experience and fish people.
- He wanted to prepare them for the future mission of preaching the gospel since he knew that he would have an end to his earthly ministry so there was need for other people to continue with it.
- It was another way for Jesus to express his love, care, compassion to the fishermen who were despised in society and that are why he called them.
- Jesus could have needed company and that's why he called these disciples.
- He wanted to be with a team that would give him company.
- It was one way to show that God's kingdom is universal. That is to say, the kingdom of God is for everyone as long as one accepts to follow Jesus.
- He wanted to forgive the sins of these fishermen just like he came calling everyone to turn away from sins he wanted to forgive their sins.
- Jesus could have needed eyewitness from the earth he knew that any time could leave and go.
- The call of the four disciples was to show Jesus' authority over mankind and authority to transform man's one career like he transformed fishermen to preacher men.
- Jesus aimed at hiding his messiah ship right from the start. This is because he holds ordinary fishermen and associates with them.
- He called the four disciples as a way to show that choice and selection does not depend on man's background but the divine will of God just as he chose the fishermen.

## **Relevance of the call of the first four disciples**

- Christians should obey God's will just as four fishermen obeyed Jesus when he called them.
- Christians should be prepared for the call of God because it is abrupt just as the four disciples had not been prepared for it.
- Christians should spread the good news of the kingdom of God just as Jesus spread the good news to the fishermen and won them to God's kingdom.
- Christians should repent just as Jesus called people to repent and turn away from their sins.
- Christian leaders should be humble and associate with everyone just like Christ humbled himself and associated with fishermen.
- Christians should respond positively to God's call just as the fishermen responded.
- Christians should love everyone without discrimination regardless of one's background Jesus loved the fishermen.

- Christians should conduct missionary journeys just as Jesus went to Galilee the land of sinners and preached the good news.
- Christian leaders should prepare their followers as successors in matters of God's kingdom just as Jesus Christ prepared his four disciples.

### ***Guiding questions***

- 1. What is the relevance of Jesus' call of the first four disciples to the modern Christians?***
- 2. What lesson do modern Christians learn from Jesus' call of the first four disciples?***

### **MIRACLES IN JESUS' MINISTRY**

A miracle can be defined as an extra ordinary event that is beyond man's ability and it is attributed to God's intervention.

It is that event that is beyond science and ordinary laws of humanity but can only be interpreted by God's involvement.

In the gospel according to Mark many of these extra ordinary events were performed and can be grouped into five major categories

- (i) Miracle of feeding
- (ii) Miracle of healing
- (iii) Miracle of life
- (iv) Miracle of nature
- (v) Miracle of exorcism

### **MIRACLE OF FEEDING**

These were extra ordinary events where Jesus fed multitudes using very little quantities of food which was beyond scientific laws. The feeding miracle include

- Feeding 5,000 multitudes using only two fish and 5 loaves of bread.
- Feeding 4,000 multitudes using 7 loaves of bread and small quantity of fish.

### **MIRACLE OF HEALING**

These were extra ordinary events where by Jesus used his divine powers to heal incurable diseases in an extra ordinary way. They include;

- Healing of blind Bartimaeus
- Healing of a woman with constant blood flow.

- Healing of a man with a paralyzed hand.
- Healing a man with leprosy
- Healing of a deaf mute
- Healing of many people at once including Peter's mother-in-law.

### **MIRACLE OF LIFE**

These include;

- Raising Jaures' daughter to life

### **MIRACLE OF NATURE**

These were extra ordinary events whereby Jesus used to calm the storm, walk on water, curse the fig tree.

### **MIRACLE OF EXORCISM**

These are miracles where by Jesus cursed out demons using his divine power and they include;

- Healing of a boy with evil spirits (Mk 9:24)
- Healing of the daughter of a Phoenician woman who had an evil spirit (Mk 7:24-30)
- Healing of a man with evil spirits (Mk 5:1-20)
- Healing a man with epilepsy

### **PURPOSE OF THE USE OF MIRACLES**

The miracles that Jesus performed in mark's gospel have the following purposes;

- Jesus wanted to express his spiritual love for mankind. For example by healing and feeding the multitudes.
- The purpose was to show the difference between Jesus and religious leaders because Jesus in his teaching performed miracles which teachers of the law and Pharisees could not.
- Miracles were used to fulfill Old Testament promises about the messiah that is to say it had been prophesized that messiah would heal the sick for example Isaiah 53.
- Miracles were to show that Jesus was a good shepherd and so caring for example feeding miracles which he did like any good shepherd can do.
- He performed miracles to show his power and control over nature for example when he calmed the storm.
- He used miracles to show his power and authority over life and that's why he performed miracles of raising Jaures' daughter to life.
- He performed miracles to show his power and authority over diseases and sickness that is why he healed the deaf, the blind and the crippled.

- He also used miracles to show his power and authority and that is why he just commanded demons to leave.
- He used miracles to show that God's miracle is stronger more powerful than Satan's kingdom. This is truer for exorcism miracle.
- Miracles serve to show that there is a lot in God's kingdom and that is why Jesus could use little food like four 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread to feed multitudes.
- He used miracles to show that there is life after death. This is truer with the miracle of raising Jaures' daughter.
- Miracles serve to show that there is no disappointment to those who believe in Jesus and trust in him for example he healed those who trusted in him.
- Miracles show that God's kingdom is a future reality. For example by raising the dead, it showed that God's kingdom is in future.
- Miracles used to restore hope to the disadvantaged and to the disappointed in the society.
- Miracles helped to raise the confidence and faith of Jesus' followers for example when he healed a woman with constant blood flow he told her "your faith has healed you".
- They were used to show Jesus as savior of mankind from sin, torture and any other form of suffering. For example healing and exorcism miracle.
- They wanted to show that God's kingdom is universal and that even his mission on earth is universal for example he did not discriminate.
- He wanted to show his divine nature despite the fact that he appeared in human nature for example when he cast out demons, he demonstrated his divine nature.
- He wanted to demonstrate his compassion, mercy, kindness for mankind.

### **Questions**

1. ***Of what importance were miracles to Jesus?***
2. ***Why did Jesus perform miracles in his ministry?***

### **MIRACLES OF EXORCISM**

- In Mark 5:1-20, Jesus cast out evil spirits from a man who had many of them and hence named themselves "mob" meaning they were so any.
- This man was in the territory of Grease in the land Galilee.
- Before Jesus came to him, he used to stay along the tombs and was so strong that nobody would touch him.

- He would be chained but broke the chains.
- As soon as the demons saw Jesus from a distance, the man came running and fell at Jesus' feet and started screaming that Jesus son of the highest God.
- Jesus commanded them to get out of him despite that they begged not to be destroyed.
- However, before the final command was given, the demons tried to be Jesus not to send them out but at least send them to pigs nearby.
- Jesus sent them to a herd of pigs about 2,000 of them.
- As soon as the demons entered the pigs, the pigs run mad and drowned in the lake.
- The pig owners became very angry with Jesus and started chasing him away from their land but the demonic had been healed and wanted to go with Jesus.
- Jesus told him to stay with his parents and tell them what the Lord had done for him.

### **Importance of Exorcism Miracle**

- It showed Jesus' love for mankind by delivering him because he had suffered for many years.
- It portrayed Jesus' messiah ship because it had been written that the messiah would come to deliver those who were suffering and by him doing so it confirmed him as a messiah.
- It demonstrated Jesus' mercy or compassion for mankind since he even told the man to go and tell the public how God had been so kind to him and delivered him.
- It portrayed Jesus' power and authority over demonic forces because he simply commanded the evil spirits and they went away.
- It shows that Jesus is the savior of mankind both from sin, torture, misery etc which this man had experienced along the tombs.
- It demonstrated Jesus' victory on earth and that god's kingdom is stronger than Satan's kingdom because the mob spirits obeyed Jesus' command and ran away.
- It demonstrated Jesus' universal nature because the miracle took place in Galilee the land of pagans.
- It helped to expand on God's kingdom because the man who had been delivered was told to go and tell others what the Lord had done for him and at the same time all people who saw him being delivered were all amazed.
- It demonstrated Jesus' divinity because he used this divine power to cast out mob demons and as such demons recognized him as the son of most high God.
- It showed Jesus' humanity because he was visible walked and even talked to the man by advising him to go and tell people what the Lord done for him.
- It showed the difference between Jesus Christ and other religious leaders of the time because for him even demons obeyed him.



- It showed that in God's kingdom there is peace, freedom and joy because Jesus brought freedom and joy to this man after setting him free.
- It showed that Jesus was a suffering messiah because people had started chasing him away even for the good he had done.
- The miracle became a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies and hence a relationship between Old Testament and New Testament.
- It showed that Satan's kingdom is a source of suffering.
- T restored hope for the demonic and his family because they were all amazed and hence their trust and hope in the Lord.
- It showed a continuous battle between satanic forces and divine powers in mark's gospel by demons asking Jesus whether he had come to destroy them.
- It became a center of controversy or opposition between Jesus and religious leaders of time. This is because they allied with pig owners to chase Jesus away as a bad man.

### **Relevance of Exorcism Miracle to Modern Christians**

- Christians should take all their problems to Jesus for help just as the demonic went to Jesus and was helped.
- Christians should confront the devil with the power of the Holy Spirit because the "mobs" in the man recognized Jesus' presence and requested him not to destroy them.
- Christians should extend love to one another just as Christ extended love to the demonic and healed him.
- Christians should commit themselves in prayers asking God to send Holy Spirit to guide them.
- Christians should depend on Jesus because he is the only source of rescue just as he rescued the demonic.
- Christians should help all people without discrimination. This is because he never discriminated.
- Christians should extend compassion or mercy to those who are suffering just as Jesus extended mercy to the demonic.
- Christians should call upon for protection and healing against the devil.
- Christians should spread good news to everyone in different places the same was Jesus spread the good news in Grease and ended up healing the demonic.
- Christians should cast all their worries/troubles to the Lord because he cares just as the demonic fell at Jesus' feet.
- Christians should trust in the Lord because he is able to deliver them just as he helped the demonic.
- Christians should exercise their faith in the Lord for help just as the demonic had faith in God.

## **THE MIRACLE OF NATURE (MARK 4:35-41) (JESUS CALMS THE STORM)**

- Jesus one time was with his disciples after feeding the multitude.
- He left them into the boat as they were crossing to go to Bethsaida but Jesus had gone to the hill to pray.
- As the boat was in the middle of the lake, the wind started disturbing them and they would not control it.
- Jesus saw the disciples shouting and he went out to rescue them while he was walking on water.
- As he was passing them, they failed to recognize that he was the master and called him a ghost.
- Jesus told them not to fear describing that it was him but not a ghost.
- They were terrified, Jesus got into the boat with them and the wind died.
- The disciples were amazed to see this happening because they had not understood.

### **Importance of the Miracle**

- It showed disciples spiritual immaturity (lack of understanding of Jesus) because they failed to recognize and instead called him a ghost.
- It portrayed Jesus' authority over nature because he commanded wind and obeyed him.
- It reflected on Jesus' coming as a fulfillment of Old Testament scriptures. This is because the supernatural walking on water symbolized the supernatural way the Jews crossed the Red sea.
- It portrayed the love of Jesus because he walked on water to rescue them from strength of strong wind.
- It demonstrated divine nature of Jesus because he walked on water in supernatural way beyond man's ability.
- It showed Jesus' universal mission because he was crossing from one region to another to preach the good news.
- It reflected on Jesus humanity because he was visible, talked to his disciples and he had gone to pray just like any human being.
- It portrayed the strength of faith because it was by faith that Jesus walked on water.
- It also reflected on the salvation mission of Jesus Christ for mankind. This is because he saved his disciples from stress and torture of wind.
- Walking on water meant that with God everything is possible and at Jesus' presence is enough to change worst condition.
- It showed that Jesus' mission is peaceful because he helped disciples to get peace as strong wind disturbed them and later stopped.
- The water on which Jesus walked symbolized troubles which therefore meant that Jesus would be victorious in his mission on earth.

## **MIRACLE OF FEEDING (Mark 6:30-44)**

- In this miracle Jesus was with disciples in an isolated place.
- Meanwhile a multitude of people who were hungry surrounded Jesus.
- When Jesus looked at them he looked like sheep with a shepherd.
- In way of expressing concern Jesus asked the disciples how to feed the hungry multitudes.
- They asked Jesus to send the people away but Jesus asked them how much food they had.
- They answered two fish and five loaves of bread.
- Then Jesus asked for bread and fish they had which he got and raised up towards heaven and prayed to the father.
- He broke the 2 fish and also 5 loaves of bread and gave his disciples to supply it to everyone.
- People ate and they were satisfied, amazed and Jesus' disciples collected twelve baskets of the leftovers and the number of men was 5,000.

### **Importance of Feeding 5,000 People**

- It showed Jesus' love, care for mankind whom he fed.
- It portrayed Jesus as a provider because he provided food for the hungry people.
- It showed that Jesus has authority of a nature because he multiplied the 2 fish and 5 loaves of bread and fed 5,000.
- It showed that in God's kingdom there is plenty because people ate and twelve baskets of leftovers were collected.
- It showed the universality of Jesus because he fed everyone regardless of the background, size, and colour.
- It implied that Jesus is a good shepherd that all other shepherds because he looked at people who looked like sheep without a shepherd and acted as good shepherd.
- It showed a fulfillment of old testament scriptures where God said that he will become the shepherd of his people.
- The twelve baskets of leftovers symbolized the 12 tribes in Israel.
- It implied that Jesus catered for both physical and spiritual needs of his audience. That is to say, by feeding he extended the care of physical needs.
- It shows that Jesus' physical power and love came from heaven (from God his father). This is because he got the bread and fish and looked up as gave thanks to God and a miracle was performed.
- It implied the spiritual immaturity of Jesus' disciples because they poorly advised Jesus to send away the people and doubted his power to feed the multitudes.
- It showed Jesus' divinity as he was able to multiply 2 fish and 5 loaves to feed the multitudes.
- It reflected Jesus as a servant of the people because he served those who were hungry.

## **THE HEALING OF A WOMAN WITH CONTINUOUS BLOOD FLOW (Mark 5:25-35)**

- This is one of the main miracles which Jesus performed.
- As Jesus was on his way across the other side of the lake he met a large crowd together with his disciples.
- In the big congregation, there was a woman who had a problem of continuous blood which she had suffered for twelve years the woman had tried all different doctors but with no cure.
- When she heard that Jesus had power to heal she decided and courageously reached out to touch Jesus 'cloak/garment or cloth.
- As soon as she had adored so the flow of blood stopped and she was healed.
- Jesus was disturbed by this touch on his cloth because he felt it and he asked his disciples who had touched him.
- Their response was that there was no way they could have recognized who touched him out of very many people who were around him.
- The woman came and fell on Jesus' feet and spoke the truth that she was the one who had touched him.
- Jesus said the woman "my daughter your faith has made you well go in peace and be healed of your trouble".

### **Significance of the Miracle**

- It portrayed Jesus' power over diseases since the woman just touched Jesus' cloth and was healed of her disease which she has suffered for 12 years.
- It implied that Jesus is the savior of mankind from trouble touches because he told the woman that go in peace and be healed of your trouble.
- It demonstrated the value and power of faith for mankind to receive miracles from God since Jesus told the woman that my daughter your faith has made you well.
- It implied the divine nature of Jesus Christ in that the woman just touched Jesus' cloth and her disease was cured and even Jesus recognized that the divine power had come out of to heal the woman.
- It portrayed that Jesus is the promised messiah who is to come and heal or deliver mankind from suffering according to Isaiah 53 by his spirit people are healed.
- It reflected the disciple's spiritual immaturity because they could not recognize that Jesus had felt a special touch as him.
- It portrayed that Jesus' mission was to bring peace, freedom, liberty when he said go in peace.
- It showed that with God everything is possible because the doctors had failed to cure the woman's problem.
- It showed his love for mankind because he healed a woman who had suffered for twelve years.

- It showed Jesus' universal nature because he never discriminated.

### **Questions**

1. ***Why did Jesus heal the woman with continuous blood flow?***
2. ***Explain the relevance of this healing to modern Christians.***
3. ***How does Jesus heal his people today?***

### **CONTROVERSIES IN JESUS' MINISTRY ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL OF MARK**

A controversy can be literally interpreted as a disagreement, misunderstanding expressed in form of opposition or verbal conflicts between two or more parties over a given principle.

In the case of Jesus, controversies refer to different misunderstanding, disagreement, opposition or conflicts which Jesus faced from the different religious leaders like the Pharisees, scribes, Sadducees and political leaders plus other people of his congregation.

Mark's gospel records the hottest battles or oppositions Jesus faced in his ministry compared to other gospel.

There are five major areas of conflict and these include;

- (i) The first controversy of healing a paralyzed man (Mk 2:1-12)
- (ii) The second controversy is Jesus calling Levi the tax collector (Mk 2:13-17)
- (iii) The third controversy is about question of fasting (Mk 2:18-22)
- (iv) The fourth controversy is about Jesus' disciples picking corn on Sabbath (Mk 2:23-28)
- (v) The fifth controversy which is the major is about Jesus' working or healing on Sabbath (Mk 3:1-6)

### **CAUSES OF THE CONTROVERSIES IN MARK'S GOSPEL**

**Examine the causes of the controversy or conflict that Jesus Christ faced in gospel according to Mark.**

- Jesus' practice to forgive sins caused conflicts between him and the Jews of the time. This is because they knew that it was only God who had the authority to forgive sins for example in the first controversy of healing the paralytic him that "my son your sins are forgiven"
- Jesus equated himself to God and according to Jews this was blasphemy for example he said to the paralytic that "my son....." meant that Jesus was God the father and this annoyed leaders hence conflicts.
- Jesus' tendency of associating with the outcasts was a strong cause of opposition in this ministry. To the Jewish cultures outcasts like tax collectors, lepers were not supposed to be associated with but Jesus instead associated with them and sometime touched them and healed them this annoyed the Jews.

- Jesus used to eat with people regarded as sinners and welcomed them in the community which annoyed the Jews. For example he called Levi the tax collector went to his house and other outcasts came in and ate with them on the round table. This was centrally to the Jewish culture.
- Jesus' disciples used not to fast during seasons of fasting and Jesus looked to support them which annoyed the Pharisees for example at one time all the people were fasting including disciples of John the Baptist but Jesus' disciples were not.
- Jesus' disciples picked corns on Sabbath in the field to eat but the Pharisees were not pleased and when Jesus was asked, his response annoyed them the more.
- Jesus' working on Sabbath was an area of controversy between him and Pharisees. Jesus used to violate the Sabbath laws by working and healing.
- Jesus used to win many people on his side at expense of religious leaders on time for example when he could go to the synagogues and preach, he got a large congregation and the Pharisees hated him.
- The religious leaders were also envious and jealousy against Jesus because he was doing extra ordinary signs which they could not do for example miracles he performed.
- Jesus' response to some of the questions they could ask him created more anger and hence opposition. To the Jews some of his response sounded a bit of arrogance with no respect for them for example when they asked why he forgave sins, he only assured them that he wanted to prove to them that he is a son of God.
- At one time Jesus' disciples ate with unwashed hands which was a violation of the Jewish ritual of cleanliness. This also angered the religious leaders hence opposition.
- Jesus was opposed because he appeared like any ordinary man.
- Jesus' coming disappointed the Jewish expectation of the messiah and so they opposed him in whatever he did and said for example they expected a messiah to come riding donkeys.
- Jesus came from the most despised land (Nazareth) which created a negative attitude giving rise to opposition.
- Jesus also used to allow women and children in public worship which was centrally to the Jewish law for example he allowed children to come to him and blessed them and also allowed a woman to anoint him.
- Political leaders that Jesus was a political opponent since he was winning a big congregation to his side.
- Religious leaders and others were spiritually immature and ignorant of Jesus Christ.

#### **METHODOLOGY (METHODS OF JESUS' GOSPEL PROCLAMATION)**

Jesus in his gospel proclamation or spreading he used many different means which transmitted the good news and these included;

Jesus in his gospel proclamation or spreading he used many different means which transmitted the good news and these included;

- By use of parables which were so interesting and so they attracted many people to his teachings and accepted the gospel.
- By miracles which convinced the congregating to raise their faith in him and followed him.
- Through the use of missionary journey when Jesus moved from Nazareth to Galilee to Capernaum and whenever he moved he spread the gospel and people accepted him.
- Through theological debates which were between the religious leaders and the Pharisees in their synagogues.
- Through commissioning his disciples.
- Through preaching in the synagogues.
- Through celebration of the Lord's Supper which showed his love for his audience and they accepted him and his gospel.
- Through sharing and helping the needy for example he fed the hungry multitude.
- Through expression of practical love to everyone without discrimination for example he associated with everyone like the tax collector, women and children.
- Through visiting different people without discrimination for example he visited Jairus' home, the home of Levi, home of Peter's mother-in-law.
- Jesus lived an exemplary life so humble, approachable by everyone, so forgiving.

### **THE CHOICE OF THE TWELVE (Mark 3:13-19)**

Following the increased number of disciples or believers or followers Jesus decided to choose 12 men from the many and he called them apostles the twelve men were Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John the brother of James, Philip, Bartholomew, Mathew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thadaeous, Simon the patriot and Judas Iscariot who later betrayed Jesus.

The incident of choosing the twelve men took place after Jesus had prayed for the whole night as quoted also in Luke 6:2.

### **Why Jesus Chose the Twelve**

- He chose the call for apostles in order to be with him to give him company.
- He chose the 12 in order to train them in the work of preaching, probably because it would be difficult for a number more than that.

- He chose the twelve to prepare them for future missionary works especially after his death, resurrection and ascension.
- He also wanted to equip the twelve with divine power to drive out demons and thereby intensifying the struggle against Satan.
- He wanted to prepare the twelve for future leadership of the church after him. For example he made Peter a leader.
- He wanted to teach them how to pray and that's why he taught them "our father".
- He also wanted to prepare them for future persecution ahead of time.
- He wanted to teach them the value of repentance and why it was important to repent.
- He wanted to equip them with healing powers.
- He chose the 12 to be the pillar of the new Israel and that's why figure 12 corresponds with the number of the twelve tribes of Israel.

#### **THE COMMISSIONING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES (Mark 6:7-13)**

- The word commission means to give authority to someone to perform a certain task or duty. This was the act of sending the 12 disciples into the field to preach or practice what they had been learning in theory.
- In the commissioning of the 12 disciples, Jesus dedicated them into the hands of God and sent them two by two for security purposes.
- He sent them in pairs for purpose of witness so that what they preached would easily be accepted.
- He instructed disciples to carry sticks in their hands which were to signify good shepherdship.
- They were to carry sticks for self defense against snakes just as God had instructed the Israelites to carry sticks during the Passover event.
- He instructed them not to move with food, bag and to carry sticks during as the Passover event.
- He told them that they were to be catered for by the people to whom they pre-called.
- Jesus told them to use the divine power to perform miracles in order to get what to eat.
- He instructed them to treat all people with equality the rich and poor, made them rich.
- He fore warned them of opposition and told them to leave places where they were not accepted.
- He told them to stay in houses and places where they were welcomed.
- He sent them off, they went and preached, baptized performed miracles, laid hands on the sick and drove out demons etc.

#### **THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP**

- According to mark, being a disciple of Jesus means being companion of Jesus (Mk 3:14)
- Discipleship means parting one's family or country for the sake of Jesus (Mk 1:20)



- Discipleship also involves abundance of one's occupation in order to follow Jesus (Mk 1:18) "at once they left their nets....."
- Discipleship calls for preaching of good news (Mk 3:13-14)
- Discipleship also means facing oppositions and persecution for the sake of Jesus.
- Discipleship involves responding to Jesus call without hesitation.
- Discipleship also demand complete obedience, faith, trust and obedience in the face of suffering.
- Involves convincing unbelievers to repent and to become baptized in the name of Jesus.
- It also involves leading a simple, poor and humble life.
- Discipleship means being a full time servant of God or for Christ.
- It involves facing and overcoming temptation . For example Peter was tempted to deny Jesus but realized his mistake (Mk 14:66)
- Discipleship means living by God's providence that's why Jesus told his disciples not to carry anything like food.
- It involves witnessing and intensifying for Christ then that's why he sent them in pairs.
- It also means being a leader but not a ruler and that's why Jesus instructed his disciples to carry sticks as a symbol of good shepherdship.
- It involves performing miracles for the glory of God's kingdom then that's why the disciples of Jesus performed number of miracles like casting demons then anointing the sick.
- It means giving equal treatment, respect and attention to all people.
- It also involves abandoning one's wealth in order to avoid hindrance.
- Discipleship involves carrying one's cross daily because it's not a walk over business.
- It also involves moral living meaning that the disciples should be morally good.
- It also involves parting with one's customs then cultures (Mk 7:1-23)
- Discipleship involves being humble then always putting oneself last (Mk 9:35, 10:41-45)
- It involves a big reward by denying oneself (Mk 10:28-31)

#### **THE DIVINITY IN GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK**

- In the opening verse Mark 1:1 Jesus is portrayed as a son of God being the son of God Jesus shares the divine nature of God in most perfect way.
- During his baptism heaven opened holy spirit descended on him in form of a dove and this showed his divinity (Mk 1:10)
- Again in his temptation experienced God the father sent him an angel who helped him to overpower the devil (Mk 1:12-13)

- His divinity is shown in the call of his first four disciples although they had not known him before at once they left their nets and went with Jesus (Mk 1:14-20)
- His miracle of healing the sick pointed at his divinity (Mk 1:21-45) presents a number of healing miracle that Jesus performed.
- Jesus had the power to forgive sins which pointed at his divinity. He healed a paralyzed man and said “my son your sins are forgiven”.
- The woman who touched Jesus' cloak with faith got healed from her bleeding thus shows Jesus' divinity (Mk 5:25-34)
- Jesus' miracles of raising the dead pointed at his divinity . For example he raised Jairus' daughter using an authoritative word “Tarithkoum” (Mk 5:21-44, 31-43)
- His feeding miracles pointed at his divinity to feed 5,000 people using only 5 loaves bread and 2 fish (Mk 6:30-44)
- He later fed 4,000 men using only 7 loaves of bread and 2 fish.
- The transfiguration show Jesus' divinity his body clothes changed into shining white colour (Mk 9:28-36)
- Jesus had power to predict future events . That is to say, he predicted his suffering and death 3 times (Mk 8:30-32) he also predicted peter's denial (Mk 14:27-31) while serving the last supper Jesus revived that his blood will receive a new covenant.
- Jesus' ascension into heaven also passed his divinity.
- The resurrection of Jesus and the empty tomb stored his divinity.

## **THE HUMANITY OF JESUS**

- Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist just like other human beings the baptism took place in water of river Jordan like that of other human beings.
- Jesus could feel pity for people . For example he felt pity when a man was suffering from a disease and asked him for mercy (Mk 1:41)
- Jesus could get suppressed just like other human beings . For example when he was rejected at Nazareth he was suppressed by people's stubbornness (Mk 6:4-6)
- Jesus like other human beings . That is to say, Jesus visited Levi and enjoyed a meal in his house (Mk 2:15-17)
- Like other human beings Jesus valued privacy . For example in Mk 1:25 Jesus is seen to a private town to pray.
- Jesus would get annoyed . For example when he entered the Jerusalem temple he found them selling and buying and exchanging goods and money he got annoyed turned to the temple table and dropped them out (Mk 11:15-19)

- Jesus had parents just like other human beings in Mk 6:1-6 his mother is mentioned to be Mary and his brothers are mentioned to be James, Jude and Simon.
- Jesus had a great love for his/her children just like another could spare sometime for them.
- Mark portrayed Jesus as a human being with village of origin . For example he originated from Nazareth (Mk 6)
- Like other human beings, Jesus feared death in the garden of Gethsemane Jesus was plotted as full of fear of death (Mk 14:32-36)
- Jesus died and was buried just like other human beings (Mk 15:33-47)
- Jesus could get tired like other human beings . That is to say, Jesus rested in the boat with his head on a pillow as they crossed the lake Galilee. This was due to fatigue.

### **THE DISCIPLES' LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK**

In spite of the fact the disciples were always with Jesus and they listened to him, they took long to understand him, his power and spiritual mission. The gospel of Mark has the following mission;

- The gospel of Mark . For example moments recorded to show that the disciples lacked proper understanding of Jesus.
- The gospel of Mark records that Jesus was interrupted by disciples when he was having private prayers (Mk 1:35-39)
- They failed to understand the parable of the sower (Mk 4:13)
- They interrupted Jesus' sleep while they were sailing along lake Galilee (Mk 4:38)
- The disciples wondered what type of man Jesus was when he ordered the winds and waves to keep calm and they obeyed him (Mk 4:37-41)
- They misunderstood that Jesus was asking a question at the time when a certain bleeding woman touched his cloth (Mk 5:30)
- The disciples didn't understand Jesus when he told them to feed 5000 people with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.
- When Jesus walked on water, the disciples thought that he was a ghost (Mk 6:45-52)
- The disciples wondered how Jesus could feed 4000 people and yet they had witnessed the feeding of 5000 men with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.
- The disciples showed lack of understanding when Jesus warned them against the yeast of Pharisees and Herod (Mk 8:14-21)
- During the transfiguration, Peter took Jesus as an earthly messiah by suggesting the building of the 3 tents for Jesus, Moses and then Elijah (Mk 9:2-5)
- Peter opposed Jesus when he announced that he will suffer be rejected.

- They failed to drive out demons from the assigned that they never understood Jesus' power (Mk 9:14)
- They urged among themselves on who was greater (Mk 9:33-39)
- When they saw a man casting out demons in the name of Jesus stopped him (Mk 8:38-41)
- The preventing of parents from bringing their children Jesus showed the disciples lack of understanding.
- They showed lack of understanding when Jesus told them that its difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.
- Peter expressed surprise when he saw the fig tree that had been cursed by Jesus had dried.
- The request of James and John that Jesus would allow them sit near his father's kingdom also showed their lack of understanding.
- The betrayal of Jesus by Judas Escariot also showed lack of understanding of Jesus.
- Peter's denial of Jesus three times during suffering showed lack of understanding of Jesus.
- They showed lack of understanding by falling asleep when Jesus was praying in the garden of Gethsemane (Mk 14:32-42)
- The running away of disciples during the arrest of Jesus showed their lack of understanding (Mk 14:50)
- Peter showed lack of understanding of Jesus' mission by cutting off an ear of one of the armed men who had come to arrest Jesus (Mk 14:43-51)
- When a certain woman poured perfume on Jesus' leg when she used her hair to clean, some of the disciples were among those who criticized her for wasting resources.
- When Jesus resurrected, among the disciples took long to believe it.

#### **WAYS IN WHICH PEOPLE SHOW LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS TODAY**

- Today people show lack of understanding of Jesus refusing to join Christianity.
- Others show lack of understanding by resorting power of witchcraft.
- Some Christians show lack of understanding by going for Holy Communion when they are not prepared for it.
- Some show lack of understanding by involving in anti-social act like revenge, anger, refusing to give etc.
- Some people show lack of understanding of Jesus' mission by doubting his resurrection which is a foundation of Christian belief.
- Many more Christians show lack of understanding of Jesus by discriminating against people basing on eternal appearance.
- Christians also show lack of understanding through committing evils like murder, rape, defilement etc.
- Christians show lack of understanding of Jesus by rejecting in times of difficulties and trials.
- Some Christians especially leaders . For example pastors and priests show lack of understanding of Jesus becoming nationalistic.

## **JESUS' USE OF PARABLES TO TEACH ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

The word parable comes from two Greek words Rova and Bale which means putting two things side by side for the purpose of companionship.

Parables were therefore comparative choices in which Jesus compared the kingdom of God with earthly things or happenings.

A parable is sometimes defined as an early story with a heavenly meaning. It was the main method used by Jesus to teach about the kingdom of God.

### **REASONS WHY JESUS USED PARABLES**

- They were easy to be understood since they had earthly experiences of daily events for example parable of the sower.
- They were brief and social so they would avoid long stories and boredom.
- He wanted to summarize the bigger meaning in a brief way over common experience.
- Parables were time saving since they were brief.
- Jesus aimed at creating a difference between his teaching and that of the Pharisees.
- Parables were so interesting since they were stories of daily experience . For example parable of growing seed, sower etc.
- He used parables to attract maximum attention from his audience just because they were nice stories and of daily experience.
- He used parables in order to avoid direct confrontation of his enemies and beat their understanding since some of the parables were condemning the evils of his opponents . For example the parable of the wicked tenant.
- He aimed at creating personal interpretation of his audience about the meaning of parables . That is to say, he wanted to have their own interpretation of the message in parables.
- Parables would allow deeper meditation and concentration . For example parable of the lamp under the bowl.
- Parables were used to allow disciples to develop have deeper reasoning and understanding based on their own interpretation.
- They were easy to be remembered and so the message in the parables could not easily be forgotten.
- They also aimed at showing the need of spreading the gospel because every parable about seed symbolized preaching the god news.

- He used parables because he was fulfilling the Old Testament teaching. For example prophet Isaiah used parable of vine yard, prophet Nathan used parable of rich and poor.

### **Questions**

1. ***Account for Jesus' use of parables in his teaching.***
2. ***Why did Jesus use parables in his ministry?***

### **THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER (Mark 4:1-9)**

In the parable which Jesus spoke to his audience, he illustrated using a sower who went out to scatter or sow seeds but these seeds fell on different grounds.

Some seeds fell on the rocky soil others in the thorny soil, others along the path and others on the fertile soil (Mk 4:1-9)

All the seeds that fell on the fertile ground grew up and yield that some produced 30, 60 and 100.

Others seeds that fell on different type of soil did not yield for various reasons.

### **The Implication of the Parable**

- The sower in this parable implied the preacher of the word of God and Jesus was the preacher.
- The seeds meant the words of God being preached by Jesus.
- The different grounds represent the different audiences who received the word of God and how they responded to it.
- The soil represented the hearts that received the word of God being .....to them.
- The rocky ground symbolized the type of Christians. Believers who are weak hearted and unserious with the word of God and didn't practice it.
- The seeds that fell in thorn bushes symbolize the type of Christians who received the word of God with joy or excitement but cannot use it to resist worldly pleasures and overcome them so when worldly pleasures like music come their way, they easily give up the word of God.
- The thorny bushes also signifies the world pleasures that disturb believers and in process of temptation believers give up the truth.
- The seed that fell along the path represent Christians who are never attentive when the word of God is being preached and at times have no bibles and so the word of God can't stick in their minds.
- The birds that picked the seeds signified satanic temptation and pleasure which take attention of believers and therefore make them ignore the word of God.

- Seeds that fell on fertile soil represent Christians who are so attentive to the will of God as it is preached and even put it into practice.
- The roots in the parable signify the faith that Christians receive as they practice the word of God but those who do not practice cannot receive this faith and up falling off the Christian target.
- The fruits signify good actions of Christianity which the Lord the God expects them to demonstrate.
- It also implied the struggle between satanic powers and divine powers. This is because satanic powers keep taking the word of God.
- It acted as a warning to believers to guard against Satan's temptation and endure persecution and temptation which come from thorns to destroy faith.
- The probable showed opposition, Jesus was encountering from the Jewish leaders.

### **Relevance to Modern Christians**

- Christians should check the type of soil they are in order to inherit the kingdom of God.
- Christians should strive to be fruitful just as the seeds that bore fruits on the fertile ground.
- They should preach the good news to others as Jesus used the parables.
- They should have strong faith in order to yield fruits.
- They should endure the different troubles that come their way unlike the Christians who just gave in because of persecution.
- Christians should listen to the word of God attentively so that it multiplies in them.
- Christians should focus on the kingdom of God in order to defeat and disorganize Satan.
- Christians should always have hope even if the entire society is opposed to the gospel message.
- They should pray for those who reject the gospel message so that the Holy Spirit may fell their hearts.
- Christians should be helpful to the needy (spiritual power)
- Christians should contribute to construction of churches.

### **THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED TENANT (Mark 12:1-12)**

The parable of the wicked tenant is one of such parables that fulfill the Old Testament in New Testament.

Jesus spoke and said there was a man who planted a vine yard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the winepress and built a watch tower.

### **The Implication of the Parable**

- The gardener who planted the vineyard, signified the almighty God of Israelites.
- The vineyard meant the Israelites as chosen people of God who were special people of God.

- The wicked tenant signified the Jewish religious leaders who were in charge of the Israelites to guide them in Godly affairs.
- Building a fence and watch tower around the vine yard, symbolized God's almighty protection of Israelites and their nation.
- The hole which was dug implied the covenant and its laws upon which Israelites would be governed or their relationship with God would be based.
- The wine press implied the good works of obedience, holiness, faithfulness expected of Israelites in relation to the covenant rules.
- The serpents whom the owners sent were the Old Testament prophets whom God used to send to his people calling them to repent.
- Sending away the servants and killing them, symbolized the persecution, injustices and killing which religious leaders extended to God's prophets.
- The parable symbolized God's judgment since he will come and kill the wicked tenants.
- It reflected on the spiritual immaturity since they were doing what they didn't know.
- It reflected on God's continuous love for the people he chose because he kept sending servants to warn his people and bring them to repent.
- The parable shows that the New Testament is a fulfillment of the Old Testament because the parable of vineyard had been announced by prophet Isaiah.
- The parable also showed the hypocrisy, pretence and unrepentant nature of religious leaders because they persecuted Jesus instead of repenting.
- It meant Jesus' death and the end of his earthly ministry because he told the wicked tenants that they killed the owners' son.
- It implied Jesus' tendency of hiding his messiahship because he used the parable and was not direct yet he was the son of the gardener.
- It reflected on Jesus' humanity because he was visible, fought and was ready to die like any other human being.

## Questions

**(a) Examine the implications of the parable of the wicked tenant.**

**(b) Explain the relevance of the parable of wicked tenants to modern Christians.**

- Modern Christians should have strong faith in God so as to become God's people like the Israelites.
- Modern Christians should listen to the word of God as it multiplies in them.
- Modern Christians should pray for those who reject the gospel message so that the Holy Spirit may fill their hearts.



- Modern Christians should have hope in God so that they are ever protected as he did to the Israelites and their nation.
- Modern Christians should focus on the kingdom in order to defeat and disorganize Satan.
- Modern Christians should be obedient, holy and faithful in order to get rewards from God just as the Israelites were expected in relation to the covenant rules.
- Modern Christians should live holy expecting God's judgment since he said to come and kill the wicked tenants.
- Modern Christians should love one another as God showed his continuous love for people he chose by sending servants to warn them and bring them to repent.
- Modern Christians should preach the word of God and contribute to construction of churches in order to convert many people to Christianity.
- Modern Christians should endure the different troubles that come their way unlike Christians who just gave in because of persecution.
- Modern Christians should believe in one God as the Israelites believed him as their almighty.
- Modern Christians should know that the parable of the wicked tenant was a fulfillment of the New Testament because it was announced by prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament by them reading the bible.
- Modern Christians should obey God's laws which were given to Israelites in that they maintain their relationship with God.

#### **THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED(Mark 4:30-34)**

Jesus in this parable compared the kingdom to a mustard seed he told his listeners that the kingdom of God is like the smallest seed in the world.

He also told them that at the time of planting the seed it is so small and insignificant. He also told them that a seed after being planted grows into the biggest tree in the whole world.

Jesus told them that the tree puts on big branches and they provide shelter for the birds.

#### **Meaning Of The Parable**

- The use of the mustard seed signify that the kingdom of God begins in a humble way.
- The mustard seed symbolized the good news or the words of God.
- The tree referred to the church which was to grow expands and then turn into a very big community.
- The spreading of the branches of the tree symbolized the future expansion of the church to all directions.
- The leaves of the tree symbolized fellowship and the need to fellowship among believers.

- The man who planted the mustard seed symbolized Jesus or any other creature.
- The birds represented the Gentiles who were also free to join Christianity.
- The birds also symbolized the different categories of people meaning that the church is universal.
- The parable in general was a call for unity since all branches that formed the tree have one stem.
- The parable was a warning that some evil people would also take over in the church.
- The parable was also a warning to stop judging in spiritual matters by using earthly standards.
- It meant that the genuine followers of Christ would find peace, joy and then relax in God's kingdom.
- It signified that in the beginning faith may be difficult to recognize but as time goes on it grows.
- Though the parable Jesus was .....the origin of the church were it started small.
- It signified that the kingdom of God is living.

### **Relevance to Christians**

- Christians should be humble, gentle and possible in their life styles just like the mustard seed.
- Christians should preach the universality of the church of Christ.
- They should always stand firm when they have few number of believers in the church just as the church started with few people and expanded later.
- Christians should show their faith and visible acts of love and mercy.
- They should believe in the kingdom of God which gives peace, joy and relaxation just as the birds relaxed on the leaves.
- Christians should be united irrespective of their different denominations.
- They should have hope in heavenly rewards because the genuine believers are assured of heavenly rewards.
- They should call upon the Holy Spirit help the church to grow.
- They should base their judgment on spiritual matters rather than basing on artificial attributes.
- They should stick to Jesus because trials and sufferings are normal.

### **THE PARABLE OF THE GROWING SEED (Mark 4:28-29)**

In this parable, Jesus compares the kingdom of God with a man who plants the seed in his field leaves it there to germinate but doesn't know the process through which the seed grows into a big plant and produces more seeds.

The seed produces corns and when they become ripe he comes to harvest them.

### **Significance of the Parable**

- It signified that the kingdom of God is a future reality.
- The man who plants the seed in this parable represents Jesus Christ or any preacher.
- The seeds planted in this parable represent the gospel message.
- The field in which the seed is planted represent the church in which gospel is preached.
- The growing of the seed in stages represents the gradual growth of the church.
- The time which the seed takes to grow and bare fruits represents the growth of kingdom of God thorough gradual process.
- The fact that the farmer is not aware of how the seed grows signifies the mystery surrounding the kingdom of God.
- The secret growing of the seed also signifies that the mystery of the kingdom of God is only understood by faithful followers of Christ.
- It points to the messianic secrecy of Jesus to take care of his church.
- It also means that it is responsibility of God to take care of his church.
- The harvesting in the parable signifies the judgment that believers would have in the kingdom of God.
- It also stresses the importance of having faith in the kingdom of God.
- It was meant to encourage the disciples to continue preaching the gospel.

### **Relevance of the Parable to Christians**

- They should preach the god news of salvation as Jesus did through the parable.
- They should be honest by spreading the truth as a way of preparing for the judgment day.
- They should strive to convert as many as possible into kingdom of God.
- They should encourage other people who may have lost hope.
- Christian leaders should strive to be exemplary in whatever they do.
- They should regularly read the word of God that can help them attain salvation.
- They should believe in God's word that they receive from preachers.
- Christian leaders should advise their members whenever they go astray.
- They should resist the devil's temptation as a way to prepare for judgment.
- Christians should develop the spirit of patience in their lives.
- They should remain hopeful even amidst trial moments.
- They should have complete trust in God who knows everything.

### **JESUS HIDES HIS MESSIAHSHIP**

The term messiah means God's anointed one, redeemer, liberator, son of God, king and long awaited one.

It was a culture in the Jewish tradition to anoint God's servants for example kings, priests, prophets etc.

To the Jews a messiah was that anticipated unique son of God who would be a savior of mankind.

Contrary to what they expected, Jesus hid his nature that's why Mark emphasizes.

### **Evidence in Mark's Gospel to Show the Messianic Secrecy**

- Whenever Jesus performed miracles he used to tell those present not to mention what had happened hence hiding his nature.
- Even after healing an individual he used to forbid those to spread the good news . For example the man with mob demons.
- He constantly referred to himself the son of Joseph the carpenter hence hiding his messiahship.
- There are occasions when Jesus retired from public views as if he had gone to hide himself. Such withdrawal from the ground meant that he did not want everybody to know him hence hiding his identity.
- He referred himself as a son of man and said he will die.
- Although parables were used in the Old Testament Jesus excelled using this method to preach.
- This parable had hidden meaning that hid his messianic identity.
- After Peter's declaration of Jesus as the messiah Jesus ordered him not to tell any one about it.
- When Jesus went up mount olive he transfigured/changed before Peter, James, and John. On their way down the mountain Jesus ordered them not to mention it until the son of man is risen hiding his identity.
- Jesus sometimes would leave his disciples so that he makes private communication (prayer) with his father from a lonely place where his disciples would find them.
- When Jesus was arrested and taken to Pilate and was asked whether he was the king of the Jews he answered "its you who says it" Pilate questioned further but Jesus kept quiet.
- In some instances when Jesus told people and failed to understand and recognize him, he used to take his disciples aside and clarified his identity to them. This meant that he did not want to tell everyone his identity.
- When Jesus confronted the devil through healing they often recognized him as a son of God however Jesus silenced them and this shows he was hiding his identity.

### **REASONS WHY JESUS HID HIS IDENTITY**

#### **Questions**

1. **Examine the reasons why Mark in his gospel does not directly refer Jesus as a messiah.**
2. **Why did Jesus conceal his meassiahship?**
3. **Account for the messianic secrecy in Mark's gospel.**

- The Jews expected a political messiah yet Jesus was a spiritual one.
- To avoid confrontation with the Jewish leaders he had to keep his messianic nature.
- He wanted people to realize that his ministry was gradual and difficult to understand.
- He wanted to show that understanding his father's kingdom takes time .e. gradual process that takes place by all believers.
- He did not want cheap popularity which would mean equating himself to the teachers of the law and the Pharisees.
- He knew that his time to be known by other people had not yet come.
- When he revealed his identity, he was killed hence fulfilling the messianic task.
- He wanted to have people of all categories attracted to the kingdom of God he had come to establish. He didn't want to keep away from people like tax collectors.
- He did not want to cause public chaos and excitement.
- He wanted to distinguish himself from the Pharisees and Scribes who wanted public recognition.
- He did not want to impose himself on the people.
- He wanted to show that the holy way of bringing salvation to mankind was by being humble.
- He wanted to get the true seekers of the kingdom he had come to establish.

### **To what extent can the gospel of Mark be referred to as the gospel of messianic secrecy?**

#### **Approach**

- To a greater extent, it shows the messianic secrecy.
- However it revealed his identity

### **JESUS' MESSIANIC IDENTITY REVEALED**

- A dove came on him during baptism and a voice from God declared him as a son of God hence revealing his identity.
- After healing the demonic at Gesera he sent him to go and spread the good news hence revealing his identity.
- He healed a paralyzed man and publically forgive his sins hence revealing his identity.
- He publically fed 5,000 people with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.
- He raised Jairus' daughter back to life hence a powerful messiah.
- He publically entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey.
- He moved openly from one place to another and he always had a big crowd.
- Peter confessed that Jesus was a messiah.

- His transfiguration convinced Peter, James, John that he was a messiah because a voice came from heaven.
- He resurrected after 3 days hence revealing his identity.

### **RELEVANCE OF MESSIANIC SECRET**

- Christians should be humble just as Jesus was humble before the people.
- Christians should boast of what God has done for them but not what they can do.
- They should accept suffering and challenges just as Jesus accepted.
- Christians should love one another and be kind to one another.
- Christians should work hard to fulfill their mission just as Jesus fulfilled his mission.
- Christians should be holy because Jesus is holy just as Jesus is holy.

### **TO WHAT EXTENT DID JESUS FULFILL THE CURRENT JEWISH EXPECTATIONS?**

To a smaller extent Jesus fulfilled the expectation of the Jews as seen below;

- Jews expected a messiah to be born from Bethlehem and it was fulfilled when Jesus was born in Bethlehem.
- They expected a messiah to come from the lineage of David and it was fulfilled.
- The Jews expected the messiah to be a Jew and was fulfilled because he was a Jew.
- They expected the messiah to perform wonders and this was fulfilled when he could perform miracles . For example healed the sick, raised the dead.
- They expected the messiah to come and perfect the Law of Moses and it was fulfilled.
- They expected the messiah to teach in parables and it was fulfilled when he preached using them . For example parable of the sower.
- They expected him to care and feed the hungry . For example he fed 4,000 with 7 loaves and 2 fish.
- They expected to establish peace and.....in the Roman Empire and was fulfilled when he lived peacefully with wild animals in wilderness.
- They expected a messiah to be king of the Jews and was fulfilled when they put a label on the cross” king of the Jews”.
- They expected a messiah to teach with authority and was fulfilled when he taught with authority in the synagogues.
- They expected him to be filled with the Holy Spirit and this was fulfilled when the Holy Spirit came on him in form of a dove during baptism.
- They expected him to be a son of God and this was fulfilled during transfiguration when voice was heard “this is my dear son, listen to him”.

- They expected the messiah to appoint disciples to work as assistants. this was fulfilled when he appointed disciples.

**However, to a larger extent, Jesus failed to fulfill the messianic expectation of the Jews as seen below;**

- The Jews expected a messiah who would save them from paying taxes but Jesus encouraged them to pay taxes by saying give Caesar what belongs to him and God what belongs to Go.
- They expected the messiah to be loved by his fellow Jews but Jesus was rejected by his own people of Nazareth.
- They expected him to perform miracles but Jesus refused to perform for Pharisees when they asked one.
- They expected him to use a horse which important people were using but instead used a donkey for triumphant entry.
- They expected him to refer himself as a son of God but instead referred himself as a son of man.
- They expected a messiah who would maintain the culture of Jews for example he elevated the position of women.
- They expected a messiah who would give out positions in his kingdom when James and John asked for the position on the priest.
- They expected a messiah to come with an army and defend the Jews but instead he came as a spiritual messiah without an army.
- They expected him to associate with the Jews but instead associated with both the Jews and Gentiles.
- They expected him to associate with important people but instead he associated with mother, sinners and children and tax collectors.
- Jesus had human parents that is to say Mary and Joseph from despised village of Nazareth which was opposed today.
- During his arrest, he prevented peter from fighting the Roman soldier yet as a messiah he was to be fought for.

## **THE REJECTION OF JESUS IN NAZARETH**

**1. Why was Jesus rejected by his own people according to gospel of Mark?**

**2. Account for the rejection of Jesus by the Jews.**

- Jesus was just a son of Joseph the carpenter and such jobs were often despised by people.
- The Jews thought that Jesus' birth was not a product of the Holy Spirit.
- They asked themselves the source of Jesus' wisdom since they knew Jesus was uneducated, came from poor family, how could he become prominent.

- Jesus' background and origin were all known yet they new that a messiah would come out of heaven and would be an extra ordinary figure.
- There were some Pharisees and teachers of the law who spread the rumour that Jesus was a bustard and therefore was not worthy to speak to people.
- They thought that Jesus was seeking for cheap popularity and believed that Jesus an opportunist interested in winning people on his side.
- They were astonished at the authority of his teaching on Sabbath when he expanded and analyzed the scriptures.
- They rejected him because of prejudice since he appeared to do extra ordinary things that none of them could not do.
- They rejected him because his disciples were eating with ritually unclean hands.
- They rejected him because he refused to perform a miracle for them when they asked him which was to prove that he was a son of God.
- It is because he could call himself son of God which was blasphemy among the Jews.
- It is because he encouraged permanency in marriage and discouraged divorce yet the Mosaic Law allows it.
- They rejected him because he could forgive sins on act which was to be done by God for example when he forgave sins of a paralyzed man.
- They rejected him because he called him self a messiah yet the leaders knew the messiah had not yet come.
- They were rejected because they had to fast.

#### **WHY SOME CHRISTIANS ARE REJECTED**

- Some Christians show bad examples in the society . For example commit adultery with people.
- Some Christians encourage homosexuality in the society.
- Some call themselves prophets and whatever they prophesize is not true for example pastor Kakande.
- Some of the religious leaders have bad backgrounds for example some have been thieves, robbers, prostitutes.
- They discriminate them in church for example special seats are for special people.
- Some Christians associate with evil world to get power and perform miracles . For example pastor Kakande.
- Some people take miracles by using electronic gadgets.

#### **THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN JESUS' MINISTRY**



### **What were the roles of women in the gospel in Jesus' ministry according to Mark?**

- Some Peter's mother-in-law showed herself as a committed disciple by serving food and drinks after healing her (Mk 1:29-31)
- A woman with a continuous blood flow.....
- A woman at Bethany showed her faith in Jesus by anointing him with an expensive perfume and thereafter, the good news was spread.
- The first witnesses of the risen Lord were women and therefore spread the good news about Jesus.
- It was a woman who took the spices to anoint the body of Jesus Christ in the tomb which.....
- It were women who ran out to tell disciples that Jesus had spread the good news.
- Among the 5,000 people Jesus fed women were present listening to his preaching.
- Jesus was born by a Virgin Mary who was a woman.
- A Gentile woman approached Jesus with deep faith kneeling and begged Jesus to drive demons out of her daughter.
- Mary mother of John Mark provided room for Jesus and his disciples to have the last supper and after the good news was spread.
- Jesus' mother came searching for him in the synagogue which attracted her spread the good news.

### **ROLE OF WOMEN IN SPREADING GOOD NEWS TODAY**

- Women are serving as reverends, pastors . For example pr. Namutebi Imelda.
- Women do teach CRE in schools hence spreading good news.
- Catholics nun who are dedicated to the service of the Lord influence over the children therefore teach religion to children.
- As wives are good at convincing their husbands to go for prayers in this men can get converted.
- In hospitals, women who are Christians spread good news to patients.
- Some women write Christian books which help in spreading good news.
- Some Christians compose Christian songs which can attract many into Christianity . For example Judith Babirye.
- They preach on mass media . For example news papers, radios, televisions etc.
- They act as good mothers during baptism therefore they take the role of guiding people to Christian life.

### **THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS (Mark 9:2-13)**

- After a sudden there was a tremendous change, Jesus' cloth became shining white, whiter than anyone in the world could wash them.

- His face also became brighter than ever.
- The three disciples saw Elijah and Moses talking to Jesus.
- Peter spoke and said “teacher how good is it that we are here” we shall build three tents one for you, one you Moses and one you Elijah. Then from the above, the cloud covered them from above with its shadows then Elijah and Moses appeared besides Jesus and the two walked with him.
- A voice similar to that of Jesus’ baptism came from the cloud.
- It proclaimed Jesus as his dear son and called them to listen to his dear son.
- Suddenly Elijah disappeared and the clouds also disappeared and Jesus turned to his usual face.
- As the four descended the mountain, Jesus told them not to tell anyone what had happened until the son of man is risen from the dead.

### **Significance of the Transfiguration**

- It proved that Jesus was the longer awaited messiah who had come to liberate mankind.
- It revealed God’s divine nature as he evidenced the complete change of his state.
- It showed a special relationship between Jesus and his father.
- It offered Jesus a chance to give another prophecy to his disciples . That is to say, suffering, death and resurrection.
- It showed the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies in Jesus’ personality. Elijah’s presence represented all the Old Testament prophecies that fore told the coming of messiah.
- The event proved that Jesus had not only come to perfect the law but to fulfill it. Moses’ presence represented the old testament which Jesus had come to perfect.
- It was a basis of courage and hope that made Jesus withstand later pressures especially during his trial and trial days.
- It pointed to the related peace, joy, happiness, glory that belongs to God’s kingdom.
- It revealed the messianic secrecy in Jesus’ ministry.
- It showed that Jesus was about to establish an everlasting kingdom.
- It indicated that Jesus’ earthly ministry was about to end, spend three days in the tomb and be raised from the dead.

### **THE TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM (Mark 11:1-11)**

- As Jesus and his disciples came nearer Jerusalem, he instructed two of his disciples to find a cult which was ahead in the next village. The cult had never been sat on.
- He told them to untie it and bring it to him.

- He told them that in case they asked to where they were taking it they were to tell them the master wanted it. The disciples did what Jesus had told them.
- They brought him the cult, threw clothes on its back and Jesus sat on it.
- Many people spread their cloak and branches of trees on the land surface and those ahead and the ones behind began to shout praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord, God bless the kingdom of our father David.
- Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple looked at everything but since it was already late in the day, he went out to Bethany with the twelve disciples.

### **Significance of the Event**

- The event marked Jesus as the expected messiah king of the Jews.
- It showed that Jesus had come to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies/scriptures which said that the messiah would come from the lineage of King David.
- It indicated the approaching hour when Jesus would be tortured and will be killed when he completed his messianic.
- It implied that Jesus was a messiah in a spiritual because his entry was peaceful.
- It showed that the kingdom of God had come.
- It was a moment in which people showed that they were for them.
- It showed that Jesus was a great nature because he did not suppress them.
- It showed that Jesus was a great figure who attracted public attention.
- The event opened hostility between Jesus and the Pharisees, teachers of the law and other authorities.
- It clearly showed Jesus as the only son of God. This was because he sat on a cult that had never been driven before which symbolized secretedness.
- The entry reflects on the future happiness and joy which would be expressed by the faithful ones in the kingdom of God.
- It exposed the disciples' lack of understanding.

### **THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE (Mark 11:15-19)**

- On the second day after his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jesus came back into Jerusalem and cleansed the temple.
- He began by driving out all those who are buying and selling from there.
- He over turned the tables of the money changers and the stools of those who sold pigeons.
- Jesus then told them "doesn't the scripture say my house will be called the house of prayer for all the people".

- He rebuked them for the way they had turned his father's house into a den of robbers.
- When it came to the notice of the chief priests and the Scribes they tried to find some days of getting rid back.
- Mark said that they were afraid of him because they were attracted to his teaching.

### **Why Jesus Cleansed the Temple**

- The temple was divided into portions (courts) but the Gentile was used for the sell of animals and a short cut for people moving to and fro Jerusalem. This made it difficult for the Gentiles to worship.
- The converted Gentiles who came to worship were expected to pay a fee and this was to be converted into Jewish currency.
- The chief priests made the conversion rate very high and got abnormal profits.
- The temple had become a den of robbers.
- There were disputes and quarrels that led to unholiness in the temple. It was no longer a symbol of God's presence but had become a place of controversy.
- There was no order in the temple. The place was full of noise since some people were selling items, others exchanging money and others haggling over prices.
- Animals polluted the temple while human beings made noise while negotiating prices.
- It was a divine will that the temple had to be cleansed.
- People in the temple had no respect for God hence need a cleansing.
- Horrible sins could sometimes be committed in the temple.

### **Significance of Cleansing the Temple**

- It showed Jesus' determination to reserve abuse which people had put on the church.
- It showed that Jesus had come to purify the house of God since God is holy his place of worship also had to be holy.
- It exposed the mistakes and guilty of the Pharisees that's why Jesus was not opposed when he over turned the tables of the money changers.
- It proved that Jesus had appointed the temple for prayer but not business.
- The cleansing event and Jesus' words proved that Jesus had not come to destroy the temple as falsely accused by the Pharisees but put right what had gone wrong.
- The destruction of the property symbolized that his body that would be destroyed so that man is cleansed of his sins.
- It showed that old testament prophecies (Isaiah 56:41, Jeremiah had been.....)
- It proved that Jesus was a messiah.

- It was against this background that Jesus noted that his father's house had been made a den of robbers.
- The action proved that Jesus was a master of all creation. He clearly opposed what was taking place and no one could risk touching him.
- The cleansing was a step taken to show that Jesus' authority was from above.
- It showed the humanity of Jesus because he got annoyed used force to destroy.
- It increased the conflicts between Jesus and the leaders teachers of the law plus the Pharisees.
- It showed that God's worship was universal.
- Jesus established the temple for all the nations.
- It fore shadowed his future death and resurrection.

### **To What Extent does the Church need Cleansing?**

To a larger extent the church needs cleansing because of the following;

- Some Christians are corrupt, they embezzle church funds therefore the church needs cleansing.
- Some Christians practice sexual immorality for example homosexuality, fornication, adultery etc.
- There is struggle for top positions in church by some Christians which is bad.
- Some Christians worship idols alongside God.
- There is witchcraft practiced by some Christians in the church.
- Some Christians mind about their businesses and leave God.
- There is practice of denominational conflicts.
- There is division between the poor and rich.
- There is division between men and women.
- There is existence of false teaching in the church.
- Some Christian couples divorce.
- Some Christians involve in telling lies.
- There is poor dressing in the church for example some people put on tight skirts that expose them.
- There is forging of miracles in the church today.
- Some Christians commit sins and receive the Holy Communion.
- Some Christians are proud and show off in the church.

**However, to a smaller extent the church does not need cleansing because of the following;**

- Some churches in Uganda have maintained spiritual standards which do not require cleansing.
- Some Christians put their faith into actions.
- Some Christian couples have remained faithful in their marriage.
- Some Christians attend bible studies to improve on their spiritual well being.
- Some Christians worship God in truth and spirit.

- Some Christians give a tenth of their earnings in the church.
- Some Christians have protected fellow Christians from false teachings.
- Some Christians repent in church.

### **THE CURSING OF THE FIG TREE (Mark 11-12)**

As Jesus was moving with his disciples he was hungry and wanted to get some figs to eat but the tree was fruitless.

The following day as he was moving with his disciples Peter got surprised to see that the fig tree Jesus had cursed had dried up from the top to the roots.

Jesus then told his disciples that with faith everything is possible and therefore should not get surprised to see the fig tree.

### **Significance**

- It signified Jesus' humanity because he got hungry and angry.
- His divinity was revealed when he cursed the tree and it dried.
- It showed Peter's lack of understanding because he was surprised to see the fig tree dry.
- It showed the importance of faith. This is seen when Jesus taught his disciples that with faith everything is possible.
- It increased the faith among his disciples after seeing the fig tree had dried and started believing in Jesus Christ as a messiah.
- The event is more of an acted parable than a miracle because of the fig tree signified Judaism which appeared to be good on surface but unproductive.
- It showed that God cannot be deceived by outward religious practices but is much interested in devotion from people by producing spiritual fruits.
- It showed that the good work for believers shouldn't be like the fig tree which could bear fruits in seasons but throughout the year.
- It showed the need to bear spiritual fruits because it was what Jesus is looking for.
- It pointed to the destruction of the unrighteous on the Day of Judgment because they will have failed to bear spiritual fruits.
- It showed that Judaism and Law of Moses were outdated so they were to be destroyed and replaced by faithful gospel.
- It showed that the kingdom of God had come on earth.

## **Lessons to Modern Christians**

- Christians should do their god work throughout their life instead of being seasonal like the fig tree.
- Christians should tell the truth instead of being hypocrites.
- Christians should pray to God with faith because with faith everything is possible.
- Christians should be prepared at all times because Jesus is coming back any time therefore should meet us bearing spiritual fruits.
- Christians should have faith that produces spiritual fruits . For example feeding the hungry, clothing the poor etc.
- Christians should move and spread the good news in this way they will be bearing spiritual fruits.
- Christians should understand Jesus in their lives unlike Peter who lacked understanding of Jesus.
- Christians should believe in Jesus as a messiah.
- Christians should be prepared for judgment day therefore Christ should meet them when they are to stand.

## **THE ANOINTING OF JESUS AT BETHANY (Mark 14:3-9)**

When Jesus had gone to visit Simon a man who had healed from a dreaded skin disease, a woman with a jar full of expensive perfume came and poured on Jesus' head.

Some people around criticized her harshly to waste the expensive perfume that she would sell for 300 silver coins to give to the poor however Jesus defended the woman that she had done a fine and beautiful thing to prepare his body for burial.

## **Significance of the Event**

- It showed Jesus as a messiah sent by god to save mankind.
- It showed the faith the woman had in Jesus it was because she believed in Jesus that's why she waited Jesus' body with an expensive perfume.
- It showed that the ministry of Jesus was universal for both men and women that's why he accepted to be anointed by the woman.
- It showed the woman's love for Jesus Christ that's why she used her expensive perfume.
- It showed Jesus' divine powers because if it were the divine powers that forced the woman to anoint him.
- It led to the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures in Old Testament important people were always anointed like kings.

- It showed that Jesus always defends his people. This is seen when he defended the woman by saying that “leave her alone, she has done a fine and beautiful thing to prepare my body for burial”.
- It showed the time for Jesus’ death had come. This is seen when the woman anointed his body for burial.
- It showed lack of understanding of people who were around. This is seen when they criticized the women harshly for wasting the expensive oil therefore lack understanding of Jesus as a messiah.
- It was a way of spreading good news. After Jesus had been anointed at Bethany, the news about Jesus spread all over.
- It also showed that the people are materialistic because instead of having faith in Jesus, they criticized the woman for wasting the expensive oil.
- It showed the greatness of Jesus Christ that he was greater than the things of the world.

### **Lessons to Christians**

- Christians should give their best to others for example expensive clothes just as a woman used her expensive perfume to anoint Jesus.
- Christians should have faith in their religious leaders just as a woman had faith in Jesus Christ and anointed with an expensive perfume.
- Christians should show love to their religious leaders by supporting them financially just as the woman showed love to Jesus Christ by anointing him with an expensive perfume.
- Christians sometimes should accept to take risks in God’s work by accepting to be abused while serving the lord just as a woman was harshly criticized.
- Christians should defend their fellow Christian during times of trouble just as Jesus defended a woman.
- Christians should give opportunity to woman to serve in church as pastors just as Jesus accepted the woman to anoint him.
- Christians should trust in Christ irrespective of their sex, Colour, tribe and many others since Jesus is universal.
- Christians should show their gratitude to the religious leaders for the work they have done just as the woman showed gratitude by anointing Jesus.
- Christians should depend on Jesus Christ just as the woman depended on Christ when she was criticized.

### **THE PASSOVER AND THE LAST SUPPER**

- In Mark 15 presentation of the Lord’s Supper it coincided with the Passover festival.
- It was speculated that the room which Jesus had the last supper with his disciples was in the house of Mary the mother of John Mark.



- It was that evening when Jesus was having a meal with his disciples and he predicted that one of his disciples would betray him.
- At the last supper Jesus identified the traitor as Judas Iscariot.
- While they were eating Jesus took a piece of bread, gave a prayer of thanks, broke it and gave to his disciples take it “this is my body”.
- Thereafter he took a cup of wine gave thanks and told all the disciples to drink from the same cup “this is my blood” poured out to seal God’s covenant.

### **Significance of the Last Supper**

- The last supper signified unity and fellowship by sharing the body and blood of Jesus Christ.
- It signified Jesus’ suffering on the cross for the salvation of sinners.
- The bread of the last supper symbolized Jesus’ body and flesh.
- The wine on the other hand symbolized Jesus’ blood which was shed to liberate sinners from bondage of sin.
- The event pointed at the importance of prayers that’s why before serving bread and wine he first prayed.
- It symbolized the new covenant between God and all humanity.
- It signified God’s love for mankind.
- It was a way of attaining spiritual reunion with Jesus.
- It also reflected the heavenly banquet which Jesus would serve to the faithful one.
- It signified Jesus’ death but he was to resurrect.
- It was during this event that Jesus predicted his betrayal by Judas Escariot.
- It signified the importance of prayers because after supper Jesus went with his disciples to Mount Olive to pray.
- It was a fare well party which Jesus served his disciples before being crucified.

### **Importance of the Lord’s Supper to Christians today**

The last supper today is referred to as the Holy Communion or Eucharist and it has the followings ways;

- It reminds Christians about the love of God for them.
- It promotes love and unity among Christians.
- It promotes the spirit of sharing among Christians.
- It reminds Christians about the death of Jesus for their salvation.
- It makes Christians to repent before taking part in the Holy Communion.
- It is a call for morality and holy living among Christians.
- It reminds Christians about the new covenant where by Jesus reconciled man with God.
- It reminds Christians of their future resurrection.

- It reminds Christians that they are on their exodus to heaven and they should be careful on the way they move.
- It points to the joy, glory and perfection awaiting Christians in the heavenly kingdom.

### **REASONS WHY JUDAS ESCARIOT BETRAYED JESUS**

In Mark 14:10-11, it was reported that Judas Escariot went to the chief priest and negotiated with him the ways in which Jesus could easily be caught. He agreed to betray him in turn of money because of the following;

- Judas did not understand the proper mission of Jesus Christ on earth.
- Judas was materialistic and had excess desire for money.
- He thought that Jesus would use his divine powers to escape from soldiers and chief priest.
- He wanted to gain cheap popularity from teachers of the law and the chief priests.
- He expected Jesus to use his messianic powers to fight Roman soldiers.
- Judas was probably envious of Jesus who had become popular.
- Judas was disappointed when Jesus called Peter, James and John his closest friends.
- His betrayal of Jesus was a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.
- He thought and felt isolated and developed the bad thought.
- His betrayal was because of the satanic forces that had entered into him.

### **THE ARREST AND TRIAL OF JESUS**

- After the last supper with his disciples, he took them and went with them to Mt. Olive where he predicted that Peter would deny him three times.
- He also predicted that at his arrest all his disciples would run away from him.
- At that very night Jesus went to the garden of Gethsemane to pray and ask for strength from his father.
- While still in the garden of Gethsemane Judas arrived with a crowd of men armed with clubs and swords.
- The men were sent by chief priests and teachers of the law to arrest Jesus.
- On the arrival Judas approached Jesus, addressed him as a teacher and kissed him.
- The kissing acted as a signal to the soldiers that Jesus was the man to be arrested.
- The kissing was followed by immediate arrest of Jesus.
- Peter tried to defend Jesus by cutting off an ear of the high priest's soldier.
- In no time, all the disciples had run away except a certain young man who followed up the men who had arrested Jesus.
- The soldiers also tried to arrest the man but he ran away naked.

### **JESUS' TRIAL (Mark 14:53-65)**

- After Jesus being arrested, they took him to the high priests' house.
- The house was packed with chief priests, elders and teachers of the law who formed the Jewish religious council which was called synhedrine.
- The intention of the synhedrine council was to get rid of Jesus and that's why they sat at night to get some evidence against Jesus unfortunately they could not.
- After failing to get evidence they bribed some people so that they could give false witness and information about Jesus.
- They taught false stories against Jesus which could not agree.
- Jesus never reacted to any accusation against him.
- The chief priest stood up and was very annoyed at Jesus' silence and he asked him "have you no answer to the accusation they bring to you".
- Jesus still kept quiet to the question of the high priest.
- The high priest then asked Jesus for the second time "are you the messiah?"
- To this question Jesus answered "I am....." And you will see the son of man seated on the right of the almighty and coming from clouds of heaven.
- This annoyed the high priest and made him tore his robes (garments) and said "we do not anymore witness! You heard his blasphemy (abuse of God)".
- The whole council voted against Jesus and agreed that he deserved death.
- They started spitting on him, the blind folded him and hit him.
- He was handed over to guards who slapped and took him.
- Peter had followed him at a distance and as trials went on, he was seated in the courtyard of the high priest's home.
- One of the high priest's slave girl identified Peter was one of Jesus' disciples.
- Peter denied three times "I don't know..... I don't understand what you are talking about and this was followed by the crowing of the cock.
- Peter remembered what Jesus had predicted which made him to break down, cried and repented.

#### **JESUS' TRIAL BY PILATE IN THE ROMAN COURT (Mark 15:1-15)**

- The following morning very early, the chief priests, elders, teachers of the law and the whole Jewish council planned to handover Jesus to Pilate.
- They suggested possible charges that could enable Pilate to sentence Jesus to death.
- Pilate who was by then the Roman governor and the judge in the Roman Empire was very strict and could not entertain religious accusations against Jesus.
- The Jewish council decided to make a case against Jesus to appear to royal court.

- They instead accused Jesus of calling himself the king of Jews with the intention of leading a rebellion against Roman authorities.
- They also accused Jesus of inciting and forbidding them from paying taxes.
- Pilate cross examined Jesus but found no fault in him.
- He asked Jesus “are you the king of the Jews?” and Jesus answered him “so you say” and Jesus never answered any accusation against him.
- Pilate asked him “are you not going to answer?” Jesus didn’t even say a word and this annoyed Pilate.
- Pilate detected the innocence in his silence and he told teachers of the law that he hadn’t found any crime in Jesus.
- On hearing that, the teachers of law shouted that they wanted him crucified.
- Pilate tried to release Jesus as he used to do every Passover season when he could release the prisoners.
- He asked the teachers of the law to decide between Jesus and Barabbas who to release.
- The teachers of the law demanded for the release of Barabbas who was a known criminal.
- Due to the public pressure, Pilate left Barabbas and handed over Jesus to the public to be crucified.

#### **REASONS TO SHOW THAT JESUS WAS INNOCENT**

- Jesus was arrested at night and not in the open showing that he was not a criminal and therefore innocent.
- Many of the accusations given against Jesus were very contradicting.
- Jesus’ keeping quiet throughout showed that he was very innocent.
- Pilate himself found out that Jesus was very innocent and didn’t find any crime committed.
- Pilate even asked Jesus whether he had anything to say after being examined.
- Jesus forgave those who crucified him a sign which showed his innocence.
- Jesus was crucified to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies otherwise he was not guilty.
- The resurrection of Jesus also proved that he was innocent.
- The Roman army official who witnessed the death of Jesus said “surely this man was a son of God”.
- The label on the cross “king of the Jews” shows Jesus’ innocence.
- Pilate acted against Jesus under the pressure of the crowd.

#### **Questions**

1. ***“Despite being crucified, Jesus was not guilty.” Justify***
2. ***What do today’s judges learn from this***

## **CAUSES OF JESUS' CRUCIFIXION**

### **Why was Jesus crucified?**

- Jesus had gained popularity than the teachers of the law so they felt jealousy.
- Jesus was crucified because of Judas' greed for money.
- Jesus and his disciples did not fast the way the Pharisees expected.
- Jesus' power to perform miracles made the Pharisees jealousy and turned against him.
- The circulating information that Jesus was the messiah made him to be crucified.
- The cleansing of the temple of Jerusalem made him to earn enmity hence his crucifixion.
- The need to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies made him to be crucified.
- Jesus' association with sinners and outcasts made him to be crucified.
- Jesus' act of raising the dead annoyed the Jewish religious leaders who never believed in resurrection of the dead.
- Jesus' use of parable to criticize the evils of the teachers of the law made him unpopular hence his crucifixion.
- Pilate's desire to please the mob and gain cheap popularity led to his crucifixion.
- He was crucified because crucifixion was the popular way of dealing with stubborn agents among the Jews.

### **Lessons Christians learn from Jesus' Trials**

- Christian judges should pass judgment basing on clear evidence but not on the interest of the crowd just as Pilate did.
- The courts should be conscious while passing judgment because it is only God who has power over death.
- A judge who feels biased should leave a certain/given case to other judges.
- Christian judges in courts of law should give alternative punishments instead of death sentence.
- Christian judges should base their judgment on concrete evidence.
- Christian judges should promote the rule of law and order by punishing what is wrong.
- Christians should give genuine witness in courts of law.
- Christian judges should allow the law instead of following people's wishes.
- Christians should avoid mob justice which can delay the process of justice.
- Christians should safe guard against acquiring cheap popularity.
- Christians who violate the law should accept punishments given to them.
- Christians should be with the spirit of forgiving one another.

## **Evidence to Show that Jesus Died**

What evidence does Mark give to prove that Jesus died?

- Mark provides that Jesus was crucified hence he died.
- Mark also provides that during his crucifixion the whole world was covered with darkness.
- The words “Eloi, Eloi” showed that he was dying.
- The tearing of the temple curtain into two parts showed that Jesus was dead.
- The army official who was guarding the cross showed that Jesus died and said “this was a real son of God”.
- Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome stood at a distance and saw Jesus dying.
- Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus had already died.
- Pilate asked the Roman official to confirm that Jesus had died.
- Joseph rolled a large stone and covered the entry of the tomb.
- Joseph placed the body of Jesus in the tomb which had been dug out of the solid rock.
- Joseph wrapped the body of Jesus Christ in a linen cloth which was a custom of the Jews.
- Joseph also removed the body of Christ from the cross and confirmed that Jesus was dead.
- His resurrection also proved that he had died.

## **Evidence to Show That Jesus’ Resurrection is a Reality**

**1. What evidences are there in the new testament to show that Jesus resurrected?**

**2. What is the importance of Jesus’ resurrection today?**

- His appearance to his disciples showed that he had resurrected.
- He also appeared to women like Mary.
- The women who went to anoint the body, early in the morning found an empty tomb meaning he had resurrected.
- Jesus appeared to Peter and the rest of his disciples.
- He proved to the doubting Thomas by showing him wound in his palms and ribs.
- In the gospel of John he ate with his disciples.
- He appeared to the two disciples who were going to Emaus, the angel of the Lord said “he has risen, he is not here see the place where they laid him”.
- He appeared to Saul on his way to Damascus and converted Saul to Paul.
- The fact that the New Testament is present then it is a proof that he resurrected.
- The readiness of his disciples to suffer was because of his resurrection.
- After his resurrection he commissioned his disciples.
- His ascension into heaven was after his resurrection.

## **THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

The gospel according to John appears as the fourth gospel in the New Testament. The exact date of writing the gospel is not clear although most scholars hold that it was written between 75-100AD.

The author of the gospel is believed to have been John.

The sources used by the author to collect the data include; oral source/kerygma, words of Mark, Mathew, and Luke and any other source known by the author.

### **THE AUTHOR OF THE GOSPEL**

#### **Who is the author of the fourth gospel?**

- According to the church traditions the writer of the gospel is John the apostle one of the most respected elders of Jerusalem church.
- It was testified by justifying the matter that the fourth gospel was written by John when he was in Ephesus.
- John the writer of the gospel was the son of Zebedee and he was a fisherman.
- The author was John whose brother was James the fisherman.
- The writer was John whose mother was Mary sister of Mary mother of Jesus.
- The author of the gospel was John who was formally the disciple of the John the Baptist.
- The author was called to follow Jesus when he was about 25 years old.
- The author is John the apostle, the last apostle to die.
- The author is John who learned against Jesus during the last supper.
- The author is John who sat on Jesus at the time when Jesus predicted his betrayal by one of his disciples.
- The author is John who was introduced to Mary as a son and named him a mother by Jesus.
- The author is John the disciple who witnessed the piercing of Jesus' body and saw water and blood coming out from Jesus.
- The author is John one of the apostles to whom Mary Magdalene went to report about the empty tomb of Jesus.
- The author is John the apostle who identified Jesus as the Lord after his resurrection.

- The author is John one of the three top leaders of Jerusalem.

## **PURPOSE/AIMS OF WRITING THE GOSPEL**

### **1. Account for the writing of the fourth gospel.**

### **2. Why was the fourth gospel written?**

- John wanted to confirm the messiahship of Jesus Christ because by 100AD some people still doubted the messiahship of Jesus.
- The author wanted to awaken the faith of the early Christians.
- He wrote the gospel for the purpose of evangelism . That is to say, spread of the good news about Jesus Christ.
- He aimed at presenting the universality of the gospel.
- He aimed at correcting the mentality that John the Baptist was greater than Jesus.
- He wanted to stress the humanity of Jesus.
- The gospel was written to meet needs of the educated.
- The gospel was aimed at providing a written record concerned with the life and work of Jesus Christ.
- It was written to show the salvation and eternal life through faith in Christ.
- It was written to show that Jesus' work was a continuation of God's creation work.
- It was written to show that Jesus is unique and a son of God.
- He wanted to show the role and importance of the Holy Spirit in guiding the church.
- He wanted to teach about the resurrection to help those who are still doubting.
- The gospel was written to confirm the pre-existence of Jesus.
- He wanted to show that Jesus had human power to transform human lives.
- He wanted to strengthen the faith of suffering Christians especially the new converts who were given hard time by relatives.
- He wanted to defend the early church community against distortion and heresies such as claiming that God didn't create the world.
- He wanted to show Jesus as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.
- He aimed at making a theological and spiritual interpretation of the work and life of Jesus.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF JOHN'S GOSPEL**

- The gospel is characterized by having only 7 signs.
- In the gospel judgment is instant . That is to say, here and now.
- The gospel is characterized by seven "I AM" saying or metaphoric sayings.
- The gospel has unique presentation of the gospel message.



- The gospel presents the teaching of Jesus in form of discourses . That is to say, lengthy conversations.
- The gospel is characterized by the prologue in which all main themes are summarized.
- The gospel presents the messiahship of Jesus in a straight forward way and without hiding right from the start.
- The gospel of John had a central aim of presenting Jesus as a messiah and son of God.
- The gospel is characterized by the central theme “God’s son became flesh and sent by the father to the world”.
- The gospel has words which give double expressions or meanings for example temple referring to the building as well as the body.
- The gospel presents the humanity of Jesus in a very vivid way.
- The gospel also manifests the divinity of Jesus in a unique way like “Jesus is in the father and the father is in him”.
- The gospel is characterized by the strong Jewish background.
- The gospel has two parts one part concentrates on signs and other part concentrates on passion, death and resurrection of Jesus.
- The gospel uses the term eternal life to refer to kingdom of God.
- The gospel is characterized by the hostility of Jesus’ opponents against him.
- The gospel recognizes the Gentiles meaning that it is universal.
- The gospel is characterized by mixed reactions where some people believe in Jesus and others do not believe in him.
- In john’s gospel Jesus refers to himself as God’s son (120 times)
- The gospel uses the term Jews to mean Jesus’ opponents (70 times)

## **COMPARISON BETWEEN GOSPEL OF MARK AND JOHN**

### **Similarities**

- Both gospels aim at presenting the good news about Jesus Christ.
- In both gospels, the content of the kerygma can be well traced.
- Both gospels present the ministry of john the Baptist as the one who came to prepare way for the messiah.
- In both gospels Jesus calls disciples and teaches them.
- In both gospels Jesus is presented as a healer and prophet.
- Both gospels present the divinity of Jesus in vivid terms.
- Both gospels present the full humanity of Jesus.
- Both gospels have a similar sequences of some events (John 6, Mark 6:30-42)

- In both gospels Jesus suffers beginning with his entry into Jerusalem and ending with his death.
- In both gospels Jesus spent three days in the grave and resurrected.
- Both gospels record the disciples' lack of understanding.
- Both gospels present a number of events in common.

## Differences

- Mark hides messiahship of Jesus while John displays it from the start.
- Mark terms the supernatural acts of Jesus as miracles while John calls them signs.
- In John Jesus' activities are centered in Jerusalem while in Mark his activities are centered in Galilee.
- The order of details in John is different from that of Mark. In Mark, Jesus uses parables while in John Jesus uses discourses.
- In John there are more indicators of time while in Mark, time indicators are few.
- In Mark, Jesus called and chose all his disciples by himself while in John, some disciples of Jesus were handed over to him by John the Baptist.
- The beginning of the gospel of John differs from the beginning of gospel of Mark. While John begins referring to creation times, Mark begins referring to prophet Isaiah's time.
- In Mark, Jesus began his ministry when John the Baptist was imprisoned while in John, the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus overlapped.
- In Mark judgment is futuristic while in John, judgment is here now and instant.
- In Mark Jesus drew people to the kingdom of God while in John Jesus drew people towards eternal life.
- In Mark, the cleansing of the temple came at the end of Jesus' mission while in John, it came at the beginning to show Jesus' messiahship.
- In Mark, the Passover meal and the last supper took place at the same time while in John the last supper is not clearly indicated.
- In Mark Jesus uses simple and direct language while in John uses symbolic/figurative language.
- Mark omits mentioning certain people like Nicodemus, Lazarus and Samaritan woman while John includes them in his gospel.
- In Mark, Simon of Cyrene assisted Jesus in carrying the cross while in John, Jesus carries his cross up to Golgotha.
- While Mark remains silent about Jesus' side being pierced and blood flowing out with water, John mentions something about that.
- Mark reports miracles of exorcism while John leaves them out.
- In Mark, Jesus' words before dying were "Eloi, Eloi" meaning my Lord my Lord "Lamasabachthan" meaning why have you forsaken me. While in John he says "it is finished".

- Mark gives an account of Jesus' baptism while John omits it.
- Mark shows how Jesus transfigured himself on Mt. Tabul while John omits the transfiguration of Jesus.
- Mark gives an account on how Jesus was tried before the Sanhedrin while John leaves it out.
- Mark reports the institution of Lord's supper/Eucharist while John talks about washing the feet of disciples.
- In Mark during the anointing of Jesus at Bethany, the woman .....the perfume on Jesus' head while in John it was poured on Jesus' feet.

### **THE PROLOGUE OF JOHN'S GOSPEL (John 1:1-18)**

The introductory part has an idea that word had already existed, the word was with God and the word was God.

- It shows that Jesus is the light that enables mankind to receive God's salvation.
- It shows that the word became a human being full of grace and truth and lived among human beings.
- It shows that Jesus was rejected and wasn't recognized by the world. (John 1:10-11)
- The word "word" in the prologue refers to the created world and the enslavement of mankind by sin.
- The prologue also shows that some people welcomed the word of God.
- The prologue shows that baptism is important (John 1:15)
- It also points to the love God has for mankind.
- It also points that through Jesus, believers come to know the glory of God.
- The prologue shows that Jesus is the truth (John 1:17)
- It also shows that salvation is by God's grace but not by the law (John 1:17)
- The prologue points at the divinity of Jesus by referring to him as the only son of God.

### **JOHN'S PRESENTATION OF JESUS' MESSIAHSHIP**

- John presents the messiahship of Jesus by referring to him as a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. (John 1:45)
- John confirms the messiahship of Jesus by referring to his act of cleansing the temple (John 2:13ff)
- John proves the messiahship of Jesus by referring to people who gave Jesus titles of prophets and messiah (John 7:42-43)
- Jesus' act of healing the blind and the lame is a proof for messiahship.
- John presents Jesus as the light of the world showing Jesus' messiahship.
- He presents Jesus as the foundation of the living water showing that he was a messiah (John 7:37-38)
- John also presents Jesus as the word meaning the word of God that became flesh.
- John presents the seven signs to testify that Jesus was the messiah.
- John also uses Jesus as the only resurrected to prove messiahship of Jesus.

- In the gospel of John, Jesus constantly referred to God as his father a proof of his messiahship.
- The seven “I AM” sayings reported/recorded by John also prove Jesus messiahship.
- The wisdom that Jesus portrayed also showed that Jesus is the messiah.
- John the Baptist testified Jesus’ messiahship by proclaiming him as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. (John 1:29)
- Andrew witnessed Jesus as a messiah by telling his brother Simon Peter that they had found the messiah (John 1:41)
- Philip also witnessed Jesus as a messiah when he told Nathanael that he had found the one whom Moses had written about (John 1:45)
- Nicodemus also testified that they knew that Jesus was the teacher sent by God meaning that he was real messiah (John 3:2)
- The Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob believed and testified that Jesus was a messiah (John 4:19)
- Martha also confessed that Jesus was a messiah (John 11:27)
- The Roman official confessed that indeed Jesus was a son of man.
- Jesus’ appearance to his disciples on a number of occasions after his.....also testified his messiahship.
- Jesus himself publically claimed that he was a messiah (John 4:26)
- Jesus claimed that he was before Abraham and this proves his messiahship.
- The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem proved his messiahship.
- Jesus being anointed by a woman called Mary at Bethany showed that he was a messiah.
- Jesus’ life which was full of justice showed that he was a messiah.
- The falling down of those who came to arrest him proves that he was a messiah.

#### **THE DIVINITY OF JESUS IN JOHN’S GOSPEL**

- Jesus’ pre-existence before the world was created shows his divine nature.
- The cleansing of the temple of Jerusalem where he referred to the temple as the house of his father proved his divine nature.
- The triumphant entry into Jerusalem also proved his divinity.
- The falling down of soldiers who came to arrest Jesus showed that he was divine.
- The resurrection after his death and burial proves he was divine.
- The healing of an official’s son shows his divinity.
- His divinity is also proved in the act of changing of water into wine during the wedding at Cana.
- The healing of the paralyzed man at the pool proved his divinity.
- Feeding of 5,000 people with only 5 loaves and 2 fish proved Jesus’ divinity.
- The act of walking on water also proved his divinity.

- The healing of a blind man was a proof of Jesus' divinity.
- Jesus referred to himself as the bread of life showing that he was divine.
- He referred to himself as "I am who I am" meaning that he was divine.
- At his death a lot of blood and water came out of his body.
- Jesus himself told Pilate that he is a messiah meaning he was divine.
- He also said that he should go back to his father showing his divine relationship with God.
- He slipped away when his opponents tried to arrest him (John 10:39)
- John the Baptist referred to him as a messiah the one sent by God.

### **THE HUMANITY OF JESUS IN JOHN**

- Jesus was a human being by the fact that he had friends . For example Lazarus, Mary and Martha.
- Jesus could also feel thirsty like any other human being . For example he asked water from a Samaritan woman to drink.
- He could get tired . For example he got tired by the journey and sat down by the well of Jacob.
- He also felt pity and human at suffering people for example at Lazarus.
- Jesus was overcome with sorrow like any other human being . For example he wept at the death of Lazarus.
- He could take time to be alone and pray like any other human being . For example he prayed alone at the grave tomb of Jerusalem.
- He could spare time and attend social gatherings like a wedding at Cana.
- Jesus was full of mercy, love and concern for others which are all qualities of human beings.
- Jesus had a mother, father and brothers.
- Jesus had blood like any other human being.
- He could feel agony/pain . For example he felt agonized after learning that Judas Escariot was going to betray him.
- He also observed the customs at his people like attending Passover ceremonies.
- He physically died.
- Like a human being, he got greatly troubled when he thought of death in his mind.

### **LESSONS CHRISTIANS DRAW FROM THE PROLOGUE OF JOHN**

- Christians should accept the word of God that became flesh in Jesus Christ.
- Since the prologue pointed to Jesus as a son of God Christians should believe in Jesus.
- Christians should overcome the evil forces since Jesus came to overcome them.
- Christians should obey him since he is a son of God.

- Christians should accept and honour Jesus as a messiah.
- Just as Jesus came to fulfill Old Testament prophecies Christians should fulfill their own promises.
- Jesus as Jesus is the light of the world.
- Christians should show love to others since Jesus showed love to his followers.
- Since Jesus came to save the world, Christians should save others especially the needy.
- Christians should be good messengers of God and Jesus.
- Christians should have faith so as to be counted as children of God.

### **DISCIPLES' LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS**

Although reading the gospel reveals that Jesus was a messiah and his divinity is made very clear.

However his own disciples took long to understand him as a messiah. Below are some of the ways in which disciples of Jesus showed lack of understanding of his nature;

- His disciples were surprised to find Jesus talking to a Samaritan woman in a private place (John 4;27)
- The disciples failed to understand the other food Jesus used to eat (John 4;34)
- The disciples misunderstood Jesus when he commended that Lazarus was sleeping yet he was dead (John 11:11-15)
- Judas Escariot failed to understand the anointing of Jesus at Bethany by Mary and he termed the use of perfume as wastage.
- Peter did not understand Jesus' intention of washing the feet of his disciples that even tried to prevent him from washing his feet.
- Judas' betrayal of Jesus to his enemies also showed lack of understanding 9John 4;1-4)
- Nathanael wondered how Jesus knew where he came from.
- Nathanael doubted whether a messiah would come from Nazareth where Andrew, Philip and Simon told him that they had found the messiah Jesus from Nazareth.
- Philip failed to understand Jesus as the way to the father when he asked Jesus to show them the way to the father (John 14:8)
- Peter's use of violence against Jesus' enemies showed his lack of understanding that Jesus as a messiah had to suffer (John 18:10-11)
- Peter's denial of Jesus at a critical moment also showed lack of understanding.
- Thomas doubted the resurrection of Jesus. This showed lack of understanding (John 20:19-25)

### **MIRACLES AS SIGNS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

- Unlike Mark who dedicates almost half of his gospel to miracles of Jesus (200/425 verses). John selects and presents only seven miracles.
- Unlike Mark and other gospel John omits the miracle of exorcism.
- John doesn't also present miracle of lepers . That is to say, people suffering from leprosy.
- In John, Jesus' miracle of turning water into wine in Cana is totally new and unique with other gospels.
- Three of is miracle namely curing of the official's son, multiplying waves and walking on water share the same tradition and format with other gospels.
- The miracles in John aren't marvelous and they are not exciting as the one in synoptic gospels.
- John presents the double reaction of the audience to signs performed by Jesus. On one hand there is faith and belief and the other hand there is hostility.
- John lays emphasis on the theological and symbolic aspects of miracle performed.
- John refers to Jesus' miracles as words (18 times and as signs)

### **THE SEVEN SIGNS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

1. The sign of changing water into wine (John 2:1-12)
2. The sign of healing the official's son (John 4:46-51)
3. The sign of healing the paralyzed man (John 5:1-18)
4. The sign of feeding 5000 men (John 6:1-15)
5. The sign of walking on water (John 6:16-21)
6. The sign of healing a blind man (John 9:1-12)
7. The sign of raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-54)

### **GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGNS**

- They proved that Jesus was a messiah prophecies by the old testament prophets.
- The signs showed the active presence of Jesus in the world, that is showing Jesus' participation in the continuation of the creation.
- The signs helped to build the faith of the disciples of Jesus giving them all the confidence and courage.
- The signs revealed God's grace and love towards mankind through healing the glory of God the father and God the son.
- The signs pointed at the divinity of Jesus that shows that Jesus was a son of God.
- The signs helped in quick spreading of the good news.
- The signs pointed at future resurrection of Jesus and of all believers.
- The sign proved that Jesus is the source of life like in the case of raising Lazarus from death.
- The signs manifested the future heavenly joy, like in the feeding of the 5000 men.

- The signs revealed Jesus' power to save like the gospel because he performed some of the sign to Gentiles and some on gentile territories.
- The signs manifested Jesus as the light of the world like in giving sight to the blind.
- The signs pointed at Jesus' humanity like changing of water into wine at wedding in Cana.
- The signs provided a useful background to the discourses.
- The signs raised the time of hostility against Jesus because he performed some of the signs on the Sabbath day.

### **CHANGING WATER INTO WINE**

- The sign took place at Cana and was during a wedding feast. It happened that Jesus and his mother had been invited to attend a wedding feast at Cana.
- In the middle of the feast, wine got finished for the organizers.
- This made the organizers to get stuck because they did not know what was next.
- The mother of Jesus told him to help the couple out of the embarrassing situation. Mary told Jesus that "they have no wine left....."
- In reply Jesus told his mother that his time had not come to reveal his father's glory.
- But all the same the mother insisted and told the organizers to obey whatever Jesus would tell them.
- Then Jesus told the servants to fill 6 jars with water later Jesus told them to draw water out of jars and taste it.
- To their surprise the water had turned to wine and it was the first sign recorded by John.

### **Significance of the Sign**

- It was to prove Jesus' divinity because the act was beyond human knowledge.
- It strengthened the faith and belief of his disciples.
- The sign separated the faithful and unfaithful.
- It showed love and concern Jesus had for mankind by saving the bride and groom from public embarrassment.
- The sign showed that Jesus supports monogamous marriage since he took place on the wedding.
- It symbolized the joy and glory in heavenly kingdom.
- It also pointed that Jesus' humanity by honouring the invitation and attending the feast.
- The wine symbolized good news while water symbolized Judaism.
- The wine also symbolized the Eucharist which Jesus was to inaugurate.
- The sign signified Mary's faith and recognition of his son's divine powers by requesting him to do something.



- It also showed that women were good and active disciples of Jesus. These were shown by Mary's move towards Jesus.
- Intimacy was proved between Jesus and his mother.
- The 6 jars signified the imperfection of Judaism because the figure 6 presented imperfection among the Jews.
- The 6 jars in number also signified the disciples' lack of understanding of Jesus.
- The sign in general symbolized the New Testament.

### **Relevance to Modern Christians**

- Christians should acknowledge Jesus' Sonship to God the father.
- Christians should acknowledge God's glory in whatever they do.
- Modern Christians should exercise love and concern for one another.
- Modern Christians should uphold monogamous marriages.
- Modern Christians should strive for the joy and glory in God's kingdom.
- Modern Christians should participate in social functions.
- Modern Christians should seek good news of Jesus in their lives.
- Modern Christians should participate in receiving the body and blood of Jesus in Eucharist.
- Modern Christians should participate actively in the ministry of Jesus via spreading the good news.
- Modern Christians should have good relationship between God the father and son.

### **HEALING THE OFFICIAL'S SON (John 4:43-54)**

- It happened that a certain government official met Jesus and he was a Gentile.
- The official had a son who was almost about to die.
- He approached Jesus and begged him to go with him to Capernaum.
- Jesus challenged the official's faith but found that he was totally faithful.
- Seeing the faithfulness of the official, Jesus assured him that his son was going to live and not to die.
- On his way back, he met some of his servants who were looking for him.
- The servants told him that the fever had left his son.
- He asked the time at which that had happened and was told the exact time when Jesus had given him assurance that boy was going to live.
- The official and his entire family believed in Jesus from that time onwards.

### **Significance of the Sign**

- It showed the importance of faith because the official presented himself with faith and his prayers were answered.

- It signified Jesus as a real messiah as he was prophesized by prophet Isaiah.
- It pointed at universality of Jesus and gospel for both the Jews and the Gentile because the official was a Gentile.
- It showed the divinity of Jesus which enabled him to heal the sick.
- It showed that Jesus had power over Satan

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THIRD SIGN OF JESUS HEALING A MAN CRIPPLED FOR 38 YEARS AT THE POOL OF BETHZARTHA (5:1-28)**

- 1. Examine the significance of healing a man crippled for 38 years at the pool of Bethzarttha.**
- 2. Comment on the meaning of the third sign that Jesus Christ performed in the fourth gospel.**
  - Water in the pool of Bethzarttha symbolized the idea of healing power.
  - 38 years the man had been crippled symbolized the time the Israelites spent into the desert.
  - The 5 porches/ entrances to the pool symbolized the five books in the Old Testament. That is to say, Torah or Pentateuch.
  - The third sign signified that Jesus Christ was the lord of the Sabbath. That is to say, had power to determine what the Sabbath was to be used for.
  - Healing a crippled man signified that Jesus Christ was the son of God. That is to say, he referred to God as his father.
  - The third sign nullified the Jewish belief about suffering as a result of one's sins or the parents' sins.
  - It signified that Jesus offers both spiritual and physical healing to mankind. That is to say, this man was healed from his physical lameness as well as his sins.
  - Signified the divinity of Jesus Christ. That is to say, he ordered the man to pick up his mat and go home receiving healing.
  - The third sign signified the fulfillment of Old Testament scriptures of Isaiah 35:5-6.
  - It signified the humanity of Jesus Christ. That is to say, he sympathized with the man and so healed him.
  - Jesus' healing a man at the pool signified that the command of Jesus' word, healing of an individual is effected instantly.
  - The third sign gave back the Sabbath day a new teaching/meaning. That is to say, it was holy that was to be used for a holy purpose to save mankind.
  - The third sign also signified that Jesus takes the initiative as the logos . That is to say, he asked this man whether he wanted to be healed and so healed him out of his will.
  - The third sign signified the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus Christ.
  - It increased the hostility towards Jesus Christ from the Pharisees simply because this sign was done on the Sabbath day.

## **DISCUSS THE RELEVANCE OF THE HEALING OF THE CRIPPLED MAN FOR 38 YEARS TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- Christians should go to Jesus for both physical and spiritual problems.
- Healing the crippled man shows the need for faith in Jesus so Christians should have faith in Jesus so as to be healed.
- Jesus is a messiah so Christians should respect and honour him.
- Christians are called upon to stand firm during period of suffering as the cripple went through.
- Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath, so Christians are called upon to use the Sabbath for improving and caring for people's lives.
- Christians today should respond readily to Jesus so as to receive healing like the man responded instantly.
- Jesus sympathized with the crippled man when he saw him lying on one of the porches, so Christians are called upon to have concern for those who are sick.
- Jesus is the son of God so modern Christians should accept him.
- The third sign signified the fulfillment of old testament scriptures, so modern Christians are called upon to believe in Old Testament scriptures.
- It shows that with God everything is possible so modern Christians should trust in God.
- Christians learn to believe in Jesus Christ as their savior.
- Christians should continue to live holy lives instead of sinning since Jesus destroyed a grip of sin and evil in man's suffering.
- Jesus is the messiah so modern Christians should respect and honour him.

## **WHY ARE SUCH HEALINGS NOT COMMON/ RARE AMONG CHRISTIANS IN UGANDA TODAY?**

- Initially these healings were ritually ministered and centralized at Jerusalem but people today look for modern ways of getting healed.
- Today Uganda has got trained doctors who use scientific medicine to heal such diseases.
- Today various religious sects profess and practice different things as far as healing is concerned.
- Today there is a lot of disbelief in Ugandans for such healings as it was before.
- Today Ugandans look for signs before they believe.
- Today the two offices of life are separated. That is to say, religion and secular way of life.
- Today we have ways of controlling diseases like immunization of children against polio.
- Ugandans who try to heal sometimes are fake and this discourages other people.
- Many diseases except venereal diseases are no longer seen as a product of sin.

- Some church leaders lack divine powers from God to heal such diseases.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FOURTH SIGN OF JESUS FEEDING FIVE THOUSAND PEOPLE (6:1-15)**

#### **Explain the meaning of the miracle of feeding the multitude in John's gospel.**

- The feeding of five thousand people pointed to the idea of Lord's Supper that Christ Jesus was about to institute to his followers.
- Feeding of the 5000 people signified that Jesus cares for both physical and spiritual needs of people.
- Feeding the multitude signified that Jesus was the source of bread . That is to say, the provider of food to mankind.
- The 5 loaves of bread symbolized the Pentateuch.
- The twelve baskets of leftovers represented the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Feeding 5000 people foreshadowed the heavenly banquet that Jesus' followers were to enjoy.
- The fourth sign signified the importance of prayer . That is to say, Jesus gave thanks to God when he broke the bread.
- The fourth sign also signified the fulfillment of old testament scriptures . That is to say, it reflected the manna and quail that God gave to the Israelites in the desert, besides, prophet Elijah also performed similar miracles of feeding people on bread.
- It signified the divinity of Jesus Christ . That is to say, he was able to multiply the 5 loaves of bread and two fish to feed the 5000 people.
- Signified the humanity of Jesus Christ sympathized with the hungry people so he gave them what to eat.
- It signified that Jesus was a son of God.
- Feeding 5000 people signified that Jesus takes the initiative as the logos . That is to say, he asked the disciples where to buy enough food to feed such a crowd.
- The fourth sign also signified that with God everything is possible.
- The miracle of feeding the multitude revealed the glory of God to mankind.

### **RELEVANCE OF THE MIRACLE OF FEEDING THE 5000 PEOPLE TO THE MODERN CHRISTIANS**

#### **Discuss the relevance of the sign of feeding 5000 people to the Christian community today.**

- Christians learn to attend both physical and spiritual needs of other people.
- Jesus is a messiah so Christians should respect and honour him.
- Christians ought to work for heavenly feast.
- Christians learn to always pray to God like Jesus did.
- Christians should always depend on God's power as Jesus did by giving thanks to God.
- Jesus was a servant of mankind, so Christians should also be servants of others.

- Christians ought to seek for the truth by following the crown of Jesus the way the crowd did.
- Christians should expect the second coming of Jesus Christ any time.
- The sign shows the fulfillment of Old Testament scriptures so modern Christians are called upon to believe in them.
- It shows that with God everything is possible so modern Christians are called upon to trust in him.
- Christians ought to work and have concern to the needy and hungry Christians.

#### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FIFTH SIGN OF JESUS WALKING ON WATER (6:16-21)**

##### **Examine the importance/ relevance/meaning of Jesus walking on water in John's gospel.**

- Jesus' walking on water in John's gospel signified his divinity. He was able to walk on water without drowning and this even surprised his disciples.
- The humanity of Jesus was indicated when he walked on water. He was concerned about his disciples who had been attacked by strong wind and he came to help them.
- Jesus' walking on water in John's gospel showed his messiahship. Jesus was able to overcome all the evil forces on earth.
- The sign signified the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures it reflected the time when Moses led the Israelites to cross the water of the Red sea during the Exodus experience/ period.
- The sign of Jesus walking on water revealed the lack of faith of Jesus' disciples. They were terrified at seeing him walking on water.
- The sign signified the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus Christ. Out of God's love Jesus saved the disciples from drowning.
- The miracle helped to increase the faith of the disciples of Jesus because they witnessed this sign and wondered.
- By Jesus walking on water, it showed his power over nature. He is termed as the Lord of nature and the creations.
- The strong wind that stirred up the water symbolized the evil forces that were at war with God and so the coming of Jesus meant that God used Jesus his son to defeat the evil forces.
- What happened to the disciples before being saved by Jesus pointed to the risks and challenges that the disciples would face in future while preaching the word of God.
- The sign showed Jesus as a servant of mankind who came on earth just to serve but not to be served.
- The sign of Jesus walking on water was in other words a training to the disciples for their future roles after the ascension of Jesus to heaven.
- The sign was to point/ reflect on the great "I am" sayings of Jesus where he said "I am the bread of life."

## **WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIGN TO MODERN CHRISTIANS?**

- It teaches Christians that Jesus is divine, therefore Christians should call upon Jesus in all their situations of life.
- The sign teaches Christians to have faith in Jesus just like the disciples believed in his saving power.
- The miracle enables Christians to trust in Jesus therefore they should understand that Jesus has powers over all created things.
- The sign teaches Christians to guard evil forces of nature in life.
- The sign shows Christians that Jesus is all loving, therefore Christians should also extend love to one another.
- It teaches Christians to have courage in Jesus like the disciples had courage in Christ.
- The miracle shows that Christ comforted his disciples therefore Christians should also comfort those in trouble and hardships.
- The sign of walking on water by Jesus helps Christians to prepare for any kind of hardships in life unlike the disciples who were not prepared.
- The sign shows that Jesus is the messiah, so Christians should respect and honour him.
- By walking on water, Jesus teaches modern Christians that he is the son of God therefore Christians should accept him.
- The sign indicates Jesus as a servant of mankind, so Christians should be servants of others too.
- The sign showed that with God everything is possible, therefore modern Christians should trust Jesus Christ as a son of God.
- The sign shows the disciples' lack of understanding Jesus so the modern Christians should make effort to understand Jesus in all circumstances.
- The sign teaches modern Christians that with God everything is possible.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SIXTH SIGN OF JESUS HEALING A MAN BORN BLIND (9:1-12)**

### **Analyse the circumstances under which the man born blind was healed in the gospel of John.**

- As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been born blind.
- His disciples asked him whose sins caused the man's blindness wondering whether it was his parents' sins or his own sins hence showing their lack of understanding.
- The man had been born blind which looked as a curse of sin hence reflecting the Old Testament scriptures in the book of Deuteronomy about retribution.
- But the interpretation of Jesus was different from that of his disciples showing that he is superior to them.
- Jesus said that the man's blindness had nothing to do with his sins or his parents' sins.
- He said that the man was born blind so that God's power might be manifested in him.

- The glory of God would be seen through Jesus as his son through healing him.
- Jesus being obedient to the will of God . That is to say, he was to work so as to fulfill what God had told him to do.
- So Jesus spat on the ground hence showing his humanity.
- He made some mud with the spittle and rubbed the mud on the eyes of the man showing his concern for the man.
- This gave the man the psychological cure of his blindness.
- The saliva of Jesus had a healing effect showing he is divine.
- Jesus ordered the man to go and wash his face in the pool of Siloam showing the faith of the man in Jesus.
- Symbolically Siloam meant being “sent”.
- So the man went, washed his face in the pool and he started seeing.
- Jesus had love and sympathy for the man who had been born blind.
- Jesus is divine.
- Jesus is the messiah.
- Jesus is a servant of man.

#### **TO WHAT EXTENT ARE CHRISTIANS IN UGANDA BLIND ABOUT JESUS TODAY?**

To a smaller extent, Christians in Uganda are blind about Jesus Christ in the following ways;

- Some Christian murder fellow human beings.
- Some Christians practice human sacrifices to solve their problems.
- Some Christians have ended up following religious cult like that of Kibwetere and Bushara.
- Some religious leaders have continued to live animal life like defiling people's girls.
- Some Christians have ended up joining different churches in search for marriage partners.
- Some Christians have continued to consult witch doctors for witchcraft.
- Some Christians still worship idols and God at the same time.
- Some practice sexual immorality like prostitution, adultery and defilement.
- Some church leaders have commercialized church services.

**To a bigger extent, Christians are not blind about Jesus . That is to say, they understand him in the following ways;**

- Many Christians are loyal to Jesus Christ in their faith.
- Many Christians do carry out charitable work.
- Many Christians practice love for one another.

- Many people have composed Christian songs and hymns.
- Many pastors are performing miracles in Jesus' name.
- Many baptize new converts in Jesus' name.
- Many Christians preach the good news about Jesus.
- There is forgiving of people's sins.
- Many Christians pray through the name of Jesus as well as praying for one another.
- The writing of Christian literature and the translation of the bible into local languages has been done by Christians.
- Many carry out the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus' death and resurrection.
- The celebration of big/ holy Christian days like Christmas, good Friday, Easter Sunday etc.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF HEALING THE MAN BORN BLIND**

#### **Discuss the significance of the sign of healing the man born blind in the fourth gospel**

- Signify that Jesus was the promised messiah who was to make the blind see.
- It fulfilled the Old Testament scriptures in Isaiah 35:5-6 . That is to say, the blind people would see.
- It signified the humanity of Jesus that he sympathized with this man who had been born blind.
- Signified the love of God for mankind through Jesus.
- Signified the lack of understanding of the disciples . That is to say, the disciples of Jesus asked Jesus who had caused the man's blindness.
- It increased hostility towards Jesus from the Pharisees because he performed this sign on a Sabbath.
- Signified a new teaching to the Sabbath as a day to bring healing to sick.
- Signified the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees, they were blind to see that Jesus was the messiah as a messiah as well as the Lord of the Sabbath.
- Signified the importance of faith in Jesus . That is to say, the blind man obeyed his instructions to go to the pool of Siloam and wash his eyes without hesitation.
- **Water in the pool of Siloam the idea of healing power.**
- It revealed the power and glory of God on earth.
- It showed that Jesus takes the initiative as the logos in saving people from their sickness.
- Signified that Jesus came from both physical and spiritual needs of mankind.
- It increased the faith of his disciples.
- Signified that Jesus is the source of light to the world.
- Signify that Jesus was a prophet as the blind man had confessed.
- Showed Jesus as a servant of mankind.



## **COMMENT ON THE RESPONSE OF PEOPLE TOWARDS THIS SIGN OF HEALING A MAN BLIND IN JOHN'S GOSPEL.**

- The disciple asked Jesus whose sin had caused the blindness to the man.
- After being healed the neighbours failed to recognize him, so they wondered whether he was man who used to beg.
- Some people recognized him while others said that he looked like a man who used to beg.
- When the man confessed that he was the one, they asked him for where about of Jesus.
- Some people took this man and reported him to the Pharisees.
- The Pharisees asked him about what who had healed him on Sabbath.
- So the Pharisees claimed the man who had healed him was not from God.
- But this claim divided the Pharisees as others saw Jesus a man of God.
- So the Pharisees sent for the parents of the man who had actually given sight to him.
- But the parents exposed ignorance of how their son had received his sight but requested them to ask the man because he was old enough to answer for himself.
- The parents feared to mention that it was Jesus who had healed their son of blindness because the Pharisees would expel them from synagogue.
- But the Pharisees insisted but the man who healed him was a sinner and wanted a man who had healed him was to confess before them.
- The Pharisees started healing this healing.

## **CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO RAISING LAZARUS TO LIFE**

**Discuss the circumstances that surrounded the raising of Lazarus in the fourth gospel.**

- Lazarus had fallen sick and later died in Bethany.
- Mary and Martha had sent a message to Jesus informing him about the illness of Lazarus showing he was a family friend.
- Jesus said the final result of Lazarus' illness would not be his death but would be to bring the glory of God on earth.
- Jesus requested his disciples to go back to Judah but they reminded him about how people there hence showing their cowardice.
- Jesus told them that Lazarus had fallen asleep but he assured them that he would go and wake him up showing his concern for mankind.
- But the disciples told Jesus that if Lazarus was asleep then he would get well but Jesus assured them that Lazarus had died hence showing their lack of understanding towards him.

- When Jesus arrived in Bethane, he found that Lazarus had been buried four days back which were almost corresponding to the days he would spend in the grave.
- Martha met Jesus and told him that if he had been present during the illness of Lazarus he would not have died showing she had lost hope about Lazarus coming back to life.
- Jesus comforted Martha that Lazarus would rise to life showing his concern for the bereaved family.
- But Martha understood it to mean that Lazarus would rise to life on the last day showing her lack of faith in Jesus.
- Jesus assured her that he was the resurrection and life, whoever believes him would live even though he dies showing that he is the source of life.
- Jesus later asked Martha whether she now believed in him and she confessed that Jesus was the messiah the son of God hence showing open revelation that Jesus was the messiah.
- Many also came to Jesus and told him that if he had been around during Lazarus' illness, he would not have died showing the trust she had in Jesus.
- Jesus saw Mary and the mourners deeply weeping and his heart was touched, so he also wept showing his humanity and his being a family friend.
- Jesus asked the mourners where they had buried Lazarus and they took him to the grave.
- Jesus ordered them to take away the stone at the entrance but Martha complained about the bad smell that would come out of it hence showing she had completely lost hope about Lazarus coming back to life.
- But Jesus reminded her that she would see God's glory if she had believed showing the importance of faith.
- Jesus looked up and gave thanks to God hence showing the effect of prayer and that he derived his powers from God.
- Jesus called Lazarus to come out of the grave in a loud voice and Lazarus came out of the grave alive showing the divinity Jesus.
- Jesus told the people around to unite him and therefore to let him go showing that Lazarus had really resurrected.
- God's love for mankind was revealed through Jesus. Even the people realized how much Jesus loved the bereaved family.
- Jesus is the promised messiah as confessed by Martha.
- Jesus is divine since he raised Lazarus to life.
- Jesus is a servant of mankind.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEVENTH SIGN (RAISING LAZARUS TO LIFE (11:1-53))**

- 1. Comment on the significance of Jesus' raising Lazarus to life in the fourth gospel.**

## **2. Examine the meaning of Jesus conversation with Martha and Mary about Lazarus in John 11:1-53.**

- Seventh sign signified that Martha had completely lost hope about Lazarus coming back to life . That is to say, the bad smell.
- Raising Lazarus signified the humanity of Jesus . That is to say, he wept when Lazarus had died.
- Seventh sign signified the divinity of Jesus . That is to say, he was able to raise Lazarus to life who had died four days back.
- It signified the importance of prayer . That is to say, he prayed at the tomb of Lazarus before raising him to life.
- Raising Lazarus signified the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures like prophet Elijah who raised the widow's son, Ezekiel's valley of the dry bones which were brought to life again.
- The seventh sign signified the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus.
- It revealed the glory of God on earth.
- Raising Lazarus signified that Jesus is the source of life and resurrection, so those who believe in him would resurrect.
- The seventh sign signified that there is life after death . That is to say, it pointed to resurrection of believers.
- Raising Lazarus signified the lack of faith in Mary . That is to say, when Jesus said Lazarus would rise to life on the last day.
- It pointed to the resurrection of Jesus.
- It increased the faith of the disciples of Jesus . That is to say, the death of Lazarus was to bring deeper belief to his disciples about real life.
- Raising Lazarus was a fulfillment of what Jesus had said previously that the dead would come out of their graves in order to live.
- It showed that death was still seen as the final destroyer of man's life and that is why Mary wept in front of Jesus.
- It signified that Jesus has power over death.
- The seventh sign increase hostility towards Jesus from the Pharisees and this eventually led to his death.
- Jesus is a servant of mankind.

### **DISCUSS THE LESSONS MODERN CHRISTIANS CAN LEARN FROM THIS SIGN OF RAISING LAZARUS TO LIFE**

- The sign of raising Lazarus to life shows how Martha and Mary had much trust in Jesus therefore modern Christians should have complete trust in Jesus.
- Raising Lazarus to life teaches modern Christians to have hope that there is life after death, since Lazarus was also raised.

- The sign of arising Lazarus to life teaches modern Christians to always turn to Jesus who heals people's sorrows and brings joy and happiness.
- The sign helps modern Christians to extend love for one another copying Jesus' example who loved Mary and Martha's family.
- It teaches modern Christians about the divinity of God, therefore they should accept the fact that Jesus has power to defeat the power of death.
- The sign shows Jesus relating the position of woman, therefore Christians today should treat all people equally.
- The sign of raising Lazarus to life teaches about the importance of prayer, therefore modern Christians should always pray in the name of Jesus Christ.
- The sign indicates sympathy of Jesus, so modern Christians should have sympathy for those who lose their beloved ones.
- It teaches Christians about service so modern Christians should be servants of others.
- The sign teaches about humbleness of Jesus therefore Christians should emulate the humbleness of Jesus Christ.
- It teaches modern Christians to be prepared for any kind of opposition from the good things they do.
- The sign helps Christians to develop a spirit of enduring any kind of suffering or opposition even when they have done well to others.

#### **THE REACTION/ ATTITUDE/ RESPONSE OF PEOPLE TOWARDS THE SIGN OF RAISING LAZARUS TO LIFE**

- 1. What was the reaction of the audience towards the raising of Lazarus to life by Jesus in John's gospel?**
- 2. Comment on the response of Jesus' contemporaries towards the raising of Lazarus to life in John's gospel.**

- The immediate result of raising Lazarus to life was that many people believed in Jesus Christ.
- The sign made the Sanhedrin to decide that Jesus should be killed as soon as possible. This was because of the uncontrollable influence Jesus was having amongst the ordinary people. That is to say, he was becoming more popular than the Jewish leaders.
- Martha and Mary believe that Jesus Christ was the messiah the son of God.
- The faith of the disciples in Jesus Christ increased as a result of this sign.
- It increased hostility towards Jesus from the religious leaders.
- The religious leaders became more hostile to Lazarus because he had been raised to life.
- It reflected the lack of understanding of the disciples of Jesus Christ.

- It caused envy and jealousy to Jesus Christ from the religious leaders.
- Some people had doubted the ability of Jesus to raise Lazarus to life saying he had managed to heal a man born blind could he not raise Lazarus to life.
- Some people who had witnessed this sign went and reported the news to the Pharisees and the chief priest.
- It caused fear among religious leaders because the Romans would destroy their temple if they had not stopped Jesus from performing miracles.
- Calaphas suggested that Jesus Christ should be killed instead of having the whole Jewish nation destroyed by the Romans.
- The chief priest gave orders to the people to inform them about the whereabouts of Jesus so that they could arrest him.
- People therefore started looking for Jesus Christ and they were expecting him to attend the ritual of purification in Jerusalem.

## **THE NATURE OF JESUS IN THE EVENT OF RAISING LAZARUS TO LIFE**

### **Comment on the portrait of Jesus as reflected in the event of raising Lazarus to life.**

- Jesus is presented as a prophet . That is to say, he predicted that Lazarus would rise to life.
- Jesus is pictured as a son of God . That is to say, Mary confessed that Jesus was the son of God.
- Jesus is a loving and caring person . That is to say, the people realized how much he had loved Lazarus and the bereaved family.
- Jesus is friendly to people . That is to say, he had personal friends like Mary and Martha.
- Jesus is courageous . That is to say, his disciples tried to bar him from going back to Judea because the people there had wanted to stone him but he insisted and went back.
- Jesus is seen as a teacher . That is to say, his disciples and Mary referred to him as a teacher.
- Jesus is pictured as Lord . That is to say, his disciples, Mary and Martha referred to him as the Lord.
- Jesus is pictured as being human . That is to say, he wept when Lazarus had died.
- Jesus is pictured as being divine . That is to say, he was able to raise Lazarus to life.
- Jesus is the resurrection and life which implied that he is the source of life.
- Jesus is seen as the messiah . That is to say, Mary confessed that Jesus was the messiah.
- Jesus also prays to God . That is to say, he prayed to God before raising Lazarus back to life.
- Jesus is suffering messiah . That is to say, faced hostility because of having raised Lazarus to life.
- Jesus is the one who brings glory to God.
- Jesus is comforter . That is to say, he comforted Mary that Lazarus would live again.

## **THE MODERN CHURCH TEACHINGS ABOUT RESURRECTION OF BELIEVERS**

### **Explain the church teaching about resurrection of believers.**

- The church teaches that there is eternal life.
- The raising of Christians will be part of the general event world wide.
- Resurrection will come at the end of time/ parausia.
- The dead bodies will be raised to life.
- The sinners will go to eternal fire.
- The righteous will see God face to face.
- The righteous people will go to heaven.
- Jesus will come back to carry his own people.
- Paul tells the Corinthians that those who will be still alive will be changed instantly.
- The resurrected bodies will be different from the earthly bodies.
- The day will come as a thief.
- Those who will be still alive will be transformed.
- There will be peace and joy instead of pain.
- Heavenly life is better than earthly life.
- Paul says Jesus will resurrect first and believers will follow.
- Believers will live like angels in heaven and there will be no marrying.
- Believers will be united as one family with God as their father.
- There will be glory in heaven.

## **THE SEVEN I AM STATEMENTS/ SAYINGS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

John's gospel presents seven great I am sayings which refer to Who Jesus was namely;

- "I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me will never be hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty again" (6:3-)
- "I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness". (8:12)
- "before Abraham was born I am" (8:58)
- "I am the good shepherd who is willing to die for many sheep" (10:11)
- "I am the resurrection and life whoever believes in me will live even though he dies" (11:25)
- "I am the way, the truth and life, no one goes to the father except through me" (14:6)
- "I am the true vine and you are the branches, whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruits" (15:5)

## **THE GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE/ IMPORTANCE/ MEANING OF THE I AM STATEMENTS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

- 1. Comment on the significance of the use of the phrase “I am” by Jesus in the gospel of John.**
- 2. Examine the meaning of the great I am statements in John's gospel.**
- 3. Discuss the importance of the I am metaphors in the fourth gospel.**

- The phrase I am signifies the divine origin of Jesus Christ . That is to say, his origin was from God as his father.
- Jesus Christ used the metaphor to refer to himself as who he was and his true personality.
- They showed the messiahship of Jesus Christ.
- I am sayings signified that Jesus Christ was the son of God.
- I am metaphors signified that Jesus was God himself.
- I am sayings signified that Jesus Christ was equal to God and that he cares for all people.
- They signified the importance of faith in Jesus in order to have eternal life.
- The I am sayings signified the divinity and authority of Jesus on earth.
- They signified that Jesus is universal savior like “I am the light of the world”
- Signified that Jesus was the source of bread like “I am the bread of life”.
- This in particular was pointing to the Eucharist that Jesus was about to institute.
- Signified that Jesus was far greater than Abraham one of the ancestors of the Jews.
- The I am sayings signified that Christ Jesus existed before the creation of the world like “Before Abraham was born I am”.
- Signified that Jesus is the source of life and so showed his life with his followers like “I am the resurrection and life”.
- The I am saying signified that there is life after death like “I am the resurrection and life”.

## **THE MEANING OF THE DISCOURSE “I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE” (6:22-39)**

**Analyse the implication of Jesus referring to himself as “I am bread of life” in the gospel of John.**

- Jesus said “I am the bread of life and whoever comes to me will never be hungry but will have eternal life”
- It meant that he was the source of eternal life so whoever would believe in him would get it.
- It signified the messiahship of Jesus.
- It signified the divinity of Jesus . That is to say, he came from above.
- Bread is compared to manna that God gave to the children of Israel in the wilderness.
- It pointed to the heavenly banquet that the Christians would enjoy.
- The “I am the bread of life” signified that Jesus was the son of God . That is to say, Jesus referred to God as his father.

- “I am the bread of life” reflected the I am saying in the book of Exodus 3 like “I am who I am”.
- It increased hostility towards Jesus from the crowd . That is to say, they misunderstood him when he had advised them to eat his flesh and drink his blood.
- “I am the bread of life” signified the humanity of Jesus . That is to say, is referred to as the son of Joseph and Mary.
- It also signified that Jesus was greater than the Jewish ancestors like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- “I am the bread of life” signified the obedience of Jesus towards God . That is to say, he came from heaven so as to do the will of God who has sent him.
- Jesus used this I am saying to refer to himself as who he was as the bread of life.

**“ I am telling you the truth, you are looking for me because you ate the bread and had all you wanted not because you understood my teaching” (John 6:26)**

**Examine the weakness of these people referred to in the above statement by Jesus in John’s gospel.**

- The crowd that Jesus had fed was just interested in the bread but not in Jesus’ miraculous power.
- The crowd did not have genuine faith in Jesus.
- They were not satisfied with the miracle that Jesus had performed for them.
- They greatly believed in their fathers like Moses and so forgot God as the sole provider.
- Because the crowd looked at Jesus in terms of worldly and material things.
- They failed to understand the terminology that Jesus had used before them like the idea of the flesh.
- The people were just spiritually blind towards Jesus.
- The idea of Eucharistic healing was far from their understanding.
- They did not know that Jesus had come from heaven.
- The people were hypocrites in nature.
- It seems the crowd was testing the authority of Jesus.
- Because they saw life on earth as something that was going to end here.
- The people were just hard to teach.
- The people thought that Jesus was blaspheming the name of God.

**What evidence is there to show that some people in Uganda have become Christians for reasons other than the cause of Jesus?**

- Some Christians when faced with persecution and martyrdom they run away from God.
- Some Christians aim at seeking for jobs only.
- Some Christians have become Christians for money gains.
- Some have become Christians as a way of seeking for scholarships.
- Some have been Christians as a way of seeking for marriage partners.



- Some have become Christians as a way of seeking company from others.
- Some outcasts/ needy people join Christianity to be loved and taken care of by Christians.
- Some join to get healing from any physical disease.
- Some join to show off their material wealth for pride.
- Some people join because of family influence.
- Some join because of peer group influence.
- Some join because of the need to get contacts with rich countries in America and Europe.

## **THE TEACHING ON EUCHARIST IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

### **Examine the teaching on Eucharist in the gospel of John.**

- In John's gospel, Jesus does not directly inaugurate the institution of Eucharist as it is in mark's gospel.
- At Cana the new wine symbolized the Eucharistic blood of Jesus.
- The new wine would satisfy all the needs of people.
- The feeding of the 5000 people has an element of Eucharist.
- Before the bread was distributed, Jesus took it and gave thanks to God which implied Eucharist.
- He feed them on five loaves of bread and two fish which represented his body.
- As people ate the Eucharistic bread and fish it symbolized the taking of life of the spirit . That is to say, eternal life.
- Jesus said that they would feed on his flesh of the Eucharist.
- Jesus is the bread of life which gives spiritual nourishment to his followers.
- Eating his flesh and drinking his blood are the source of eternal life.
- Whoever eats his flesh and drinks his blood lives in Jesus and likewise Jesus lives in him.
- This implied believing in Jesus who satisfies all hunger and thirst.
- And Jesus live in him by the power of the spiritual meal.
- His body is the divine bread that came down from heaven.
- It is different from the bread that the Jewish ancestors ate but later died.
- This new Eucharist bread of Jesus brings eternal life.
- Thus Jesus is the bread of life in Eucharist.
- It was superior to the manna of the exodus event which the Israelites were fed on.
- When Jesus appeared to the disciples at lakeTiberias, the meal they had of bread and fish was a sign of Eucharist.

## WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SYMBOLS OF BREAD AND WINE TO CHRISTIANS TODAY?

Bread and wine are symbols taken during Holy Communion.

- They symbolize the love of Jesus who died for the sins of man.
- They are symbols of salvation.
- They point **out the of the salvation** of mankind that Jesus paid through his death.
- Bread symbolizes the body of Jesus which was crucified on the cross.
- Wine symbolized the blood of Jesus that he shed on the cross.
- They call upon Christians to have reverence for Jesus as the son of God.
- They symbolize the death of Jesus.
- They give Christians the hope for resurrection.
- Bread and wine are symbols of unity and equality among Christians.
- They strengthen the faith of Christians in Jesus.
- They call upon the Christians to live holy lives.
- They call upon Christians to repent of their sins before taking part in the Lord's Supper.

## “THERE IS A LOT OF SYMBOLISM ATTACHED TO BAPTISM AND EUCHARIST IN JOHN'S GOSPEL” JUSTIFY.

Yes, there is a lot of symbolism attached to the baptism in the following ways;

- John the Baptist was baptizing people preparing them for the Holy spirit.
- The disciples of Jesus were baptizing concurrently with John the Baptist.
- The Samaritan woman is told of water giving everlasting life . That is to say, baptism through Jesus.
- During the washing of the disciples' feet, water in the basin symbolized baptism.
- While on the cross water came out of Jesus which was a symbol of baptism.
- Water in the well of Jacob symbolized the idea of baptism.
- Nicodemus was told by Jesus that no one enter the kingdom of God unless is born of water and the spirit which implied baptism.

There is symbolism attached to Eucharist in the following ways;

- The wedding at Cana, the water turned into wine which symbolized the idea of Eucharist.
- The feeding of the 5000 people, Jesus said that the bread of life implying the idea of Eucharist.
- The blood that Jesus shed while at the cross after being pierced by the soldier was symbolizing the idea of Eucharist.
- In the epilogue of John's gospel, Jesus ordered his disciples to eat the fish and bread symbolizing the idea of Eucharist.
- Jesus as the good shepherd, he feeds the followers on the spiritual food.

## **THE MEANING OF THE DISCOURSE “I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD” (8:12-20)**

- 1. What did Jesus mean by the phrase I am the light of the world in John’s gospel.**
- 2. Examine the significance of Jesus’ referring to himself as the light of the world in John’s gospel.**

- The term light signifies the true wisdom and spiritual understanding of God.
- “I am the light of the world” signified the divinity of Jesus because he was from above and God was with him.
- Jesus used this I am to refer to himself as who was as the light of the world.
- Jesus as the light would give sight to those who are spiritually and physically blind.
- Jesus was the light to enlighten people about the law of the Jewish rituals.
- Jesus as the light brings joy and happiness to the world because those who believe in him will never walk in darkness.
- Jesus as the light will lead believers to heavenly glory.
- “I am the light of the world signified that light is opposed to darkness.
- It reflected the Old Testament scriptures in Exodus 33:22 . That is to say, the pillar of fire that guided the Jews under Moses at Mountain Sinai.
- It signified the purity/ holiness of Jesus because he is the light of the world.
- Showed that Jesus and the father are one.
- Jesus used this I am saying to refer to himself as who he was as the light of the world.

## **ANALYSE THE CHALLENGES MODERN CHRISTIANS FACE IN TRYING TO LIVE AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.**

### **Discuss the obstacles Christians face in being the light of the world today.**

- The influence of western culture on Christians.
- The influence of traditional African culture.
- The balance between work and religious affairs, so having no time for God.
- Financial problems faced by Christians . That is to say, poverty.
- Some religious leaders live immoral lives hence discouraging Christians.
- Commercialization of church services.
- Changing work pattern like working in brewery factory.
- Influence of science and technology.
- Influence of education.
- The unemployment problem.
- The greed for money causing corruption.

- Lack of exemplary behaviours from parents towards their children.
- High degree of moral degeneration in society.
- Hostility from other religious movements like Islam.
- The need for political power.
- The presence of false preachers.
- Tribalism and nepotism.

#### **TO WHAT EXTENT ARE CHRISTIANS LIVING AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD IN UGANDA?**

To a larger extent, Christians are living as the light of the world in the following ways;

- They preach the gospel about Jesus.
- They baptize new converts into Christianity.
- Carry out miracles in Jesus' name.
- Laying hands on Christians.
- Live exemplary lives.
- Pray to God and pray for one another.
- Carry out crusades.
- Establishing new churches.
- Carry out missionary journeys.
- Carry out works of charity.
- Compose Christian songs and hymns.
- Carry out Lord's supper.
- Carry out religious conferences and seminars.
- Sharing of material property.

**However to a smaller extent, some Christians have failed to live as the light of the world in the following ways;**

- Some practice sexual immorality like prostitution, incest and adultery.
- Some religious leaders live immoral lives.
- Some Christians are corrupt in nature.
- Some Christians are selfish in nature.
- Some practice discrimination.
- Some Christians practice murder of people.
- Some Christians are hypocrites.
- Some Christians are too work oriented.

- Some practice witchcraft.
- Some religious leaders have commercialized church services.

### **THE THIRD I AM STATEMENT, “BEFORE ABRAHAM I AM” (8:21-59)**

**Discuss the significance of Jesus’ saying “Before Abraham I am” in the gospel of John”.**

- The statement signified the humanity of Jesus Christ. This showed that Jesus had existed as a human being just like Abraham was a human being.
- It signified the divinity of Jesus. Jesus said that he came from above.
- By Jesus saying that “Before Abraham, I am” it implied that he was a son of God.
- The I am statement signified the messiahship of Jesus he said that he had no demon by they dishonoured him.
- It showed that Jesus paid great respect to the father Jesus said if he was to honour himself, that honour would be nothing, the one who honours him is his father God.
- The statement also indicated that Jesus respected Abraham although he was greater than him.
- The statement before Abraham I am also showed the relationship between Jesus and God.
- It showed the importance of faith in the ministry of Jesus.
- The “I am” statement revealed the love of God to mankind through Jesus Christ.
- Jesus’ statement that before Abraham I am also signified that he was the source of eternal life.
- It indicated the fulfillment of the old testament scriptures.
- It was a way of spreading the word of God/ kingdom of God.

### **HOW SIGNIFICANT IS THE I AM STATEMENT ABOVE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS?**

- The statement teaches Christians to respect others as Jesus did in his ministry.
- It teaches Christians to believe in Jesus since he is divine.
- Christians learn to love one another even those in need just as God loved mankind through Jesus Christ.
- The statement teaches Christians to accept Jesus since he is the messiah.
- The “I am” statement show the importance of the old testament scriptures, so modern Christians learn to believe also in the old testament scriptures.
- It teaches modern Christians to obey God’s command, so they should avoid sinning.
- It teaches modern Christians to have respect to those in authority, just as Jesus said they should honour his father.
- Guides modern Christians to seek eternal life from Jesus since he is the source of life.
- Calls upon modern Christians to have good relationship with God just as Jesus had it with the father.
- Teaches modern Christians to love one another since Jesus was sent to us love.

- Modern Christians learn that Jesus was greater than Abraham therefore they should give him respect and honour.

#### **THE FOURTH I AM SAYING (10:1-21) “I AM THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP AND A GOOD SHEPHERD”**

- 1. What did Jesus imply by referring to himself the good shepherd in John’s gospel?**
- 2. “I am the good shepherd who is willing to die for my sheep” (10:11). Examine the meaning of this allegory by Jesus in the gospel of John.**

- The term sheep referred to disciples whereas shepherd referred to Jesus.
- The terms thieves and robbers who come to take away the sheep mean the Jewish leaders who are the false preachers that misled the people of God.
- The discourse of I am the good shepherd also signified that Jesus is the way to the kingdom of God because he said that he is the gate for the sheep where they must pass and he opens the gate for them. (10:2-3)
- His saying of Jesus that he is the good shepherd also implied the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus Christ who said he was ready to die for his sheep as a chief shepherd. (10:11)
- The saying indicated that Jesus is the good shepherd because he knows those who belong to him and can separate the sheep from other animals and they even know him. (10:15)
- The discourse points to the death of Jesus he was willing to lay his life for the sheep as he said “I am the good shepherd who is willing to die for the sheep...”
- When Jesus said he was the gate to the sheep and a good shepherd he was pointing to his resurrection . That is to say, he was willing to give up his life in order to receive it back.
- The discourse indicates the divinity of Jesus. His leadership was ordained by God because he says/ claims that his father knew him. (10:14-15)
- When Christ said he was a good shepherd it indicates that he had come as a good shepherd to gather all God’s people into one flock in order to bring about unity.
- The statement I am the good shepherd said by Jesus signified his intimate relationship with his followers because he knew them by name and they too knew him by his name. (10:15)
- The discourse signified that Jesus had come to look for sinners so as to bring them back to God.
- It showed that Jesus leads his people/ followers to righteousness and peace because he was a good shepherd even ready to die for his sheep.
- The discourse also implied that Jesus as the good shepherd feeds the flock because he is the provider for the sheep just as he did through celebrating the sacrament of Eucharist.

- The saying of Jesus implies that Jesus as a good shepherd would treat all sheep equally because he does not segregate.
- The discourse showed Jesus as a good shepherd willing to offer fair judgment to all people by separating the sheep from the wolves (10:11-12)
- The discourse also signifies that through Jesus the sheep can find green pasture . That is to say, eternal life (10:9)
- It also implies that Jesus is the source of life who came to give life in its fullness.
- The saying also reflected the old testament I am saying in exodus 3 when God called Moses and said I am who I m when Moses wanted to know God's name.
- It signified that Jesus was a son of God. He referred to god as his father. (10:15)

#### **WHAT LESSONS CAN THE CHURCH LEARN FROM THE ABOVE DISCOURSE?**

- ✓ The church learns to have truth/ trust in Jesus Christ who can lead them in the right way to the kingdom of God.
- ✓ The discourse teaches the church leaders to care for the people they lead and give them the right pasture which is the word of God.
- ✓ The discourse teaches the church to obey and listen to the commands of Jesus as a path to enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ By Jesus he was a good shepherd willing to die for his sheep. This enables modern Christians to accept Jesus as the messiah who can lead them to eternal life.
- ✓ The discourse teaches Christian leaders to have intimate relationships with their followers just as Christ said he knew his sheep and they also know him.
- ✓ The saying of I am the good shepherd by Jesus calls all Christians to always follow Jesus and his instructions because he is the good shepherd who can lead us into God's kingdom.
- ✓ The discourse or saying teaches the church leaders and followers to be in position of separating or distinguishing false preachers from true preachers of word of God. Therefore modern Christians should pray for God's wisdom to enable them distinguish the false from the true preachers.
- ✓ The saying reflects the element of repentance. Therefore modern Christians should be careful or go for repentance as a way of preparing for God's judgment.
- ✓ The discourse teaches about Jesus as the gate to the sheep therefore the church today should have faith in Jesus because he is the gate way to the kingdom of God.
- ✓ The discourse shows that Jesus is ready to defend and protect his sheep therefore this calls upon church leaders also to be ready to defend and protect other Christians from getting lost.

- ✓ The discourse showed that Jesus came in order that people may have life in its fullness; therefore both Christians and church leaders should on guard against the thieves who come only to steal, kill and destroy.
- ✓ The church learns from the discourse that there is life after death; therefore modern Christians should prepare for life after death as Jesus said that he is willing to give out his life but he would receive it back again. (10:15)
- ✓ The I am the good shepherd discourse teaches about equality of all people; therefore the believers today to promote equality of all persons because we are all equal before God.
- ✓ It teaches the church to believe in Jesus because he is willing to give up his life for the sake of the lost sheep.

### **ACCOUNT FOR THE FAILURE OF CHURCH LEADERS TO LIVE AS GOOD SHEPHERDS TODAY**

Many church leaders today have failed to live as good shepherds because of the following reasons;

- ✓ Some church leaders involve in conflicts and for this reason they have failed to live as good shepherds . For example pastor Serwadda and Bujingo.
- ✓ Some church leaders have failed to live as good shepherds because they involve in immoral acts . For example it is alleged that pastor Yiga raped a woman in 2016, Fr. Musala and Pr. Kayanja are homosexuals etc.
- ✓ Because some church leaders are corrupt . That is to say, they misuse church funds for personal benefits.
- ✓ Because some church funds for personal benefits in their service to God and the people.
- ✓ Because some church leaders are false preachers and others even use demonic powers and electric gadgets to perform miracles in Jesus' name.
- ✓ Some of them misinterpret the gospel to suit their selfish interests.
- ✓ Some misrule the flock of God instead of guiding it with tender care.
- ✓ Because some of them live a luxurious life when their sheep are suffering with high poverty.
- ✓ Because they don't show love to the flock as Christ did.
- ✓ Because some of them have divorced their marriage partners and married others which is ungodly . For example pastor Kiganda divorced his wife.
- ✓ Because some of them have mixed Christianity with politics whereas it is known that politics is a dirty game.
- ✓ Because some of them fear to die for the flock.
- ✓ Because some of them have been victims of sexual immorality.
- ✓ Because some have commercialized church services . That is to say, they are greedy for material wealth.
- ✓ Its because some lack genuine faith in God.



## **TO WHAT EXTENT CAN CHURCH LEADERS TODAY IN UGANDA BE CONSIDERED AS GOOD SHEPHERDS?**

### **Asses the role of the church leaders as good shepherds in Uganda today.**

To a bigger/ larger extent, modern church leaders are considered to be good shepherds in Uganda basing on the following facts;

- ✓ Many church leaders have put in more efforts to preach the gospel about Jesus in many parts of the country and in some outside countries . For example Pastor Kayanja.
- ✓ Many church leaders have continued to show love to the Christians by giving them needs like school fees and clothes . For example PR. Bugembe, Kayanja and Catholics.
- ✓ Many church leaders have continued to perform miracles in Jesus' name of healing the sick . For example father Magembe of Bukalango Christian centre.
- ✓ Some church leaders are considered good shepherds because they have formed organizations helping the needy in the society . For example Kulika Charity Organizations which offers school fees for the bright and needy children under the Catholic Church.
- ✓ Many church leaders organize crusades to carryout massive preaching and this resulted into the growth of Christian community in Uganda.
- ✓ They carry out missionary journeys to different parts of the country thus spreading the good news and converting many to Christianity.
- ✓ Some church leaders have organized the composition of christen songs and hymns which praise the Lord for example Fr. FX. Mbazira, Pr. Bugembe.
- ✓ Many church leaders can be considered good shepherds because they have continued to live exemplary lives to the flock, archi-Bishop Cyprian Kizito Lwanga of Rubaga Cathedral and Stanley Ntagali of Namirembe.
- ✓ Many church leaders can be credited good shepherds in Uganda because they live a celibate life so as to dedicate their life to the work of God . For example Pr. Bugembe etc.
- ✓ Many church leaders are considered good shepherds because they spare time and pray for the sick in Jesus' name.
- ✓ They call upon Christians to live a moral life as good shepherds.
- ✓ Many church leaders are considered good shepherds today because they continue to baptize new converts in the name of Jesus.

**However, to a smaller extent some church leaders have failed to live as good shepherds because of the following evils they commit;**

- ✓ Some church leaders promote divisionism in the church.
- ✓ Some are corrupt.

- ✓ Some are hypocrites in their work.
- ✓ Some are false preachers.
- ✓ Misinterpret the gospel for selfish interests.
- ✓ Some use demonic powers to perform miracles.
- ✓ Some live luxurious life at the expense of the poor.
- ✓ Some misrule the flock of God.
- ✓ Some have divorced their partners.
- ✓ Some have been victims of sexual immorality.

#### **THE DISCOURSE OF “I AM THE RESURRECTION AND LIFE” (11:17-27)**

- 1. Examine the meaning/ significance or relevance of Jesus saying I am the resurrection in John’s gospel.**
- 2. Comment on the meaning of the discourse “I am the resurrection and life in the fourth gospel.**

- ✓ I am the resurrection and life accompanied the sign of raising Lazarus to life and it raised hostility towards Jesus from the Pharisees.
- ✓ The statement said by Jesus was an assurance to Martha that Lazarus would live again because Jesus was the resurrection and life to all people.
- ✓ The statement reflected the I am statement in the Old Testament book of Exodus when God said to Moses “I am” when Moses wanted to know God’s name.
- ✓ The discourse signified the divinity and generally divine authority of Jesus because he claimed to have power to bring back people’s life after their death.
- ✓ The statement meant that Jesus is a source of life he gives to the dead as he did to Lazarus.
- ✓ When Jesus said this statement, it signified the importance of faith in him. Those who believe in Jesus though they die physically they would still live eternally.
- ✓ The saying of Jesus “I am the resurrection and life” also pointed to the resurrection of Jesus that would happen after his death.
- ✓ It also signified that Jesus was going to die shortly like the way Lazarus had died but he would resurrect from death because he was the controller of his life.
- ✓ This I am saying pointed to the resurrection of believers who would believe in Jesus.
- ✓ The statement indicated that death is necessary. Jesus told Martha that even if one died he would rise to life again.
- ✓ The discourse indicated that Jesus is the gate way to heaven. Those who die in his name are capable of entering the kingdom of God.
- ✓ The statement clearly reveals who Jesus was that is the promised messiah.

- ✓ The statement and what happened after to Martha and those around like Jesus' disciples increased their faith in Christ.
- ✓ It also showed that Jesus is the son of God because he had the power over life and resurrection and even Martha said he was the son god. 11:27)
- ✓ They saying and the miracle that Jesus performed thereafter signified that the ministry of Jesus was universal.

## **HOW DO CHRISTIANS TODAY SHOW THAT THEY WILL RESURRECT AFTER DEATH?**

### **What do Christians do to prepare for resurrection/ judgment day?**

- ✓ Christians today have tried to prepare for resurrection or judgment day by going for baptism, baptizing their children and also encouraging others to be baptized in Jesus' name.
- ✓ Many Christians take up names of the saints who died long ago hoping they would give them blessings in life to reach the judgment when they are also holy.
- ✓ Christians show that they will resurrect after death by carrying out continuous prayers for themselves and their families and some pass these prayers through the names of the saints or Uganda martyrs.
- ✓ Christians carryout memorial services to pray for those dead ones in their families and also prepare their own way after death.
- ✓ The present Christians believe in the judgment day through celebrating the lord's supper in remembrance of Jesus' death and resurrection.
- ✓ Many Christians today regularly go for repentance of sins to ask God for forgiveness and prepare for judgment day.
- ✓ Christians show they will resurrect after death by also putting hope and belief in the parausia. This they do through their preaching and their behaviours.
- ✓ Many Christians show that they will resurrect or believe in the resurrection by annually going to holy places like Namugongo martyrs shrine every 3<sup>rd</sup> June each year. They do this to remember the Uganda martyrs who died for the sake of Christianity.
- ✓ Many Christians believe they will resurrect and so honour the rent period and prepare to celebrate the good Friday and Easter Sunday on which our Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins but later resurrected.
- ✓ The Christians praise and worship the Lord on Saturdays and Sundays as a preparation for life after death.
- ✓ The religious leaders have continued preaching the message about Jesus' resurrection. This shows that they are preparing themselves and the followers for resurrection after death.
- ✓ May Christians endure persecution and suffering with the hope that they will be rewarded that is with resurrection after death.

- ✓ Christians show they will resurrect after death by living holy lives/ exemplary lives full of praying and helping the needy.
- ✓ Christians show that they will resurrect after death by construction of monuments for the dead. These are commonly constructed around major worshipping places (churches) like at the cathedral.

### **“I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE” (14:1-14)**

#### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE I AM SAYING**

- ✓ The saying signified that Jesus was the way to heaven when he said no one goes to the father except by me.
- ✓ The I am saying signified that Jesus was the source of life.
- ✓ “I am the way, the truth and life” signified that Jesus was the son of God because he referred to God as his father. (14:6)
- ✓ The statement signified that Jesus and God are the same. (14:10)
- ✓ The statement signified the spiritual blindness of Jesus’ apostles. That is to say, Philip asked Jesus to show them his father, also Thomas said to Jesus that they did not know where Jesus was going.
- ✓ The statement showed the messiahship of Jesus when he said to his disciples that there are many rooms in his house, and he was going to spare a place for them which meant heaven.
- ✓ The statement signified that there is life after death. (14:2)
- ✓ The I am saying signified that Jesus Christ encouraged his followers to believe in him in order for them to do greater things.
- ✓ It showed that Jesus was the provider when he said to his disciples that he will do whatever they asked in his name. (14:13)
- ✓ The I am saying signified that Jesus was the servant of mankind. This is shown when he said to his disciple that if they asked him for something in his name he will do it. (14:14)
- ✓ The statement said by Jesus also showed that Jesus was caring when he told his disciples that they should not be worried and upset. (14:1)
- ✓ The statement signified the humanity of Jesus where he also had friends who were the disciples like Philip.
- ✓ It signified the divinity of Jesus when he said that those who believe in me will do what he did.

#### **LESSONS MODERN CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM THE ABOVE I AM SAYING**

- ✓ I am saying teaches modern Christians to believe in Jesus since he is the source of life.
- ✓ Modern Christians learn to trust in Jesus since he is the source of life.
- ✓ Modern Christians learn to have faith in Jesus because he is the way to heaven.
- ✓ It signified that Jesus was the son of God, so modern Christians learn to obey him.

- ✓ The I am saying teaches modern Christians to anxiously wait for the second coming of Jesus since he said he will come back and take his people so that they be where he will be. (14:3)
- ✓ The I am saying helps Christians to be obedient to Jesus.
- ✓ Learn to be servants of other people since Jesus also was a servant of mankind.
- ✓ The I am saying teaches modern Christians the importance of praying through Jesus Christ because he is the only way to God.
- ✓ The I am saying helps modern Christians to ask anything they want from god through Jesus Christ.
- ✓ Modern Christian also learn to be caring since also Jesus advised his disciples not to be worried and upset.
- ✓ Modern Christians learn to respect God since he is divine.

#### **THE IMPLICATION OF THE DISCOURSE “I AM THE TRUE VINE AND YOU ARE THE BRANCHES” (15:1-16)**

- 1. What was the implication of the discourse ‘I am the true vine’ in the gospel of John?**
- 2. “I am the true vine and my father in the gardener.....and you are the branches” (John 15:1,5).**

##### **Explain the meaning of this statement**

- ✓ Jesus referred to the metaphor vine to symbolize the idea of Israel as a nation.
- ✓ The term branches signified the followers of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ It means that Jesus is the true Israel of God planted by him.
- ✓ Essentially this refers to the idea of Eucharist/ Lord’s supper.
- ✓ It means that believers are supposed to bear good fruits so as to bring glory to God.
- ✓ It implied that Jesus Christ was the son of God.
- ✓ The statement signified the intimate relationship between Jesus with his disciples.
- ✓ So he called for love for one another just as he had loved them.
- ✓ The statement fulfilled the I am sayings of the Old Testament scriptures in Exodus 3.
- ✓ It means that those who bear spiritual fruits will be rewarded.
- ✓ The statement means that Jesus Christ lays the foundation for the new community of believers as the church.
- ✓ The I am saying signified that Jesus’ followers derive their life from him since he is the true vine and they are the branches.
- ✓ It means that believers must continue to have life provided they remained united to Jesus and abide by him.
- ✓ The statement implied the need to endure persecution because persecution would help the church to grow.
- ✓ It means that it is through Jesus Christ that people bear good fruits.

## **TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE CHURCH LIVED UP TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE ABOVE DISCOURSE?**

### **How far have modern Christians lived to the aspiration of this discourse?**

To a larger extent, the church has lived to the expectation of the above discourse in the following ways;

- ✓ Many Christians are faithful to God and abide by him.
- ✓ Many Christians do practice the love for one another.
- ✓ Many do take part in the Lord's supper as a way of remembering his death and resurrection.
- ✓ Some Christians have lost their lives for the sake of the gospel like bishop Jonathan Luwumu during the reign of the late president Idi Amin.
- ✓ Many Christians do carry out works of charity.
- ✓ Many Christians are devoted to prayer.
- ✓ Some Christians have decided to live a celibate life with the view of devoting their life to the work of God.
- ✓ Some have continued to endure suffering and persecution for the sake of gospel.
- ✓ Many Christians do live exemplary lives.
- ✓ Many Christians do repent of their sins.
- ✓ Many Christians are preaching the gospel about Jesus.
- ✓ Many Christians are carrying out many missionary journeys.
- ✓ Many have performed miracles in Jesus' name.
- ✓ The unity among the Christians is a proof that they live to the expectation of the above.

**However to a smaller extent, there are times when Christians have failed to live to the expectations of the above discourse in the following ways;**

- ✓ Some Christians are hypocrites . That is to say, they practice double standards.
- ✓ Some Christians live sexually immoral life yet they bear Christians names.
- ✓ Some Christians blasphemy the name of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ Some Christians are envious of people's achievement.
- ✓ Some lack genuine faith in Jesus Christ.
- ✓ Some do consult witchdoctors.
- ✓ Some fail to take part in church sacraments like baptism and the lord's supper.
- ✓ Some are too proud of themselves.
- ✓ Some misinterpret the bible for selfish motives.

### **GENERAL POINTS OF SIGNIFICANCE OF "I AM DISCOURSES"**

D – directly referred to the personality of Jesus . That is to say, as who he was . For example Jesus was the bread of life.

D – Divinity of Jesus/ divine authority/divine origin of Jesus . That is to say, Jesus was from above.

H – Humanity of Jesus . That is to say, Jesus having a conversation with people referred to himself as the son of man.

M – messiahship of Jesus.

F – Faith in Jesus .That is to say, importance of faith in Jesus.

E – Eternal life .That is to say, Jesus as the source of eternal life.

e. equal to God and Jesus as the same as god . That is to say, Jesus is equal to god and the same as god.

L – Love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus.

O – Old testament scriptures fulfilled . That is to say, “I am who I am” in the book of Exodus 3:14)

O – Obedience of Jesus towards the will of God.

S – Son of God.

I – initiative as the logos . That is to say, Jesus took the initiative as the logos in doing things.

### **THE USE OF THE PHRASE “I AM TELLING YOU THE TRUTH” IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

- 1. The gospel of John commonly uses the phrase “I am telling you the truth....” Justify the above statement.**
- 2. Summarize the reference to the phrase “I am telling you the truth” as used in the gospel of john.**

Jesus commonly used the phrase “I am telling the truth” in the following ways;

- ✓ Jesus told Nathanael that “I am telling you the truth, you will see heaven open and God’s angels going up and coming down on the son of man.
- ✓ Jesus told Nicodemus that “I am telling you the truth no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again of water and the spirit.
- ✓ Jesus also told Nicodemus “I am telling you the truth we speak of what we know and report what we have seen yet none of you is willing to accept our message.
- ✓ Jesus said that “ I am telling you the truth, the son can do nothing on his own he does only what he sees his father doing.
- ✓ Jesus said that “I a telling you the truth, whoever hears my words and believes in him who sent me has eternal life.
- ✓ Jesus also taught that “I am telling you the truth he who believes has eternal life”.
- ✓ Jesus told his disciples “I am telling you the truth, one of you is going to betray me”.
- ✓ Jesus assured the people that “ I am telling the truth, before Abraham was born I am”
- ✓ Jesus assured Peter that “ I am telling you the truth, it is better for you that I go away because if I don’t go, the helper will not come to you.
- ✓ Jesus comforted his disciples that “ I am telling you the truth, the father will give you what you ask for in my name”.

- ✓ Jesus said that “I am telling you the truth, whoever obeys my teaching will never die”.
- ✓ Jesus comforted his disciples that “I am telling you the truth, you will cry, weep but the world will be glad, you will be sad but your sadness will turn into gladness”.
- ✓ Jesus told the crowd that “I am telling you the truth, whoever believes in me will even do greater things because am going back to the father.
- ✓ Jesus assured Peter that “I am telling you the truth, before the cock crows you will say three times that you do not know me”.
- ✓ Jesus also told Peter that “I am telling you the truth, when you were young, you used to get ready and go anywhere you wanted to but when you are old you will stretch out your hands.

#### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE USE OF THE PHRASE “I AM TELLING YOU THE TRUTH”**

- 1. Explain the significance of Jesus’ use of the phrase “I am telling you the truth”.**
- 2. Comment on the meaning of Jesus’ use of the phrase “I am telling you the truth” in the gospel of john.**

- ✓ The phrase was referring to who Jesus was and his divine origin.
- ✓ The phrase implied God’s open relation that Jesus was the promised messiah.
- ✓ The phrase signified that Jesus was the source of eternal life.
- ✓ It signified the importance of faith . That is to say, believing in Jesus as a means of getting eternal life.
- ✓ The phrase signified that Jesus was the son of God . That is to say, he referred to God as his father.
- ✓ The phrase showed Jesus is greater than Abraham.
- ✓ Jesus is the gateway to the kingdom of God . That is to say, he is the gateway for the sheep.
- ✓ Jesus is a servant of mankind . That is to say, no slave is greater than his master.
- ✓ It helped to reveal his betrayer to his fellow disciple.
- ✓ The phrase signified that the Holy Spirit would come after the departure of Jesus from the physical world.
- ✓ It showed the importance of prayer . That is to say, whoever asks from God, he would answer his prayer.
- ✓ The phrase signified the importance of the Eucharist . That is to say, one had had to eat the flesh of Jesus and drink his blood.
- ✓ It signified that Jesus existed before the creation of the world . That is to say, he existed before Abraham.
- ✓ The phrase shows Jesus as a prophet . That is to say, he prophesied the betrayal of Judas and the denial of Peter which came to reality.

#### **THE IDEA OF WITNESS TO JESUS AS THE SON OF GOD IN JOHN’S GOSPEL (5:30-47)**

- 1. Examine the various witnesses to Jesus Christ in the gospel of John.**
- 2. Discuss the theme of witness to Jesus in the fourth gospel.**



The theme of witness is common in John's gospel, which means that what Jesus Christ said and did is true and was a proof that he was the son of God.

There are seven witnesses to Jesus Christ as the son of God in John's gospel namely;

1. John the Baptist
2. Jesus Christ himself
3. God the father
4. The Old Testament scriptures especially those of Moses.
5. The deeds of Jesus Christ/signs.
6. The disciples of Jesus
7. The holy spirit

1. John the Baptist testified that Jesus was the son of God as well as the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and that Jesus was far greater than him because he existed before he was born.
2. Jesus also testified on his behalf that he was the son of God and that is why he normally referred to God the father during the discourse of "I am good shepherd and the washing of the disciples' feet."
3. God the father bore witness to Jesus as his son like during the baptism of Jesus, he sent the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove to identify him as his son before John the Baptist.
4. The Old Testament scriptures especially those of Moses bore witness to Jesus as the son of God like in the book of Deuteronomy (18:15)
5. The deeds of Jesus including the seven signs testified that Jesus was the son of God namely;
  - ✓ The feeding of the 5000 people on two fish and five loaves of bread.
  - ✓ The turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana.
  - ✓ The walking on water towards his disciples.
  - ✓ The healing of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath.
  - ✓ The healing of a man who had been born blind on the Sabbath.
  - ✓ The raising of Lazarus to life.
  - ✓ The healing of the Roman official's son.
  - ✓ The cleansing of the temple was a proof that he was the son of God.
  - ✓ The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem was a public act that he was the Messiah, the son of God.
  - ✓ The resurrection of Jesus from death.
6. The disciples of Jesus also bore witness to Jesus as the son of God namely;
  - ✓ Andrew found Peter his brother and told him that they had found the son of God/ Messiah.

- ✓ Phillips found Nathanael and told him that they had found the one whom Moses quote about in the law and whom the prophets wrote about.
- ✓ Nathanael confessed that Jesus was the son of God as well as the lion of Israel.
- ✓ Peter confessed that Jesus was the holy one from God who had words that give eternal life.
- ✓ Thomas confessed that Jesus was the Lord and God.
- ✓ John the beloved disciple bore witness to Jesus as the messiah the son of God.
- ✓ The Samaritan woman bore witness to Jesus as a prophet as well as the messiah when she called other Samaritans to come and see him.
- ✓ Martha confessed that Jesus was the messiah who was to come to this world.
- ✓ The man who had been healed from his blindness testified before the Pharisees that Jesus a prophet also claimed that unless Jesus from God he would not be able to perform miracles.

7. The Holy Spirit bore witness to Jesus as the son of God . That is to say, he was to reveal the truth about God and speak with authority from God.

#### **HOW DO CHRISTIANS WITNESS FOR JESUS IN THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS IN UGANDA TODAY?**

Explain the various ways in which a Christian can bear witness to Jesus Christ today.

- ✓ A Christian can bear witness to Jesus Christ by baptizing new converts in Jesus' name.
- ✓ By praying to God through Jesus' name.
- ✓ By praying for one another like praying for the sick.
- ✓ By performing miracles in the name of Jesus.
- ✓ By taking part in the Lord's supper to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- ✓ By going for day and night fellowships.
- ✓ By living an exemplary life which can attract people to Jesus Christ.
- ✓ By visiting the sick in hospitals and prisoners.
- ✓ By carrying on missionary journeys.
- ✓ By continuing to preach the gospel about him.
- ✓ By carrying out charitable works.
- ✓ By endurance of suffering and persecution.
- ✓ By promoting the spirit of love to one another.
- ✓ Composing Christian songs and hymns.

#### **THE DISCOURSES/ DIALOGUES IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL**

##### **JESUS AND NICODEMUS (3:1-21)**

Man known as Nicodemus of Sanhedrin (Jewish rulers visited Jesus at night at a time when Jesus was still in Jerusalem.

**DISCUSS THE SIGNIFICANCE/ RELEVANCE/ IMPORTANCE OF THE DISCOURSE BETWEEN JESUS AND NICODEMUS ABOUT BEING BORN IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.**

- ✓ Nicodemus was a Pharisee and an influential man (teacher) implying that not all Pharisees were against Jesus Christ.
- ✓ The conversation signified that salvation was for all kinds of people who come to Jesus. Jesus was willing to accept anyone who came to him.
- ✓ The discourse indicated that Jesus was the promised messiah. He said that God had sent him to be a savior of the world and Nicodemus also referred to Jesus as a teacher sent by God.
- ✓ Nicodemus' conversation with Jesus signified the importance of faith in Jesus Christ as a means of getting eternal life. (3:15-16)
- ✓ The love of God for mankind was revealed through Jesus Christ by accepting to have a dialogue with Nicodemus a Jewish ruler.
- ✓ Jesus telling Nicodemus to be born again implied the need for repentance as a way of entering the kingdom of God.
- ✓ Similarly when Jesus told Nicodemus to be born again it implied that Nicodemus had to be baptized by the power of the Holy Spirit and water instead of physical birth.
- ✓ In the conversation Jesus told Nicodemus that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again. This signified that baptism is a condition for entering the kingdom of God.
- ✓ The conversation gave a chance to Jesus to teach about the meaning and importance of baptism to Nicodemus who seemed not to have been understanding it.
- ✓ The conversation taught about the humanity of Jesus Christ. He used the title son of man to show that he was a human being too.
- ✓ The discourse pointed to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He said that the son of man must be lifted up which meant his death and resurrection.
- ✓ In the discourse the divinity of Jesus was revealed. Nicodemus said he was a teacher sent by God and the miracles he was performing were because God was with him.
- ✓ The discourse proved the spiritual immaturity of Nicodemus. He failed to understand the meaning of being born again and asked Jesus how a grown up man could go back to his mother's womb and be born again.
- ✓ The discourse indicated that Jesus is a source of everlasting life and whoever believes in him would have life.
- ✓ Nicodemus visited Jesus at night so the term darkness symbolized evil and ignorance he had together with his fellow Jewish rulers.

- ✓ The conversation signified that the coming of Jesus to the world is judgment to the world. In other words Jesus was teaching Nicodemus to be prepared for the judgment day.
- ✓ The discourse taught that becoming a Christian is by God's grace because the wind blew where it wills and knows where it comes from and where it goes.

#### **JUSTIFY NICODEMUS' MEETING JESUS LATE IN THE NIGHT IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.**

##### **Account for the encounter of Nicodemus and Jesus late in the evening in John's gospel.**

There are various reasons assumed as to why Nicodemus had to meet Jesus late in the night;

- ✓ Nicodemus met Jesus at night because not all Pharisees were against Jesus so being one of the few who followed Jesus' teachings he decided to visit him at night to get the word of God.
- ✓ It could have been a divine plan or call of God to Nicodemus to go late at night to meet Jesus.
- ✓ Nicodemus being one of the great Jewish rulers he could have been very busy during the day therefore he only spared time at night to visit Jesus.
- ✓ Nicodemus visited Jesus at night probably because Jesus could have been very busy during day time to easily be accessed by Nicodemus.
- ✓ The gospel of Jesus Christ generally spread moving from one house to another. This could also be a reason why Nicodemus planned to visit Jesus late at night because he was not always moving with him.
- ✓ Nicodemus could have been attracted to Jesus by the supernatural powers that Christ used to perform various signs.
- ✓ Nicodemus met Jesus late at night may be because he wanted a private discuss between him and Jesus.
- ✓ Nicodemus decided to meet Jesus at night because he could have feared being publically noticed by his fellow Pharisees who did not support the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ Nicodemus could have feared being interrogated by his fellow Pharisees if they had seen him.
- ✓ Nicodemus moving late at night to meet Jesus was an element of symbolism . That is to say, he wanted to move from darkness to light.
- ✓ Nicodemus met Jesus late at night may be because he was a secret follower of Jesus Christ and he was not willing to reveal his identity to others.
- ✓ Nicodemus could have wanted to know what to do in order to enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ Nicodemus could have wanted to get a deeper meaning and explanation from Jesus Christ about his ministry.
- ✓ Nicodemus met Jesus late at night may be that was the time God revealed his call to him and was sent to meet Jesus.
- ✓ Meeting Jesus Christ at night could have been the convenient time for Nicodemus and Jesus Christ himself to have a sharing.

## **LESSONS OF JESUS AND NICODEMUS' DIALOGUE/ CONVERSATION TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- ✓ Christians learn to have faith in Jesus Christ like Nicodemus showed faith who went to Jesus for construction because he showed faith in him.
- ✓ The conversation teaches Christians to respond to God's call positively unlike Nicodemus who had doubts over how one could go back to his mother's womb and be born again.
- ✓ The discourse teaches modern Christians to be ready to be born again so as to enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ The discourse teaches Christians especially the religious leaders to preach the message of baptism to all people as Jesus taught Nicodemus as a Jewish traditional ruler.
- ✓ The conversation calls upon Christians to repent their sins in order to enter the kingdom of their God. When Jesus told Nicodemus to be born again he was calling upon him for repentance.
- ✓ The conversation shows the message of hope, modern Christians should have hope for eternal life.
- ✓ In the discourse Nicodemus is shown to have heard confidence when approaching Jesus; therefore this shows that modern Christians should have confidence and trust in Jesus when approaching him.
- ✓ The conversation teaches modern Christians to be ready to meet Jesus Christ at any time whether they are sick or okay as Nicodemus decided to meet Jesus even at night.
- ✓ From the discourse Christians learn to live holy lives as they prepare for the judgment day.
- ✓ The conversation teaches Christians that Christ is the messiah. This is evidenced when Nicodemus said that Jesus is a teacher sent by God.
- ✓ The discourse shows Christians that there was a spirit of love for one another between Nicodemus and Jesus. Therefore modern Christians are called upon to extend their spirit of love even to their enemies.
- ✓ The discourse indicates hope for life after death, so Christians should have hope for resurrection which Christ was also teaching Nicodemus.
- ✓ From the discourse Christians can learn to honour and respect Jesus because he was the exalted one in heaven.
- ✓ The discourse between Jesus and Nicodemus teaches Christians today to accept the light of Jesus Christ in order to have reconciliation.
- ✓ Modern Christians learn to have desire for spiritual renewal as Nicodemus desired from Jesus Christ.
- ✓ The conversation teaches modern Christians to seek for the kingdom of God as Nicodemus also went to Jesus trying to know more about the kingdom of God.

## **WHAT DID JESUS MEAN BY SAYING "NO ONE CAN ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD UNLESS HE IS BORN AGAIN"?**

By Jesus saying so, it meant the following;

- ✓ Jesus meant that physical birth is not enough for one to enter the kingdom of God. Instead one has to be born of the spirit and water in order to enter the kingdom of God.

- ✓ The statement meant that one has to be renewed by forsaking/ foregoing his sinful nature on earth in order to enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ The saying of Jesus meant that one has to put on a new creature of God as to see him to be purified and to be holy.
- ✓ In other words the saying of Jesus no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again meant one to be ready to be crucified with Christ.
- ✓ The statement meant a call to surrender our lives to Jesus Christ so as for him to live in us.
- ✓ No one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again meant to receive the power of holy spirit from God.
- ✓ This saying of Jesus called upon spiritual regeneration for believers. In other words one had to be spiritually renewed in order to enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ It meant one had to receive baptism as a sign of being born again in order to enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ In the statement Jesus meant that people should have complete faith in him in order to enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ Jesus said so which meant showing his messiahship that he could determine a person who can enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ It meant to Nicodemus and others to come out of the enslavement of the law so as to accept Jesus Christ.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN JOHN AND JESUS (3:22-36)**

- ✓ Signified the spiritual blindness of Jesus' disciples.
- ✓ Showed Jesus as a teacher/ rabbi.
- ✓ Signified Jesus/ God as a provider.
- ✓ Showed that John the Baptist was not the messiah he was just preparing way for him/messiah.
- ✓ Showed that Jesus was from heaven not on earth.
- ✓ The dialogue signified the importance of team work when John Baptist also had disciples. (3:25)
- ✓ The bridegroom was Jesus and the friend of the bride was John the Baptist.
- ✓ It signified that Jesus had so many followers (3:26) and also believed in him.
- ✓ It signified that Jesus was a son of God and through him he got powers he used on earth.
- ✓ Jesus is seen as the source of life. (3:36)
- ✓ It signified the importance of baptism.

#### **LESSONS CHRISTIANS TODAY LEARN FROM THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN JOHN AND JESUS**

- ✓ The dialogue teaches modern Christians to have more trust in Jesus unlike the disciples who shown signs of spiritual blindness by arguing with a Jew about the matter of ritual washing.

- ✓ The dialogue teaches modern Christians to give high respect to their religious leaders and other elders in society as the disciples called Jesus rabbi meaning great teacher.
- ✓ Modern Christians learn to ask God to provide them with necessities whenever they are in need.
- ✓ Religious leaders today learn from John the Baptist to keep respect to Jesus who acknowledged that he was not the messiah but had been sent ahead to prepare the way for the coming of the messiah.
- ✓ The discourse shows that Christians should put much trust in Christ Jesus because he comes from heaven and more linked with the father.
- ✓ John the Baptist having disciples in his ministry teaches modern religious leaders also to choose some people to help them in carrying out the ministry of Jesus so as to reduce the burden.
- ✓ The dialogue between Jesus and John teaches modern Christians to prepare some people in their ministry who can be their fore runners in spreading the gospel to different parts of the world as John did for Jesus.
- ✓ It teaches modern Christians to have trust and faith in Jesus all the time as that faith shown by the people who went to him in big numbers for baptism.
- ✓ The discourse teaches modern Christians to seek for God's providence and power by believing in his son Jesus Christ who has the power to do all things.
- ✓ The baptism of John and Jesus in river Jordan teaches modern Christian leaders to encourage followers to go for baptism, like the many people who went to Jesus.
- ✓ The discourse shows Jesus as a source of life, therefore modern Christians should put their trust in Jesus as the source of eternal life.

#### **THE DISCOURSE BETWEEN JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN 4:1-42)**

- 1. Comment on the meaning/ implication/ significance of the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman in the fourth gospel.**
- 2. Analyse the importance of the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman in the gospel of John.**

- ✓ The discourse signified the ministry of Jesus was universal. By talking with the Samaritan woman about the kingdom of God. It indicated that Jesus was a universal savior for both Jews and Samaritans.
- ✓ It indicated the divinity of Jesus. He was able to tell the woman as a prophet all what had happened to her in life . For example having been married to over 5 men.
- ✓ The conversation proved the humanity of Jesus. He got tired and thirsty, sat by Jacob's well and then asked for a drink of water from the Samaritan woman at around noon time.
- ✓ The conversation signified the equality of all sexes before Jesus. Jews despised woman yet Jesus respected this woman by having a long conversation with her.

- ✓ It signified the lack of understanding of the disciples of Jesus (spiritual blindness). It's noted in 4:27 that they got surprised when they found Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman.
- ✓ In the conversation, the messiahship of Jesus is revealed. Many Samaritans confessed that Jesus was the messiah after being told by the woman. (4:39-40)
- ✓ The conversation showed the strong faith the Samaritan woman had in Jesus at a later stage because she left everything behind to follow Jesus Christ.
- ✓ The conversation showed that later the woman a disciple of Jesus who had because she called upon other Samaritans to come and see Jesus who had told everything in her life. (4:28-29)
- ✓ The discourse signified that Jesus was a prophet as confessed by the Samaritan woman that he could be the messiah. (4:29)
- ✓ In the conversation the five husbands the woman had, had a doubt meaning like it could mean the woman was too immoral or it meant the different gods that the Samaritans worshipped.
- ✓ The conversation proved Jesus as the source of eternal life he said to the woman that he gives life giving water. (4:10)
- ✓ Water in the well of Jacob symbolically stands for the idea of baptism or it symbolizes the religion of Judaism that was ineffective so the living water that Jesus was to give to the woman implied being baptized to Christianity.
- ✓ When Jesus promises life giving water it implied that he is greater than Jacob one of the ancestors of the Israelites who owned the well where the woman was found.
- ✓ The disciples of Jesus begged him to have something to eat but answered he had food to eat. This implied that he had no need for physical food but his relation with God could satisfy him. (4:31-32)
- ✓ The conversation signified the need to change one's heart as the Samaritan woman had done.
- ✓ It signified the need to worship one true God the almighty instead of worshipping gods.
- ✓ The conversation also exposed the lack of understanding of the Samaritan woman. She did not understand the meaning of life giving water.
- ✓ The woman going back to the town and telling other people what had happened to her taught the need for people who come to Jesus not to fear sharing their experience with others.

#### **ANALYSE THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED JESUS TO HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH THE SAMARITAN WOMAN IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

- ✓ When Jesus was moving from Judea to Galilee he had to go through the territory of Samaria.
- ✓ In Samaria he came to a town named Sychar which was not far from the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph and this continued Jacob's well.
- ✓ Jesus was tired out by the journey and so sat down by the well at around noon. This also showed the humanity of Jesus.



- ✓ Later a woman came to draw water and she was a Samaritan.
- ✓ Thirsty as he was Jesus asked the Samaritan woman to give him a drink of water which also signified that Jesus had human character.
- ✓ The Samaritan woman's response to Jesus was that Jesus was a Jew and Samaritans do not share the same cups and bawls with Jews. This showed that the woman had spiritual blindness about Jesus' true nature.
- ✓ The Samaritan even informed Jesus that it was Jacob who gave them that well and wondered whether Jesus was claiming to be greater than Jacob. But Jesus told her that whoever drinks on water from Jacob's well would still be thirsty again.
- ✓ Jesus then told the woman that if only she knew what God gives and who it is that is asking for water to drink, then he would give her life giving water.
- ✓ The woman even told Jesus that he did not even have a bucket and the well was deep, then how would Jesus get the life giving water. But Jesus assured her that whoever drinks the water that he give would never be thirsty again instead would gain eternal life. Then the woman requested him to give her that life giving water so as never to be thirsty again. (4:15)
- ✓ After words Jesus sent the woman to bring her husband but she claimed had none because she had been married to five husbands and the one she was with currently was not her husband implying the woman was too immoral.
- ✓ When the woman was told her life background, she realized that Jesus was a prophet (4:19) because he told her the truth.
- ✓ The woman told Jesus that the Samaritan ancestors worshipped God on that very mountain that wondered why the Jews claimed that Jerusalem was the place where to worship God from. Jesus then told the woman that time was coming when people could not worship God either on that mountain or Jerusalem but worship only one true God.
- ✓ The woman also confessed to Jesus that she knew the messiah was to come and when he comes he would tell them everything but at this moment Jesus told her he was the messiah showing open revelation of his messiahship.
- ✓ The disciples of Jesus who had gone to the town to get food, then came back found Jesus with the woman but said nothing.
- ✓ Shortly the woman left the water jar with Jesus and went back to the town where he told people about the messiah he had seen. Many Samaritans came back with her believed in Jesus and even requested him to stay with them for at least two more days which showed that the gospel had been accepted.

#### **APPLICATION OF THE DISCOURSE BETWEEN JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

## **What is the significance of the discourse of Jesus and the Samaritan woman to modern Christians?**

- ✓ The discourse teaches modern Christians to live holy lives instead of immoral lives.
- ✓ The conversation shows that Samaritans worshipped many gods therefore modern Christians should worship only one true God the almighty.
- ✓ The discourse teaches Christians to go to Jesus for salvation as the Samaritan woman did after knowing that Jesus was the promised messiah.
- ✓ The discourse indicates that Jesus was universal; therefore modern Christians should promote equality among persons regardless of race and background.
- ✓ The conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman teaches modern Christians to have love for one another like Jesus showed love to the Samaritan woman however much she was adulterous.
- ✓ Modern Christians learn to go to Jesus seeking him for eternal life as he promised it to the Samaritan woman.
- ✓ Christians today learn to confess their sins as a way of speaking the truth like the Samaritan woman acknowledged that she no longer had a husband.
- ✓ The conversation teaches modern Christians about the messiahship of Jesus; therefore they should give honour to him.
- ✓ The discourse calls on Christians to become disciples of Jesus Christ by telling the good news about him to others and taking them to Jesus like the Samaritan woman did by inviting other people to Christ.
- ✓ The conversation shows the hospitality of the people (Samaritans) to hear the good news about Christ. Therefore modern Christians are called upon to be hospitable and also accept invitations by others intended to spread the word of God like Jesus stayed for two more days with the Samaritans.
- ✓ Christians learn to associate with all kinds of people regardless of sex and race. Jesus showed this example by associating with both men and women and even with Samaritans.
- ✓ The conversation indicates that the Samaritan woman changed her behaviors of adultery, so modern Christians should be ready to repent their sins for God is ever ready to forgive them.
- ✓ The discourse teaches modern Christians to depend on God as the provider just as Jesus' food was his relationship with God.
- ✓ Christians learn to abandon earthly things in favour of heavenly things like the woman left the jar of water she came with and then went to town and called other people to witness Jesus.

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DISCOURSES/ ALLEGORIES/ DIALOGUES IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

- 1. Analyse the use of discourses in the gospel of John.**
- 2. Comment on the meaning of discourses as used by Jesus in the fourth gospel.**
  - Discourses were lengthy discussions or conversations between Jesus and his followers.

- Discourses were the common methods of teaching the message about God by Jesus in the gospel of John.
- Discourses were the equivalent of parables in Mark's gospel . That is to say, Jesus taught in parables in Mark while in John he taught by use of discourses.
- They used to start as ordinary conversations between Jesus and an individual but gradually developed into theological ideas/ debates. They mainly included the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman and Jesus with Nicodemus.
- ✓ Discourses helped Jesus to take the initiatives as the logos in saving the individual like Jesus asked the Samaritan woman, for water so as to give her eternal life.
- ✓ Allegories created a personal relationship between Jesus and the individual involved like the Samaritan woman became a disciple of Jesus and even went to the town and called many other people to witness Christ.
- ✓ Discourses contained a lot of symbolism . For example in the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus water stood for the idea of baptism.
- ✓ The dialogues were more effective in winning followers to Jesus than parables because in discourses the person could ask for any clarification from Jesus and get a quick reply.
- ✓ The use of discourses showed Jesus associating with even the least respected people in the society like the conversation with the Samaritan woman.
- ✓ The discourses revealed the humanity of Jesus like in the conversation of Jesus and the Samaritan woman it noted that he was tired and thirsty that's why he asked for some drinking water from the woman.
- ✓ They revealed the divinity of Jesus like Nicodemus realized that Jesus was a teacher sent by God and even the Samaritan woman realized that Jesus was a prophet or a messiah.
- ✓ The allegories helped to reveal the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus Christ. Because the woman believed in many gods Jesus promised her to give everlast water meaning he wanted her to believe in him/ come to Christianity.
- ✓ Discourses were used by Jesus to challenge his opponents who celebrated the feast of dedication. Nicodemus was a Pharisee who celebrated such feasts contrary to Christianity but came to Jesus.
- ✓ The discourses also revealed the lack of understanding of Jesus' disciples and the audience. For example the disciples of Jesus wondered when they came back from the town to look for food and found Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman.
- ✓ The allegories used by Jesus were a reflection of what was taking place in the church during the time of Jesus. That's why he called upon people like Nicodemus to be born again in order to enter the kingdom of God.

- ✓ The conversations helped Jesus' audience to have a better knowledge about the kingdom of God. For instance Jesus told the Samaritan woman that he gives life giving water implying that whoever believes in him receives eternal life.
- ✓ They helped Jesus to introduce important sacraments to his audience like the idea of baptism was introduced in the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus.
- ✓ The discourse reflected fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures like the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus and between Jesus and the Samaritan woman brought out the idea of Jesus as the bread of life.
- ✓ Discourses showed a contrast (misunderstanding between heavenly issues and worldly issues. For instance the Samaritan woman was practicing adultery which was against the biblical teaching of marriage that is supposed to be monogamous.

**However discourses had limitations/disadvantages that are noted below;**

- ✓ The conversations involved a lot of symbolism which made it hard to understand by Jesus' audience. For example when Jesus told Nicodemus to be born again Nicodemus wondered how he could go back to his mother's womb to be born again.
- ✓ The dialogues were theological and philosophical in nature and so required deeper thinking and reasoning in order to understand him like the Samaritan woman did not understand the kind of life giving water Jesus offered.
- ✓ The discourses were lengthy in nature so required a lot of patience and attention. This could at times bore the listeners, confuse Jesus' listeners.
- ✓ The use of discourses was a slower method of preaching the message about the kingdom of God as compared to parables. This was because they used to involve a few people with Jesus.
- ✓ The discourse could bring open hostility to Jesus because he directly challenged his opponents like the Jewish rulers who did not understand the law.
- ✓ Discourses were majorly dominated by Jesus with Jesus little input from the listeners like Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. So sometimes they could get bored.
- ✓ The conversation revealed lack of faith of Jesus' audience . For example the disciples were amazed when they found Jesus conversing with the Samaritan woman.
- ✓ The discourses hardly gave Jesus enough time for resting as he was kept busy all the time . For example Nicodemus visited him late at night and even the Samaritan woman interrupted Jesus when he was resting near Jacob's well.
- ✓ Generally discourses were tedious and time wasting because Jesus could take a lot of time explaining abstract things to the listeners like explaining to Nicodemus how to be born again.

- ✓ Discourses could lead Jesus to be accused of blasphemy for example the discourse at the dedication of the temple where people wanted to stone Jesus because of claiming to be a son of God.

### **Revision questions**

- 1. Assess the role of discourses in the ministry of Jesus according to the gospel of John.**
- 2. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of Jesus' use of discourses in the fourth gospel.**

### **REASONS WHY JESUS USED DISCOURSES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

#### **Account for Jesus' use of discourses in the fourth gospel.**

- ✓ Jesus used discourses because they were the commonest method of teaching.
- ✓ Jesus used discourses because they could easily create a personal relationship between him and the individuals involved. For example he became a close friend with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman.
- ✓ The use of discourse by Jesus was due to the fact that it could create more disciples than the parable in Mark's gospel indeed the Samaritan woman became a good disciple went to town to tell other people to witness Jesus.
- ✓ The discourses were used by Jesus in the fourth gospel because they helped him to take the initiatives of seeking mankind easily. He did to Nicodemus by telling him to be born again.
- ✓ Jesus used discourses because he wanted to have an ordinary conversation with various individuals however the conversation could later shift into theological.
- ✓ Jesus wanted to have conversations with all categories of people including the least expected one like women.
- ✓ Jesus used discourses in the fourth gospel because they could enable the individuals to ask from him questions directly and get immediate clarification.
- ✓ Jesus used discourses because he wanted to reveal his humanity to his followers. For example he begged the woman for water to drink because he was feeling thirsty as a human being.
- ✓ Jesus used discourses because he wanted to reveal his divinity because he told the Samaritan woman that he gives life giving water.
- ✓ Jesus used discourses because he wanted to reveal his messiahship to the people who were involved. He told the Samaritan woman that indeed he was the messiah.
- ✓ Messiah used dialogues because he wanted to challenge his opponents (Jewish rulers) who did not believe in his divinity.
- ✓ He used discourses because he wanted to reveal the spiritual blindness of his disciples and save people who were involved. To the Samaritan woman at first did not know Jesus was the messiah and even the disciples showed their spiritual blindness by wondering why Jesus was speaking with the Samaritan woman.

- ✓ Jesus wanted to show the love of God for mankind revealed through him . That is to say, he requested Nicodemus to be born again in order to enter the kingdom of God.
- ✓ Jesus used discourse aiming at introducing important sacraments to his audience like baptism and lord's supper.
- ✓ He wanted to expose what was happening in the church at that time like sexual immorality which the Samaritan woman was practicing.
- ✓ The use of discourses by Jesus was intended to preach the message about the message about the kingdom of God.

## **THE TEACHING ON EUCHARIST IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

### **Examine the teaching on Eucharist in the gospel of john**

- ✓ In john's gospel, Jesus does not directly inaugurate the institution of Eucharist as it is in Mark's gospel.
- ✓ At Cana the new wine symbolized the Eucharist blood of Jesus.
- ✓ The new wine would satisfy all the needs of people.
- ✓ The feeding of the five thousand people has an element of Eucharist.
- ✓ Before the bread was distributed, Jesus took it and gave thanks to God which implied Eucharist.
- ✓ He fed them on five loaves of bread and two fish which represented his body.
- ✓ As people ate the Eucharistic bread and fish, it symbolized the taking of life of the spirit . That is to say, eternal life.
- ✓ Jesus said that they would feed on his flesh of the Eucharist.
- ✓ Jesus is the bread of life which gives spiritual nourishment to his followers.
- ✓ Eating his flesh and drinking his blood are the source of eternal life.
- ✓ Whoever eats his flesh and drinks his blood lives in Jesus and likewise Jesus lives in him.
- ✓ This implied believing in Jesus who satisfies all hunger and thirst.
- ✓ And Jesus lives in him by the power of the spiritual meal.
- ✓ His body is the divine bread that came down from heaven.
- ✓ It is different from the bread that the Jewish ancestors ate but later died.
- ✓ This new Eucharist bread of Jesus brings eternal life.
- ✓ Thus Jesus is the bread of life in Eucharist.
- ✓ It is superior to the manna of the Exodus event which the Israelites were fed on.
- ✓ When Jesus appeared to the disciples at Lake Tiberius, the meal they had of bread and fish was a sign of Eucharist.

## **WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SYMBOLS OF BREAD AND WINE TO CHRISTIANS TODAY?**

Bread and wine are symbols taken during Holy Communion.

- They symbolize the love of Jesus who died for the sins of mankind.
- They are symbols of salvation.
- They point out the cost of the salvation of mankind that Jesus paid through his death.
- Bread symbolizes the body of Jesus which was crucified on the cross.
- Wine symbolizes the blood of Jesus that he shed on the cross.
- They are symbols of the new covenant made between mankind and God, sealed with the blood of Jesus.
- They call upon Christians to have reverence for Jesus as the son of God.
- They call upon Christians to have the spiritual nourishment that Jesus gives.
- They point to the heavenly banquet that Jesus' followers would enjoy.
- They symbolize the death of Jesus.
- They symbolize Jesus as the living Lord as we take his flesh and drink his blood.
- They give Christians the hope for resurrection.
- They give Christians the hope for the parousia.
- They are symbols of unity and equality among Christians.
- They call upon the Christians to live holy lives.
- They call upon the Christians to repent of their sins before taking part in the Lord's supper

**“THERE IS A LOT OF SYMBOLISM ATTACHED TO BAPTISM AND EUCHARIST IN JOHN'S GOSPEL”.  
JUSTIFY.**

Yes there is a lot of symbolism attached to the baptism in the following ways;

- John the Baptist was baptizing people preparing them for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- The disciples of Jesus were baptizing concurrently with John the Baptist.
- The Samaritan woman is told of water giving everlasting life . That is to say, baptism through Jesus.
- During the washing of the disciples' feet, water in a basin symbolized baptism.
- While on the cross, water came out of Jesus which was a symbol of baptism.
- Water in the well of Jacob symbolized the idea of baptism.
- Nicodemus was told by Jesus that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the spirit, implied baptism.

**There is symbolism attached to Eucharist in the following ways;**

- The wedding at Cana, the water turned into wine symbolized the idea of Eucharist.
- The feeding of the five thousand people, Jesus said that he was the bread of life implying the idea of Eucharist.
- The blood that Jesus shed while at the cross after being pierced by the soldier was symbolizing the idea of Eucharist.

- In the epilogue of John's gospel, Jesus ordered his disciples to eat the fish and bread symbolizing the idea of Eucharist.
- Jesus as a good shepherd, he feeds the followers on spiritual food.

#### **REASONS WHY MARY ANOINTED JESUS AT BETHANY (12:1-8)**

##### **1. Account for the anointing of Jesus by Mary in the gospel of John.**

##### **2. Justify the anointing of Jesus by Mary in the gospel of John.**

- Mary anointed Jesus to show that he was the king of Israel before he could enter Jerusalem as the royal city.
- It was to show that he was the expected messiah. That is to say, this act of anointing was reserved for the Jewish kings.
- It was to prepare Jesus for his death and burial ahead of him.
- It was to show the lack of understanding of the disciples of Jesus especially Judas Iscariot, because he rebuked for having wasted the expensive perfume.
- It was to show the greatness of Jesus . That is to say, Mary had realized how great Jesus was and that is why she anointed hi with expensive perfume.
- It was to show the love that Mary had towards Jesus Christ.
- It was to show that Jesus was a human being who could appreciate the good things done for him.
- It was to show that Jesus was going to pay heavily for the sins of mankind, to save them just as the expensive perfume was used to anoint him.
- It was to show that Judas Iscariot was an agent of Satan and that is why he rebuked Mary for having used an expensive perfume to anoint Jesus.
- It was to show the need for total surrender . That is to say, Mary had spent everything she had on buying the expensive perfume to anoint Jesus.
- It was to elevate the position of women in the Jewish society . That is to say, Jesus broke the negative Jewish culture attitude towards women.
- It was to show that the love for money was the cause of temptations like the one Judas Iscariot had.
- It was to show that those who went to achieve earthly things like Judas Iscariot always fail in their quest for heavenly glory.
- It was to show the respect and honour that Mary had for Jesus.

#### **IMPORTANCE/ SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SYMBOLS OF WATER, BREAD AND LIGHT IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

##### **1. Discuss the significance of the symbols of water, bread and light in john's gospel.**

##### **2. Show how water, bread and light are used to convey spiritual truth in John's gospel.**



### **3. What is the symbolic meaning of water, bread and light in John's gospel?**

#### **The significance of water in John's gospel**

- John the Baptist used water for cleansing people's sins in river Jordan.
- Water stood for the idea of baptism like Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to be born again of the spirit and which implied baptism.
- Water in the six jars at the wedding at Cana stood for the idea of purification and satisfaction.
- Water symbolized the religion of Judaism plus all its rites like the water in the well of Jacob.
- At Jacob's well there were physical water that could give physical satisfaction to the Jews and the Samaritans.
- Jesus Christ used water to make wine for the guests at the wedding party at Cana.
- The new wine made out of water was used to introduce a new religion called Christianity.
- Jesus referred to himself as the life giving water which implies he gives eternal life and satisfaction.
- The man who had been crippled for 38 years found the water in the pool of Bethzatha ineffective in healing him.
- So it is Jesus who gives both physical and spiritual healing to people.
- Jesus walked on water towards his disciples to show that he was divine, besides this helped in revealing the lack of faith in his disciples.
- Water was used to give sight to the man who had been born blind. This is when Jesus Christ ordered the man to go and wash his face in the pool of Siloam and so he received sight.
- Symbolically this meant that after receiving his sight he was to go and be the light to others who did not believe in Jesus.
- Jesus used water to wash the feet of the disciples which stood for spiritual washing.
- Water and blood came out of Jesus when the soldiers pierced his body which symbolized that he was a human being and also the idea of Eucharist.

#### **The significance of the symbol of bread in John's gospel**

- Bread represented the unleavened bread of the Passover feast.
- Bread gave nourishment meaning that Jesus Christ alone could give people the spiritual nourishment.
- It meant that life can only come through Jesus Christ.
- Bread is compared to the manna that God gave to the children of Israel in the wilderness it was foretelling the idea of Eucharist/ Lord's Supper which would imply the new covenant with mankind.
- He wanted people to put more emphasis on the spiritual bread other than physical bread.
- It stood for the redemption, death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- It meant that eternal life only comes by receiving God's own life given by the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

- It pointed to the hunger which the people would have for the word of God which is Jesus Christ.
- It meant that Jesus gives spiritual strength to his followers.
- Blood stood for the messiahship of Jesus.
- Bread stood for the divinity of Jesus.
- It pointed to the heavy banquet that followers of Jesus Christ would enjoy.

### **The spiritual meaning of the symbol of light in John's gospel**

- The term light meant the true wisdom and spiritual understanding of God.
- The term light was contrasting the darkness of sin, evil and death brought into the world by Satan.
- It meant that it is through Jesus Christ that man gets the true meaning of life.
- It means that righteous can be got through Jesus Christ as the only light.
- It means that Jesus Christ is a universal savior . That is to say, anyone who believes in him can reach the father because he is the light that shows the way.
- It meant that Jesus gives light to those who are spiritually blind towards him.
- It meant that Jesus Christ is divine . That is to say, son of God.
- It meant that Christ Jesus is the promised messiah.
- It meant the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures like the pillar of fire at Mt. Sinai in Exodus.
- It meant that it is only through Jesus that one can fully understand the scriptures because he is the light of the world.
- It meant that through Jesus Christ man can come from the world of sin to righteousness and life.
- It meant the purity of Jesus Christ because he is the light of the world.

### **COMMENT ON THE SYMBOLS THAT THE CHURCH USES TODAY**

#### **Explain the symbols that Christians use in modern times.**

- The candle light used during baptism shows that the baptismal candidate has received the Holy Spirit.
- Light shows that the baptized candidate should be the light to others.
- Bread symbolize the idea of the body of Jesus Christ.
- Wine symbolizes the idea of the blood of Jesus Christ.
- The cross/ rosary reminds Christians of the death of Jesus Christ at the cross.
- The ring used by the clergy symbolizes the union with Jesus Christ.
- The scepter used by the bishops symbolizes that there are heads of the church.
- The white cloth used during one's baptism implied the purity of the candidate.
- The incense used by the Catholics during church worship symbolizes blessings to the congregation.
- The different colours of garments used stand for different meanings like white garments stand for holiness black garments stands for death and mourning.

- The laying down of the catholic priest during ordination symbolizes obedience.
- Laying hands on the Christians is a symbol of giving blessings to Christians.
- The sprinkling of water at the forehead of a person symbolizes the idea of baptism.

#### **CAUSES OF HOSTILITY/ CONFLICTS/ OPPOSITION TOWARDS JESUS FROM THE JEWISH LEADERS**

- 1. Account for the increasing hostility between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders as portrayed in John.**
- 2. Analyse the circumstances that led to rise of conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders in the fourth gospel.**

- Because Jesus claimed to tear down the Jerusalem temple and rebuild in three days later.
- Because Jesus cleansed the Jerusalem temple yet they did not know the origin of his right to cleanse it.
- Because Jesus appeared to break the Jewish law when he healed the crippled man on the Sabbath.
- Because Jesus normally called God as his father which was seen as blasphemy.
- Because Jesus referred to the Jerusalem temple as his father's house.
- Because Jesus was performing miracles which made him more popular than them.
- Because Jesus called himself the bread of life.
- Because Jesus referred to them as children of the devil.
- Because Jesus attacked them for being hypocrites.
- It was God's plan.
- Caiaphas suggested killing Jesus because of fear of the Romans to destroy the Jewish nation.
- Jesus background as the son of Joseph was contradicting with his claim that he was from heaven.
- Because Jesus claimed that they would not go where he was going and that they would look for him but will die in their sins.
- Because Jesus raised Lazarus to life which made him more popular hence made plans to kill him.
- Because Jesus claimed that he was greater and older than Abraham.

#### **THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY (8:1-11)**

- 1. Discuss the meaning of the incident of the woman caught in the act of infidelity in the gospel of John.**
- 2. "The one who has never done it, let him be first one to throw a stone at her". (John 8:7). Examine the importance of Jesus' response as reflected in the above quotation.**

- The quotation showed Jesus' messiahship for he came to correct the weaknesses of the mosaic law and save sinners from forces of evil and sin.
- The saying indicated Jesus as a fair judge of man's sins. The Pharisees used emotions to pass judgment to the woman but Jesus listened to the accusations against the woman and reminded them that they were equally sinners.
- The action of Jesus signified that the mosaic law had outlived its importance and therefore Jesus had come to perfect it by freeing mankind from the burden of the law that was stated in Deuteronomy 22:22 and Leviticus 20:10.
- Jesus' response indicated that all people are sinners before God. The Pharisees were accusing the woman for committing adultery and wanted her to be stoned to death but when Jesus said the one who had never committed it be the first to throw stone to her they all left.
- Jesus' response showed lack of understanding of the Pharisees towards Jesus. The Jewish leaders wanted to trap Jesus basing on Moses' laws that permitted such a woman to be stoned to death and he escaped them.
- Jesus' response showed the importance of repentance of sins in the ministry of Jesus. He forgave the woman of her sins and commanded her to in no more.
- The love for mankind was revealed through Jesus. Jesus willingly accepted to save the woman from being stoned to death by the Pharisees which was a sign of love to sinners that can also enter the kingdom of God.
- The event indicated the humanity of Jesus. He sympathized with the woman whom the Pharisees wanted to stone to death because of the sin of adultery but later advised her to stop sinning.
- It also showed the divinity of Jesus. He quickly realized that the Pharisees had brought the woman with the intention to trap him and accuse him of doing wrong but dodged their trick.
- Jesus' response reflected/ indicated that he came to condemn any kind of sin but not the sinners. He told the woman that he could not condemn her but advise her to stop sinning.
- The words of Jesus proved that he came for reconciliation between God and mankind. In other words he came to condemn sins but not sinners in order to bring them back towards God also to bring reconciliation among people.
- The words of Jesus showed that he came to save the sinners but not the righteous people. This is why he dealt with a woman caught in adultery and advised her to stop sinning.
- Jesus' response to the Pharisees implied that any sin can be forgiven by God. The Pharisees thought that Jesus could support stoning the woman to death because of committing adultery but he reminded them that they were equally sinners before God.

- The action of Jesus was a call to holiness that was required by the followers of Jesus instead of living immoral kind of life involving adultery.
- It was one of the sources of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees and it eventually increased hostility towards him from the Pharisees who saw him as breaking the Mosaic Law.
- The response of Jesus indicated that Jesus cared for both physical needs and spiritual needs of mankind. He saved the woman from being stoned to death by the Pharisees and also forgave her from the sin of adultery.
- It showed the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. They arrested the woman for committing adultery and wanted her stoned to death but equally they were sinners and needed salvation from Jesus.

#### **DISCUSS THE RELEVANCE/ SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STORY OF THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY TO THE MODERN CHURCH.**

- The incident teaches the modern Christians to live holy lives instead of sinning as Jesus encouraged the woman who had been caught in the act of adultery to stop sinning.
- The story encourages modern Christians to repent their sins as Jesus encouraged the woman caught in the act of adultery to stop sinning in her life.
- Jesus' response reminds the modern Church especially the married people to be faithful in their marriage instead of committing adultery because it can lead them to death like the woman was going to be stoned to death but saved by Jesus.
- The modern church learns to condemn evil things committed in society instead of condemning sinners as Jesus condemned the act of adultery but encouraged the woman to stop sinning.
- The incident promotes a spirit of forgiveness of one another regardless of the sins committed as Jesus also forgave the woman caught in the act of adultery.
- The incident teaches Christians today to be sincere in what they do instead of being hypocrites the way the Pharisees condemned the woman and wanted her to be stoned to death because of her sin yet they were equally sinners.
- The story of a woman caught in adultery teaches the modern Christians to examine themselves before condemning others as Jesus told the Pharisees that whoever had never committed any sin/ done it before be the first to throw a stone at the woman but because of guiltiness they all left.
- The story reminds Christians today to be fair when judging others instead of using emotions to pass judgment to sinners as Jesus was fair to the woman caught in the act adultery.
- The incidence of the woman caught in adultery teaches modern Christians to promote the spirit of love for one another regardless who had been caught in adultery whom the Pharisees wanted to stone to death.

- The action of Jesus acts as a good example to church leaders to be ready to reconcile conflicting parties as Jesus Christ did between the Pharisees and the woman instead of creating more divisions.
- It reminds modern Christians to respect the ten commandments of God instead of breaking them like Jesus requested the woman not to commit adultery anymore.
- The incident helps the modern church to know how to keep Jesus protected the woman caught in adultery from being stoned to death.
- Jesus' words remind Christians today to always seek for God's wisdom when judging cases instead of using emotions like the Pharisees had done to the woman caught in adultery.
- Christians learn to promote human rights in society instead of promoting mob justice that Jesus discouraged from the Pharisees who wanted to stone the woman to death.
- The story teaches the Christian church today to respect and honour Jesus as the messiah who came to fulfill God's plan for the salvation of mankind instead of rejecting him the way the Pharisees rejected Jesus.

#### **DISCUSS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS BEING ANOINTED AT BETHANY BY MARY TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- The anointment of Jesus by Mary reveals to modern Christians that Jesus was the expected king of the Jews as Mary anointed him before entering the royal city of Jerusalem.
- The anointment of Jesus at Bethany proves to modern Christians that Jesus was the expected messiah. This is because such anointment was only reserved for Jewish kings.
- The action reveals Mary as one of the fore runners of Jesus' ministry. She prepared for his death and burial ahead.
- The anointment of Jesus reveals to modern Christians the spiritual blindness of some of Jesus' disciples. Judas Iscariot rebuked Mary for having wasted this expensive perfume indicating his spiritual blindness.
- It teaches modern Christians the greatness of Jesus. This was evidenced by Mary anointing him with expensive perfume.
- It shows to modern Christians the great love Mary had towards Jesus as such expensive perfume could not be poured to any lay man.
- The action of anointing Jesus at Bethany proves to modern Christians his humanity, because Mary anointed him physically.
- Jesus being anointed at Bethany encourages Christians today to have total faith in him like Mary knew that Jesus could soon save mankind from the bondage of sin.
- The actions of Judas Iscariot (words) teaches modern Christians that he was an agent of Satan that is why he rebuked Mary for using such expensive perfume to anoint Jesus.

- The action of anointment of Jesus encourages Christians today to have total surrender to Jesus like Mary who spent the little she had and bought the anointment oil she poured to Jesus.
- It showed Christians that those who want to achieve earthly things like Judas Iscariot are likely to fail in their quest for heavenly glory.
- Modern Christians are encouraged to respect and honour Jesus like Mary did by buying and anointing him with expensive perfume.

#### **TO WHAT EXTENT IS GOSPEL OF JOHN A MANIFESTATION OF PERFECT LOVE?**

**“The gospel of John was essentially aimed at manifesting the love of God for mankind”. Discuss.**

The gospel of John is a true manifestation of the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus . That is to say, divine love/ perfect love

To a larger extent, the gospel of John is a true manifestation of divine love in the following ways;

- Jesus performed seven signs in his public ministry which revealed the love of God for mankind . For example
  - ✓ Jesus turned water into wine for the guests at the wedding party as a sign of love for mankind because the wine that had been served first had gotten finished.
  - ✓ Jesus fed the 5000 people on 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish when he saw that people were hungry and therefore asked his disciples where they could buy enough food to feed the crowd.
  - ✓ Jesus saw Mary weeping about the death of Lazarus, his heart was deeply moved and also wept. Jesus eventually raised Lazarus to life as a sign of love for the bereaved family.
  - ✓ Jesus found a man at the pool of Bethzatha who had been crippled for thirty eight years, so asked him whether he wanted to be healed and later healed him in order to restore him to his normal health.
  - ✓ The Roman official came to Jesus at Cana and sought for healing of his son who was about to die, Jesus accepted to heal the son as a sign of love for even the Gentiles.
  - ✓ Jesus came to a man who had been born blind and helped the man to receive his sight after washing in the pool of Siloam.
  - ✓ When in the boat that had the disciples was attacked by strong winds in the night, Jesus came walking on the water in order to rescue them and gave them courage.
- Jesus told Nicodemus that God loved the world so much that he gave his only son, so that whoever believed in him would have eternal life, therefore manifestation of divine love.
- Jesus asked for a drink of water from the Samaritan woman in order that she might have life giving water, thus the love of God revealed through Jesus for the Samaritans whom the Jews despised as being inferior.
- Jesus accepted to wash the disciples’ feet despite being their master as a sign of perfect love towards them and also a perfect example for the disciples to always serve one another as he had served them. In

the event of washing the disciples' feet, it is said that Jesus always loved those in the world who were his own and he loved them to the very end, thus manifestation of the love of God for man.

- During the Lord's supper, Jesus gave the disciples a new commandment of love one another just as he had loved them and reminded them that if they showed the love for one another, then everyone would come to know that they were his disciples.
- Jesus shared the last meal with all the disciples including Judas Iscariot whom he knew that he would betray him but went ahead to offer a piece of bread/ morsel to him as final appeal to him to accept the bread offered to him in love in order to reject Satan's influence upon him.
- Jesus willingly accepted to suffer at the hands of the Jewish leaders and later died for the sins of the mankind in order to bring about salvation to all.
- The Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus who had been caught in the act of adultery and wanted her stoned to death but Jesus rescued the woman from being stoned to death when he challenged Pharisees that they are equally sinners.
- The "I am" sayings in the gospel of John are presented as consequence of God's love for mankind revealed through Jesus . For example
  - ✓ Jesus as the bread of life Jesus told the crowd that whoever came to him would never be hungry and whoever believed in him would never be thirsty and emphasized that it was not God's will for him to lose any of all those he gave him but that he should raise them to life on the last day.
  - ✓ Jesus as the good shepherd. Jesus claimed that he was the good shepherd who was willing to die for his sheep as a good shepherd, he cared for the lost sheep and even protected the sheep from being attacked y wolves.
  - ✓ Jesus as a true vine. Jesus told the disciples that he loved them just as the father loved him and besides he commanded them to love one another just as he had loved them.
  - ✓ Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. Jesus promised the disciples that he was going back to the father and would prepare a special room for them but would come back and take them where they would be with him.
  - ✓ Jesus as the light of the world. Jesus told the Pharisees that whoever followed him would have the light of life and would never walk in darkness.
  - ✓ Jesus as the resurrection and the life. Jesus assured Martha that he was the resurrection and the life whoever believed in him would live though he was to die and whoever lived and believed in him would never die.
- The risen Jesus appeared to peter and had a personal conversation with him, which eventually led to his appointment as the shepherd of his sheep, therefore as a sign of love for Peter despite his denial.
- Jesus loved a certain disciple more than rest of the disciples . For example the beloved disciple sat very close to the **boast** of Jesus at the Lord's supper.



- Jesus defunded and appreciated Mary's act of appointment with an expensive perfume though Judas Iscariot rebuked Mary for wasting the perfume suggesting that it should have been sold to raise money for the poor.
- Jesus had personal friends whom he always visited as a sign of love for them . For example Martha, Mary and Lazarus were his family friends.
- Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the disciples as a helper who would stay with them forever despite his departure from the world. This was a sign of perfect love for them.
- Jesus prayed for the disciples as a way of comforting them before he could depart from the world and called upon God to keep them safe by the power of his name and also keep them holy from the evil ones.
- Before the risen Jesus could ascend into heaven, he breathed the holy spirit upon the disciples and assured them that be forgiven and if they never forgave people's sins, they would not be forgiven.
- Jesus protected his disciples from being arrested by the Roman soldiers and the temple guards sent by the chief priest. He requested the soldiers to let his disciples go and instead arrest him.
- The risen Jesus appeared to the seven disciples at lake Galilee and helped them to catch a big number of fish and later Jesus took the bread and gave it to them and also took the fish and gave it to eat.
- Jesus promised to prepare a special room for his disciples when he goes back to his father's house as a sign of love.
- Jesus always referred to himself as the good shepherd who is willing to die for his sheep knew his sheep by name and always protected his sheep from wolves as a sign of love.

**However to a smaller extent, the gospel of John had other concerns about the public ministry of Jesus to teach about namely;**

- The prologue of the gospel of john . That is to say, where John the Baptist is seen as a messenger who came to prepare away for the coming of Jesus and also reveal that Jesus existed between the creation of the world.
- The conflicts between Jesus and the Jewish leaders which climaxed to his death at the cross . For example the Pharisees accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath law when he healed the cripple at the pool.
- Peter denied being a disciple of Jesus during his trial by the Sanhedrin yet he had assured him before that he was ready to die for him.
- Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus and came with the Roman soldiers and temple guards sent by the chief priest to assist them in arresting Jesus.
- In the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus Jesus emphasized the importance of baptism of the Holy Spirit and water in order to enter the kingdom of God.

- The burial of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathian together with Nicodemus and his eventual resurrection from death and the several resurrection appearances to the disciples.
- The teaching of Jesus on the holy spirit and the work of the holy spirit . For example the holy spirit would come to reveal the truth about God and would also teach the disciples everything about God.
- Jesus cleansed the Jerusalem temple and ordered the people to stop making his father's house a market place.
- The idea of witness to Jesus as the son of God . For example John the Baptist testified that Jesus was the son of God.
- The ministry of Jesus as the fulfillment of a number of the Old Testament scriptures . For example healing the cripple at the pool and the healing of a man born blind fulfilled the scriptures in the book of Isaiah 35:5-6.

### **THE TRIUMPHANT ENTRY OF JESUS INTO JERUSALEM (JOHN 12:12-19)**

#### **ANALYSE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS EVENT**

- The event signified the fulfillment of the old testament prophecies like in Zachariah 9:9 and Psalms 118:25-26 which stated that "your king is coming.....triumphant and victorious.....humble and riding on the young donkey.
- It showed the honour and respect people had towards Jesus when picked branches of palm tree to wave at him.
- The incident signified that Jesus was a spiritual messiah instead of a political messiah who was expected by the Jews basing on the way they welcomed him.
- The event also showed that the kingdom of Jesus was peaceful. The young donkey that he was sitting on was a symbol of peace.
- The event also indicated the spiritual blindness of the disciples of Jesus not until they remembered this event at the resurrection of Jesus.
- The event showed Jesus as a king, an agent of salvation that is why he was given songs of praise "Hosanna" or .....praise God.....
- The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem showed that the kingdom of Jesus was not of this world where people compete for political posts but his was a spiritual kingdom.
- The event increased the hostility of the Pharisees towards Jesus. They were not happy that Jesus was so popular as they watched this happening.
- The event pointed to the joy and happiness that would be enjoyed by the believers in the kingdom of God.
- It showed that the kingdom of God was now being established on earth/ at and.

- The event showed God fulfilling his divine plan through Jesus. Christ was linked to David so that the blessing which God promised to David comes true.
- It indicated that Jews expected a political messiah who would lead them in political revolutions but Jesus did not fulfill their desires as he came as a spiritual messiah.
- The event proved that Jesus was a king of the Jews basing on the way they welcomed him.
- The event signified the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus. The journey to Jerusalem was the start of his journey to suffering and death so as to save mankind (12:20-39)
- The event signified the humanity of Jesus. Jesus sat on a donkey and moved into Jerusalem.

#### **WHAT LESSONS DO MODERN CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM THIS EVENT?**

- Modern Christians should believe in Jesus Christ as a spiritual messiah just as the Jews believed in Jesus as a spiritual messiah not a political messiah.
- Modern Christians are called upon to believe in both the Old Testament scriptures as this event proved the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures in Zachariah 9:9 that promised the coming of the king.
- Modern Christians are called upon to pray for the power of wisdom from God so as to understand the nature of his gospel preachers not to be like the disciples who failed to understand the meaning of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem until his resurrection.
- Modern religious leaders are called upon to exercise a spirit of love and peace because even the kingdom of God is peaceful.
- Christians today should give honour and respect to Jesus Christ emulating the example of the people who picked branches of palm tree and welcomed Jesus in Jerusalem.
- Christians learn from the event that Jesus was a humble son of God as well as a prince of peace.
- Christian leaders should always work for peace in their community as Jesus did not like the Pharisees who developed hostility towards Jesus.
- The event calls upon Christians today to prepare to celebrate the joy and happiness that will be enjoyed by believers in the kingdom of God.
- Christians should have self sacrifice to serve God as he so loved mankind that he gave in his beloved man Jesus to die for man's sins.
- Christians today learn the spirit of hospitality from the Jews who welcomed Jesus as happily that they picked some branches of palm trees and waved at him.
- Christians should give praise and honour to the Lord like the Jews who welcomed Jesus by singing "praise God".
- Modern Christians are called upon to go out and preach the word of God as the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem revealed that the glory of God was on earth.

## **JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET (13:1-20)**

### **Discuss the implication of Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet.**

- The event signified the love of Jesus of his disciples for he took it by will to wash their feet.
- It signified the divine love in incarnation . That is to say, Jesus accepted rejection and death as a son of God.
- Washing the disciples' feet by Jesus showed spiritual blindness of Peter. He barred/ prevented Jesus from washing his feet without knowing the meaning of this action.
- The event was a perfect example or teaching to the disciples to always serve one another as Jesus had served them.
- It signified the humanity of Jesus. Everything he did was done humanly and secondly he was deeply troubled about his coming death.
- The event showed the divinity of Jesus. He knew that the hour of his death had come and was to return to God.
- The laying of Jesus' garments pointed to his death and resurrection. He took off the outer garment and put it on back after washing their feet predicting how he would loose his garments during crucifixion and later regain them after resurrection.
- It signified that Jesus was promised messiah as he Old Testament prophet had foretold all what Christ was doing as a servant of mankind.
- Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet signified that he was giving his disciples spiritual cleansing (baptism) that they needed before he would go back to God.
- The event gave Jesus a chance to reveal the betrayer to the rest of the disciples. This came to be known as Judas Iscariot.
- It also reflected on the Old Testament "I am" saying of God in the book of Exodus. Jesus also referred to himself as I am who I am.
- This was a step towards preparation of the Lord's Supper which was actually the last Christ had with his disciples.
- The event signified that Jesus was a servant of mankind because he accepted to wash the feet of his own disciples.
- It was also a preparation to the disciples for their future mission of spreading the gospel where Christ taught them to be ready to bend down and serve others.
- The event showed Jesus as a suffering messiah. He was to suffer to bring salvation to mankind.
- It signified that Jesus was a son of God. He told his disciples that he was to return to God his father.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET TO MODERN CLERGY**

### **How relevant/ significant is this act of washing the disciples' feet to the modern church leaders?**

- Modern church leaders learn to humble themselves in their service to Christians just as Jesus Christ in his service humbled and washed his disciples' feet.
- The act teaches modern church leaders to have mercy and love while executing their services to the people as Christ also had such mercy and love.
- Modern church leaders are encouraged to be exemplary to their flock as they try to serve them.
- Church leaders learn to serve others instead of waiting to be served.
- The act encourages modern Christian leaders to have intimate relationship with the Christians they serve instead of being proud of themselves.
- The act teaches modern church leaders to copy the example of Christ by accepting to die for the flock.
- Jesus' act reveals to modern church leaders that there are always traitors among the Christians they serve. However they should not fear to talk about them openly as Christ pointed out Judas Iscariot.
- The act calls on modern church leaders to seek for guidance from God and allow him to lead them in their leadership as Christ did.
- Modern church leaders learn to train their followers for their future mission like Jesus trained his disciples to serve others.
- The act teaches modern church leaders to correct their followers who go wrong like Jesus corrected Peter who had refused to be washed.
- The action of Jesus reminds the modern clergy to tolerate even those people who may work against their ministries like Jesus who tolerated Judas Iscariot who had prepared to betray him.
- The church leaders today learn to treat all their servants equally including those who may betray them like Jesus did to Judas.
- The action of Jesus enables modern church leaders to do the will of God for mankind like Christ did all what he could for the good of mankind.
- Washing the disciples' feet by Jesus teaches the clergy to encourage their followers to repent of their sins or to withdraw their evil plans.
- Jesus' action of washing the disciples' feet promotes the spirit of fellowship that church leaders should put in place for their followers.
- It teaches church leaders together with their followers to believe in Jesus as the messiah.

## **REASONS WHY JESUS WASHED THE DISCIPLES' FEET**

1. **Account for Jesus' act of washing his disciples' feet in the gospel of John.**
2. **What prompted Jesus to wash the disciples' feet in the fourth gospel?**

- Jesus wanted to show divine love to his disciples for he took it by will to wash their feet.
- Jesus washed his disciples' feet because also God wanted to show his real love to mankind through Jesus Christ who was preparing for his death and resurrection.
- Jesus washed the disciples' feet because he wanted to teach the disciples to always serve one another as Jesus had served them.
- Jesus wanted to show his humanity before his disciples that is to say everything he did was done humanly.
- Jesus wanted to show his divinity to the disciples. That is to say he was able to know the person who was to betray him.
- Jesus also wanted to fulfill the Old Testament scriptures . That is to say, he reflected to Old Testament "I am" saying of God in Exodus.
- Jesus washed the disciples' feet because it was the perfect time for him to give the betrayer to the rest of the disciples.
- Jesus also wanted to prepare his disciples for the future mission of spreading the gospel.
- Jesus washed the disciples' feet because he wanted to prepare the Lord's Supper which was actually the last Christ had with his disciples.
- Jesus also wanted to show to his disciples that he was the promised messiah as the Old Testament prophets had foretold all what Christ was doing as a servant of mankind.
- Jesus wanted to show to his disciples that he was a true son of God because he told them that he was to return to God his father.

#### **EXAMINE THE CHALLENGES CHRISTIANS FACE IN SERVING ONE ANOTHER TODAY**

Christians face the following challenges in serving one another especially in line of preaching the gospel;

- Some Christians are selfish so they do not want to pay attention to other people's word of God.
- Some Christians are so proud of themselves.
- Differences in education levels.
- Differences in political ideologies.
- Differences in religious groups.
- Financial hardships.
- Divisions among Christians themselves.
- The greed for material wealth.
- Inadequate time.
- Political instabilities in some parts of the country . For example Kasese.

- Emergency of epidemics nodding head, ebola etc.
- Poor payment at work.
- Wrong attitude of some people towards work.
- Cultural differences.
- Discrimination in churches and other work places.
- Increased immoral degeneration.
- Influence of western culture . For example adoption of pornography.

## **THE LAST SUPPER/ LORD'S SUPPER IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

### **Give an account of Jesus' last supper in the fourth gospel.**

- According to the fourth gospel the last supper took place a day before the Passover meal.
- It happened after Jesus had finished washing the feet of his disciples as an example to them.
- After the Lord's supper Jesus was preparing the disciples for the future task of serving although they did not understand what Jesus was showing.
- Jesus felt greatly troubled and declared openly that one of his disciples was to betray him soon.
- The words of Jesus puzzled the disciples and looked at one another and so peter requested John the beloved disciple who was seated next to Jesus to ask him who was going to betray him.
- So the disciple moved closer to Jesus' side and asked "who is it Lord".
- Jesus answered to the disciples that he was to deep some bread in the sauce and give it to the betrayer.
- Jesus performed a sign to reveal the identity of the betrayer by deeping a piece of bread in a sauce and so gave it to Judas Iscariot the son of Simon Iscariot.
- Immediately as soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered him.
- Then Jesus told Judas to be quick with what he was going to do. Judas took the bread went out and it was a night meaning Judas was surrounded by evil forces.
- None of the other disciples at the table understood why Jesus said to Judas to be quick with what he was planning to do.
- But because Judas was in charge of the money bag some thought that Jesus had told him to go and buy what they needed for the festival or what to give to the poor.
- After Judas had left Jesus told the rest of the disciples that his hour had come to reveal the glory of the son of man and glory of God.
- Christ assured the disciples that he would not be with them very soon but they could look for him however they would not be in position to go where he was going.
- At the end Jesus gave a new commandment to his disciples to love one another as he had loved them. This meant that if they showed love for one another everyone would know that they were his disciples.

- Simon peter wondered why he could not follow Jesus but Christ told him he had to first die.
- Finally Christ told Peter that before the cock crows peter would have denied Jesus three times and it really happened.

## **THE COMPARISON BETWEEN JOHN'S GOSPEL AND MARK'S GOSPEL ON THE ISSUE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER OR THE LAST MEAL**

- 1. Analyse the similarities and differences between Mark and John's gospel on the issue of the last supper.**
- 2. Compare the gospel of John and Mark on the account of the Passover or the Lord's Supper.**
- 3. To what extent is John's preservation on the Lord's Supper different from that of Mark's gospel?**

### **Similarities**

- In both gospels of Mark and John, the Lord's Supper coincides with the Passover feast although in John's gospel it was a day before the Passover feast.
- The Lord's supper started in the evening.
- The last supper ended at night.
- The last supper involved Jesus and his disciples.
- There is prediction of Jesus' betrayer who was Judas Iscariot.
- It marked the last meal that Jesus had with his disciples.
- The disciples failed to know at first the actual name of the betrayer.
- The disciples showed lack of faith towards Jesus like Peter.
- Last supper was initiated by Jesus himself.
- It involved drink of wine and eating of bread.
- Judas Iscariot leaves Jesus and his disciples before the end of the meal.
- The disciples were shocked about the impending death of Jesus.
- In both gospels Jesus predicted his own death.
- Jesus predicts Peter's denial although in Mark's gospel it was shortly predicted at Mountain of Olives.
- In both Jesus makes a sign to identify the betrayer as Judas Iscariot.
- In both Jesus referred to himself as a son of man.

### **Differences**

- In Mark's gospel, the Lord's Supper coincided with the Passover feast while in John's gospel the Lord's Supper took place a day before the Passover feast.



- In Mark's gospel the disciples asked Jesus where to prepare the Lord's Supper from while in John's gospel, the disciples were already having the Lord's Supper with Jesus Christ.
- In Mark's gospel the Lord's Supper is prepared in an upper room while in John's gospel, the place is not described.
- In Mark's gospel Jesus Christ inaugurates/ confirms the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. While in John's gospel Jesus washes the disciples' feet.
- In Mark's gospel Jesus talks of a new covenant sealed with his blood while in John's gospel he talks of the need to serve one another.
- In Mark's gospel Jesus gives a brief teaching but no farewell message to the disciples while in John's gospel Jesus gives a lengthy teaching and a farewell message to the disciples.
- In Mark's gospel, Jesus identifies the betrayer saying that the one who deeps a piece of bread with me in a dish would be the betrayer but in John's gospel he took a piece of bread and deeped it and gave it to Judas the son of Simon Iscariot to identify him as the betrayer.
- In Mark's gospel all the twelve disciples are treated equally yet in John's gospel special attention is given to John the beloved disciple who leaned towards Jesus and even Peter requested him to ask Jesus for the name of the betrayer.
- In Mark's gospel the disciples sang a hymn during the Lord's Supper and thereafter went to mount Olives yet in John's gospel the disciples stayed at the Lord's supper and had no singing of a hymn.
- In Mark's gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that he would never drink wine again until the new wine in the kingdom of God while in John's gospel Jesus simply tells the disciples that he would not be with them much longer and that they would look for him.
- In Mark's gospel Jesus warns the disciples about his coming death while at mountain Olives after the Lord's supper. Yet in John's gospel Jesus was troubled in spirit and so warned the disciples about his coming death while still at the Lord's Supper.
- In Mark's gospel the Lord's Supper goes on till the end with all the disciples including Judas Iscariot while in John Judas leaves before end of the Lord's supper because Jesus had ordered him to be quick about what he was going to do.
- In Mark's gospel Satan appears to have already entered Judas before the Lord's Supper. Yet in John's gospel Satan entered Judas immediately after he had eaten a piece of bread given by Jesus.

#### **DISCUSS THE TEACHING OF JOHN'S GOSPEL ON THE HOLY SPIRIT**

- According to John the Holy Spirit reveals the truth about God.
- The Holy Spirit according to the gospel of John as said by Jesus Christ could be a helper who would stay with the disciples forever.

- In the gospel the Holy Spirit would enable believers to remember what Christ had taught to them.
- According to the gospel of John Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit who would encourage the believers to remember what Christ had taught.
- John teaches that the Holy Spirit was to bring peace to the world to those who believed in Jesus Christ.
- The gospel of John teaches that Holy Spirit was to complete the work of Jesus Christ. Therefore the Holy Spirit was to come after Jesus' departure.
- John teaches that in times of suffering persecution the Holy Spirit comforted believers.
- According to John's gospel the Holy Spirit would make people aware of their sins and therefore go for repentance as they prepared for judgment.
- The gospel teaches that the Holy Spirit in the early church enabled disciples of Jesus to perform miracles in Christ's name.
- According to the gospel of John the Holy Spirit played the work of settling disputes among believers.
- It was the work of the Holy Spirit according to the teachings of John's gospel that enabled believers to give testimonies about Christ without fear or favour.
- John teaches that the Holy Spirit helps in expansion of God's kingdom here on earth.
- John also teaches that the Holy Spirit would give people courage especially those who obey God's commandments.

#### **EXAMINE THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH TODAY**

- The Holy Spirit guides people to perform various miracles in Jesus' name like healing the lame.
- The Holy Spirit guides Christians to live holy lives emulating the example of Christ. That is to say, not involving in immoral acts like murder, sexual immoralities, robbery, corruption etc.
- The Holy Spirit guides Christians to endure persecution.
- Guides Christians to carry out catechism lessons to the new converts.
- Guides Christians in translating scriptures in local languages so as even the illiterates can understand the word of God.
- Guides the church on how to preach the gospel.
- Guides Christians on how to detect false preachers.
- Guides Christians to write Christian literature and spread it to others.
- Guides Christians to speak in tongues.
- Guides Christians to do charitable works. For example assisting the poor by giving them clothes, school fees, food, housing facilities etc.
- Guide Christians to lay hands on sick people and get healed.
- Guides Christians to compose Christian songs and hymns used for praise and worship.

- Guides Christians to establish churches in different places of the world.
- The Holy Spirit guides Christians to carry out baptism of new converts.
- Guides Christians to love one another.
- Guides Christians to carry out fellowship.

## **JESUS' PROMISES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO HIS DISCIPLES**

**What promises of the Holy Spirit did Jesus make to his disciples about the holy spirit in the fourth gospel.**

- Jesus assured his disciples that if they loved him they would automatically obey his servants and so he would send the Holy Spirit to them.
- Jesus told the disciples that he would ask his father to send the Holy Spirit as a helper who would be with them forever.
- Jesus promised the disciples that the Holy Spirit was to reveal to them about his true nature.
- Christ said to the disciples that the world could not receive the Holy Spirit because they could not see him or know him.
- Jesus told his disciples that for they knew the Holy Spirit because he remained **thim** and was in them.
- Christ went ahead to say to the disciples that God loves those who love his son and obey his commandments, so he would love and reveal himself to those who loved them.
- When Jesus said the above words Judas wondered how Jesus would reveal himself to the disciples instead of the world.
- But Jesus said that the world is blind to the revelation of God in him, so the world neither obeyed nor loved Jesus and God.
- Jesus told the disciples that the Holy Spirit who God would send in his name would remind them about everything.
- Jesus promised his disciples to leave them with spiritual peace which the hostility of the world would not be able to destroy.
- Jesus discouraged the disciples from being worried and upset because he was going to come back for them soon.
- He encouraged the disciples to be glad/happy that he was returning to the father with his work being completed. This was also teaching the disciples to also be hardworking to accomplish their task in time.
- Christ promised the disciples that he was leaving physically but they would not be a lot because he would return to them in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- He still said that he would disappear from the sight of the world but not from the sight of the disciples who would have eternal life.

- Jesus promised his disciples that after resurrection, they would come to understand his relationship with his father and they would know that there are spiritual union with him.

## **THE TEACHING OF JOHN'S GOSPEL ON THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF TRINITY**

### **Examine the teaching of John's gospel on the Holy Spirit and its relationship to the Christian doctrine of trinity**

The teaching of John's gospel on the Holy Spirit

- John understands the giving of the Holy Spirit to the followers to have been prophesied in the Old Testament scriptures.
- God told John the Baptist that he would see the spirit come upon Jesus in form of a dove and that would be the person who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.
- John the Baptist confessed that he had seen the Holy Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and it stayed on Jesus.
- Jesus told Nicodemus that no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the spirit.
- Jesus said that the fullness of God's spirit is in him as the son of God because he speaks God's word.
- Jesus told the Samaritan woman that by the power of God's spirit would people worship God truly.
- The Holy Spirit will reveal the truth about God.
- The Holy Spirit would teach them everything about God.
- The Holy Spirit would remind them about what Jesus had taught them.
- The Holy Spirit would make the world aware of sin and the judgment on sin.
- The Holy Spirit would be a witness to Jesus because he would speak about him.
- The Holy Spirit is sent by God and his son.
- The Holy Spirit speaks of God with authority from him.
- The Holy Spirit will live in us and with us.
- The Holy Spirit would give god glory because he will talk what he says.
- The Holy Spirit will help believers to love Jesus Christ and also to obey his commandments.

## **THE RELATIONSHIP OF JOHN'S TEACHING ON THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF TRINITY**

- The teaching of trinity states that is one God, there are three persons namely, God the father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- The word of God identified with the son of God hence Jesus was with God in the beginning.
- The word/ son is sent into the world by God the father for man's salvation.
- Jesus the son shares identity with God the father . That is to say, and God were one.

- The father's work is the sons' work . That is to say, Jesus said that the father who sent him is with him because he does what pleases him.
- Jesus Christ the son is totally obedient to his father' will.
- God the father loves whoever loves his son Jesus Christ.
- The Holy Spirit is the third person who takes the place of Jesus Christ after his departure.
- Both the son and the Holy Spirit come from God the father . That is to say, Jesus is his father's name and the holy spirit is in his name.
- The father gave and sent the son and the son will give and send the holy spirit at his request.
- The Holy Spirit is present during the baptism of Jesus being sent by God the father.
- After the son's resurrection, he breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples.
- The relationship of the father and the son is that of love, Christ said his father loved him because he was willing to his life.
- Jesus is the truth and holy one from God the helper in the spirit of truth and this is the Holy Spirit.
- God would send the holy spirit in the name of his son Jesus Christ.

#### **THE ROLE/ IMPORTANCE OF SIMON PETER AS A LEADER OF THE DISCIPLES IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

Assess the role of Peter as a leader of the 12 disciples in John's gospel

Positive role of Peter as the leader of the disciples in john's gospel

- Peter is one of the first two disciples who were called by Jesus Christ and was introduced to Jesus by Andrew.
- He was the only disciple that was given a new name by Jesus Christ as the rock (Cephas)/ SIMON.
- peter confessed on behalf of the disciples that they had no where to go because Jesus was the holy one from whom words of eternal life come.
- At the Lord's Supper, it was Peter who requested the beloved disciple who was seated next to Jesus to ask Jesus the name of the betrayer.
- Peter was the only disciple who tried to defend Jesus Christ from being arrested when he cut off the ear of one of the arresting soldiers.
- Peter was one of the two disciples who witnessed the trial of Jesus Christ before the Sanhedrin from the courtyard.
- Peter was given to be the shepherd of the sheep . That is to say, Jesus instructed him to take care of the church in his absence.
- He was the only disciple whom Jesus asked whether he really loved him and peter assured him that he loved him.

- Peter was one of the disciples who first received the news about the resurrection of Jesus from Mary Magdalene.
- Peter was the only disciple concerned about Jesus' act of washing his disciples' feet, probably he thought that it was the duty of the disciples to wash their master's feet.
- Peter was the only disciple who assured that he was ready to die for him.
- Peter was so much concerned and worried when Jesus Christ told them that he was going to leave them, so he asked him about where he was going.
- After receiving the news of Jesus' resurrection, Peter together with John ran to the empty tomb, although it was the disciple who reached the tomb first, when Peter arrived he went straight into the empty tomb and touched the wrappings of Jesus that he had left behind.
- Peter suggested to the six disciples that he was going fishing on Lake Tiberius and they accepted to go with him the risen Jesus appeared to them abruptly.
- Besides when the beloved disciple realized that it was Jesus who had ordered them to throw a net into the lake some fish, he only informed Peter on behalf of the disciples.
- When Jesus ordered the seven disciples to bring some of the fish they had caught to the shore of the lake, it was one who went abroad and dragged the net full of fish to Jesus.
- He had concern for the beloved disciple to be the leader of the sheep . That is to say, when Jesus had asked him to take care of the sheep he referred him to the beloved disciple.

### **Negative role of Peter as a leader of the disciples in John's gospel**

- Unlike in Mark's gospel, the leadership of Peter in John's gospel seems to be challenged by the beloved disciple of Jesus.
- Peter tried to bar Jesus from washing his feet because he did not know what it meant.
- Peter cut off the ear of one of the arresting soldiers, so failed to understand that Jesus Christ was a peaceful leader as a suffering messiah.
- Peter denied Jesus Christ three times in the court yard.
- Peter failed to recognize the risen Jesus when they had gone fishing on Lake Tiberius, it was instead the beloved disciple who recognized him and informed Peter about it.
- John the beloved disciple was the only disciple present during the crucifixion and the death of Jesus Christ.
- Even Jesus ordered John the beloved disciple to take care of Mary his mother as his own mother and even requested Mary his mother to take John the beloved disciple as her own son unlike Peter.
- Peter requested the beloved disciple to ask Jesus for the name of the betrayer instead of Peter asking for himself.

- The beloved disciple enjoyed a special position at the lord's Supper by sitting close to the breast of Jesus Christ unlike peter.
- Peter failed to know the actual place where Jesus was going after his departure, so asked him where he was going.
- Peter was not the first disciples to be called by Jesus instead he was introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew.
- Peter first feared to go straight into the courtyard when Jesus was being tried by the Sanhedrin instead it was a certain disciple (name not mentioned) who came and begged the guard to allow peter into the courtyard.

## **THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

- 1. Analyze the role of women in Jesus' ministry as depicted in john's gospel.**
- 2. "The women were very good disciples as reflected in John's gospel". Justify the above statement.**

- Mary the mother of Jesus is presented as the mother of Jesus at the wedding at Cana.
- Mary the mother caused Jesus Christ to perform a sign of provision of wine to the guests.
- The Samaritan woman confessed that Jesus was the messiah as well as a prophet.
- Later the Samaritan woman became a disciple when she went and called on other Samaritans to come and see Jesus and they believed in him.
- The Samaritan woman helped to reveal the gap that existed between the Jews and the Samaritans. This helped Jesus to bridge the gap between the Jews and the Samaritans as equal people.
- The woman caught in adultery could have gone out to spread the message of forgiveness by Jesus Christ.
- The adulterous woman gave chance to Jesus to bring up the inadequacies of the Jewish law . That is to say, the law had condemned such a woman to be stoned to death.
- Mary anointed Jesus Christ at Bethany as a preparation for his death and burial and Jesus appreciated her action.
- This anointing helped Jesus to realize the spiritual blindness of Judas Iscariot who had rebuked Mary for having wasted the expensive perfume on him.
- Mary and Martha showed great faith in Jesus as the messiah who was to come to this world.
- Mary the sister of Lazarus prepared dinner for Jesus.
- Mary the mother and Mary Magdalene showed their concern during the suffering of Jesus Christ, they followed him up to the cross and stood by his cross.
- Mary the mother showed her motherly love, care and concern to Jesus during his last hour.

- Mary Magdalene was the first person whom the risen Jesus appeared to and Jesus ordered her to go and inform his disciples that he was going back to his father.
- On Easter Sunday, Mary Magdalene showed her concern and went to the tomb where Jesus Christ had been buried and found it empty.
- Mary Magdalene obeyed and went to inform all the disciples and Jesus' brothers about the risen Christ.
- A woman (slave girl) created an opportunity for Peter to deny Jesus Christ three times as Jesus had predicted before.

## **THE ROLE OF WOMEN TODAY IN THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL**

1. **"Today women can effectively spread the gospel" comment on this assumption.**
2. **Assess the effectiveness of women in the spread of the gospel today.**

Yes women today can effectively spread the gospel because of the following;

- Women are good in composing and singing Christian songs and hymns.
- They give hospitality in church when they act as church ushers.
- They organize religious conferences and seminars to promote the gospel.
- They are acting as teachers of CRE in secondary schools and tertiary institutions.
- The Catholic Church has nun/ sisters who are dedicated to the service of God and this has attracted many to Christianity.
- Christian mothers have a lot of influence on the child's behaviours through prayer right from birth of the child.
- During the formative stage, the child is normally with the mother and this is where the personality of a child is formed.
- They are good at convincing men to become Christians and change their behaviours.
- Some are carrying out missionary journeys.
- They are good at organizing fellowships.
- Women have set up charity organizations to help the disadvantaged people in society.

**However, women experience some limitations in the spread of the gospel hence becoming ineffective namely;**

- In the Catholic Church women cannot be ordained as priests.
- The long period of lactation makes them weak physically.
- They are faced with the problem of lack of finance.
- Some are faced with the problem of menstruation period.



- Some are faced with the problem of pregnancy.

## **THE ROLE OF GENTILES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

### **1. Analyze the role of Gentiles in Jesus' ministry in the gospel of John.**

### **2. Assess the role of Gentiles in the ministry of Jesus in the fourth gospel.**

- Jesus conversed with the Samaritan woman showing that he was a universal savior. Later a woman becomes a disciple of Jesus when she went out and called other Samaritans to come and see Jesus and they believed in him.
- The Samaritan woman confessed that Jesus was a prophet as well as a messiah so indicating that she played a positive role in Jesus' ministry.
- In John's gospel Jesus healed the Roman officer's son who came for assistance from Jesus. Therefore such Gentiles had faith in Jesus.
- Many gentiles were converted to Christianity after receiving the word of God from Jesus or after being healed. For example the family of the Roman officer after healing their son believed in Jesus.
- In John's gospel Pilate who examined Jesus and found no guilty in him was a gentile.
- The notes on the cross of Jesus declaring him as the king of the Jews was written in Greek, Aramaic and Latin languages to show that the gentiles were important in the ministry of Jesus.
- At one time Jesus was visited by the Greeks and he accepted to talk with them implying that he was concerned about the gentiles too (12:20)
- Jesus referred to himself as the light of the world. This implied that he brought salvation to both Jews and Gentiles.
- When Jesus prayed to God he said that God gave him authority over all mankind so that he might give eternal life to whoever believed in him hence gentiles were included.
- The gospel of John indicates a translation of Aramaic words for the gentiles like Golgotha which means the place of the skull.
- Jesus cleansed the Jerusalem temple that the Jews had abused as a lesson to the Gentiles also that this was a place of worship.
- John the Baptist referred to Jesus as the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and this implied he was teaching both the Jews and Gentiles.
- Jesus preached the message about God to the Samaritans and big number of them were converted and even requested him to stay with him for two more days which he accepted.
- During Jesus' discourse of the good shepherd, Jesus said that there were other sheep which belonged to him that were not his sheep fold but he would also look for them in order to make one flock with one shepherd. This implied that he was concerned about the gentiles.

- In John's gospel the Roman soldiers who arrested Jesus were Gentiles. (18:4)
- The Jews themselves alleged that Jesus was a Samaritan during the discourse on before Abraham was born I am.

### **JESUS' TEACHING ON PRAYER TO HIS DISCIPLES (JOHN 17:1-26)**

#### **Analyse Jesus' prayer to his disciples**

- Jesus looked up in heaven and said to the Father that the hour has come.
- Then Jesus prayed for glory and said that the Lord gave him authority over all mankind so that he could give eternal life to all those that were with him.
- Jesus further said to the Father that he had completed the work assigned to him, so he asked the Father to give him glory in the same way he had done before the world was made.
- Jesus confirmed to the Father that many people had known him now and obeyed his word through the Son.
- Jesus said that he gave the people the message he was sent to deliver so that all who received it may continue to believe in Christ.
- According to 17:9 Jesus acknowledged to the Father that all he had was to the Father but also what the Father had was for him. This signified that both Christ and God are one.
- Jesus continued to pray for his followers that as he goes back to the Father. He keeps them safe and united just as he and the Father were united.
- Jesus went on to pray that while he was with the believers, he kept them safe by the power of the Lord's name and none of them was lost except the man who was bound to be lost so that the scriptures could come true.
- Christ also prayed to the Father for his disciples that as he goes back to him the believers might remain with joy in their hearts in all its fullness.
- Jesus further said to God he gave to the believers the Lord's but the world hated them because they did not belong to the world like Christ did not belong to the world.
- In 17:15 Jesus prayed to the Father not to take away believers out of the world but to keep them safe from the evil ones.
- He also prayed to God to dedicate the believers to himself by means of truth as Christ had dedicated himself to God in his service.
- He further prayed to the Father not only to show mercy to the believers but that they should be all united knowing both Jesus and God.
- Christ said to the Father that he gave him the believers but requested that they should be with him by heart such that they may see Christ's glory that the Lord gave to him.

- However in his prayer Jesus said to the father that the world did not know him and did not know who sent Jesus but he had tried to make the world know God.

### **DISCUSS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS' PRAYER FOR HIS DISCIPLES TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- Jesus' prayer for his disciples teaches modern religious leaders always to be ready to pray for the believers in both times of peace and trouble.
- It reveals the union that Jesus had between him and the father who sent him into the world to preach the gospel as he said "all have is yours, and all you have is mine..." (17:10)
- It teaches modern Christians to always dedicate their services to god as Jesus did and was able to accomplish the work the father gave him. 917:4)
- Jesus ' prayer to his disciples promotes a spirit of unity among believers as Christ prayed to the father to keep them as one.
- It teaches modern Christians to always give glory to the father as Christ said that he always gave glory to the father while on earth. 917:4)
- The prayer of Jesus reminds religious leaders to prepare their followers to take on their mission when they are away.
- Jesus' prayer to hid disciples encourages modern Christian leaders to carry out their mission of preaching the word of God without fear or favour like Jesus said he had made the father be known to the people in the world.
- The prayer of Jesus teaches modern religious leaders to struggle and keep their followers safe from the powers of evil following the example of Jesus who said that he had kept the believers safe by the power of god who sent him.
- Jesus' prayer to his disciples shows that he had too much love for his disciples; therefore modern Christians are called upon to also exercise such spirit of love among their followers.

### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ARREST, CRUCIFIXION AND THE DEATH OF JESUS IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN**

**Explain the importance/ relevance of Jesus' arrest, crucifixion and death in light of john's gospel**

#### **The significance of the arrest of Jesus (18:1-11)**

- The arrest of Jesus was carried out in the night which implied the action was illegal.
- It also signified that darkness was conflicting with light in other words darkness represents the spiritual blindness of the Jewish leader towards the truth of Jesus' gospel.
- The arrest of Jesus signified lack of understanding of Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus by handing him over to be arrested.
- Jesus' arrest and Judas' betrayal fulfilled the prediction of Jesus that one of his disciples would betray him.

- It also signified that Jesus took initiative as the logos (love) to save mankind. He clearly identified himself before the arresting soldiers that he was Jesus of Nazareth that they were looking for.
- The arrest of Jesus signified his divinity. Jesus' power was felt by the soldiers by falling down as soon as he identified himself before them.
- It also signified the humanity of Jesus. He was actually arrested like any other Jew/ human being who had committed an offense.
- Jesus' arrest signified that he was in full control of the events that led to his arrest. This is why he was able to present himself to the soldiers who even did not know him properly.
- The arrest of Jesus indicated that he was a good shepherd who protects his sheep. He told the soldiers to only arrest him and let the disciples free which they accepted.
- Jesus' arrest portrayed/ showed peter as the leader of the 12 disciples and also as a man who loved his master so much he tried to defend Jesus by cutting off the ear of one of the soldiers.
- It showed Jesus as suffering messiah as well as a peaceful leader as he felt sympathy for the soldier whose ear had been cut off.
- Jesus' arrest fulfilled his prediction that not any of his disciples would be lost from him. This is proved when all his disciples were let free by the soldiers.

### **The significance of the crucifixion of Jesus (19:1-27)**

- The crucifixion of Jesus indicated that he was in full control of events that were taking place. He managed to carry his own cross to Golgotha to bring salvation to mankind.
- It signified Jesus was a human being. He physically carried the cross himself to Golgotha.
- The crucifixion indicated the majestic power of Jesus/ divinity instead of a suffering type of a messiah.
- During the crucifixion of Jesus the great power of faith of women is depicted. Some of them stood towards Jesus Christ by his cross.
- Jesus carrying the cross during his crucifixion fulfilled Old Testament times when Israelites carried firewood.
- The crucifixion also fulfilled the Old Testament scripture in psalms 22:28 indicating how soldiers would grumble for Jesus' clothes.
- It also proved that Jesus was a king of the Jews as it was written on his cross "king of the Jews".
- It was a divine plan that the title king of the Jews was written on Jesus' cross because the Jewish leaders wanted Pilate to change the title but he rejected their request.
- The crucifixion of Jesus signified the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures of the suffering servant of God whom Isaiah 53 had talked about.

- The action also proved that the work of Jesus had been completed because he said it is finished at the time of his death.
- Jesus' crucifixion implied that his ministry was universal. The notes put on his cross was written in different languages like Aramaic, Latin and Greek so catering even to the gentiles.
- Jesus' mother and John the beloved disciple were both present at his crucifixion and Jesus requested his mother and John to take care of each other, this signified continued friendship between the two families.

### **The significance of the death of Jesus in John's gospel (19:28-37)**

The death of Jesus Christ had the following significances;

- The blood that came out of Jesus' body when he was pierced signified the idea of Eucharist.
- Water that came out of Jesus' body at his death also signified the idea of baptism of Christians.
- The death of Jesus on the cross showed his humanity. He physically did like any other Jew who could die.
- Jesus' death revealed the glory of God/ love of God to mankind on earth revealed through Jesus Christ who died for human sins.
- The death of Jesus Christ indicated the kingdom of God was a present reality as he accepted his son to die for the sins of mankind.
- The piercing of the body of Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament scriptures in Zachariah 12:10.
- Jesus' death being witnessed by people like John the beloved disciple and his mother Mary indicates that he also had followers.
- The legs of Jesus were not broken fulfilling the Old Testament scriptures in Exodus 12:46 and also signifying that Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God.
- At the time of Jesus' death he said it is finished this signified that he had completed his work the Father gave him.

### **REASONS FOR THE DEATH OF JESUS ACCORDING TO JOHN'S GOSPEL**

- 1. Justify Jesus' crucifixion on the cross in the gospel of John.**
- 2. Account for Jesus' crucifixion on the cross in the light of the fourth gospel.**
  - The crucifixion of Jesus Christ was a divine plan. It was God the Father who had planned it that Jesus would die at that time.
  - Jesus Christ was crucified in order to bring glory to God his Father who had sent him into the world to preach the gospel.
  - Jesus died because Satan had entered one of his disciples Judas Iscariot who decided to betray him and was then handed over to the Jewish leaders who crucified him.

- The crucifixion of Jesus was caused by his becoming more popular than the religious leaders especially after raising Lazarus to life.
- Jesus was crucified because he knew about his crucifixion but willingly accepted to surrender himself to the Jewish leaders.
- Jesus was crucified because he accepted to carry the cross himself to Golgotha.
- The crucifixion of Jesus was caused by his action of cleansing the Jerusalem temple which caused controversy with the Jews later planning to kill him.
- Jesus' crucifixion was because the high priest Caiaphas had predicted the death of Jesus so as to save the Jewish nation from being attacked by the Romans.
- Jesus was crucified because the Jewish leaders had accused him falsely of treason before Pilate. They said he claimed to be the king of the Jews yet they were under the Roman rule.
- Jesus was crucified because the mob preferred Jesus to be crucified so as to release Barabbas by Pilate.
- Jesus was crucified because he had conflicted with the Jewish leaders over the observation of the Sabbath for example he had healed a blind man on Sabbath which was against the Jewish law.
- Jesus was crucified because the Jewish leaders accused him of committing blasphemy . That is to say, he claimed to be the son of God and equal to God which to them was unacceptable.
- The death of Jesus was part of fulfilling the Old Testament scriptures of the suffering messiah as noted in Isaiah 53.
- Jesus was crucified because his arrest, trial and accusation by the Sanhedrin were all fake but just of out of jealousy.
- Jesus was crucified on charge of treason because it was the order of the Roman execution that such a case could be punished by crucifixion in order to avoid other people from committing a similar offense.

#### **HOW FAR WERE THE JEWISH RELIGIOUS LEADERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF JESUS ON THE CROSS ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN?**

To a larger extent the Jewish religious leaders were responsible for the death of Jesus in the following ways;

- When Jesus cleansed the Jerusalem temple they asked for the origin of his right to cleanse the temple hence they started making plans to kill him.
- In the same way of cleansing the Jerusalem temple Jesus claimed to rebuild the temple in 3 days which was not understood by the Jewish leaders who claimed that they had taken many years to rebuild it.
- Jewish leaders became jealous of Jesus and laid plans of his death because he had a large crowd following him like when he entered the Jerusalem city with a lot of praises to him.

- When Jesus claimed to be greater and older than Abraham their ancestor, this annoyed the Pharisees and hence organized to kill him.
- When Jesus raised Lazarus to life the Jewish leaders plotted to kill him because of his increasing popularity.
- It was the Jewish leader the high priest Caiaphas that suggested Jesus should be killed in order to save the Jewish nation from being destroyed by the Romans.
- They were the Jewish leaders that bribed Judas Iscariot to help them in betraying Jesus which Judas also did in their favour.
- The Jewish leaders falsely accused Jesus of claiming to be the king of the Jews before Pilate. So Pilate also accepted to hand over Jesus to them to be crucified.
- The Jewish leaders caused Jesus' death through accusing him of blasphemy. He claimed to be a son of God as well as being equal to God.
- It was the Jewish leaders who accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath law like when he healed the crippled at the pool also he healed the man who was born blind.
- The Jewish leaders planned the death of Jesus by accusing him forgiving the sins of the adulterous woman which was against the mosaic law.
- The Pharisees were not happy with Jesus when he called them children of the devil. Hence they planned for his crucifixion.
- The Jewish leaders were responsible for the death of Jesus as they organized the guards to arrest Jesus for having attracted many people and they were also wondering whether he was the promised messiah.
- When Jesus referred to God as his father it highly annoyed the Jewish leaders and called it blasphemy hence leading to the death of Jesus.
- The Jewish religious leaders were responsible for the death of Jesus through accusing him of treason before Pilate.
- It was these Pharisees that insisted that Jesus should be crucified despite Pilate finding him innocent.
- The Jewish leaders still influenced the death of Jesus through mobilizing the mob to demand for Jesus' crucifixion in return for the release of Barabbas.
- The Jewish religious leader Caiaphas is the one who ordered his guards to take Jesus to Pilate for trial where he was eventually sentenced to death.
- Still it was Annas one of the high priests who allowed high guards to torture Jesus before forwarding him to Caiaphas.

**However, to a smaller extent other factors led to the death of Jesus other than the Jewish religious leaders as noted below;**

- The betrayal of Judas Iscariot led to Jesus' death.

- It was a divine plan of God.
- It was meant to fulfill the Old Testament scriptures about the suffering messiah.
- Crucifixion was the Roman way of executing criminals like Jesus who was accused of treason.
- Pilate's decision ordering the Jewish authorities to take Jesus for crucifixion although he saw no case over him also resulted into the death of Jesus.
- Pilate was unfair in his judgment because he subjected Jesus' trial to the wishes of the crowd.
- Jesus himself willingly accepted to go to the cross and even refrained people like Peter from fighting back to defend him resulted into his death.
- The crowd that forced Pilate to sentence Jesus to death and release Barabbas also contributed to his death.
- Jesus' death was meant to show the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus.

### **JESUS' TEACHING ON PRAYER (17:1-24)**

#### **How did Jesus pray to God referring to his earthly ministry which was about to an end? (17:1-6)**

- Jesus prayed to God asking him to give him glory in his coming death so that he may also give back glory to God.
- Jesus appreciated the fact that God had given him the authority over all mankind.
- Jesus prayed to God so that he may give eternal life to those who believed in him.
- Jesus said that eternal life meant knowing the true God and knowing Christ as the son of God.
- In the prayer Jesus says he had shown the glory of God on earth and had finished the work he had been given to do.
- Jesus prayed to God to give him glory in his presence same glory he had with him before the world was created.
- In the prayer Jesus appreciated the fact that he had made God known to his followers who as well belonged to him as the Father.
- When praying Jesus recognized the fact that his followers had obeyed the word of God which he taught to them.
- In his prayer, Jesus had no expression of sorrow because he was returning to the Father and had accomplished his work.

#### **HOW DID JESUS PRAY TO GOD FOR HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DISCIPLES HE HAD CALLED TO SERVE? (17:7-9)**

- Concerning Jesus' relationship with the disciples, Jesus informed God that he had passed the message he had given to him to teach to his disciples/ followers.
- Jesus also reminded God that his disciples knew the fact that he came from him as the Father.



- Jesus prayed for his disciples because they also belonged to him as the father and his glory is shown through his disciples.
- Jesus prayed to God asking him to keep the disciples safe by God's power now that Christ was to go back to the father.
- Jesus prayed to God also to keep the disciples united just like he and God the father were united.
- In this prayer Jesus reminded God that he had done everything possible to protect his disciples and keep them safe except one who was bound to get lost so as to fulfill the Old Testament scriptures.
- Jesus said to God that he passed on the gospel to his disciple but the world hated them because they did not belong to it.
- Jesus also prayed to God asking him to keep his disciples holy and safe.
- In the prayer Jesus said that he sent the disciples to the world just as God had sent them to the world to preach the world.
- Jesus prayed to god to accept his disciples as he was offering them back to him as he was dedicating himself to God.

#### **HOW DID JESUS PRAY FOR THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE ACCORDING TO 17:20-26**

- Jesus prayed for those who believed in the message of the disciples so that they be blessed by god.
- He also prayed to god for the unity to exist in the church of the future.
- Jesus prayed for unity of the church in order for the world to believe that God had sent him.
- He prayed for glory in the future church as God has also given him glory so that they might be one.
- Jesus prayed to God to love his followers of the future church as God had loved him too.
- Jesus appreciated the fact that God had given him all those followers, so he prayed to him to allow them be where he was in order to see his glory.
- Jesus prayed that his followers keep knowing him so that the love of God be with them too.
- Jesus also prayed for the future church to get the power of the holy spirit to fight evil forces that would come their way.

#### **THE EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

- 1. What justification is there in john's gospel to show that Jesus really resurrected from death?**
- 2. Discuss the concrete proof for the resurrection of Jesus from death in the fourth gospel.**
- 3. "the resurrection of Jesus is a historical reality". Justify the statement in light of the fourth gospel.**

The gospel of john justify the resurrection of Jesus in the following ways;

- John's gospel records the presence of the empty tomb as a proof that Jesus actually resurrected.

- Mary Magdalene went to the tomb where Jesus was buried and saw that the stone had been taken away from the entrance. This implies that Jesus had already resurrected.
- Similarly the beloved disciple of Jesus went to the tomb of Jesus' burial and saw only linen wrappings that Jesus had left behind but never saw the body which implies Christ had already resurrected.
- Simon Peter also went straight to the empty tomb and touched the linen wrappings where the body of Jesus had been buried, this also implies that Christ had risen.
- The two angels who were sitting at the entrance of the tomb where the body of Jesus **had been buried resurrected**.
- There is proof that Jesus appeared after resurrection to Mary Magdalene and even called her by name while at the empty tomb.
- Jesus resurrected according to John's gospel because he instructed Mary Magdalene to go and inform his disciples his resurrection.
- It is true Jesus resurrected according to John's gospel because he appeared to the disciples in a room and wished them peace to be upon them.
- Indeed Jesus resurrected because he showed the scars of his hands and body to the disciples and were filled with joy.
- The risen Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon his disciples and advised them to forgive people's sins.
- Jesus resurrected because he was able to show himself to Thomas the disciple who had at first doubted the news of Jesus' resurrection and later he confessed he was the Lord.
- Jesus resurrected according to John's gospel as he appeared to seven disciples who had gone fishing on Lake Tiberius and even called them to have a meal of fish and bread with him.
- It is true Jesus resurrected because he later had a conversation with Peter whom he asked over three times whether Peter loved him and Peter confirmed he did love him.
- According to the gospel of John it is evident that Jesus resurrected because he appeared to Peter and appointed him as the official shepherd of the sheep. That is to say, the head of the disciples.

### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESURRECTION AND APPEARANCE OF JESUS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

Examine the importance/ meaning/ significance/ relevance of the resurrection and appearance of Jesus according to the gospel of John.

- The resurrection of Jesus signified that there is life after death since he had resurrected.
- It signified that Jesus was a true son of God as he claimed that would die and later resurrect in three days.
- The resurrection of Jesus signified that Jesus was the promised messiah who suffered, died and later re-appeared on earth as it was expected.
- The resurrection of Jesus meant he was a divine being.

- It revealed the lack of faith of Thomas because he had doubted Jesus' resurrection before seeing him physically.
- Jesus' resurrection and re-appearance to some people like Mary Magdalene and the disciples increased their faith in him.
- The resurrection and appearance of Jesus enabled the disciples to receive the power of the holy spirit which he had promised to them.
- Jesus' resurrection taught the disciples a lesson that their master Jesus had powers over death.
- It gave courage to the disciples to preach the word without fear.
- Jesus' resurrection and appearance to various people gave them joy in life.
- It signified that Jesus was a good shepherd who calls his sheep by name as he called Mary Magdalene.
- It also showed the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus Christ who died and later resurrected to prove God's power.
- Jesus' resurrection helped him to commission the disciples to go out and forgive people's sins on his behalf.
- It also signified the importance of faith as Jesus emphasized to the disciples that happy are those who believe without seeing.
- The resurrection of Jesus enabled him to fully appoint Peter as the head of the apostles.

#### **REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY VERSES FUTURISTIC ESCHATOLOGY IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN**

- 1. How far is the gospel of John concerned with realized eschatology other than futuristic eschatology?**
- 2. To what extent does the gospel of John show that the kingdom of God had already come among the contemporaries of Jesus?**

To a larger extent, the gospel of John is concerned with realized eschatology other than futuristic eschatology . That is to say, the kingdom of God had come in the following ways;

- John the Baptist confessed to his disciples that Jesus was the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.
- Jesus told Nicodemus that whoever does not believe in the son of God is already judged there and then.
- John's gospel uses the term eternal life instead of kingdom of God to show that it had already come on earth. John's gospel says whoever believes in Jesus Christ as the son of God already gets eternal life which is here and now.
- When Jesus prayed for his disciples he said that the hour had come to give glory to him and glory to God.
- Jesus told Mary and Martha that he was the resurrection and life so he raised Lazarus to life.

- Mary anointed Jesus at Bethany with an expensive perfume to show that God's anointed has already come.
- Jesus Christ cleanses the Jerusalem temple as a public manifestation that it had come on earth.
- The triumphant entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem was a public manifestation that it had come on earth.
- Jesus said that the time has already come when the dead will hear the voice of the son of God and have life.
- Jesus send the holy spirit to his disciples after his resurrection.
- The Baptist witnessed the Holy Spirit come upon Jesus from heaven in form of a dove and he confessed that he was the son of God.
- The Samaritan woman went out and called upon other Samaritans to come and see Jesus who had told her everything she had ever done.

**However, to a smaller extent, John's gospel was also concerned with futuristic eschatology . That is to say, the kingdom of God had not yet come in the following ways;**

- Jesus told Nicodemus that one must be born again of water and the spirit before he can enter the kingdom of God.
- Jesus promised the disciples that he will come back and take them where they will be with him.
- Jesus promised the disciples to send them the Holy Spirit as helper who will stay with them forever.
- Jesus' crucifixion and death showed that the kingdom of God was yet to come.
- Jesus told Peter that if he wanted the beloved disciple to live until he was to come back, what would that mean to him.
- Jesus prayed for his disciples that God keeps them safe by the power of his name because he was coming back to him.
- The feeding of the 5000 people was pointing to the heavenly banquet that his followers would enjoy.
- The anointing of Jesus at Bethany was a preparation for his death and burial.

#### **THE MEANING OF THE VARIOUS SYMBOLS USED IN JOHN'S GOSPEL**

- 1. Discuss the meaning of the various symbols in the gospel of John.**
- 2. Comment on the significance of the symbols used in the gospel of John.**
- 3. Justify the view that the gospel of John is a gospel of symbolism**

A striking feature of the gospel of John is the symbolic uses of common things from everyday life. John's gospel uses ordinary symbols to bring out spiritual truth about God or spiritual realities to his audience like water, bread, the grape vine and its fruits, light, darkness among others.

- Symbols in John's gospel are used to convey spiritual truth about God to the readers.
- The term water symbolizes the idea of purification.
- The term water also symbolizes the idea of baptism.
- Term word symbolizes the wisdom of God, so Jesus is the true wisdom of God.
- Bread and wine symbolize the idea of Eucharist/Lord's supper.
- The cross symbolizes the idea of victory in the ministry of Jesus.
- Water in the pool of Bethzatha symbolized the idea of healing.
- Jesus being the Lamb of God symbolized that he was humble and a gentle son of God.
- They symbolized the messiahship of Jesus.
- They also symbolized the divinity of Jesus.
- The six jars that were filled with water during the wedding at Cana symbolized the satisfaction and abundance found in Jesus.
- The blood and water that came out of Jesus while at the cross when the soldiers pierced him symbolized the humanity of Jesus.
- The term world symbolizes the physically created world in which mankind lives and also mankind being enslaved by sin.
- Life giving water that Jesus promised to give the Samaritan woman symbolized the idea of eternal life.
- The feeding of the 5000 people was a symbol pointing to the heavenly banquet that Jesus' followers would enjoy.

#### **JOHN'S TEACHING ON JUDGMENT ON MANKIND**

- 1. Examine the teaching on judgment of mankind in light of John's gospel.**
- 2. What did Jesus teach on judgment of man in the gospel of John?**
- 3. Explain what John's gospel teaches about God's judgment.**

- According to John's gospel, the judgment of mankind takes place in the present age than in the future . That is to say, it is here and now.
- Judgment of an individual is determined by his own attitude towards Jesus.
- Whoever believes in Jesus is not judged.
- But whoever does not believe in Jesus has already been judged.
- It explains how judgment works; the light has come into the world but people love the darkness because their deeds are evil.
- Whoever believes in Jesus has eternal life.
- Whoever disobeys Jesus will not have life but will remain under God's punishment.

- Whoever hears Jesus words and believes in God who sent him has eternal life.
- He will not be judged but has already passed from death to life.
- Whoever rejects Jesus and fails to accept his message has one who will judge him.
- The words that Jesus speaks will be his judge on the last day.
- For God did not send his son into the world to be its judge but to be its savior.
- But whoever does what is true comes to the light in order that the light may show that what he did was in obedience to God.
- God himself does not judge anyone but gave the right to judge to his son.
- The time will come when the dead will come out of their graves and those who will have done good will be raised and live and those who will have done badly will rise and be condemned.
- For what God wants is that all those who believe in Jesus should have eternal life and will raise them to life on the last day.
- Whoever believes in Jesus will live even though he physically dies and whoever lives and believes in him will never die.
- He says the Holy Spirit would prove to people of the world that they are wrong about sin about what is right and about God's judgment.
- Jesus also advised the Jewish leaders to stop judging by external standards instead to judge by true standards.
- Jesus also said that he came to this world to judge so that he blind should see and should become blind.

## **THE TEACHING OF JOHN'S GOSPEL ON THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS**

- 1. How does the gospel of John present the authority of Jesus as a son of God?**
- 2. Examine the teaching of John's gospel on the authority of Jesus.**

- Jesus clearly asserts his divine son ship and his complete union with his father.
- His union with God the father is shown in complete obedience to him.
- Jesus says that he can do nothing on his own, he does only what he sees his father doing.
- The father loves him and shows him all that he himself does, so that the son shares the father's work.
- To Jesus, god entrusted him with the power to raise the dead and give them life.
- God entrusted Jesus with the owner to judge the world.
- Honour shown to Jesus is honour shown to God his father.
- Jesus was entrusted with the power to give eternal life to those living in the world.
- Just as God is the source of life, in the same way he has made his son to be the source of life.
- The deeds of Jesus were showing that he had authority in the world from God.

- The I am saying are a reflection of Jesus' authority given to him by God.
- He says he did not come on his own authority but God who sent him.
- Jesus assured the Jewish leaders that he came from above unlike them who came from the world.
- He promises to send the Holy Spirit to his disciples because he had the authority.
- Cleanses the Jerusalem temple with divine authority.
- He claims that he came from above and so was greater than all.

## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN AND THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES**

- 1. Discuss how the work and the ministry of Jesus in the gospel of John is a fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures.**
- 2. Discuss how the gospel of John fulfills the Old Testament scriptures.**
- 3. Comment on the relationship between the gospel of John and the Old Testament scriptures.**

- In the beginning was the word and the word was with God as presented in John's gospel, this fulfills the creation stories in the book of Genesis.
- John the Baptist is presented a fore runner in the prologue of John's gospel, which stands for Prophet Elijah of the Old Testament times.
- When John the Baptist claimed that he was the voice of some one shouting in the desert, this fulfills the old testament scriptures in Isaiah 40:3
- The cleansing of the Jerusalem temple by Jesus fulfills the Old Testament scriptures in psalms 69:9 and Jeremiah's temple sermon in Jeremiah 7.
- The 12 baskets of food that remained after feeding the 5000 people reflected the 12 tribes of Israel.
- The 5 loaves of bread that were used to feed the 5000 people reflected the Torah. That is to say, the 5 law books of Old Testament.
- The crucifixion of Jesus on the cross coincided with Passover lamb.
- The triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem fulfills the prophesy in the book of Zachariah 9:9.
- The cross of Jesus bore the notice INRI . That is to say, Jesus of Nazareth the king of Jews, the expectation of Jews though in irony.
- The division of the garment of Jesus by the soldiers fulfills the Old Testament scriptures in psalms 22.
- The burial of Jesus reflected the message in Isaiah about the suffering servant of God.
- Jesus refers to himself as the true vine, this reflects the true vine pictured in Isaiah 5:1-7 and Jeremiah 2: 21.
- The I am sayings in John's gospel are equivalent to the I am sayings in Exodus like when God told Moses that "I am who I am".

- The anointing of Jesus at Bethany by Mary showed that Jesus was the anointed king of the Jews as expected in the Old Testament scriptures.
- Jesus performed seven signs which were expected of a messiah like healing a cripple, healing a man born blind fulfilling Isaiah 35:5-6.

## **TO WHAT EXTENT DO CHURCH LEADERS FULFILL THE MINISTRY OF JESUS TODAY**

### **How far have the modern clergy fulfilled the ministry of Jesus?**

To a larger extent religious leaders do fulfill the ministry of Jesus today in the following ways;

- They preach the gospel about Jesus.
- Catholic priest are living celibate lives in order to concentrate on serving God alone.
- They carry out works of charity.
- They carry out missionary journeys.
- They choose their successors to take over them.
- They perform miracles in Jesus' name.
- They guide and counsel Christians.
- Extend forgiveness of people's sin on behalf of God.
- They interpret the Old Testament scriptures and the New Testament scriptures.
- Some have endured persecution and suffering for the sake of Jesus.
- They anoint the sick Christians, visit those in hospitals and visit those in prison.
- They lay hands on Christians to receive blessings and the Holy Spirit.
- Settle disputes among Christian.
- Baptize new converts in Jesus' name.
- Carry out the Lord's Supper.
- Conduct prayers

**However to a smaller extent, some church leaders have failed to fulfill the ministry of Jesus in the following ways;**

- Some are promoting immoral behaviours among Christians like homosexuals.
- Some are materialistic in nature
- Some are false preachers
- Some are hypocrites
- Some misinterpret the gospel for selfish interest.
- Some do fuel divisions in the church.
- Some are involved in politics.
- Some are too proud of themselves.



- Some have commercialized church services.
- Some are living sexually immoral lives

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EPILOGUE OF JOHN'S GOSPEL 21:1-25**

- Epilogue of John's gospel refers to the concluding chapter of John's gospel and this covers chapter 21:1-25

#### **Comment on the significance of the epilogue of John's gospel.**

- Signified that Jesus had indeed resurrected from death . That is to say, his appearance to the seven disciples.
- Signified the divinity of Jesus . That is to say, he told his disciples to throw the net into the lake and they were able to catch some fish.
- Signified the humanity of Jesus. That is to say, called upon the disciples to come and eat the fish and bread that he had prepared for them.
- Signified the commissioning of Simon peter to be the head of the church on earth by the risen Jesus Christ.
- It foreshadowed the miracle of feeding the 5000 people by Jesus. That is to say, he fed the disciples in fish and bread just as he had fed the 5000 people on fish and bread.
- The disciples also received the spiritual sight through the sign of catching fish and later when they shared the bread and fish that Jesus had prepared for them.
- This could have symbolized the Lord's Supper.
- Signified the continual lack of understanding of Jesus by his disciples. That is to say, at first they did not understand him when he appeared to them at the lakeside and ordered them to throw the net into the lake.
- It signified the love of Jesus for his disciples. That is to say, he appeared to them.
- It signified the genuine love that Peter had for Jesus. That is to say, he assured Jesus three times that he really loved him.
- The three times that Peter affirmed that he loved Jesus corresponds to the three times that Peter had denied Jesus.
- It pointed to the martyrdom of Peter which would bring glory to God.
- It removed the faith of the seven disciples in Jesus.
- It removed the misunderstanding about the disciple whom Jesus loved . That is to say, Jesus clarified to Peter about the position of the beloved disciples.
- Its beloved disciple of Jesus confirms himself as a witness of Jesus.

## **PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS**

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is specifically the people known as Corinthians living in the city of Corinth.

### **THE CHARACTERISTICS/FEATURES OF THE CITY OF CORINTH**

At the time when Paul first visited them

- The city of Corinth was the largest sea port Greek and most important city in the whole of the Roman Empire because of its commercial business.
- It was a city characterized by a high degree of sexual immorality like prostitution and incest.
- Drunkardness was the order of the day. That is to say, the Corinthians were habitual drunkards and this explains why there was a high rate of crime in Corinth.
- The city was a camp of many people from different parts of the world who had been affected by the city because of its commercial prosperity such people included the Jews, Greek, Egyptians and Syrians.
- Socially people were divided into classes . That is to say, the majority of the people were poor especially the slaves whereas the minority were very rich in luxury and extravagance.
- The dominant religion of the people was fertility cult. The Corinthians worship Baal and his wife Astarte
- They believed that success in life depended on sexual intercourse between Baal and Astarte and if they did not have sex, it was the duty of Corinthians to remind them.
- There was temple prostitution especially in the Greek temple where the Greek
- The Corinthian was an industrial and ship building centre.
- Greek was the common language of communication used since the territory was under the Roman rule.
- Paganism was common because each race had its own Baal god or goddess to worship like the Corinthians worshipped Baal, the Greeks worshiped the goddess Apodite whereas Egyptians worshiped Isis.
- Religious syncretism existed in Corinth . That is to say, there was a mixture of Christian and pagan believe especially the Christians who had been converted from paganism continue being influenced by pagan feast and ideology.
- Christianity was practiced by some God fearing people in the city especially the Jews and some Gentiles who had been converted to Christianity.
- Corinth was a famous sports centre where people were talented in both in door and out door.
- The city was full of Greek philosopher who used to confuse the people about the meaning of life after death and ideas of crucifixion.

### **HOW PAUL ESTABLISHED THE CHURCH AT CORINTH**

- The church was started by Paul during his second long missionary journey in the area around 50-52AD.

- While in Corinth Paul met a Jewish couple who were already Christians and they were Aquilla and Priscilla and they had been ordered to leave Rome by emperor Claudius.
- Paul stayed with this Jew family were together with them and made tend for sale.
- He then began enuagardising Corinthians working long with in Jewish community and a few Greeks with who they used to meet in the local synagogue on the Sabbath.
- Paul also lived in the house of Titus Justus who believed in God. He later baptized Crispus who was the leader of the synagogue in Corinth.
- Paul was also joined by Silas and Timothy in the spreading of the gospel so then the church started expanding . That is to say, getting more followers.
- In the mean time, Paul met a Greek Christian woman Chloe who had great influence in Corinth and worked with her in expanding the church.
- Afterwards, Paul left Aquilla and Priscilla and moved to Ephesus in Philistine where met Apollos a Jew but born in Alexandria and he baptized him.
- Apollos was an eloquent speaker and had a good knowledge Old Testament scriptures especially these of the John the Baptist.
- Paul then decided to send Apollos to Corinth to continue strengthening the church that he had established during his second mission journey to the area.
- While Paul was in Ephesus the Corinthians wrote and sent him a letter seeking for guidance to the problem that had cropped up to the church like sexual immorality and misuse of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- On the above accent responded to them by writing the letter entitled "Paul's first letter to the Corinthians".
- However it is believed by scholars that this was not actual first letter that Paul had written but the first letter could have been lost during the process of selection and compilation of the New Testament.
- Paul's first letters to the Corinthians as known in the bible is said to have been dated/written from Ephesus around 55-57AD.
- All in all Paul played a big role in the establishment of Christians church in the Corinthians city.

#### **AIMS OF WRITING PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIAN**

##### **1. Division in the church of Corinth.**

Paul wrote to encourage the Corinthians to have unity in the church since the different human leaders they followed were all servants of God. This was because they had been divided basing on four personalities namely; some claimed to follow Paul, some claimed to follow Apollo, some claimed to follow Peter while others claimed to follow Jesus Christ.

##### **2. The problem of incest.**

Paul wrote to encourage them to expel the young man from the church fellowship who was having intercourse with his widowed step mother and also to condemn the incest as a sin before God.

This was because they had tolerated the young man in the church fellowship, besides they had become proud that such a sin was taking place with their knowledge.

3. Law suits against fellow Christians.

Paul wrote to advise them to choose one wise member from the church to settle disputes instead of taking Christian to pagan courts of law to solve them.

4. General sexual immorality . That is to say, prostitution.

Paul wrote to encourage them to use their bodies to glorify God instead of ashaming him by uniting their bodies with prostitution. This was because they had continued to have sexual affairs with prostitutes claiming they were free to do anything they wanted with their bodies.

5. The problem of marriage.

Paul wrote to encourage those who wanted to marry and those who wanted to live a celibate life to stay celibate since both were gifts from God.

This was because they had asked him whether they should marry or should celibate and whether divorce was accepted in marriages.

6. The problem of food offered to idols.

Paul wrote to encourage them to do things that glorify God and also to do things that do not make the weaker Christian in faith to be tempted into sin. This was because they wanted to know whether they were to buy and eat the meat that had been offered to idols and whether they were to attend pagan parties and eat what is served when invited by pagan brother.

7. Right and duties of an apostle.

He wanted to use his own experience of how he had surrounded his apostolic rights so as to commit himself to the spread of the gospel as an example to those who claimed to be strong in faith without minding about the feelings of those who were weak in faith.

8. Paul wanted to warn the Christians about idol worship.

He does this by reminding them of how God had punished the Israelites because of worshipping idols yet he had always provided them with everything so God would punish them as well.

9. The problem of head covering by women during church worship.

Paul wanted to encourage women to continue veiling their heads during church worship this reflected the glory of their husbands.

This was because woman had misunderstood Paul's teaching on Christian freedom to mean that they were now free to go for church worship without veiling their heads hence ashaming their husbands.

10. The problem of the Lord's Supper.

He wanted to encourage them to examine themselves before taking part in the Lord's Supper had been seen as feast for over eating and even drinking.

11. The problem of spiritual gifts.

Paul wrote to teach them that all spiritual gifts came from God and that Agape love was the most important spiritual gift of all.

This was because they had considered the gift of peaking in tongues as the important spiritual gift besides they had not known that these spiritual gift were given by God.

12. The problem of the resurrection of Jesus.

Paul wanted to assure them that Jesus Christ had resurrected from and so even the Christian would resurrect like him

This was because hey had doubted the resurrection of Jesus Christ as well as the resurrection of believers because of the Greeks teaching of resurrection.

13. Offering for fellow believers in the church of Jerusalem.

Paul wanted to encourage them to continue contributing some money to the need Christians in the church Jerusalem.

## **SOCIAL EVILS/SOCIAL ILLS/IMMORALITY IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

### **(a) Discuss the social evils that were manifested in the Corinthian church.**

### **(b) Comment on the immorality that existed in the church of Corinth.**

- Incest. A young man was having sexual intercourse with his step mother which was a sin before God.
- Prostitution. Some Christians were having sexual affairs with prostitutes claiming that they were free to do anything they wanted with their bodies.
- Divorce under marriage. Some married people were divorcing their partners yet marriage was supposed to be permanent.

- Division in church. Christians were divided basing on personality ground . That is to say, followed Peter, some followed Paul some followed Apollos while others followed Jesus instead of being united.
- Misuse of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper had been abused by discriminating against the poor, grabbing of food, over drinking and lack of self examination.
- Drunkardness was its order of the day among some Christians.
- Misuse of spiritual gift. Those who had a gift of speaking in long tongues boasted over with the spiritual gift. there was also disorder and noise during moments of public worship.
- Worship of idols and participation in pagan teats where some Christians ended up being tempted into sin.
- Law suits against fellow Christians. Christians failed to settle their own disputes, so opted to settle them before pagan magistrates.
- Women failed to cover their heads during church worship being seen as dissonance to their husband hence breaking the Jewish culture.
- Judgment of human leaders by the Christians yet it was only God to judge mankind since he was the final judge.
- Trusting in human wisdom instead of trusting in the wisdom of God . That is to say, the Corinthians had depended so much on human reasoning which made them to doubt the truth of the gospel.
- Backsliding in the Christian faith especially by those who were weak in faith and an aspect of food offered to the idols.

#### **HOW DID PAUL RESPOND TO THE ABOVE SOCIAL EVIL?**

##### **Comment on Paul's response on the immorality in the Corinthian church.**

1. Division in the church
  - He advised the Corinthians to be united completely.
  - He advised them to follow Jesus Christ in whose name they were baptized.
  - He asked them whether he was the one who died for their sins.
  - Says the message of the crucified Jesus is the power and wisdom God.
  - He specified the role of each apostle in establishing of the Corinthian church.
  - He rebuked them as spiritual babies..
  - He rebuked them as men of the flesh because they were living according to the standards of the world.
  - Says he and Apollos were simply partners as well as servant of God.
  - Advised them to boast of what Jesus had done for them instead of boasting about human leaders.
  - Advised them to leave judgment of human leaders to God.
  - Says the body of a Christian is the temple of God where the Holy Spirit lives so were to keep it holy.

2. Incest
  - He advised them to expel the young an from church worship.
  - He passed judgment on the young man in the name of Jesus Christ.
  - He advised them to hand this man over to Satan for his body to be destroyed but saved on the Day of Judgment.
3. Prostitution
  - He advised them to use their bodies to glorify God.
  - Discouraging them from using body for sexual immorality because it is a sin before God.
  - He reminded them that their body is the temple of Holy Spirit.
4. Legal disputes
  - Discouraging them from taking fellow Christian to pagan courts of law.
  - Advised them to choose one wise member from the church to judge their cases.
  - Reminded them that they would even judge the angels in heaven but wonder how they had failed to such small matters.
5. Misuse of the Lord's supper
  - Advised them to first examine themselves before taking part in the Lord 's Supper.
  - Advised those who were hungry to first eat at home before taking part in the Lord's Supper.
  - Advised them to always wait for one another at the Lord 's Supper.
6. Misuse of spiritual gifts
  - Advised them to use the spiritual gifts for the benefits of the whole church.
  - Says love was the most important gifts of all spiritual gifts.
  - Advised those speaking tongue to pray for the gift of interpreting what is spoken in tongue.
7. Divorce under marriage
  - Advised them to have permanent marriage instead of seeking divorce.
  - Advised those who lacked self control to marry instead of burning with sexual passion.
8. Failure of women to cover their heads during church worship
  - Advised women to continue veiling their heads during worship as a sign of respecting and submission to their husband.
  - Advised women to always keep quite during public worship and if they wanted to find something from the church, they were to wait and ask their husbands from home.
9. Food offered to the idols
  - Advised them to buy and eat meat and food sold in the market without asking any question.
  - Advised them to always worship one God.

- Advised the strong in faith to consider the feeling of those who are weak in faith because tempting them to eat food offered to idols would be equivalent to sinning against Jesus and their brothers.
10. Trusting in human wisdom
- He advised them to trust in God's wisdom which is the death of Jesus Christ on the cross and his resurrection.
  - Says the facilities of God is more than human wisdom and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.
11. Judgment of human leaders
- He advised them to hand judgment of human leaders to God because he is the final judge of mankind.
12. Paul also advised them to always associate with moral people instead of associating with immoral people.

### **THE DIVISION/PARTY FACTIONS IN THE CHURCH OF CORINTH**

- 1. Comment on the nature of divisions that existed in church of Corinth.**
- 2. Give an account of the divisions in the Corinthian church**

The division in the Corinthian church was based on personality ground . That is to say, each group preferred to follow a particular human leader at the expenses of the other leaders.

There were four divisions or party factions or splinter group based on personality grounds namely;

#### **1. "I follow Paul's party"**

- These followed Paul because he was the founder of the church at Corinth.
- Because Paul had baptized some, some of them like Cripus, Gaius, Stephanus and his family.
- Because Paul was an apostle specifically for the Gentile Christians.
- Because Paul preached a gospel in a simple manner and language which was easy for ordinary people to understand and this teaching was based on his experience.
- He used his past experience to win people to Jesus Christ.

#### **2. "I follow Apollos party"**

Apollos had succeeded Paul had now left for Ephesus so when he came to Corinth, some people followed him because;

- He was more eloquent and interesting in his preaching of the gospel than Paul.
- He used a philosophical approach to interpret the gospel hence easily won the support of the Greeks.



- He had received quality education from the great university of Alexandria so he won the support of the Greeks who cherished intellectualism.
- He was a young intelligent man with good knowledge and interpretation of the Old Testament scriptures especially those of John the Baptist.
- He was a Jew who was seen as a lover of the Jewish culture and the Jewish life style so he won the support of the Jews.

### 3. “I follow Simon Peter’s party”

These followed Peter because of the following reasons;

- He was of the original apostles of Jesus Christ.
- He was the head of the apostolic band . That is to say, the shepherd of the sheep.
- He was a Jew brought under the Jewish culture and always supported it under that is why he won the support of the conservative Jews.

### 4. “I follow Jesus Christ party”

This group decided to follow Jesus Christ instead of human leaders because;

- Jesus Christ was the son of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ was the Messiah who had died for their sins.
- He was the founder of Christianity.

## NB

The above division in the church of Corinth was only based on personality grounds, however the Corinthian were still united as far as the gospel message was concerned.

It is important to note that there existed other divisions in the church of Corinth not necessary based on personality ground but based on the following:

5. Division on the issue of food offered to idols. The strong Christians in faith continued to eat food offered to idols because they believed that idols did not exist at all whereas the weak Christians in faith believed that **country this** meat could defile one’s relationship with God.
6. Division on the issue of Lord’s Supper. The Lord’s Supper had divided the Christians into two groups . That is to say, the rich Christians who despised the poor Christians.
7. Division on the issue of spiritual gifts. The Christians who had the gift of speaking in tongues saw it as the most important spiritual gift so boasted over those who had other spiritual gifts or did not have any spiritual gift.

8. Division on the issue of head covering by women. Women who had stated going for public worship without veiling their heads, but men could not tolerate women who were praying without covering their heads in church worship because this was shaming them in public.

## **PAUL'S TEACHING ON DIVISIONS/PARTY FACTIONS IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

### **1. What does Paul teach about divisions in the Corinthian church?**

### **2. Discus Paul's response to the problem of party factions in the Corinthian church.**

- The divisions in the Corinth church were based on personality grounds other than doctrinal differences.
- Paul advised them to be completely with one purpose and one thought.
- He was particularly angry with one group that claimed to follow him because they boasted that he had baptized them and that he was the one who laid the foundation of the church at Corinth.
- He asked them whether he was the one who had died for their sins on the cross.
- He reminded them that he did not baptize many of them apart from Crispus, Gaius, Stephanus and his family.
- Paul says even those he baptized were not baptize were not in Jesus' name.
- Paul says Jesus did not send him to baptize but to preach the gospel without using the language of human wisdom.
- He says the message of the crucified Christ is the power and wisdom of God.
- Paul says what seems to be God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom and what seems to be.
- God's weakness is stronger than human strength.
- God has brought us into union with Jesus Christ and he made Jesus Christ to be our wisdom and by him Christians put right with God.
- Paul says he didn't preach his own gospel but preached the gospel of the crucified Jesus who died for the sins of the world.
- He rebuked them as spiritual babies and that is why he had used a simple language suitable for them to understand the message about Jesus Christ.
- He rebuked them as men of the flesh because they were living according to the standard of the world.
- Paul says he and Apollos were simply God's servants and each of them was doing the work that God had given them.
- He specified the role of each apostle/servant in establishing the Corinthian church as follows;
  - Paul planted the seeds (gospel) among the Corinthians and
  - Apollos watered the plant, but it was God who made the plant to grow.
- So what mattered most was to follow Jesus Christ/God who made the plant to grow after than following the apostles.

- Paul says there is no difference between the man who sows the seeds and the one who waters, God would reward each servant according to the work done.
- Paul says he and Apollos were working together for God, the Christians were the field of God.
- He was the following metaphor to explain his work in establishing the kingdom of God; he refers to himself as an expert builder who laid the foundation of the church at Corinth and Apollos was building on the same foundation which foundation was Jesus Christ.
- God has placed Jesus Christ as the only foundation and so no other foundation can be laid down. However each apostle was to be careful in the way he was building on the foundation.
- The quality of each apostle's work on the foundation will be seen on the day when Jesus Christ returns and fire will be used to test each apostle's work.
- He advised them to boast of what Jesus Christ had done for them instead of boasting about human leaders.
- He says even if they had ten thousand guardians in their Christian life, they had only one father and he had become their father because of bringing the gospel to them.
- He promised to send them Timothy to remind them of the Christian principles they ought to follow.
- He promised to visit them again in order to find out the source of pride of those who were causing trouble in the church.
- He says the body of a Christian is the temple of God where the Holy Spirit lives and so they were to keep it holy.
- Condemns them for judging God's servants, instead judgment was to be left to God as the final judge of mankind.
- He says that he and Apollos as servants of God were required to be faithful to him as their master.
- He says God's servants were facing persecution for the sake of the gospel and if they were competitors, then they would not compete with one another in order to be persecuted.

#### **CAUSES OF DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH OF CORINTH**

- 1. Account for Paul's teaching on divisions in the Corinthian church.**
- 2. Justify Paul's teaching on party factions in the church of Corinth.**
- 3. Why were there divisions in the Corinthian church?**
  - The Corinthian were divided basing on personality grounds.
  - The Corinthians thought that the human leaders were competitors yet they were working as partners.
  - They failed to realize that all human leaders were working towards the expansion of the kingdom of God.
  - Because of the high level of spiritual immaturity among them. That is to say, they were spiritual babies and that is why they could not understand that Jesus Christ was the foundation of the church.

- Because they were still men of the flesh . That is to say, they were living according to the standards of the world.
- Because they were still ignorant of who had died for their sins, probably they thought that it was Paul or Apollos or Peter.
- Because they did not know in whose name they were baptized, probably they thought that they were baptized in Paul's name or Apollos or Peter.
- They failed to understand that the church leaders were building on the same foundation which was Jesus Christ.
- It could have been as a result of the failure of the Holy Spirit to guide them in matters of Christian faith.
- Because they lacked faith and that is why they decided to follow God's servant.
- The multi-racial nature of the church and the discrimination based on tribal grounds . That is to say, the Jews and the Greeks preferred to follow Apollos because of his eloquence and intellectualism, while the Gentiles preferred to follow Paul because he was specifically an apostle to the Gentiles, while the Jews preferred to follow Peter because he was a lover of the Jewish culture.
- Because they lacked the love for one another.
- Because they had failed to understand who had sent the church leaders.

#### **DANGERS/EFFECTS OF DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH OF CORINTH**

##### **1. Examine the dangers of divisions in the Corinth church.**

##### **2. How did the divisions threaten the unity of the church in Corinth?**

The divisions in Corinth were based on personality grounds . That is to say, some were following Apollos, some followed Paul while others followed Peter's teaching such were going to cause the following;

- The spirit of fellowship with God was being threatened . That is to say, the divided believers would find it hard to meet together to fellowship and pray to God as a family.
- Divisions affected their spiritual growth because it was leading to quarrels hence backsliding among them.
- Divisions worsened the level of spiritual immaturity among them . That is to say, they continued to live as spiritual babies.
- Divisions could hinder the expansion of the church since this could discourage the non believers from joining the church.
- Divisions along personality beliefs made Christians to turn out to be sinners because God prefers unity other than divisions.
- Division encouraged them to pass judgment to human leaders yet judgment was to be left to God.

- Divisions made the people to fail to realize in whose name they were baptized instead of understanding they were all baptized in Jesus' name, they thought they were baptized by the different persons they followed.
- The unity emphasized in the church was being threatened hence becoming disunited.
- Because of the divisions, the Christians substituted the place of Jesus Christ in their hearts with human leaders that is to say instead of defending the course of Christianity and the gospel, Christians only defended human leaders who they claimed to follow.
- Divisions among Christians were equivalent to dividing Jesus Christ which was very dangerous.
- Divisions were dangerous because they **caused chaos** Jesus Christ was not divided.
- Division caused chaos, quarrels and open accusations among the Christians.
- Division caused personality cults among the Christians which in turn caused pride.
- Divisions made Christians to destroy God's holy temple because of the quarrels, jealousy and pride among them.
- The division made them to forget the foundation of the church as Jesus.
- The division affected the spirit of love for one another.
- Divisions brought a mixture of Christianity with pagan beliefs like the belief in intellectualism . That is to say, they trusted more in human wisdom than the true wisdom of God.
- Divisions made the Christians to look at the apostles as competitors instead of partners. This competition extended to the followers.
- Divisions could make some Christians to backslide to paganism . That is to say, many found it easy to follow the words of the fortune tellers and do what they requested them to do than praying to God in times of crisis.
- Divisions made them to be proud of themselves . That is to say, it caused pride. The preachers took themselves as earthly gods.

#### **PAUL'S TEACHING ON THE CONTRAST BETWEEN DIVINE WISDOM AND HUMAN WISDOM**

**Explain Paul's response/teaching about divine wisdom and human wisdom in the first letter to the Corinthians.**

- St. Paul taught that human wisdom is nothing compared to God's wisdom in other words he wanted to teach the people to always seek for God's wisdom other than wisdom from fellow human beings.
- He also advised the Corinthians that they could not reach or understand God by their human wisdom or reasoning but they could get to know him.
- He also stressed that people were taking the gospel to be a new kind of wisdom and that's why they had compared who is wisest among the religious leaders like Paul, Apollos and Simon Peter.

- Paul taught the Corinthians that they were not saved by human wisdom or understanding but they were saved by the wisdom which is Jesus Christ.
- He taught them that with human wisdom the Jews could not understand the meaning of the crucified Jews as the Messiah.
- He said that the Jewish understanding of the law made them to be imprisoned by the law. This is why when Jesus came he taught the people laws about the Sabbath when he said the Sabbath is meant for man not man for Sabbath.
- Paul taught the Corinthians that because Jesus believed in human wisdom.
- He taught to the Corinthians that human wisdom could not permit the Greeks to believe in Jesus as the son of God as to them Jesus was an ordinary man as well as criminal but because of God's wisdom Jesus Christi was born by the power of the holy spirit from virgin Mary and Joseph her husband.
- The Greeks could not image God becoming a human being so this was contradicting and foolish that God could die on the cross.
- Paul taught the Corinthians that true wisdom is only revealed to those who have faith in Jesus Christ therefore he called upon the people to trust in Jesus Christ.
- Paul said the gospel he preached to them was that of the cross of Jesus Christ and did not preach it using human wisdom but God's wisdom so he encouraged the people to always think of God's wisdom.
- Paul said that with divine wisdom people believe in the cross to be a victory other than defeat.
- He also added that the crucifixion of Jesus Christ that mankind received salvation which is the wisdom of God.

#### **THE RELEVANCE OF PAUL'S TEACHING ABOUT WORLD AND HEAVENLY WISDOM TO CHRISTIANS TODAY**

- Paul's message is a warning to the educated, scientists and the rich that they can't find salvation in their seasonal strength but through seeking for God's wisdom.
- Christians are called upon to seek for wisdom of God in order to attain salvation at the end of time.
- Christians should pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit not to seek for guidance from the so called scientists who may give false wisdom.
- Christians are called upon to use their talents and abilities to prove the existence of God but not through use of the so called educated people who in many cases oppose God's creation of power.
- Christians should defend the sign of the cross before those who despise it . That is to say, those who do not believe in God.
- Christians should be united. Both church leaders and the laity should work for unity in the church unlike the Corinthians who had belief in different personalities like Apollos, Peter and Paul.
- Christians should understand salvation is attained through divine but not human wisdom.

- Christians are warned that God will destroy the proud and bring the wisdom of the great to an end.
- Christians are called upon to use their wisdom God gives them to benefit others . For example healing the sick through prayers.
- Christians should understand that with God's wisdom greediness for material wealth of man need to be controlled but people should work for the kingdom of God.

### **THE INDICATORS OF HUMAN WISDOM TODAY**

The following are some of the things people do today to show that they have human wisdom in their heart;

- Many people depend on money to solve all other people's problems. This is practiced even by pastors who ask for some money to offer prayers of blessings to individuals.
- Many people depend on intellectualism, science and technology to survive and disprove God. This is more evident with the whites who make robots that do many things in relationship to human kind whom God created.
- Some non Christians question the trinity of God the father, Son and holy spirit they say there is only one true God.
- Many people don't believe that Jesus is God's son. They insist that Jesus Christ was a son of Mary and Joseph the carpenter as indicated in the gospels.
- Christians who involve in acts of embezzlement and corruption of government funds and property they believe have better human wisdom than others.
- Believers in human wisdom also doubt about the resurrection and second coming of Jesus Christ. Many say the time he promised to come back almost expired.
- Many people claiming to have human wisdom haul insults at road sides preachers of the word of God. They take it that they lack what to do.
- Some preachers hide under the church for selfish games. In other words many pastors have started up individual churches not for the main purpose of spreading the gospel but targeting financial benefits.
- Human wisdom has been indicated among church leaders who are rivaling and creating divisionism in the church among believers . For example in Uganda pastor Simeon has for long been at longer heads with pastor Robert Kayanja of Miracle Centre Cathedral.
- In Uganda some laity glorify some creatures at the expense of others like the people of Corinth used to believe in personalities. This is a total sign of having human wisdom.
- Some people do not observe the Sunday services. They refer to religion as the opium of the people. In other words many say religion is someone's belief.

### **THE RELEVANCE, LESSONS OR SIGNIFICANCE OF PAUL'S TEACHING ON DIVISION IN THE CORINTH CHURCH TO CHRISTIANS TODAY**

## **What lessons do modern Christians learn from Paul's teaching on disunity in the Corinthian church?**

- Christians are called upon to be united with one purpose and one hope unlike the Corinthians who were disunited by following the teaching of different personalities like Apollos, Peter and Paul.
- Modern Christians are called upon to follow Jesus Christ as our universal savior. He is the only one who died for our sins not human beings like the Corinthians are following.
- Modern Christians should have faith in Jesus but not in personalities or pastors. This is because we were baptized in Christ's name not in the name of pastor some of us adore like the Corinthians were doing.
- Christians are called upon to boast of what Christ Jesus had done for them instead of boasting about what the religious leaders have done for them.
- Church leaders should preach the same gospel about Jesus Christ unlike the Corinthians who had divided gospel.
- Christians should keep their bodies holy because the body of a Christian according to Paul's teaching is a temple of the Holy Spirit.
- Christian leaders should work as servants of God as well as partners in establishing the kingdom of God instead of competing with one another like the Corinthian preachers were doing.
- Modern Christians are reminded to believe in the power of God because it's what saves them but not the power of human beings that saves them.
- A Christian should trust in God's wisdom other than trusting in the power of human wisdom which is totally foolish before God.
- Christians should leave judgment of human leaders to God alone. He is the final judge but not use fellow human beings to judge others.
- Church leaders are called upon to be careful in the way they build the foundation of the church lest they face God's judgment. According to the Corinthians the foundation of the church was poor because followers had divided opinion basing on personality preachings.
- Christians should have spiritual maturity instead of behaving like spiritual babies by being divided which Paul noted in the Corinthian church.
- Christians are called upon to live according to the standards of God instead of behaving like men of the flesh. In other words we should follow God's commands more than following human commands.
- Christians should accept all religious leader of the church because they are servants of God unlike the Corinthians who had divided up themselves by following different leaders.
- Church leaders should do God's work because they will be rewarded in heaven at the end. In other words they should fight to create unity of Corinthian leaders who created more disunity among the believers.

## **DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH TODAY**



**“Today the present splinter denominations among Christians in Uganda are not a new development in the church”. With reference to Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians justify the statement.**

- Yes, the splinter denominations in Christians today are not a new development because they began right from the time of the Corinthian church.
- Corinthians were divided basing on four personalities namely Apollos, Paul, Peter and others followed Jesus Christ.
- Those who followed Paul’s party stressed that he was the founder of the Corinthian church; he baptized some of them, was an apostle to the Gentiles and preached the gospel about Jesus Christ in a simple way.
- Some people followed Apollos’ party or teaching giving their views that he was mere eloquent in preaching the gospel than Paul, he was educated from the university of Alexandria and a man with good knowledge of new testament scriptures especially these of John the Baptist.
- In Corinth some people followed Peter’s party and their view were that he was one of the original apostles of Jesus Christ and was the head of the apostolic church.
- Divisions or splinter denominations also existed through some people following Jesus Christ’s teaching only. They say Jesus was the son of God born of the Holy Spirit and was the Messiah who died for their sins.
- Divisionism existed also on the issue of celebrating the Lord’s Supper. Some people were impatient that others were still praying they started enjoying their food. Also some rich Christians did not want to share their meals with the poor.
- The splinter denominations in the Corinthian church also existed on the issue of spiritual gifts. These people that spoke in tongues undermined others who could not speak in tongues like those who preached the gospel.
- Divisions in the Corinthian church existed on the issue of food offered to idols. Some people supported the views of attending and eating food offered to idols during pagan parties but others did not support the view.
- In the Corinthian church splinter sects existed on the issue of head covering by women. Paul taught that a woman should cover her head while in public worship so as to show the good image of the husband but still some women did not want to move in public uncovered heads thus creating divisions.
- However even today, sects among Christians are divided up basing on personalities just as it was in the Corinthian church. For instance refer to fellow pastor Kayanja, pastor Kakande or pastor Namutebi or various priests to preach to them the gospel other than others.

- There are also divisions based on denomination grounds and the way of interpreting the bible. In Uganda today just like in the Corinthian church, people are divided along lines of protestants, Catholics, Adventists due to difference in the interpretation of the bible.
- There are also divisions existing in the church due to leadership wrangles for instance the protestant church in the North has just announced its separation from the leadership in Kampala.
- Splinter denominations in Uganda are also brought about due to economic reasons . That is to say, some religious leaders from church to acquire wealth but not to spread the gospel. For instance pastor Muwanguzi Kiwedde who is in prison now as implicated for standing as a pastor in various places like Namulanda, Mengo then Raka but aiming at cheating people.
- The misuse of church funds in form of offering and donations had led to constant quarrels and separations of believers. Sometimes the implicated religious leaders taken to the courts of law which brings more misunderstanding between them and their followers.

### **INDISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH OF CORINTH/IMMORALITY**

Immorality in the church of Corinth covers three sub themes including the following;

- (a) Incest
- (b) Legal disputes/law suits against fellow Christians
- (c) Prostitution

### **INCEST**

#### **Justify the teaching of Paul on incest in the Corinthian church.**

Paul got information that there was a scandal in the Corinthian church. A certain young man was having sexual intercourse with his father's wife.

Therefore Paul taught about incest in the Corinthian church because of the following reasons;

- Sexual immorality in form of incest was a sin before God which he wanted the Corinthians to stop there and then.
- Paul taught about incest because he had that a young Christian man was having sexual intercourse with his widowed step-mother which to him was also not good.
- Paul taught about incest because the Christians in the Corinthian church had kept quite about this issue and only came to learn about it from Chloe's family.
- The Christians had become proud that such a sin of incest was happening in their midst knowing that it was evil before God.
- The Corinthians had failed to condemn the young man who had committed incest therefore Paul's writing about this issue was intended to warn or condemn the young man of this evil.

- The Corinthians had failed to ex-communicate the young man from their church fellowship. So when Paul wrote the letter he aimed at ex-communicating this young man from the church fellowship.
- They had failed to pass judgment to the young man who committed incest in Jesus' name. Therefore Paul wrote the letter so as to pass on his judgment to the young man in Jesus' name.
- The Corinthian Christians had failed to hand over the young man to Satan for his body to be destroyed but to be saved on the day when Jesus Christ returns.
- Paul wrote the letter and addressed the issue of incest in order to teach the Corinthians that even if it was only this young man committing incest, the danger would spread in the church as normal so people had to be warned to stop or avoid it.
- Paul addressed the issue of incest in the Corinthian church in order to warn the believers to stop associating with immoral people in the church.
- Paul addressed the issue of incest in his first letter to the Corinthians because he wanted to teach them that incest in church was abominable in the Jewish culture and he so said that one who sleeps with any of his father's wives as disgracing his father.
- Paul's teaching about incest was to show the Corinthians that incest was ashaming the church of God. In other words he wanted to let them stop practicing it.
- Paul taught about incest in the Corinthian church because it was discouraging pagans from joining the church. Actually not even the pagans were practicing incest.

#### **PAUL'S TEACHING ON INCEST**

##### **1. Examine the stand that Paul took against the case of incest in the Corinthian church.**

##### **2. How did Paul react/teach about the problem of incest in the Corinthian church**

- Paul assured the Corinthians that this act of incest was so terrible that not even the pagans would be guilty of it.
- Paul discouraged the Corinthians from being proud that incest was taking place in the church. In his view this was going to affect the spiritual growth of believers and the expansion of the church.
- Paul taught the Corinthians that they had to expel this young man from their church fellowship as this would help to control the spread of the vice.
- He reacted by saying to them that they were to feel with sadness instead of being proud that incest was taking place in the church of Jesus Christ.
- Paul reacted also to the young man who was practicing incest by passing judgment to him in Jesus' name.
- Paul also reacted to the problem of incest in the Corinthian church by advising the Christians to handover this man to Satan for his body to be destroyed so that his spirit would be saved on the day when Jesus returned.

- Paul used an example of a little bit of yeast which can make the whole batch of dough rise. In this he wanted to mean that small kind of sin if not controlled would cause more problems in the church.
- Paul also advised the Corinthians to remove the yeast of sin (incest) so that they may be pure at the time of judgment.
- Paul also reminded the Corinthians about the Passover feast (Lord's Supper) that was ready celebration and says Jesus Christ as the Passover lamb had been sacrificed for them.
- Paul advised the Corinthians to celebrate the Lord's Supper with the bread of purity and truth instead of having bread of the old yeast of sin.
- Paul advised the Corinthians to avoid associating with immoral people like those who practice incest.

### **LESSONS MODERN CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM PAUL'S TEACHING ON INCEST**

#### **What lessons do modern Christians learn from Paul's teaching on incest in the Corinthian church?**

- Christians should associate with only moral people instead of associating with immoral people like the Corinthian Christians were doing by associating with the man who committed incest.
- Christians are called upon to expel immoral people from their church fellowship just as Paul advised to the Corinthians to chase away the man who committed incest.
- Christians today are called upon to live exemplary lives in order to avoid being judged harshly on judgment day.
- Modern Christians should guard against being tempted because an immoral person can have the capacity to influence others into sinning.
- Modern Christians should pass judgment in Jesus' name to those who commit terrible sins in the society like incest.
- Modern Christians should do things that glorify God instead of shaming him like practicing incest.
- Modern Christians should examine themselves before taking the Lord's Supper. That is to say, they should be sure in heart by going for repentance.
- Modern Christians should condemn evil acts in our society instead of keeping quiet about them like the Corinthians who had kept quiet until Chloe's family told Paul about the case of incest.
- Modern Christians are called upon to respect matters of sex instead of abusing it like the Corinthians who had started spreading the vice of incest.
- Modern Christians who have committed evils like practicing incest should be encouraged to go for repentance unlike the Corinthians who did not encourage evil doers to go for repentance.
- Modern Christians should be able to judge members of their own fellowship but not to wait.
- Modern Christians should prepare themselves for the day of the Lord by going for repentance not like the man who committed incest and never went for repentance.

## **ASSES THE VALIDITY OF PAUL'S ADVISE ON INCEST IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH TO MODERN CHRISTIANS.**

To a greater extent Paul's advise on incest in the Corinthian church is valid/relevant/important/applicable to the modern Christians in the following ways;

**NB**

- **The above points are all relevant to modern Christians**

**However, to a smaller extent, Paul's teaching on incest may be irrelevant in the following ways to modern Christians;**

- Some societies in Uganda like among the Banyankole, incest is allowed so this would make Paul's teaching on incest irrelevant to modern Christians.
- In a related way in some clans of Buganda there are elements of incest practiced. For example in Engabi clan they are divided into two that is the Cob (Engabi) known as "Nyunga" and the cob known as "nsambya". These can marry one another meaning Paul's teaching becoming irrelevant.
- There is need to associate with immoral so as to show them the right direction instead of neglecting or discriminating them from our society as Paul advised the Corinthians to ex-communicate or expel the incestuous person.
- Paul only passed judgment on the young man who committed incest and ignored the widow because he was a pagan. However, the two need to be judged.
- According to the teaching there is need to judge even non believers in our society because if not done they can continue spreading evil acts among Christians but St. Paul put such as suggestion to a pagan woman.

## **LAW SUITS/LAW DISPUTES AGAINST FELLOW CHRISTIANS (1 Corinthians 6:1-11)**

In the church of Corinth there was another scandal where Christians used to drug each other into pagan courts of law. When Paul was informed by Chloe's family, he was greatly shocked/disappointed with this behavior.

## **ACCOUNT FOR PAUL'S DISAPPOINTMENT ABOUT LEGAL DISPUTES IN THE CORINTH CHURCH.**

- Paul was disappointed because such behavior would discourage pagans from joining Christianity. Pagans would fear to be converted to Christianity because it looked like religion which had no signs of forgiveness to one another.
- The law suits against fellow Christians disappointed Paul because it showed lack of love and Christian brotherhood among believers in the Corinthian church.

- Paul was disappointed with the issue of legal disputes in the Corinthian church because to him it showed lack of guidance from the Holy Spirit.
- The Christians of Corinth showed that they had forgotten the Christian virtues like forgiveness to those who wrong us.
- Paul was disappointed with legal disputes because to him it showed these Christians had continued to depend on human wisdom (pagan judges) other than seeking for divine wisdom from God.
- Paul was disappointed with law suits in the Corinthian church because the quarrels and disputes were tearing the church apart . That is to say, that's creating more divisionism in the church.
- Paul was warned because the Corinthians claimed to be wise yet they could not solve minor cases in their midst (community)
- Paul was worried because Christians had not properly understood the purpose of Christ's death and resurrection to them.
- Paul feared that pagan courts might be corrupted and hence pass wrong sentences.
- Paul was disappointed with the Corinthians because of acts of legal disputes indicated that they were spiritually immature.
- Paul was disappointed because the Christian Corinthians were now washing.

#### **DISCUSS PAUL'S ADVISE/RESPONSE TO THE CORINTHIANS ABOUT TAKING FELLOW CHRISTIANS TO PAGAN COURTS OF LAW**

**Examine Paul's response/teaching to Christians seeking assistance from pagan courts of law today.**

**(Similar points but use present simple tense)**

- Paul began by wondering why and how Christians could drag a fellow Christian to a civil court of law (1 Corinthians 6:1). He was shocked that Christians had preferred the civil rather than the Christian courts.
- He also put this fear that pagan courts of law where they referred would not judge the Christians well because they were on just and corrupt.
- Paul put ashame on the Christians because they were taking their fellow Christians to courts of law.
- According to Paul he informed the Corinthians that its Christians who will judge the world rather than allowing the world pagans to judge them (1 Cor 6)
- Paul reminded the Corinthians to prepare for the second coming of Jesus. He said that on the Day of Judgment Christians will seat with Jesus altogether will pass judgment on all creatures.
- Paul reminded them that they were even to judge angels in heaven. So he expected them to be capable of judging such small matter among themselves.
- Paul advised the Corinthians always to choose one wise person within their fellowship who could guide them in sorting out their problems.

- Paul reacted by saying that the mere fact that they had legal disputes against one another showed that they had completely failed to follow the Christian virtues and principles like love and forgiveness.
- He believed that the weakest member in the Christian community would be a better judge than the wisest pagan judge.
- Paul wondered why the Corinthians boasted of wisdom when there was no one among them who was not wise enough to settle their disputes. Their behavior manifested poverty and wisdom.
- He started having quarrels and disputes among brethren was bad itself. Worse of all was presenting the disputes before non Christians judges.
- Paul said that it was a shame to resort to pagan courts (1 Cor 6:5). As Christians they had a duty of showing a good impression to non Christians in order to be attracted to the church.
- He emphasized the need to practice love and forgiveness of one another. This indicated in the statement he made. It's bad enough for you to have law suits of all against one another (1 Cor 6:7)
- He told them that having become Christians they had been washed clean, sanctified and justified through Christ and the holy spirit. Therefore they were to live holy lives not by the standards of the world.
- Paul called upon the Corinthians to endure injustice to accept suffer for a while instead of causing suffering for any other (1 Cor 6:8)

#### **THE APPLICABILITY/RELEVANCE OF PAUL'S TEACHING TO LAW SUITS TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

##### **Comment on the relevance/applicability of the above message to Christians today.**

- Christians should forgive one another as a way of solving their conflicts in the way Paul advised the Corinthians.
- Christians should endeavour to settle their own disputes like in the church by involving the church leaders instead of taking cases of fellow Christians to pagan courts of law.
- Christians today are called upon to practice the spirit of love one another just as Paul suggested to the Corinthians.
- Christians today are advised by Paul to choose one wise member from the church to judge their cases other than going to pagan courts.
- Christians today should live in order to inherit the kingdom of God as St. Paul said wicked will not enter the kingdom of God.
- Wicked Christians should go to repentance of their sins because according to Paul's advise to Corinthians God is ready to forgive them.
- Modern Christians should expect to judge the world (pagan) and angels in heaven so should be able to judge even small cases among them.
- Christians should be in position to do things that glorify God by voiding to take fellow Christians to pagan courts of law.

- Christians are called upon to follow the Christian principles/virtues like forgiveness other than having continuous conflicts with the brethren.
- Modern Christians are called upon to guard against being tempted to sin by avoiding cases of corruption in one's hands.
- Christians and magistrates should practice fair hearing and trials in the courts of law act to worry people like Paul who did not believe in the pagan courts of law.
- Modern Christians are called upon to rely on the power of the holy spirit to solve quarrels in their midst instead of relying on the power to the corrupt pagan judges.

## **PAUL'S TEACHING ON THE PROBLEM OF PROSTITUTION AND FORNICATION**

### **(1 Cor 6:12-20)**

There was rampant prostitution and fornication in the Corinthian church. This was due to the Greek teaching that the body and soul of a human being are independent of each other. The Greeks taught that the body could not affect the soul and that at death the body will not but the soul will escape and receive God's judgment.

The Greeks even had a saying that sex was as essential for the body as food was the stomach.

## **HOW DID PAUL RESPOND/REACT TO THE PROBLEM OF PROSTITUTION/ FORNICATION IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

Paul responded in the following ways;

- He reminded them about the meaning of their new freedom in Christ. He said they had misinterpreted this freedom by thinking that they were free to do whatever the law had forbidden. But he corrected them and said that their freedom is not a license to sin (1 Cor 6:12)
- Paul also informed the Corinthians that evil acts destroy the new freedom that Christ had given them by dying for their sins on the cross.
- He informed the Corinthians that their bodies were not created for sex. Some Corinthians had reasoned like the Greeks that sex was essential for the body as food was for the stomach.
- Paul says/said that all things are permitted but not all are helpful. He said both food and sex were ordained by God for proper use by man but when misused it is an abuse of Christian freedom.
- Paul advised the Corinthians to treasure their bodies. He agreed with them that **food and stomach** go hand in hand but both will end.
- Paul worried the Corinthians that the body was meant to serve the Lord and so they had to use their bodies properly so as to be rewarded on the judgment day.



- Paul taught the Corinthians that a body of Christian is part of Jesus' body and so Christ dwells (lives) in each Christian's body (1 Cor 6:15). Therefore he said it was wrong to join Christ's body with a prostitute too.
- Paul informed the Corinthians that fornication is a sin against one's own body. He said it is worse than any other sin because it is an internal sin but not external (1 Cor 6:18)
- Paul also notified the Corinthians that a Christian's body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19). Therefore to misuse the body was to defile the temple of the Holy Spirit who lives in each Christian.
- He reminded the Corinthians that Jesus paid a big price to liberate believers from sin by dying on the cross so he called them to honour Christ by avoiding immoralities like prostitution (6:19-20)
- Paul tried to make the Corinthians understand that the mind body and soul that one entity and will be judged together. This was removing the Greek teaching that stated the body and soul will be judged differently.

#### **HOW RELEVANT IS PAUL'S TEACHING TO CHRISTIANS TODAY**

- Christians today should abstain from sex before marriage that is fornication as Paul forbid the Corinthians.
- Modern Christians are called upon to understand sex is only proper and sanctified in marriage . That is to say, that sex should only be practiced in marriage unlike the Corinthians who practiced sex before marriage and prostitution.
- Christians today should keep their bodies holy by knowing that their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit unlike the Corinthians who defiled the temple of the holy spirit by carrying out prostitution.
- Christians today are reminded that what the body does affects the soul not like the Corinthians who were misguided by the Greek that the two will be judged differently on resurrection.
- Christians should prepare their bodies for judgment by keeping themselves holy.
- Christians ought to repent their sins such that when Christ comes back will find them holy.
- Christians are warned about the distraction nature of fornication and prostitution in other words they should avoid them because they are unholy before God.
- Modern Christians should use their freedom responsibly not like the Corinthians who misused their Christ given freedom by carrying sexual immorality like prostitution and fornication.

#### **PAUL'S TEACHING ABOUT MARRIAGE AND CELIBACY (1 Cor 7:1ff)**

The Corinthians written a letter to Paul asking for his advise about certain issues, marriage and celibacy inclusive.

**The Corinthians had asked Paul the following questions which he responds to in this letter;**

- Is it right to marry?
- Is it right to stay single?
- Is sex holy or an evil?
- Should Christians get married to non believers?
- Should slaves marry?
- Is divorce allowed?
- Should widows remarry?

**1. Account for Paul's teaching on marriage in the Corinthian church.**

**2. Justify Paul's teaching on marriage in his first letter to the Corinthians.**

Paul taught about marriage in his first letter to the Corinthians because of the following reasons;

- Paul taught about marriage in the church of Corinth because they had written to him (Chloe's family) seeking for guidance on the subject of marriage where they asked whether sex was holy or an evil.
- Paul taught about marriage because the un married Christians in Corinth wanted to know whether they were to go ahead to marry or stay un married.
- Paul addressed the issue of marriage in his letter to the Corinthians because the Corinthians had written to him and wanted to know whether they were to remain unmarried or to go ahead and marry.
- The virgins of Corinth wanted to know from Paul whether they were to remain unmarried or to go ahead and marry because they also feared that sex is an evil.
- Paul's writing about marriage in his letter to the Corinthians was due to the engaged couples who wanted to know whether they were to remain unmarried or stay single.
- Some married Christians wanted to know whether they were to have sexual intercourse in marriage or not.
- The letter was written to address the issue of the unmarried Christians who faced sexual temptations (passion) and they could not restrain their sexual desires.
- Some married Christians wanted to know whether divorce was accepted in marriage so this forced Paul to write his letter addressing this issue.
- The Corinthians had written to Paul inquiring whether it was okay for someone to remarry after divorcing his partner. Paul answered them in the letter that it wasn't right.
- Paul wrote about marriage because some Christians wanted to know from him whether marriage was to be monogamous or polygamous. Here he answered them or advised them to practice monogamous marriage.
- The letter of Paul to the Corinthians had much teaching about marriage because he was answering the questions asked whether it was right marriage to go on between believers and pagans.

- Paul taught about marriage in order to stress the issue of the widows who wanted to know whether they were to remarry again or continue staying unmarried. He advised them to remarry.
- Some Christians wanted to stay unmarried because they believed that there was no time left to get married due to the imminence of the end of the world.
- Paul taught about marriage as a way of teaching the Corinthians to have self control among the unmarried people.
- Some Christians had a problem of whether they should stay in the same condition as when God called them or change to another state after being called by God. Paul advised them to stay in the original state.

## **PAUL'S TEACHING/ADVISE ON MARRIAGE IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

**(1 Cor 7:1-40)**

### **Comment on Paul's teaching/reaction/response on the problem of marriage in the first letter to the Corinthians.**

- Paul reacted by saying celibacy is good and proper . That is to say, he said it is excellent, more profitable and morally better for a man not to touch a woman in order to serve God well (1 Cor 7:1)
- He advised the Corinthians to practice monogamous marriages. In this he said "let each man have his own wife and each woman her own husband". (1 Cor 7:2)
- He advised the married to fulfill their marital obligations.  
Here he said that a man has full control over his wife's body and the wife likewise has control over the husband's body.
- Paul advised the married people to have enough sex but he said there should be reservations during times of prayer and after prayer they can resume sexual activities so as to avoid satanic temptations (1 Cor 7:5)
- Paul also reacted to the Corinthians by stressing that marriage is a holy institution. He emphasized it was ordained by God and ends into a sacrament of matrimony.
- Paul also reacted to the problem of marriage by advising widows to remain single . That is to say, not remarry although this was not a rule but a suggestion (1 Cor 7:8)
- Paul taught the Corinthians who were unmarried to remain single as God called them. This was because the end of the world was soon (1 Cor 7:9)
- However Paul also reacted by teaching that it is better for one to marry than to burn with sexual passion/desires although he preferred much people to be celibate like him(1 Cor 7:9)
- Paul reacted to the problem of marriage by discouraging divorce. He said a wife should not leave her husband and vice versa. Actually this was a command from the Lord (1 Cor 7:10-11)

- However Paul also encourages divorce on condition that if a non believer, pagan partner desired divorce (1 Cor 7:15)
- He encourages marriage between believers and non believers. He said that in such a relationship the unbelieving partner is sanctified and their children are sanctified too (made holy) (1 Cor 7:12-16)
- Paul advised those who had separated to reunite with their husbands or stay single for the rest of their life (1 Cor 7:11)
- Paul taught the Corinthians that if one is unmarried he has not committed any sin and if one is married he has not also committed a sin. Therefore he encouraged them to marry.
- He said to the Corinthians that a married woman is not free as long as her husband lives but if he died, then he was free to marry another man she wished provided he was a Christian.
- He encouraged the engaged couple should either marry or stay unmarried.

## **RELEVANCE/SIGNIFICANCE OR IMPORTANCE OF PAUL'S TEACHING ON MARRIAGE**

### **How relevant is Paul's teaching on marriage to the Christians?**

- Married partners should have permanent marriage like Paul advised instead of seeking for divorce which is un Christian.
- Married partners should satisfy each other's needs in marriage by not denying themselves sex.
- Modern Christians are called upon to live in the same state when one was called by God to serve him just as Paul taught the Corinthians.
- To the Christians who prefer to marry should go ahead to marry because according to Paul it is a gift from God.
- Those Christians who prefer to remain unmarried Paul advises them to go ahead because it is also a gift from God.
- Celibacy is the last way according to Paul for one to live in order to serve God well. Therefore Christians are called upon to pray for the gift of celibacy.
- Paul teaches modern Christians to practice marriage mainly between fellow Christians although he does not deny marriage with non Christians.
- Paul teaches marriage partners to treat each other equally because they are all equal before God therefore Christians today should also treat their partners equally.
- Modern Christians are called upon to practice monogamous marriages instead of polygamy which St. Paul discourages to the Corinthians.
- According to Paul's teaching to the Corinthians modern married couples should reconcile with each other in case divorce occurs but not to go ahead and marry other partners.

- Modern Christian widows learn from Paul's teaching to the Corinthians that they are free to marry again in case they burn with sexual desires.
- Paul encourages virgin Christians to go ahead and marry or stay unmarried.
- Modern Christians who are engaged to one another are encouraged by Paul to go ahead and marry that is make marriage vows.

### **PAUL'S TEACHING ABOUT CELIBACY**

- Paul suggested that a man does well not to marry in order to serve God better.
- Similarly, Paul put it clear that celibacy is gift from God. So he suggested whoever could remain celibate due to the limited time left on earth had to do so.
- Paul also proposed that someone who became a Christian when he was unmarried should pray as a celibate to enable him serve God well.
- He also mentioned that because of the imminence of the end it would be better for one to be unmarried because there was no time left.
- Paul said an unmarried man concerns himself with the word of the Lord more than a married man.
- He advised the widows to remain single as he had done.
- Paul put it clear that celibacy is not a sin before God as some people thought.
- He stated that if married partners divorced, they should stay single instead of marrying another partner.
- Paul thought the world was to come to an end very soon, so it was better not to marry at all.
- He said considering the present time, married men should live as though they were unmarried.
- Paul said that a person who marries does well but the one who doesn't marry does even much better.
- He encouraged the people of Corinth to remain celibate when he said that celibacy offers more chances for spiritual fulfillment.
- Paul said to the Corinthians that unmarried life saves people from the daily troubles and worries that married people go through.
- He also said that if one was free from a husband he discouraged them from seeking for partners.
- Paul still advised the Corinthians who were engaged couple to stay single as they were if they so wished without being influenced.

### **THE PROBLEMS OF FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS/CHRISTIAN' FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE**

1. **What prompted Paul to teach about food offered to idols in the first letter to the Corinthians.**
2. **Account for Paul's teaching on Paul's freedom on conscience in first Corinthians.**
3. **Justify the teaching of Paul on food offered to idols.**

By the time Paul established the church at Corinth people used to offer sacrifices in form of animals, food drinks to their gods and idols such sacrifices were offered to ask for peace, blessings, good harvest, fertility, victory in war and success in business.

All the religious, social, political, military, economical occasions were characterized by animal and food sacrifices to share the food and drinks offered to these idols in case they attended the function. But this was going to cause a danger to the new converts to Christianity. They questioned themselves and also sought for advise from Paul whether it was okay or wrong to continue eating such sacrifices offered to idols.

### **JUSTIFY THE TEACHING OF PAUL ON FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS**

- ✓ Paul taught about food offered to idols because the Corinthians had written to him seeking for advise on that issue.
- ✓ It was because in many of the pagan temple in Corinth, animal and food and meat that was not consumed was sold in market places.
- ✓ Paul wrote about this issue in order to help the Corinthians who wanted to know from him whether they were free to buy and eat the meat that had been offered to idols.
- ✓ The Corinthians wanted to know from Paul whether believers were free to attend pagan parties when invited by their pagan relatives and friends yet the food and meat served at first was dedicated to idols.
- ✓ The Corinthian Christians had split themselves into two groups . That is to say, those who still eat food offered to idols and those who had abandoned so Paul wrote to re-unite them.
- ✓ Paul wrote about food offered to idols because the strong Christians in faith were acting as a stumbling block to those who were weak in faith and needed guidance.
- ✓ Paul wrote about this issue to answer the Corinthians who wanted to find out whether idols really existed and what their impact was on faith. Paul answered them by saying idols don't exist and have no negative impact on their faith.
- ✓ some Christians were practicing double stands . That is to say, eating and drinking from the cup of demons and at the same time taking part in the Lord's supper so Paul wrote .....this problem.
- ✓ Paul wrote about food offered to idols to correct the new converts in Christianity that some of the things they were doing were not glorifying God like practicing in pagan feasts.
- ✓ Some Christians had continued to worship idols without knowing the consequences like lowering their spiritual understandings.

### **PAUL'S RESPONSE/TEACHING ON FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS/CHRISTIAN FREEDOM TO CONSCIENCE**

- 1. Give an account for Paul's teaching n food offered to idols in first Corinthians.**
- 2. Analyse Paul's advise/recommendations concerning food offered to idols.**

### **3. Critically examine the response of Paul on meat offered to idols.**

- ✓ Paul started by saying an idol stands for something that doesn't clearly exist.
- ✓ He told Corinthians that there is only one supreme God although he agreed with them that they are so called gods. He added on that God is super natural while idols were artificial.
- ✓ Paul responded to the Corinthian the power of the idols they worshipped he said they are man creatures and cannot lead to salvation.
- ✓ Paul taught that God is the creator of man and man should worship one true God.
- ✓ He also said that eating food offered to idols neither improves nor reduces a person's spiritual status (1 Cor 8:8)
- ✓ Paul advised the strong in faith to use their knowledge with love for those who are weak in faith (1 Cor 8:8-9)
- ✓ He also recommended strong Christians that they were free to eat meat offered to idols but the weak Christians he recommended they should avoid eating food offered to idols (1 Cor 8:8)
- ✓ Again Paul advises the strong in faith to eat food offered to idols in the absence of those who are weak in faith.
- ✓ However Paul also discouraged the Corinthian from eating any kind of food or meat if it would make those who were weak in faith to sin against Jesus.
- ✓ Paul taught that if food offered to idols was eaten without somebody knowing that it was offered to idols then a Christian should not fear to eat it.
- ✓ Paul still said however if a believer knew that meat had been offered to idols, he was not to eat it for the sake of the weak Christians in faith.
- ✓ He recommended that one is free to buy and eat any kind of food or meat offered in the market places without necessarily asking where it came from (1 Cor 8:25) he still mentioned that if one was told that the meat that was offered then he was not to eat it for the sake of his weak brothers in faith.
- ✓ On the issue of attending or not attending pagan parties. Paul recommended that one is free to attend any pagan party when invited and asking any question (8:27)
- ✓ Paul advised them to always do things that glorify God be it eating or drinking.
- ✓ He said that eating food offered to idols would be like putting the Lord to tests as the Israelites had done and Lord punished them for that.
- ✓ Paul called upon the Corinthians to imitate him just as he had imitated Jesus.

### **DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS**

- ✓ It was causing divisions in the Corinthian church between those who claimed to be strong Christians and those who attend pagan parties and also called themselves Christians.

- ✓ It offended/affected the weak Christians and made some of them backslide in faith . That is to say, they got confused whether idols do exist or not.
- ✓ It made the strong or mature Christians proud, arrogant and selfish over their weak brethren.
- ✓ Some of the weak Christians started abusing strong Christian who attended idol feasts as selfish and uncouthly.
- ✓ It hindered the conversion of more people to Christianity. This was because they saw no difference between their beliefs and Christians misled their freedom where by they remained attending pagan parties at the same time worshipping the supreme God.
- ✓ Some Christians stopped visiting their relatives and friends for fear of eating meat and food offered to idols. However this is also hindered the spread of gospel to relatives and friends.
- ✓ Some Christians participated in pagan and at the same time shared the Lord 's Supper. This was a great disgrace to the Lord.

#### **RELEVANCE OF PAUL'S ADVISE/TEACHING ON FOOD OFFERED TO IDOLS TO MODERN CHRISTIANS.**

##### **How relevant/important/applicable is Paul's teaching about food offered to idols to modern Christians?**

- ✓ Christians are called upon to do things that bring glory to God just as Paul called upon the Corinthians to glorify God by limiting their involvement in pagan feasts.
- ✓ Christians who are strong in faith should guide against being tempted into sin and also guard against misleading those weak in faith.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to put trust in God the super natural creator of earth and heaven with creatures in it instead of trusting in idols which to Paul they don't even exist.
- ✓ Modern Christians should live exemplary life to fellow Christians and also before pagans which can attract them to Christianity unlike the Corinthians who stopped visiting their relatives and friends who were worshipping idols.
- ✓ Christians should pray for the power of the holy spirit for guidance in decision making not like the Corinthian pagans who looked for blessing through sacrificing idols.
- ✓ Modern Christians should use their freedom responsibly instead of tempting others into sinning like the strong Corinthians who misled the young believers.
- ✓ Modern Christians should only worship one God the real creator unlike the Corinthians who used to worship God and other gods.
- ✓ Christians with weak faith should seek advise from those with strong faith.
- ✓ Christians should always respect other people's feeling.
- ✓ Modern Christians should use their common sense/their Christian conscience to find out what is right and proper for them unlike some Corinthians who failed to use their common sense to judge who the supreme God was to the idols.



- ✓ Modern Christians were called upon to do things that attract pagans to Christianity not like the Corinthians who simply scared away new converts when they involved themselves in pagan worship.
- ✓ Modern Christians should sacrifice some of their right time and privileges in order to win more people to Christianity.
- ✓ Modern Christians should always consult leaders whenever in problems instead of consulting pagan gods.
- ✓ Christians today are free to eat any kind of food or meat because food doesn't defile one's relationship with God.
- ✓ However sometimes Christians are called upon to give up certain food stuffs and drink for the sake of those who may feel offended that it can defile them.
- ✓ Christians should attend any pagan party without fearing to eat the meat offered but should take prayer fast.

### **PAUL'S TEACHING ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF AN APOSTLE (1 Cor 9:1-27)**

It was an accepted norm of culture in the early church that an apostle had to receive material support from the laity (followers). However in the case of Paul and Barnabus they preached the gospel but never accepted any form of material from the church.

Many Christians in Corinth doubted Paul's apostleship and said he was trying to buy cheap popularity from the Corinthians by not asking for his apostolic rights.

They even wondered why he was not and he was not using his apostolic rights or privileges as other apostles were doing.

Paul's answer to them is linked to what he had already said in chapter 8 . That is to say, one's freedom may be limited for the good of others.

- 1. How does Paul use himself as an example in explaining the rights and duties of an apostle?**
- 2. Analyse the way in which Paul disciplined himself by surrendering his privileges as an apostle in 2 Corinthians.**
- 3. How does Paul respond/teach about rights and duties of an apostle in 1 Corinthians 9:1-26**
  - ✓ He started by confirming to them that he was a true apostle of Jesus Christ. He said he had seen the risen Lord and the Corinthian church was a result of his apostolic sweat (1 Cor 9:1-2)
  - ✓ Paul informed the Corinthians that he was aware of all his apostolic rights like the right to receive food and drinks from the Corinthian Christians (1 Cor 9:3-4). So he wasn't ignorant of his right to depend on the convert for his maintenance.

- ✓ He told them that he was aware that other apostles such as Peter and the brothers of the Lord James, Joseph, Simon and Jude were maintained by the Christian community (1 Cor 9:5)
- ✓ He also informed them that he was aware that even the wives and children of apostles were maintained for by the church (1 Cor 9:5)
- ✓ He said he had a right to be given food and drinks for his work but because he was .....but he decided to meet his personal needs for the sake of others.
- ✓ Paul also stressed that he knew he had a right to earn a living from the church but he decided to work himself by .....
- ✓ Paul confirmed to the people that he had a right to have a wife and even moving with her like the other apostles did but decided to live a celibacy life.
- ✓ For those who were saying he did not demand for material wealth for his service .....so he had a right to be free from the demand of the Jewish law.
- ✓ Paul proves his right to be maintained by quoting the example of a soldier. He said that a soldier does not pay for his expenses so even an apostle should not.
- ✓ He gave them an example of a farmer who also feeds on the fruits of wine. By this he meant that he had a right from to reap from his garden.
- ✓ According to 1 Corinthians 9:7 Paul also used an example of a shepherd who drinks from the flock of his sheep. By this he meant that as a shepherd he had a right to receive their support.
- ✓ Men who worked in the temple got their food from the temple. Those who offered sacrifices in the altar were entitled to some shares.
- ✓ He told them next that he and Barnabus had surrendered their lives for the good of the gospel because they didn't want to burden poor Christians with the task of looking for extra material to support apostles (9:2)
- ✓ He also preached that it was Jesus' command that those who preach the gospel should be supported by Christian communities (9:14)
- ✓ Paul informed the Corinthians that his work of preaching the gospel was enough privilege for him. Jesus had chosen him to preach and this was a rare opportunity and enough privilege.
- ✓ He said that Christian ministry involves sacrifice. In order to love and serve others well, who had learnt to put themselves in their shoes to share the joy and sorrow.

#### **SHOW HOW PAUL'S SURRENDERING OF HIS APOSTOLIC RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES IS RELEVANT TO CHRISTIANS TODAY**

- ✓ Christians should subsidize on what the .....gives them by working for themselves.
- ✓ Church leaders should get their own means of preaching the gospel to the people like the way Paul did.

- ✓ Should endure all problems, challenges entitled in the gospel spreading like undermining their authority as Paul was undermined by his people.
- ✓ Christian communities are called upon to support church leaders for example giving them food, housing and transport.
- ✓ The preachers should get rid of acting as stumbling block to the spread of the gospel because of their demands.
- ✓ Church leaders should preach the gospel to all categories of people as Paul preached to both Jews and Gentiles.
- ✓ Church leaders are called upon to lower themselves to the level of those they serve just like Paul did to the Corinthians who did not demand material wealth.
- ✓ Church leaders should work to win people to God.
- ✓ Church leaders should live exemplary lives to the Christians they serve just as Paul lived an exemplary life.
- ✓ They should exercise self control and self discipline in their daily life.
- ✓ Church leaders should be ready to work as volunteers like Paul did but not working for a pay.
- ✓ Christians should imitate the example of Paul who remained celibacy for the purpose of spreading the gospel smoothly.

#### **ORDER OF PUBLIC WORSHIP/BEHAVIOR OF PUBLIC WORSHIP IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

There are three types/areas concerning order of public worship in the Corinthian church.

- (a) The issue of covering heads by women while in church (head veiling) (1 Cor 11:2-16)
- (b) The conduct of the Lord's supper (1 Cor 11:17-34)
- (c) The gifts of the holy spirit (1 Cor 12:14)

#### **THE ISSUE OF COVERING THE HEAD IN WORSHIP (1 Cor 11:2-6)**

Paul was asked whether it was proper for Christian women to appear in public worship and other places without veils on their heads a social custom among Jews, Romans, Greeks and even pagans.

#### **THE PROBLEM OF HEAD COVERING BY WOMEN DURING PUBLIC WORSHIP**

##### **Why did Paul teach about head covering by women during church worship?**

- ✓ The Corinthians wrote to Paul seeking for guidance on whether women were to veil their heads during public worship or were not to veil their heads.
- ✓ Some women were going for public worship without covering their heads with a veil which prompted Paul to teach about it that it was improper to what they did.

- ✓ Some women had misunderstood the teaching of Paul about Christian freedom to mean that were now free to go for public worship without veiling their heads.
- ✓ The women who failed to cover their heads during public worship were breaking the Jewish culture that demanded women to cover their heads. This also prompted Paul to teach about head covering.
- ✓ The poor dressing in public worship was causing disorder as the body of women could be exposed.
- ✓ Some women were speaking during public worship yet . For example were required to keep quite thus making Paul to teach about it to his letter to the Corinthians.
- ✓ There was a problem of women who had failed to submit to their husband yet man is the head of the women. **Therefore Paul to clear this problem.**
- ✓ Men could not tolerate seeing the behaviours of women with uncovered heads in public when Paul was informed he cleared the problem by advising the women to always cover their heads.
- ✓ Paul wrote the letter to teach the women that they were out of men's ribs and therefore, they had to respect their husbands.
- ✓ Some women were praying and prophesying God's message with uncovered head which to Paul was unright.
- ✓ Paul advised the issue of head covering by women to teach them that women did not cover her head during public was to be seen as a prostitute.
- ✓ Some women were ashaming their husbands by not veiling their heads during public worship so Paul wrote to call upon them to veil their heads.
- ✓ Some women had started asking their husbands questions while in church worship. But Paul wrote and taught them women should only ask questions at home.

## **POSITION/STATUS OF BEHAVIOR OF WOMEN IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

### **Discuss the position/behavior of women in the church of Corinth.**

- ✓ Women were subordinates to men.
- ✓ Women were to dress decently according to the social convention of the time.
- ✓ Women were to cover their heads during public worship.
- ✓ Women were not to cut their hair short because this would be a disgrace to their husbands but they were to live it grow long.
- ✓ A woman who prayed without veiling her head was seen as shaming her husband.
- ✓ Women were to veil their heads as a sign of respect to the angels in heaven.
- ✓ Women were to keep quite during public worship instead of speaking in the church.
- ✓ If a woman did not understand what had been preached in public worship, she was to wait and ask her husband while at home.
- ✓ Women were not required to speak in tongues.

- ✓ A woman who exposed her hair while in public worship was seen as a prostitute.
- ✓ A woman was created for the sake of man and was also created from man.
- ✓ Women were not supposed to be church leaders . That is to say, in charge of church affairs as the Jewish law commanded.

## **POSITIONS OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC WORSHIP TODAY**

**Discuss the position and behavior of women in public worship today.**

- ✓ Today women have gone against most of Paul's advise.
- ✓ Today women are equal to men instead of being subordinates which right is granted by the Uganda constitution.
- ✓ Today we have women liberation movement that has tried to sensitize women with the aim of emancipating them.
- ✓ Women are also church leaders like in the protestant church we have female priests who lead moments of worship.
- ✓ Among the Pentecostal church we have female pastors who lead the praise and worship session as well as performing miracles like Pastor Imelda Namutebi of Liberty Worship Church.
- ✓ Today women do not need to cover their heads during public worship.
- ✓ Women pray with unveiled heads by having fancy hair styles.
- ✓ Women also give testimonies during church worship. Women in the Catholic Church are refrained from heading church worship.

## **THE CONDUCT OF THE LORD 'S SUPPER (1 Cor 11:17)**

- 1. Examine the problem of the Lord's Supper in the Corinthian church.**
- 2. Justify the teaching of Paul on the issue of the Lord's Supper in the Corinthian church.**
- 3. Account for Paul's teaching on the issue of the Lord's Supper in the Corinthian church.**

The following are some of the problems or reasons taught by Paul about the Lord's supper;

- ✓ The Corinthians celebrated the Lord's Supper without examining their attitude towards the Lord's Supper hence making Paul to write about this issue.
- ✓ There was misuse of the Lord's Supper in Corinth where people had made it a mere ritual. This also made Paul to write about the Lord's supper.
- ✓ The Lord's supper had divided the Corinthians on the basis of the rich and poor, Gentiles and Jesus, slaves and free people to Paul this was deterring the spread of the gospel and so had to teach about it.
- ✓ Some Christians were greedy. They tended to grab as much food as they could in order to fill their stomachs which made other Christians go hungry.

- ✓ There was selfishness of the Lord's supper which made Paul get concerned to teach about this issue. The spirit of sharing had died out as each one ate his own food.
- ✓ Paul wrote about the Lord's supper because there was a problem where women Christians hurried to start the Lord's supper before waiting for one another so as to eat at the same time (impatience)
- ✓ There was over eating at the Lord's Supper so as to satisfy people's physical hunger spiritually had no faith because they did not share with the poor.
- ✓ Paul taught about the Lord's Supper because people misused it by becoming drunkards.
- ✓ There was a problem of insincere repentance. Some Christians took part in the Lord's Supper before self examination.
- ✓ The Christians conducted the Lord's Supper with no spirit of Christ's love which he showed when he was celebrating the last supper with his disciples.
- ✓ There was a problem of pride among the rich Christians. Whenever they came for the Lord's Supper they distanced themselves away from the poor this made Paul to get concerned and taught about the proper use of the Lord's supper.
- ✓ The abuse of the Lord's Supper was despising the church of God.
- ✓ The abuse of the Lord's Supper caused backsliding among some Christians especially the poor who were despised by the rich Christians.
- ✓ Some Christians participated in the Lord's Supper without the spirit of love for one another.
- ✓ Some Christians practiced double stands by taking part in the Lord's Supper and at the same time took part in idol feasts by drinking from the cup of demons.
- ✓ The actual meaning of the Lord's Supper had lost meaning among Christians.
- ✓ They took part in the Lord's Supper to satisfy themselves without having concern for one another.

#### **PAUL'S TEACHING ON THE LORD'S SUPPER (1 Cor 11:17-34)**

- 1. Comment on the teaching of Paul on the Lord's supper in the Corinthians church.**
- 2. Comment on the advice that Paul gave concerning the conduct of the Lord's supper in first Corinthians.**

- ✓ Paul does not praise the conduct of the Christians on the issue of the Lord's supper because it was doing more harm than good.
- ✓ The Lord's supper was communal meal, a feast which was to nourish their Christian fellowship.
- ✓ The Lord's supper was a way of sharing in the body and blood of Jesus as they came to take part in it instead of just eating and drinking.
- ✓ He wondered whether they did not have their own homes in which to eat and drink instead of the Lord's supper.

- ✓ He condemns the act of selfishness at the Lord's supper . That is to say, each person eating his own food while others went hungry.
- ✓ He condemns them for despising the church of God and putting to shame to poor.
- ✓ He reminds them of the actual teaching of Jesus on the Lord's supper.
- ✓ On the night Jesus was betrayed, he took a piece of bread, broke it and gave thanks to God saying "This is my body which is for you and whenever you eat of it. Do so in memory of me".
- ✓ In the same way after supper he took a cup of wine and said "This cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood, whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me".
- ✓ So the Lord's supper was meant to renew the covenant with God.
- ✓ Taking part in the lord's supper was equivalent to proclaiming the death of Jesus until he returned.
- ✓ Those who take part in the Lord's supper in a way that shames Jesus are guilty of sin.
- ✓ Advises them to first examine themselves before taking part in the lord's supper.
- ✓ If one fails to recognize the meaning of the lord's supper, he brings judgment upon himself as he takes part in it.
- ✓ The cause of weaknesses, illness and death among them was because they had abused the Lord's supper.
- ✓ Paul says if they examined themselves first they would not come under judgment of God.
- ✓ Advises those who were hungry to first eat at home so as to avoid coming under God's judgment.
- ✓ Advises them to be orderly and wait for one another whenever they came for the Lord's supper.
- ✓ He emphasized respect they should give Jesus as they celebrate the Lord's supper.
- ✓ He advised them to take the Lord's supper as a holy meal.
- ✓ Paul challenges them to judge for themselves whether it was right to take part in the Lord's supper and at the same time drink from the cup of demons.
- ✓ Discourages them from being partners with demons . That is to say, one cannot eat from the table of the Lord and at the same time the cup of demons.

## Questions

1. ***How did the celebration of the Lord's supper by the Corinthians differ Paul's understanding?***
2. ***How did Paul's teaching on the Lord's supper differ from the way the Corinthians celebrated it?***
3. ***Show how the Corinthians celebrated the Lord's supper . That is to say, how the Corinthians had misused the Lord's supper.***
4. ***And show how Paul understands the Lord's supper . That is to say, his teaching on the Lord's supper.***

## IMPORTANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER TO CHRISTIANS TODAY

### **What is the meaning of the sacrament of the Lord's supper t Christians today?**

- ✓ Lord's supper is a sign of remembering the deliverance from sin by Jesus.
- ✓ It is a sign of unity and togetherness among the different categories of Christians because they all share from the same cup of wine and eat the same bread.
- ✓ It is a sign of the love of God for mankind revealed through Jesus Christ.
- ✓ It is a sign of equality between men and women, young and old, and poor and rich because they all drink from the same cup.
- ✓ It is a sign of holiness among themselves.
- ✓ It is a sign of repentance of one's sins . That is to say, one has to first examine himself before taking part in the lord's supper.
- ✓ It is a symbol of overcoming death through Jesus Christ.
- ✓ It shows the fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures in Jeremiah 31:31.
- ✓ It seals the new covenant that God made with mankind, indeed it was the blood of Jesus Christ that sealed this covenant.
- ✓ It is a sign of expecting the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ It is a sign of expressing one's faith in Jesus Christ.
- ✓ The bread symbolizes the body of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ The wine symbolizes the blood of Jesus Christ.

### **THE PROBLEM OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS . THAT IS TO SAY, THE MISUSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

- 1. Account for the teaching of Paul in spiritual gifts in the Corinthian church.**
  - 2. Explain why Paul taught about the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the church of Corinth.**
  - 3. Examine the dangers of the misuse of spiritual gifts had caused in the Corinthian church.**
- ✓ The Corinthians had confused and limited ideas about the origin and meaning of spiritual gifts.
  - ✓ There was misuse of spiritual gifts in the Corinthian church.
  - ✓ Spiritual gifts had caused a division among the Christians especially between those who had the gift of speaking in tongues and those who had other spiritual gifts or did not have any spiritual gifts.
  - ✓ There was chaos, disorder and noise during church worship in the use of spiritual gifts.
  - ✓ They had considered the gift of speaking in tongues as the most important spiritual gifts.
  - ✓ There was no interpretation of the gift of speaking in tongues.
  - ✓ There was forging of spiritual gifts especially the gift of speaking in tongues since it was seen as the most important gift.
  - ✓ There was discrimination based on spiritual gifts . That is to say, those who did not have any spiritual gift were being discriminated against in the church.



- ✓ There was pride/boasting about spiritual gifts . That is to say, those who had the gift of speaking in tongues boasted over those who did not have this particular gift.
- ✓ There was monopolizing of church worship by those who had the gift of speaking in tongues . That is to say, these did not give others a chance to make use of their gifts.
- ✓ Love as the most important spiritual gift had been ignored.
- ✓ Spiritual gifts were no longer being used for the benefits of the whole church instead they were being used for personal glory.
- ✓ They had failed to know that even the gift of proclaiming the word of God was more important than speaking in tongues.
- ✓ They had failed to distinguish between the gifts that came from the Holy Spirit and those that come from the devil.
- ✓ The misuse of spiritual gifts was hindering the expansion of the church because it was discouraging non believers from joining the church.
- ✓ Speaking in a random way could give a chance for demons to infiltrate into church worship and so shout in confusion with Christians.
- ✓ Some Christians were saying Amen without having understood the meaning of a thanksgiving prayer.

#### **DOES THE CHURCH IN UGANDA FACE SIMILAR PROBLEMS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

Yes the modern church in Uganda faces a similar problem of spiritual gifts in the following ways;

- ✓ Some christens have also failed to know the origin of spiritual gifts.
- ✓ Some Christians with the gift of speaking in tongues despise those with other spiritual gifts or without any spiritual gift.
- ✓ Spiritual gifts have caused disorder, chaos and noise when making use of them during church worship.
- ✓ Some Christians have migrated from church to another in search of the best preachers especially the youths.
- ✓ Those with the gift healing sometimes abuse it by asking money from the sick people.
- ✓ Some Christians have gone ahead to oppose medicine prescribed by medical doctors assuming that the power of the Holy Spirit will heal them.
- ✓ Some Christians have gone ahead to forge spiritual gifts.
- ✓ Some Christians have been baptized again on joining the “good churches” leaving the mother church.
- ✓ Most youths have migrated from one church to another in search of spiritual gifts.
- ✓ There is a lot of pride among Christians with spiritual gifts.
- ✓ Some Christians have doubted the Christians who do not have any spiritual gift.
- ✓ Some Christians have also doubted the Christians who have continued to stay in the mother churches like the Catholics and protestants are doubted by the born agains.

- ✓ There is hardly the interpretation of what is spoken in tongues during church worship.
- ✓ Some religious leaders like pastors have been accused of acquiring evil powers from the devil in the making of miracles.

### **PAUL'S TEACHING ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH (12:1-40)**

#### **Comment on the response Paul gave to the problem related to the spiritual gift in his first letter to Corinthians.**

- ✓ Paul teaches that all spiritual gifts come from God. There are different spiritual gifts but the same spirit gives these gifts.
- ✓ There are different ways of serving the Lord but the same Lord is served by these spiritual gifts.
- ✓ Lists nine spiritual gifts that existed as faith, wisdom, knowledge, healing, working miracles, prophesy, speaking in tongues, interpretation of what is spoken in tongues and discerning.
- ✓ He compares the different spiritual gifts to the different parts of the human body to illustrate that.
- ✓ All spiritual gifts are complementary to one another . That is to say, no spiritual gift can exist independently.
- ✓ God put the different parts of the body just as he wanted it to be so he gave different people the way he wished.
- ✓ Paul also taught the Corinthians that spiritual gifts are given to individuals as the Holy Spirit wishes.
- ✓ He also told them that if one part of the body suffers the other parts of the body suffer too. In this he wanted to mean that all spiritual gifts are complementary to one another.
- ✓ Paul taught the Corinthians to have a spiritual unity in the church while making use of their spiritual gifts . That is to say, he taught them to have concern for one another.
- ✓ Paul emphasized that even those with specutalar gifts such as speaking in tongues, prophesying, healing and performing miracles must know that Christians with less specutacutor gifts are more important in the church than the so called superior gifts.
- ✓ Paul informed the Corinthians that the most important gift of the holy spirit that everyone should yearn for is the gift of love. With love he said all things are possible.
- ✓ He taught them that the gift of preaching was more important than that of speaking in strange tongues (1 Cor 14:1-3). This is because proclaiming the good news gives people encouragement and hope.
- ✓ Paul advised the people in Corinth with the gift of speaking in tongues to use it in private prayers to God other than peaking it in public when other people would not understand.
- ✓ He advised those who spoke in tongues to interpret them or to get interpreters, otherwise the message would remain abstract (1 Cor 14:5)
- ✓ Paul called for order during worship. He said members with different gifts had to be given opportunities other than dominating worship wit speaking in tongues (1 Cor 14:26-33)

- ✓ Paul discouraged shouting and competing during worship. He suggested that at least 2 or 3 people with tongues to speak but one at a time (1 Cor 14:26-39)
- ✓ He advised women to keep quiet during public worship. To Paul it was shameful and a sign of disorder and disrespect for women to argue with men during and after public worship.

## **RELEVANCE OF PAUL'S TEACHING ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

### **What lessons do Christians learn from Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts today?**

The following are some of the lessons Christians learn from Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts;

- ✓ Christians are called upon to use the different spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit for the common good of the whole church as Paul advised the Corinthians.
- ✓ Christians should understand the different gifts of the Holy Spirit are equally important. For example preaching, prophesying, healing. Paul taught the Corinthians that all spiritual gifts are complementary like the parts of the body.
- ✓ Christians today should emphasize unity in the church like making use of the spiritual gifts unlike the Corinthians who were disunited between those who spoke in tongues and those who had other spiritual gifts like healing.
- ✓ Like Paul stressed to the Corinthians, Christians are called upon to treat all spiritual gifts as equal because there is no inferior and superior gifts.
- ✓ Christians today should understand each Christian has been endowed with a particular gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore they should strive to develop these gifts.
- ✓ Christians should use their God-given gifts to serve others. One's talent like athletics, swimming, singing and drumming is a gift from God and the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ Paul advised the Corinthians to have orderly worship when making use of their spiritual gifts like two or three people to speak one at a time which also Christians today should speak.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to strive for the gift of love as the most important gift which even Paul advised the Corinthians to seek for.
- ✓ Modern Christians are called upon to make use of all spiritual gifts instead of one gift dominating church worship like the gift of speaking in tongues had dominated church worship among Corinthians.
- ✓ Christians today are called upon to pray to the Holy Spirit for spiritual guidance just as Paul advised the Corinthians to do.
- ✓ Speaking in tongues among the Corinthians had made some people become boastful however Christians today are called upon to use their gifts of the Holy Spirit to honour and praise God other than boasting.
- ✓ Modern Christians are called upon to thank God for the different gifts he endows to us other than being proud like some Corinthians were.

- ✓ Teachers, lawyers, farmers and others are called upon to reflect God's kindness in their work. This is because the special abilities they possess are gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ Modern Christians who are able to speak in tongues should consider themselves fortunate but not superior to others like the Corinthians used to be.
- ✓ Modern Christians with the gift of speaking in tongues should regulate it. There is no need for much noise in a church where some people want to consult God in silent prayers.
- ✓ Modern Christians are called upon from Paul's teaching those who preach the word of God should preach one after the other while those seated in worship **should what is being said.**
- ✓ Modern Christians with special gifts of the Holy Spirit should strive for the gift of producing the word of God as Paul encouraged the Corinthians because it benefits the whole church.

## **THE SUPREMACY/IMPORTANCE OF AGAPE LOVE OVER OTHER SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

**(1 Cor 13:1-14)**

- 1. How does Paul show that love is the most important gift over other spiritual gifts?**
- 2. Examine the teaching of Paul on the theme of agape love in his first letter to the Corinthians.**
- 3. Explain Paul's teaching on the importance of love in the church.**
- 4. "I may be able to speak the language of men and even angels but I have no love....." (1 Cor 13:1).**

The following are ways how Paul taught on the importance of agape love over other spiritual gifts.

- ✓ Paul shows the supremacy of the gift of agape love over other spiritual gifts. He does this by comparing the gift of love with other spiritual gifts and later gives the characteristics of agape love.
- ✓ One may be able to speak the language of men and that of angels but if he has no love, his speech is just a noisy gang.
- ✓ One may have the gift of inspired preaching or the gift of knowledge to understand all secrets but if he lacks love, these gifts are nothing.
- ✓ One may have all the faith needed to move a mountain or one may give all the things he has to others but if he has no love these gifts are nothing.
- ✓ Love is eternal while as other spiritual gifts are temporary.
- ✓ To Paul love should be the dominant spiritual gift of all. So love should accompany other spiritual gifts.

### **Paul gives the following characteristics of agape love**

- ✓ Love is eternal or everlasting.
- ✓ Love is patient and kind.
- ✓ Love is not jealous or proud of itself.
- ✓ Love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable.

- ✓ Love does not keep a record of wrongs.
- ✓ Love is not happy with evil but it is happy with the truth.
- ✓ Love does not give up but it endures forever.
- ✓ Love does not insist upon its rights instead it thinks of others.
- ✓ It is faith, hope and patience never fails.
- ✓ Love is greater than faith and hope.
- ✓ To Paul, love is the greatest gift all the spiritual gifts so advises them to strive for the gift of love.
- ✓ Love controls tempers.
- ✓ Love unites all people.
- ✓ Love is absolutely complete, builds confidence and hope in the life of Christians.

### **LESSONS MODERN CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM PAUL'S TEACHING ON LOVE AS THE MOST IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL GIFT**

#### **What challenges does Paul's teaching on love bring to modern Christians?**

- ✓ Christians ought to strive for the gift of agape love because it is the most important spiritual gift.
- ✓ Christians ought to practice the love for one another which is free from boasting and hypocrisy.
- ✓ Christians ought to sympathy for those who are suffering.
- ✓ Christians ought to take care of the needy Christians.
- ✓ Christians ought to be patient regardless of the circumstances they find themselves in.
- ✓ Christians ought to extend forgiveness of people's sins instead of keeping grudges.
- ✓ Christians ought to live holy lives because love is free from evil.
- ✓ Christians ought to speak the truth as a sign of love for one another.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to humble themselves instead of boasting over others.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to expose the wrongs done in society because love is not happy with evil.
- ✓ Christians should have unity amongst themselves as sign of love for one another.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to be ready to suffer and endure up to the end.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to maintain their faith and hope in Jesus Christ.

### **THE SUPREMACY OF THE GIFT OF PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD OVER SPEAKING IN TONGUES (1 Cor 14:1-25)**

- 1. How does Paul compare the gift of proclaiming the word of God with speaking in tongues in his first letter to Corinthians?**
  - 2. Explain Paul's response on the contrast between the gift of proclaiming the word of God and speaking in tongues in his letter to the Corinthians.**
- ✓ Paul advises them to strive for the gift of proclaiming the word of God.

- ✓ A person who speaks in tongues does not speak to others but instead only speaks to God and no one can understand him. But the person who proclaims God's message speaks to people and gives them comfort and courage.
- ✓ A person who speaks in tongues helps himself but the one who preaches God's message helps the whole church.
- ✓ A person who speaks the message from God is of greater value than the one who speaks in tongues.
- ✓ A person who speaks in tongues can be of greater value if there is another person to interpret what is spoken in tongues.
- ✓ Advises those speaking in tongues to pray for the gift of interpreting what is being said in tongues.
- ✓ The gift of speaking in tongues is a proof for unbelievers while the gift of proclaiming the word of God is a proof for believers.
- ✓ The gift of speaking in tongues could make the pagans think that the Christians have gone crazy. But if one proclaimed the message of God in the presence of the pagans, they will be convicted to their sins by what they clearly hear and so may end up being converted.
- ✓ Paul compares the gift of speaking in tongues to a trumpet blower who is meant to alert the soldiers for battle if the sound is not clear no one would turn up.
- ✓ There are many different languages with different meanings but if a person does not understand a particular language then he is foreigner to it.
- ✓ Advises those who are eager to get spiritual gifts to strive for spiritual gifts which build up the church like proclaiming God's message.
- ✓ He goes to wonder whether the worshippers would be able to know when to say Amen to a prayer delivered in speaking in tongues.
- ✓ Says he had the ability to speak in tongues more than any of them but he chose to speak a few words that can be understood in order to teach others than to speak thousands of words in strange tongues that cannot be understood.

#### **DISCUSS PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CORINTHIANS CONCERNING ORDERLY WORSHIP**

Paul's instructions/teaching about orderly worship covers specific aspects taken from the Lord's Supper, head covering by women and the issue of spiritual gifts.

Paul's specific instructions on orderly worship on the issue of the Lord's Supper include;

- ✓ He ordered the Christians to first examine themselves before taking part in the Lord's Supper.
- ✓ He ordered those who were hungry to first eat at home before taking part in the Lord's Supper.
- ✓ He instructed them to wait for one another before starting the Lord's Supper.
- ✓ He orders them to respect the Lord's Supper instead of turning it into a disgrace.

- ✓ He instructed those going for public worship to remain sober instead of over drinking.

**Paul's specific instructions on orderly worship on the issue of head covering by women include;**

- ✓ He instructed women to continue veiling their heads during public worship.
- ✓ Paul says it is a disgrace for men to veil their heads during church worship.
- ✓ When preaching, women were to veil their heads as part of the public order.
- ✓ Women were to cover their heads during public worship to show that they are under the authority of their husbands.

**Paul's specific instructions on orderly worship on the issue of spiritual gifts include;**

- ✓ Paul says every gift should be used for the benefit of strengthening the whole church.
- ✓ If one speaks in strange tongues, two or three people at most should speak one after the other and some one else should interpret what is spoken in strange tongues. But if there is no interpreter, then the one who speaks in tongues should keep quiet or speak to himself and God.
- ✓ Two or three people proclaiming the word of God should speak one after the other.
- ✓ Then the other people seated in church worship should listen and judge, discern what is being proclaimed before them.
- ✓ But if one who is seated in church worship received a message from God, then the one speaking in tongues should stop instantly.
- ✓ The gift of proclaiming the word of God should be under the control of the speaker.
- ✓ He says God wants them to be in harmony and peace instead of creating disorder.
- ✓ Women should keep quiet during public worship because they are not allowed to speak in church according to the Jewish law.
- ✓ Paul says women are not supposed to be in charge of church worship.
- ✓ If a woman wanted to inquire about something while in church, she was to wait and ask her husband while at home. This is because it was a disgrace for a woman to speak during public worship.
- ✓ Orderly worship required unity in the church.
- ✓ Paul advised those participating in church worship to stop criticizing one another. This was because they were one body but with many parts.

**HOW RELEVANT IS THIS PAUL'S TEACHING N THE ABOVE TO THE CHURCH IN UGANDA TODAY**

- ✓ Christians should use all spiritual gifts in the church for the benefit of strengthening the whole church.
- ✓ Those with the gift of speaking in tongues should bother to interpret what is spoken in tongues.
- ✓ Christians should give their prophecies one at a time during public worship for all people to understand other Christians should listen alternatively to those proclaiming the word and judge them.

- ✓ Christians should respect moments of worship.
- ✓ Christians should go for church worship with a sober mind.
- ✓ Christians should first examine themselves before taking part in the Lord's Supper.
- ✓ Christians should get rid of being greedy in church especially during church celebrations.
- ✓ Christians should promote unity of all members of the church as a means of having orderly worship.
- ✓ Christians should promote peace and harmony during church worship.
- ✓ Christians participating in church worship should get rid of criticizing one another.
- ✓ Women should dress decently during public worship.
- ✓ Christian should take themselves as one body but with many parts.
- ✓ Christians should strive for the gift of proclaiming God's message because it is a better gift than speaking in tongues.
- ✓ Christians should be in position to distinguish between the gifts that come from the Holy Spirit and those that come from the devil.

#### **REASONS FOR PAUL'S TEACHING ON ORDER OF WORSHIP IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

- 1. Account for Paul's teaching on order of worship in the church of Corinth.**
- 2. What prompted Paul to teach about behavior in worship in the Corinthian church?**
- 3. Explain why Paul was concerned about the conduct of worship in the church of Corinth.**

- ✓ Paul taught about order of worship because the Corinthians had written to him asking for guidance on the issue of the Lord's supper, head covering and spiritual gifts. Because there was disorder, chaos and noise during moments of public worship.
- ✓ Because some women were going for public worship without covering their heads with a veil.
- ✓ Women who failed to veil their heads during public worship were breaking the Jewish culture that demanded them to cover their heads.
- ✓ Some women had started speaking during moments of public worship yet they were required to keep quiet, besides they asked their husbands some questions during moments of worship.
- ✓ Some women failed to give respect to their husbands yet the husband was the head of woman.
- ✓ Because a woman who did not cover her head during public worship was seen as a prostitute.
- ✓ Poor dressing in public worship was causing disorder as the beauty of women was being exposed.
- ✓ Women were seen as advocating for independence/equality with men.
- ✓ Some Christians had started abusing the Lord's Supper.
- ✓ Some Christians celebrated the Lord's supper without self examination
- ✓ The Lord's Supper had divided the Christians into the rich and poor Christians.
- ✓ Some Christians were greedy and this made them to grab as much food as they could.



- ✓ There was selfishness at the Lord's Supper, some hurried to start the Lord's Supper without waiting for one another.
- ✓ There was over eating at the Lord's Supper so as to satisfy their physical hunger.
- ✓ There was over drinking of wine at the Lord's Supper which made some Christians to get drunk.
- ✓ Because some Christians had abused the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ Spiritual gifts had caused divisions among Christians especially between those who had the gift of speaking in tongues and those with other spiritual gifts.
- ✓ There was no interpretation of the gift of speaking in tongues during public worship.
- ✓ There was forging of spiritual gifts especially that of speaking in tongues during public worship. There was discrimination based on spiritual gifts.
- ✓ There was boating in the use of spiritual gifts especially by those with the gift of speaking in tongues.
- ✓ There was monopolizing of church worship by those who had the gift of speaking in tongues.
- ✓ Those who were speaking in tongues were all speaking at once instead of one person at a time.
- ✓ Because the misuse of spiritual gifts and the discrimination at the Lord's Supper were shaming the church of God.
- ✓ Disorder in church hinder the expansion of the church.

#### **THE PROBLEM OF RESURRECTION IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH**

- 1. Account for Paul's teaching on the subject of resurrection in the first letter to Corinthians.**
- 2. Examine the problems of life after death that the Corinthians faced.**
- 3. Why did Paul teach about the theme of resurrection to the Corinthian church?**

- ✓ The Corinthian had written to Paul asking him about the idea of resurrection.
- ✓ The Greeks' teaching confused the Christians for they taught that it was the soul which resurrected when freed from the body at death.
- ✓ Some Christians were confused about the teaching of the Sadducees who taught that there was no resurrection at all.
- ✓ Some Christians doubted the fact that Jesus Christ resurrected from death.
- ✓ Some Christians doubted the resurrection of believers from death.
- ✓ Some Christians thought that resurrection meant the total resurrection of the human body by God.
- ✓ Some Christians wanted to know the people who had actually witnessed the risen Jesus Christ.
- ✓ Some Christians wanted to know the nature of the resurrected body.
- ✓ Some Christians wanted to know the nature of resurrected life, would it also be like the current physical life.
- ✓ Some wanted to know whether the resurrected life would require the daily material things of life.

- ✓ Some Christians wanted to know the order of resurrection . That is to say, who would resurrect first and later.
- ✓ Some Christians wanted to know how the dead would be resurrected to life.
- ✓ It was because Paul had met the risen Jesus Christ and so this could be inspired him to teach about resurrection.
- ✓ He wanted to confirm that what they preached about the resurrection of Jesus Christ was still true.
- ✓ He wanted to confirm that their faith in the risen Jesus Christ is true and not imaginary.
- ✓ He wanted to emphasize the ideas of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

#### **PAUL'S TEACHING ABOUT RESURRECTION/LIFE AFTER DEATH (15:1-58)**

- 1. Examine the teaching of Paul on the resurrection of Jesus Christ in his first letter to the Corinthians.**
- 2. Examine Paul's response to the doubts the Corinthians had about life after death.**
- 3. How did Paul try to convince the Corinthians that there is life after death?**

- ✓ Paul says that Jesus Christ died but was raised to life three days later.
- ✓ Paul says that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was the basis of their faith.
- ✓ Paul says the resurrection of Jesus as the basis of what the apostles were preaching.
- ✓ Paul says Jesus appeared to James, peter and more than 500 of his followers, some of whom were still alive.
- ✓ Paul says also appeared to him when he was going to Damascus to persecute the Christians who had assembled there. Since Jesus resurrected, even the believers would resurrect to life.
- ✓ Paul says that death came by means of Adam, so even rising from death comes by means of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ Paul explains the order of resurrection, in the first place Jesus Christ, then the Christians at the time when Jesus returns and eventually the end will come.
- ✓ Paul says the last enemy to be defeated will be death.
- ✓ Paul challenges them that if the dead cannot be resurrected to life, then let them eat and drink because for tomorrow they will surely die.
- ✓ He also challenges them why some of them were baptized for the dead if they would not be raised to life.

**He compares the human body with the resurrected body to show what type of resurrected body will be like in the following ways;**

- ✓ When the body is buried, it is mortal and when it will be raised, it will be immortal.
- ✓ When the body is buried it is ugly and weak but when raised to life it will be beautiful and strong.

- ✓ Paul says it is the physical body that comes first and then the spiritual body will follow.
- ✓ Says we shall not all die but when the trumpet is sounded, those alive will be transformed into a resurrected body instantly.
- ✓ He compares the first man Adam with Jesus Christ as the second Adam to show the following;
- ✓ The first Adam was created as a living being but the second Adam Jesus Christ was created as a life giving spirit.
- ✓ The first Adam was made from earth but the second Adam came from heaven.
- ✓ Paul says the apostles accepted to be persecuted because there is life after death.
- ✓ Compares human life on earth with the existence of a seed that is sown in the ground, when the seed is sown it dies and later it acquires a new body, so man has to die first so as to acquire a new body.

**EXAMINE THE PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES THAT MODERN PREACHERS MAY FACE WHEN TRYING TO CONVINCE THE AUDIENCE THAT THERE IS LIFE AFTER DEATH**

- ✓ No one has ever come back to life to tell people how resurrected life is all about.
- ✓ People's belief that when one dies the body completely rots makes them to doubt life after death.
- ✓ Even the righteous, prominent religious leaders and wicked people face similar death and none has ever come back to life.
- ✓ No one has ever had voices from the dead physically.
- ✓ The presence of ancestral graves which are still where the dead were buried may make people doubt the idea of resurrection.
- ✓ The excavated graves only show people mere skeletons hence making it hard to believe in the idea of resurrection.
- ✓ The increasing number of false preachers.
- ✓ No one has ever witnessed the risen Jesus Christ in physical terms.
- ✓ Some lack genuine faith.
- ✓ The trust in human wisdom . That is to say, intellectualism makes people to doubt life after death.
- ✓ Even the preachers who preach that there is life after death fear death hence making it hard for one to believe in life after death.
- ✓ The lack of exemplary behavior from the religious leaders.

**“IF JESUS CHRIST HAD NOT BEEN RAISED FROM DEATH, THEN OUR PREACHING IS IN VAIN AND YOUR FAITH TOO”. EXPLAIN WHAT PAUL MEANT BY THIS STATEMENT.**

- Paul meant that the resurrection is the basis of Christian teaching or preaching.
- Resurrection is the major theme of the New Testament the whole idea of Christianity would not be true if Christ had not been raised from death.

- It is the basis of the Christian faith, if he had not resurrected, then the faith of Christians would be a delusion.
- Since Christ resurrected from death, even the believers would resurrect so as to enjoy eternal life.
- Paul made this statement to the Corinthians because all Christians are assured of the fact that death is not an end of their life.
- He made it to enlighten them about the resurrection of Jesus and also the resurrection of believers.
- Because in Corinth, there were people who were having different ideas on the final destiny of man.
- Some Christians doubted the idea of life after death.
- Some wanted to know the nature of the resurrected body.
- Some wanted to know the actual witnesses to the risen Jesus Christ.

**So when Paul learnt of such doubts he had to respond on the issue of resurrection of Jesus in the following ways;**

- He said that the Good news he had preached to them had its basis on the resurrection of Jesus.
- Failure to believe in the resurrection of Jesus meant denial of the gospel and an attack on Christianity.
- The denial of Christ's resurrection meant that the gospel that Paul had preached would not save mankind.
- He stressed that Jesus died for the sins of mankind as the scriptures had foretold . That is to say, he was buried but on the third day he rose from the death.
- Christ's resurrection was witnessed by his apostles and some 500 of his followers some of whom were still alive although some had died.
- Jesus Christ then appeared to Paul himself on way to Damascus to persecute Christians.
- Christ's resurrection and conversion of Saul to Paul who was a persecutor of the church is the greatest proof of Jesus' resurrection.
- If Jesus had been raised from death, as well as appearing to him, then Paul would have continued to persecute the church.
- If Christ had not been raised from death, as well as appearing to him, then Paul would have continued to persecute the church.
- If Christ had not been raised from death, then his believers must have been unfortunate.
- Paul emphasized that Christ had been raised from death as the first fruit of all who have died.
- Paul says as death came by means of man Adam, even rising comes by means of man Jesus Christ as the second Adam.
- If Jesus Christ had not been raised from death, then the apostles would appear as liars that God raised him from death.
- If Christ had not been raised from death, why were some of them being baptized for the dead.

- God will give each individual a body fitting to the resurrection state which body will be incapable of corruption.
- The resurrected body is spiritual in nature.

### **SIGNIFICANCE/IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS**

1. **Examine the belief that the resurrection of Jesus is the basis/foundation of Christianity.**
2. **Why was the subject of Jesus' resurrection so central/ important in the early church?**
3. **"Without the resurrection of Jesus, Christianity would not have come into existence". Discuss.**

Yes, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the basis/foundation of Christianity in the following ways;

- The resurrection of Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament scriptures in Isaiah 53.
- It enabled the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles in the early church.
- It became the basis of what the apostles were preaching. That is to say, it was the basis of the gospel.
- It became the basis of what the early Christians believed. That is to say, it was the basis of their faith.
- It gave hope to the Christians that they will also resurrect like the way Jesus Christ resurrected.
- It led to the conversion of Saul the persecutor of the church of Jesus Christ to Christianity.
- It helped to guard the gospel against the false/wrong teachings of the Sadducees and the Greeks.
- It showed that death had been conquered when Jesus Christ had resurrected.
- It gave the Christians the courage and strength to accept and endure the persecution and martyrdom.
- The experience of the risen Jesus Christ filled the early Christians with hope and courage.
- It proved that Jesus Christ was stronger than Satan the cause of death.

## **PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS**

### **AUTHORSHIP/DATE AND DESTINATION OF THE LETTER**

Apostle Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians during his second or third missionary journey this was between the period 53-55AD. Paul's main audience was the Galatians or the people of Galatia.

### **JUSTIFY THE NEED/PURPOSE/AIM/CAUSE FOR PAUL'S WRITING THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS.**

- The letter was written as a reaction to a serious crisis which had come up in the church of Galatia shortly after Paul had left Galatia.
- Paul wanted to defend the gospel of faith that he had preached before to the Galatians this was because the judaizers had claimed that Paul was preaching a gospel which lacked the necessity of the Jew law and circumcision.
- Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians to defend his apostleship. Many people doubted Paul's right to be a true apostle of Jesus for they claimed he was a self made apostle.

- He wanted to teach about the importance of change where he said it is faith in Jesus Christ that puts a person right with God instead of following the law as the judaisers had claimed.
- Paul wanted to teach the Galatians that circumcision was not a necessary condition for one to become a Christian because it was just a physical mark to identify them as Jews.
- By writing the letter Paul wanted to bring back the Galatians to the true gospel of faith that he had preached to them before this was because the judaisers had managed to convince a large number of Galatians with their false gospel.
- Paul wanted to encourage the Galatians to carry one another's burden during times of trouble. That is to say, helping the needy.
- The letter was written to show that in Jesus Christ all people are equal regardless of sex, race, status or background hence reconciling the Jews and Gentiles.
- Paul wanted to encourage the spiritual Christians to always guide and protect fellow Christians who were caught in wrong doing however they were to do it gently.
- Paul wanted to teach the Galatians to always love one another as Christian brothers and sisters.
- He wanted to encourage them to live as people controlled by the spirit so as to promote peace, joy, kindness and faithful to one another.
- Paul wanted to teach the Galatians that God's salvation plan was universal for those who had faith in him. That is to say, not necessary follow the Jewish law of circumcision.
- He wanted to reveal his image which had been destroyed by the judaisers who called him a liar, persecutor and self made apostle.

#### **WHY DID THE GALATIANS DOUBT PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP OR WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES LED THE GALATIANS TO QUESTION THE APOSTLESHIP OF PAUL AND THE GOSPEL HE PREACHED?**

The following are the reasons that led the Galatians to doubt the apostleship of Paul:

- The judaisers claimed that Paul was not a true apostle of Jesus and so was a self claimed apostle.
- Paul was accused that he was not one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ which was indeed true although Christ had appeared to him and was given the power to preach the gospel.
- Paul's apostleship was doubted because he had been a persecutor of the church so how could he turn around to preach a gospel he had tried to destroy.
- The Galatians claimed that Paul's gospel was of a human origin that is to say he had copied it from the major Jerusalem apostles and therefore there was no need to take him seriously.
- They claimed that the gospel of Paul was incomplete/half baked. This was because it lacked the necessity of the law and circumcision.

- They accused Paul of trying to win man's approval/favour and that is why he was trying to leave out the law and circumcision so as to win cheap popularity.
- They claimed that Paul himself was a Pharisee that is a strict follower of the Jewish law and then wondered why he was trying to teach the Gentiles not to follow the law and circumcision which he followed himself.
- The Galatians also doubted Paul's apostleship and his gospel reason being he was not even an eyewitness of Jesus according to their understanding. However Jesus had appeared to him on his way to Damascus as noted in the book of the Acts of the apostles (Acts 9:1ff)
- Galatians claimed Paul was a hypocrite. That is to say, Paul himself was circumcised and even allowed Timothy and Titus to be circumcised so who then could he not preach the same gospel.
- The doubt of Paul's apostleship and the gospel came because he was preaching a different gospel from that which the Jerusalem apostles were preaching.
- The Galatians claimed that if Paul was an apostle than he was a minor apostle who was not to be taken seriously.
- The judaisers conflicted with Paul because he taught that the Christians were freed from the Mosaic Law which annoyed them as teachers of the law.
- Paul taught that one is justified by faith instead of the works of the law which was contrary to what the judaisers taught the Galatians hence leading to the conflict.
- Paul's apostleship and the gospel he preached was questioned by the Galatians because he stressed the equality of all people regardless of sex race and background though the Jews took themselves as a superior race.

#### **PAUL'S DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL AND HIS APOSTLESHIP (Gal 1:6)**

- 1. How did Paul defend the gospel and his authority as an apostle in the letter to Galatians?**
  - 2. Analyse Paul's response to the allegations made by judaisers in his letter to the Galatians.**
  - 3. What arguments did Paul use in his letter to the Galatians in defense of his gospel and apostleship?**
- Paul said his call to be an apostle did not come from man but from Jesus Christ himself and his gospel was a gospel of free grace.
  - Paul said there was no any other gospel apart from the gospel of faith he had preached and was the same gospel preached by the Jerusalem apostles.
  - He urges that he had received the gospel on the way to Damascus when he had gone to persecute Jesus and his followers.

- To confirm defense of Paul's apostolic authority he stressed that he did not see the use of seeking advice from human leaders (Gal 1:18). He clarifies that immediately after his conversion experience he did not go to Jerusalem to seek authority from apostles like Peter and James.
- Paul warned that anyone who preached a different gospel from that he preached he was to be condemned to death even of angels.
- He defended himself by saying his gospel was after winning the approval of God instead of winning man's approval.
- Paul defended his gospel and his apostleship by saying that the gospel he taught was revealed to him by the risen Christ.
- He defended himself by trying to remind the Galatians about his past experience as a persecutor and how he had destroyed the church of God but he was converted by Christ on his way to Damascus.
- Paul defended his gospel by narrating the Galatians how he had been a devoted follower of the Jewish laws and the traditions of the ancestors but all this did not put him right with God.
- Paul further said in defense of his gospel that God chose him to be an apostle before he was born.
- Paul defended his gospel by stressing the task to preach the gospel to the Gentiles just as Peter was given task to preach the gospel to the Jews.
- He defended himself by saying after his conversion experience at Damascus; he left for Arabia and then returned to Damascus, it was after 3 years that he went to Jerusalem to obtain information from Peter.
- In his letter to the Galatians Paul responded to the allegation made by judaizers that he wanted a true apostle by showing them that while in Jerusalem he stayed there for two weeks which was a very short time to acquaint with the gospel preached by Peter and James the Lord's brother.
- He also stressed as a true apostle he went to Jerusalem fourteen years later after his conversion together with Barnabus and Titus to meet the Jerusalem apostles and explain to them the gospel he was preaching to the Gentiles.
- Paul defended his gospel and apostleship by saying the major Jerusalem apostles recognized and acknowledged the fact that Paul had done a great duty to preach the word of God to the Gentiles.
- Paul said he even received a hand shake from the Jerusalem apostles as a sign of approval and that they were working as partners.
- Paul said that what he wrote was the complete truth of the gospel and even God knew that he was not lying.
- Paul defended himself as a true apostle by rebuking Peter at Antioch (Gal 2:11-14) when Peter had discriminated against the Gentile Christians by withdrawing from eating a meal with them.
- Paul defended his gospel by preaching that a person is put right with God by only his faith in Jesus Christ instead of the law and circumcision.



## **COMMENT ON THE RELEVANCE OF PAUL'S DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL AND APOSTLESHIP IN THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS TO CHRISTIANS TODAY**

- Christians should accept the call of God regardless of their background, race, sex just as Paul accepted the call of God to preach the gospel to the Galatians.
- Christians are called upon to preach the gospel to all categories of people beyond their home localities just like Paul preached even to the Gentiles whereas for him he was a Pharisee.
- Christians today should always be eager to help the needy people in society like Paul tried to help the Galatians who did not know the word of God.
- Christian leaders are called upon to confess their sins emulating Paul who was once a persecutor of Christ's followers but at once came up and confessed to the people.
- Christians should defend courageously the gospel of Christ if they know they are delivering the right message taking the example of Paul who defended his gospel before the judaisers who were watering down his gospel.
- Modern Christians should have total faith in God as a means to be put right with him.
- Christians learn from Paul's teaching to have complete change of life like Paul was a persecutor of Christ's believers but eventually changed completely to a preacher of the word of God.
- Christians should leave judgment of church leaders to God because God does not judge from outside appearance but from one's inner purity or impurity.
- Religious leaders should preach one gospel about Jesus Christ of preaching a different gospel that may cause conflict among themselves.
- Church leaders should work for the approval of God instead of winning the approval of men which the judaisers claimed Paul was seeking for.
- Church leaders and Christians are called upon to work as partners in the preaching of the gospel unlike in the case of Paul who conflicted with judaisers preaching a different gospel from his gospel.
- Christians ought to treat each other equally regardless of sex and race as Paul behaved.
- Christians should correct and guide fellow Christians who go wrong following the example of Paul who corrected/rebuked Peter at Antioch because of Peter's segregative nature.

## **CAUSES/AREAS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHURCH LEADERS AND CHRISTIANS TODAY**

**Identify and discuss areas in which modern preachers would face opposition from the Christians.**

The following are some of the areas in which the sheep (Christians) may conflict with the chief shepherd (church leaders)

- Conflict between the church leaders and Christians may arise due to mismanagement of church funds. Many believers have come up to oppose their leaders in church for mobilizing fund raising to renovate the church but end up using money for personal gains like buying luxurious cars.
- Conflicts may arise over unfair promotions within the church. Some strong ushers have left some churches and formed theirs because the church leaders do not promote them fairly.
- Difference in political ideologies has contributed more conflicts in the church. Some Christians may support NRM or others FDC or DP during presidential and parliamentary elections leading to division among believers and their leaders.
- Some religious leaders may be opposed because they involve in politics directly which may create a misunderstanding with the followers from the opposite side.
- Conflicts may arise due to wrong preachings in the church like the protestant church condemned Bishop Ssenyonjo for supporting homosexuals when he was in America.
- Opposition to church leaders may arise over the background of the preacher if one was a thief or a witch doctor, the Christians would certainly oppose such a leader.
- Conflicts may arise due to tribal or racial difference or preaching in a language uncommon to the people in the area.
- Church leaders would face opposition from the Christians when they involve in immoral activities like sexual immorality in form of adultery or defilement. Fornication. This was partly the case with Pastor Muwanguzi who had a church in Namulanda and the Mengo.
- Christians today may conflict with their leaders due to the different methods/approach to the teaching of family planning. Some encourage their followers to use birth control means like pill plans and condoms which many followers say it is un Godly.
- Conflicts may arise due to poor education and home background. Some educated people tend to oppose the preaching of some pastors who are not educated and base their teaching on a few lines in the bible.
- Some conflicts may arise due to the marriage status of some church leaders. Many church leaders are not married but preach the gospel of marriage as an easy institution as if they have wives at home.
- Some people conflict with church leaders just out of envy that is jealousy, dislikeness based on colour, height ascent.
- Some Christians today conflict with their leaders because some people naturally do not want to be under any kind of authority.
- Some conflicts arise in the church between Christians and church leaders as a result of the church leader over staying in the same church but not making any development in the church.
- Some churches leaders are opposed because of giving false prophesy to the people. For example Pastor Robert Kayanja of Rubaga Miracle Centre was hated by many Christians when he prophesied in 2001 that

one of the presidential candidates was to die during the campaign. Unfortunately even up to now 2017 non of those who contested has died.

- Some church leaders are opposed because they are conservative in nature. That is to say, they don't want to change even if money is available. That is to say, putting new buildings.

**“FOR I WOULD HAVE YOU KNOWN, BRETHREN THAT THE GOSPEL WHICH WAS PREACHED BY ME ISN'T OF HUMAN ORIGIN” (GAL 1:11) JUSTIFY PAUL'S DEFENSE OF HIS APOSTLESHIP.**

- Paul quotes his experience of conversion in Acts 9 to prove his encounter with the risen Jesus.
- Paul had been a fanatical follower of the Jewish law and traditions of the ancestors. So he had to defend his apostleship.
- He had even persecuted and destroyed the followers of Jesus without mercy which made it difficult to be called an apostle even after his conversion.
- Paul defends his apostleship and the gospel he preached because the judaizers had doubted him as a true apostle of Jesus Christ.
- Paul defends his apostleship because the judaizers had claimed that Paul was preaching a false gospel which he had to defend by saying that it came from Jesus himself.
- Paul defended his apostleship because the judaizers had accused him of preaching an incomplete gospel.
- The judaizers had accused Paul of not being among the 12 disciples of Jesus so for this reason Paul decided to come up and defend his apostleship.
- Paul defended his apostleship among the brethren of Galatia because the judaizers were preaching against him saying he was trying to win man's approval (cheap popularity) instead of God's approval.
- Paul defended his apostleship because the judaizers had claimed that was not an eye witness of Jesus Christ but a second hand apostle so what he was preaching was not original from Christ.
- The judaizers had claimed that Paul was a Pharisee but what he preached was against their culture so they watered down his gospel which he came up to defend.
- Paul defended his apostleship among the brethren of Galatia because the judaizers had accused him of centering his gospel.
- Paul defended his gospel because he was accused by the judaizers of preaching the gospel which was different from that the Jerusalem apostles were preaching.
- The judaizers had accused Paul that his gospel lacked the core of the gospel message. That is to say, the law and circumcision. But said faith was more important to the Gentiles than following the Jewish law and circumcision.
- Paul wanted to show that his call to be an apostle was initiated by God not any human being that is why he said he preached a gospel not of human origin but from Christ.

- Paul defended the gospel he preached because he wanted to stress that his gospel was not different from the one preached by the Jerusalem apostles. He even said he met them in the Jerusalem council and they agreed with him the gospel he preached.
- He wanted to show that his apostolic work was even acknowledged by the major Jerusalem apostles like Peter and James.
- Paul wanted to show that he was equal to the other apostles whom they had regarded as major because he was also called by Christ to serve.

### **ASSESS THE OFFICE OF APOSTLESHIP IN UGANDA TODAY**

Largely the following are the positive laws of the modern apostles;

- Some people go for training in order to become apostles. For example the young ones who go in seminars for priestly training, the young girls who go to the convents training as nuns and others go to theological colleges (bible schools) like at African Bible University.
- Most of the apostles are males with a few female apostles which implies that women need to put in more effort to gain apostleship.
- Some apostles are celibates mostly priests because of the need to serve God better with limited family obligations.
- Some apostles take it as a vocation (calling) to serve God.
- Most apostles live exemplary life like that of Jesus Christ in order to attract more followers.
- Some apostles do their role willingly even without minding about failing because they need to serve mankind and God.
- Some apostles carryout charity work. For example building orphanages, helping the needy.
- Some apostles carryout missionary journeys as a way of preaching the gospel for example Sudan.
- Some apostles baptize new converts to Christianity.
- Some apostles have endured persecution and suffering in their work like being accused by some people who dislike their gospel.
- Some apostles carryout catechism classes to the young ones hence promoting the word of God right from childhood.
- They encourage Christians to live exemplary lives that are morally upright.
- They call upon people for repentance such that at the Parousia Jesus finds everybody prepared.
- Some apostles have encouraged Christians to get tidy matrimony so as to control sexual immorality.

**However, to a smaller extent the modern apostles have played the following negative roles;**

- Some apostles are false preachers. For example Joseph Kibwetere in Kanungu murdered a number of people at his church whom he converted that the world would come to an end in 2000.
- Some apostles are self imposed on Christians. For example pastor Kiwedde Muwanguzi.
- Some apostles are living immoral lives. That is to say, they have been identified practicing or supporting sexual immorality.
- Some apostles are performing miracles with use of evil powers. For example pastor Kakande.
- Some apostles are acting negatively by commercializing the gospel. That is to say, they are money minded than real spreading of the word of God. For example pastor Namutebi who puts divisions in church and does not allow coins in her church.
- Some apostles have fueled divisions and conflicts within the church partly due to power struggle.
- Some apostles preach a false gospel or misinterpret the gospel for example pastor Yiga a.k.a ‘Mbizaayo’ of Kawala
- Some apostles have created personal cults in churches. For example Nabbi Bushala.
- Some apostles are corrupt they misused church funds by developing their personal desires like being luxurious cars pastor Namutebi.
- Some apostles fail to endure persecution and martyrdom because of fear of death.
- Some apostles have sided with government leaders to support government policies which may even be against the will of the majority which creates divisionism in church. For example pastor Kayanja openly supports the ruling party, national resistance movement organization.

#### **THE CONFLICT BETWEEN PAUL AND PETER AT ANTIOCH (Gal 2:11-14)**

##### **1. Give an account of the conflict between Paul and Peter at Antioch.**

##### **2. Comment on the disagreement between Paul and Peter at Antioch.**

- Paul had visited Antioch which was basically a Gentile place.
- While in Antioch Peter had exercised his freedom and so eat freely with the uncircumcised Gentile Christians.
- By eating with the Gentiles Peter had indicated that both Jesus and gentiles were equal in union with Jesus so circumcision was not a big matter to follow now.
- But when the circumcised group/judaisers arrived from Jerusalem they began preaching that Gentiles needed to observe the Jewish law and accept to be circumcised in order to be called real Christians.

- Due to the new preaching of judaisers in favour of the law and circumcision, Peter felt embarrassed before the uncircumcised Gentile Christians.
- As a result Peter withdrew from eating with the uncircumcised Gentile Christians which attracted other Jewish Christians like Barnabus to also withdraw.
- Peter's withdrawal from eating with uncircumcised Gentile Christians was a sign of cowardice and insincerity.
- Paul was not happy with the action of Peter's withdraw so he rebuked him for his double standard.
- To Paul this was also a sign of undermining the growth of the church.
- Paul said if Peter as a Jew could not apply the law and circumcision in order to be saved, then how could he expect Gentile Christians to comply with the law.
- Indeed Peter's action of withdrawing from eating with the Gentiles had given a bad example to the rest of the Christians in Antioch.
- Peter's action according to Paul was not demonstrating him as a true apostle of the church and a leader. Its like he was trying to uphold Judaism.
- Peter's action was bound to hinder reconciliation efforts between the Jews and gentiles.
- Peter's behavior undermined the gospel that Paul was preaching to the Gentiles.

#### **ACCOUNT FOR PAUL'S REFERENCE TO THIS DISAGREEMENT IN HIS LETTER TO THE GALATIANS**

##### **Why was Paul referring to this conflict between him and Peter at Antioch in his letter to the Galatians?**

- Paul referred this conflict in his letter to the Galatians because the Galatians were being confused by the judaisers.
- Paul wanted to highlight towards Galatians the difficulties involved in a bidding to the mosaic/Jewish law.
- He wanted to show that no one can fulfill every requirement of the Mosaic Law.
- Paul wanted also to show the Galatians that if one did not fulfill the requirements of the law then he was under a curse of God.
- Paul wanted to show the Galatians to realize that Christianity is a religion of equality regardless of sex, status, race and background.
- He wanted to show the Galatians that b following the law it was risky and would make the slaves of the law instead of being free in Jesus Christ.
- He wanted to prove to the Gentiles that the judaisers were wrong to force the Gentiles to circumcision.
- Paul wanted to defend his apostleship to them (Gentiles) since he had rebuked Peter the major apostle openly.
- Paul wanted to use his experience of how he had followed the law but it only turned him into a persecutor of the church.

- Paul also wanted to teach the Galatians that if the law could put a person right with God then Jesus Christ died for nothing.

## **WHAT MAKES ONE A CHRISTIAN**

### **1. Examine Paul's teaching on justification by faith in his letter to the Galatians.**

### **2. Discuss what makes one a Christian in light of Paul's letter to the Galatians.**

- ✓ The judaisers were insisting that the law and circumcision were important in making one righteous because they were divinely inspired by God hence all Christians whether Jew or Gentiles had to obey it.
- ✓ However Paul insisted that both Jews and Gentiles were saved by faith in Jesus Christ and so were put right with God through Jesus and not obeying the law.
- ✓ Paul even uses his experience of how he had tried to follow the Jewish law but it did not put him right with God other than turning him into a persecutor.
- ✓ Paul says it was only God's direct and loving intervention through Jesus Christ that he became a new creature and his old nature completely died so as to a Christ like character.
- ✓ Paul emphasized that if a person can be put right with God through the law, then it means that Christ died for nothing.
- ✓ He said that himself and Peter had found salvation in Jesus Christ not because of following the Jewish law and so they were not different from the Gentiles who were also finding salvation in Jesus Christ without following the law.
- ✓ To defend himself that a person is justified by faith not by the law. Paul said God had worked miracles among them because they had believed in the gospel and not because they had followed the law and circumcision.
- ✓ Paul says he received the spirit of God as a result of hearing and believing in the gospel not because they had followed the law and circumcision.
- ✓ Paul abused the Galatians by calling them foolish because they had heard a clear description of the death and resurrection of Jesus but now they were turning to the teaching of judaisers.
- ✓ Paul says it is through faith in Jesus Christ that one can become a Christian and reconciliation is possible to mankind.
- ✓ Paul said the time for faith had come in his teaching and the error of the law had come to an end.
- ✓ To emphasize more that one is made a Christian by faith he used the example of Abraham who believed in God and because of his faith God accepted him as a righteous yet he lived before the error of the law.
- ✓ Paul said the law was a curse for mankind but Jesus Christ had to die on the cross to save mankind from the curse of the law.
- ✓ Paul stressed that those who depend on the law leave under God's curse because whoever does not obey every requirement of the law is under the curse of God.

- ✓ Paul taught that only a person who is put right with God through faith shall live and the law had nothing to do with his faith.
- ✓ He also stressed that the law came 430 years after the covenant of faith that God had made with Abraham. So the law could not break and cancel the promises that God had made to Abraham.
- ✓ He used the example of Hagar to symbolize the idea of the law and the Jewish nations under slavery. Hagar's son Ishmael could not become the heir to Abraham because he was born under slavery.
- ✓ Paul also uses the example of Sarah to symbolize the idea of faith and heavenly Jerusalem set free from the demands of the Jewish law. Her son Isaac became Abraham's heir because he was born as a result of God's promises.

#### **REASONS WHY PAUL REBUKED PETER AT ANTIOCH**

- 1. Analyse the factors that made Paul to rebuke Peter at Antioch.**
- 2. Justify Paul's criticism against the behavior of Peter at Antioch.**
- 3. Account for Paul's opposition of Peter's behavior at Antioch.**

- ✓ It was because Peter's action of stopping to have the meal with Gentiles seemed to win man's approval instead of God's approval. That is to say, to Paul, Peter wanted to win cheap popularity from the other Jews.
- ✓ Paul rebuked Peter's action because he saw that it could hinder the unity of the church. That is to say, the unity between Jews and Gentiles.
- ✓ The action of Peter discriminating the Gentiles was contradicting with the decision that had been agreed upon in the Jerusalem council meeting whereby apostles agreed that it was faith in Jesus Christ that put a person right with God not following the law.
- ✓ Paul rebuked Peter because Peter's action was a bad example to other Christians. That is to say, it could mislead other Christians like Barnabus who also withdrew from the meal.
- ✓ It was because Peter's actions contradicted with the gospel that he was originally preaching which made Paul attack him. Peter was preaching a gospel of faith yet he behaved as if the law and circumcision were still guiding him.
- ✓ Paul rebuked Peter because the action was discriminating against the Gentile Christians hence going against the law of love for one another.
- ✓ Paul rebuked Peter because he wanted to defend the true gospel of faith yet the action of Peter seemed to be in favour of the law and circumcision.
- ✓ It was because Paul wanted to show that he was a true apostle of Jesus Christ that is why he had rebuked Peter moreover the head of the apostles.
- ✓ To Paul Peter's action showed him as a true hypocrite. That is to say, a man of double standards or a man of no clear stand.



- ✓ Paul rebuked Peter because his action was putting the gospel of faith that Paul had preached to the Gentiles at stake.
- ✓ Paul was concerned because Peter's action was abusing the real meaning of the Lord's Supper which was intended to unite all Christians as a way of remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ Peter's action could hinder the expansion of the church as many Gentiles could get discouraged from joining the church that Paul had formed.
- ✓ Paul rebuked Peter because Peter's action showed he had failed to emulate of associating with all classes of people (Jews and Gentiles).
- ✓ Rebuking Peter at Antioch was to show that Peter was discriminative which could mean that the death of Jesus on the cross was for nothing.
- ✓ Peter's action of discrimination was opposed by Paul because it meant that Peter was still being enslaved by the law like other Jews.

## **PAUL'S TEACHING ON FAITH**

### **1. Examine the teaching of Paul on faith in his letter to Galatians.**

### **2. Discuss Paul's teaching on the idea of faith in the letter to Galatians.**

Paul taught the following concerning faith:

- ✓ Paul taught that faith is not simply to accept or know Jesus Christ in the mind but it means giving total commitment of oneself to the will of God.
- ✓ Paul also said we are liberated or saved by God's grace in Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection instead of human effort.
- ✓ Paul also taught a person is put right with God through faith and faith alone.
- ✓ He stressed that he lived by faith in Jesus Christ who gave in his life for him.
- ✓ Paul says even the apostles believed in order to be put right with God.
- ✓ Paul continued to teach the Galatians that both the Jew and Gentiles are put right with God by faith.
- ✓ Paul went ahead to use his own example of a person who followed the Jewish law in order to win salvation, instead this turned him into a persecutor until when God's grace put him right.
- ✓ He taught the Galatians that they received the Holy Spirit as a result of their faith in Jesus not because they followed the law.
- ✓ Paul taught that God worked miracles among them as apostles because of their faith in Jesus Christ and not because they followed the law and circumcision.
- ✓ He put it clear that now the time for faith had come and so the law was no longer in charge of mankind.
- ✓ Paul used the example of Abraham as a man who was put right with God because of his faith in him but not because of following the law.
- ✓ Paul went ahead to teach that the real descendants of Abraham are those who have faith in Jesus Christ.

- ✓ Paul stressed that through faith we are in union with Jesus Christ and with faith all Christians are heirs of God.
- ✓ Paul taught the Galatians that with faith in Jesus Christ there are neither men nor women in Jesus.
- ✓ Paul uses the example of Sarah the wife of Abraham. She believed in bearing a son of her own who came to be known as Isaac.
- ✓ Paul also quotes the Old Testament scriptures which predicted that God would put right the Gentiles by faith in him.
- ✓ He stressed that the covenant of faith was given 430 years before the covenant of the law. So the law could not break and cancel God's promises to Abraham.
- ✓ Paul says the people without faith were spiritually immature and irresponsible.

### **THE CURSE OF THE LAW (Gal 3)**

#### **Examine Paul's teaching about the curse of the law in his letter to Galatians.**

- ✓ Paul said the law carried a risk of curses and so warned the Galatians that those following the law were under a curse as the scriptures said in Deut 27:26 that any person who breaks a single law is placed under a curse.
- ✓ He also said Jesus saved us from the curse of the law by being hanged on the cross thereby taking on the curse that would have been ours (Deut 21:23)
- ✓ Paul taught that it is through faith that the Gentiles received blessings and the promised spirit of God. So meaning only a person of faith shall live.
- ✓ Paul taught that the law does not put a person right with God but one had to remain faithful.
- ✓ Paul also taught the Galatians that the law could not save an individual but only those who believed in Jesus Christ's death could be saved.
- ✓ He taught the Galatians that the law was given to mankind to show him what wrong doing (sin) was and to make people aware of their sins such that they could repent.
- ✓ Paul narrated that the covenant of the law was made 430 years after the covenant of faith and so the law could not break and cancel the promises of God to Abraham.
- ✓ According to Paul the law was a temporary arrangement meant last and work until the coming of the descendant of Abraham to whom the promises were made (Gal 3:10)
- ✓ Paul taught the Galatians that the law was handed down by angels and it cannot be compared with faith which was handed down directly by God to Abraham. Therefore Paul believed that the law was of second class importance.
- ✓ He taught that the law was to enslave mankind until the coming of Jesus Christ.

- ✓ Paul taught the Galatians that now the time of faith had come; the law was no longer in charge of mankind.
- ✓ He also emphasized that the law was to separate men from women, Jews and Gentiles and free people from slaves.
- ✓ As emphasis Paul used the example of Hagar to symbolize the law and the Jewish nation under the slavery of the law.
- ✓ Hagar's son Ishmael could not become the heir of Abraham because he was born under slavery.
- ✓ Paul emphasized that the law is inferior to faith. That is to say, the law would not spiritually purify a sinner because it did not have the power to save mankind from sins.

### **THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW**

- 1. Discuss the purpose of the law according to Paul's letter to the Galatians.**
  - 2. Account for the usefulness of the law according to the letter to the Galatians.**
- ✓ According to Paul the law was to identify sinners. When the Israelites started sinning God gave them the law to make them understand what wrong doing was (Gal 3:19)
  - ✓ The law was meant to prepare the Jews for the coming of Jesus Christ. Indeed it's importance was temporary just to prepare people for the coming of Christ.
  - ✓ According to Paul the law was given to show the nature of sin mankind committed.
  - ✓ The law was given to the Jews until the time for faith was to come that is the coming of Jesus Christ.
  - ✓ Paul says the law was put to distinguish between the Jews and Gentiles, slaves and free people.
  - ✓ He said that the law was to bring a curse upon mankind who had failed to follow the requirements of the law.
  - ✓ The law was to work on last until the coming of Jesus Christ the descendant of Abraham to whom the promises were made.
  - ✓ According to Paul the law could not break and cancel the promises that God had made with Abraham because of his faith.
  - ✓ Paul also stressed that the law was put to maintain holiness among the believers of God.
  - ✓ It was also purposely to identify Israel as a nation of God just like a father could put guiding laws towards his children.
  - ✓ According to Paul God gave the Jews laws to reveal his concern to them as his chosen nation.

### **THE WEAKNESS OF THE JEWISH LAW ACCORDING TO THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS**

- 1. Discuss the inefficiency of the law according to the letter to the Galatians.**
- 2. Comment on the weakness of the law as far as the letter to the Galatians is concerned.**

- ✓ According to Paul the law had no power to forgive the sins of mankind in case sinned because it was only through Jesus that one's sins were forgiven. The law could not put a person right with God unless he also had faith.
- ✓ To Paul if the law could put a person right with God then Jesus Christ died for nothing. Thus the law was inefficient to the Galatians without having faith.
- ✓ Paul said that those who followed the law were spiritually immature. That is to say, it led to spiritual immaturity.
- ✓ According to Paul's teaching the law was inefficient in that observing the law had turned Paul into a persecutor of the church of Christ,
- ✓ Paul states that the law was inferior to faith because it was given to mankind through a mediator Moses.
- ✓ The law created distinctions between men and women, Jews and Gentiles, free people and slaves hence to Paul the law was inefficient in the growth of the church.
- ✓ He stated that the law was only given to the Jews as the chosen people of God thus it could not help the Gentiles to be saved but only faith.
- ✓ Paul taught that it was very hard to follow every requirement of the law written in the book of the law. So if one broke any one law according to God's standards then even other laws would be violent.
- ✓ The law led to crucifixion of Jesus Christ on the cross so as to save mankind from the curse of the law. Therefore according to Paul now that Christ had died and risen faith was more important than obedience of the law.
- ✓ Paul noted that observation of the law had made mankind a prisoner or a slave instead of giving him freedom. Therefore it wasn't necessary anymore to have the law.
- ✓ Paul noted that the law was temporary arrangement meant to last and work until the coming of Jesus Christ so now that Christ came and died for man's sins the law was no longer necessary or was inefficient.
- ✓ Paul taught that the law was inefficient because it could not bring about the holy spirit as well as making miracles among the Galatians instead it was faith in Jesus Christ that could bring miracles.
- ✓ Against Paul says the law was inefficient as he said that could not make mankind inherit the blessings could not become a heir to Abraham because of born out of slavery.
- ✓ Paul stressed that the law as inefficient because it brought death to mankind yet through faith mankind was to leave.

#### **THE EFFECTS OF MODERN CHURCH LAWS TO CHRISTIANS**

- 1. Assess the effects of the church laws and practices in Uganda today.**
- 2. Discuss the effects/merits and demerits of the church laws for Christians in Uganda today.**

##### **Positive effects/merits of church laws and practices**

- ✓ Law against divorce and marriage make marriage to be permanent and respect as a divine institution of God.

- ✓ Church laws like preventing drunkardness especially among church leaders like priests has kept the morals of Christians.
- ✓ The church law commanding believers to practice monogamous marriages has helped to check on immorality in the society as well as respecting marriage as a divine institution. That is to say, initiated by God.
- ✓ The giving of tithes helps the clergy financially as well as aiding the church to extend services to the poor Christians.
- ✓ The catholic priests have a law of remaining celibate; this helps to be devoted to the work of God because marriage life is full of worries and challenges.
- ✓ In the church its by law that sex has to be practiced only in marriage. This gives respect to the issue of sex which is sacred. It also reduces on sexual immorality in the society like fornication adultery and prostitution.
- ✓ In some churches baptism of infants is discouraged. This helps the baptism candidate to clearly understand the meaning of baptism.
- ✓ The vow of poverty taken some church leaders mostly the Roman catholic priests makes them depend totally on the will of God as the soul provider as well as giving assistance to the poor.
- ✓ In the church following the command of sacraments like Holy Communion and matrimony gives respect for church sacraments.
- ✓ Observing the days of obligation like Easter, supper, Christmas brings Christians together as members of the church as one body in Christ.
- ✓ The laws about leaders to be elected into higher offices of leadership. For example the pope, archbishop and bishops help to maintain peace and order/democracy in the church.
- ✓ In most churches condoms re forbidden therefore it helps to stop the misuse of sex among youth.

#### **Negative effects/demerits**

- ✓ The law of celibacy for the Catholic Church priests has led to sexual immorality practices by some of the priests which can cause unwanted pregnancy.
- ✓ Some church leaders pretend to be celibates but end up practicing sex leading to acquisition of AIDs.
- ✓ The vow of poverty has made some religious leaders to act or practice corruption whereby they use church funds for personal benefit like buying luxurious cars.
- ✓ Some Christians especially from the Roman Catholic Church are running away to born again churches because the Roman Catholics have so strict laws like no divorce.
- ✓ Some Christians are eloping because of fear of taking church vows.
- ✓ In most churches especially the Roman Catholics, contraceptives are discouraged because they lead to unwanted pregnancies sometimes if poorly used.
- ✓ Some churches are opposing or paying tithes every moth which they claim makes them poor.

- ✓ Observing the days of obligation like the Sabbath makes some people enslaved.
- ✓ The church law of observing monogamy may lead to some women being unmarried because their number is more than that of men.
- ✓ In the same way having monogamous marriage may lead to some men being unmarried, being sexually unsatisfied and this may lead to sexual immorality like adultery.

## **PAUL'S USE OF OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES IN HIS LETTER TO GALATIANS**

- 1. Discuss use of Jewish scriptures in his letter to Galatians.**
- 2. Analyse the scriptural justification Paul used to show that faith is more important than the works of the law in his letter to the Galatians.**
  - Paul refers to Abraham as the father of believers whom God accepted as righteous because of his faith (Gal 3:6)
  - Paul goes on to say that the real descendants of Abraham are those who have faith in Jesus Christ but not those who observe the law.
  - In Gal 3:9 Paul quotes Abraham and says he was blessed because of his faith and so those who have faith in Jesus Christ will be blessed too.
  - Paul teaches that the Jewish scriptures predicted that Gentiles would be put right with God by faith in him which indeed was (Gal 3:8)
  - Paul says that God's promises were fulfilled through Abraham and later through his descendant Jesus Christ to indicate that it is faith that puts a person right with God.
  - He said that those depending on obedience to the law live under a curse of God because whoever does not follow everything written in the book of the law is under God's curse.
  - In Gal 2:20-21 Paul teaches that Jesus Christ died on the cross so as to save mankind from the curse of the law that was put upon them in Deut 21:23.
  - Paul says that a person who is put right with God through faith shall live hence reflecting the scriptures in the book of Habakkuk 2:4.
  - Paul says that the law was given 430 years later and so could not break or cancel God's promises to Abraham.
  - Paul uses the example of Sarah to symbolize the idea of faith and heavenly Jerusalem freed from the law (Gal 4:21-31)
  - He says Sarah's son Isaac became the heir to Abraham because he was born as a result of the promises of God.
  - He still uses the example of Hagar to represent the idea of the law and the Jewish nation under slavery (Gal 4:21-31)

- Paul's teaches the Jews were given the law to show mankind what wrong doing was and the results.
- Paul teaches the law was a temporary arrangement given to the Jews and was meant to last and work until the coming of Jesus Christ.
- Paul quotes that the angels handed down the law through Moses acting as a mediator but the covenant of faith was directly made between God and Abraham.

### **PRESERVATION OF CHRISTIAN FREEDOM (Gal 5:1-26)**

#### **Examine Paul's teaching concerning Christian freedom in his letter to the Galatians.**

- Paul taught the Galatian Christians that freedom in Jesus Christ is what makes them true sons and daughters of God the father and so can call upon God the father Abba in prayer (Gal 4:6-7)
- Paul taught that by accepting Jesus Christ as the savior the Galatians had been set free from the curse of the law.
- Christian freedom according to Paul meant a license to live moral life but not a license to sin.
- Paul taught that since Jesus Christ had died to set people free, they were not to allow becoming slaves to the law again.
- Paul taught that Christian freedom meant having faith in Jesus Christ as a means to being put right with God.
- He said Christian freedom does not require circumcision and other food prohibitions, otherwise this would mean that Jesus Christ died for nothing.
- Paul stressed that Christian involves loving one another plus loving our enemies and neighbours.
- Christian freedom according to Paul's teaching to free Christians means to serve one another with partiality.
- Paul taught that Christian freedom is a life of free Christians characterized by the gift of the Holy Spirit where love, patience, peace, kindness, goodness, gentleness, trustfulness, self control are practiced.
- Paul warned the Galatian Christians that they should not use their freedom to fulfill their r bodily desires like fornication and jealous.
- He said that Christian freedom means the removal of sin from society because small as it is, it may affect the whole church.
- Paul says Christian freedom unites all people with Jesus Christ regardless of race, sex or free people the circumcised and non- circumcised.
- Paul taught the Galatians that they were children of a free woman, Sarah who represents the Jewish nation freed from the law.
- Paul illustrates the new freedom Galatians should enjoy by referring to Hagar and Sarah. Hagar and Ishmael represent slavery while Sarah and Isaac represent freedom and its blessing.

- Paul taught the Galatians that himself was freed from the Jewish law by Jesus himself. This was on his way to Damascus when he was going to persecute Christ's followers (Acts 9)
- Paul notified the Galatians that it was due to the freedom in Christ that enabled him to rebuke Peter at Antioch. He did this in a true Christian spirit.

### **WHAT LESSONS CAN MODERN CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM THE TEACHING OF PAUL ON CHRISTIAN FREEDOM?**

- Modern Christians should love one another just as Paul emphasized to the Galatians that their Christian freedom should mean to love one another.
- Christians are called upon to worship one God as Paul emphasized to the Galatians.
- Modern Christians learn to have faith in Jesus Christ so as to get God's salvation.
- Christians today are called upon to be united in Jesus Christ regardless of race, sex, slaves or free people.
- Christians should be controlled by the power of the Holy Spirit because according to Paul this can enable a person to achieve God's glory.
- Modern Christians are called upon to preserve and guard their Christian freedom not to be controlled by one's physical desires.
- Just as Paul emphasized to the Galatians, Christians today should serve one another by carrying one another's burdens.
- Basing on Paul's teaching to the Galatians, modern Christians should produce fruits of the Holy Spirit in their lives like patience, kindness, and self control.
- Christians today should treat each other equally because Christian freedom unites all people in union with Jesus Christ.
- Modern Christians should use their Christian freedom responsibly to live holy instead of misusing it to live immoral lives.

### **HOW CAN CHRISTIANS EXERCISE THEIR CHRISTIAN FREEDOM IN MODERN TIMES?**

- A Christian can exercise his Christian freedom by worshipping one true God as Paul emphasized to the Galatians.
- Christians can exercise their Christian freedom in modern times by loving one another as Paul called upon the Galatians/as Jesus loved both Jews and Gentiles.
- In modern times Christian freedom can be exercised through promoting peace in the society.
- By being kind to one another in society.
- By helping one another as well as serving enemies.



- Be praying to God and praying for one another.
- By visiting the sick in hospitals and prisoners in jail.
- By participating in church activities like church choir, drama and plays.
- By preaching the word of God.
- Be carrying out crusades and attending them.
- By carrying out missionary journeys.
- By living exemplary lives.
- By reading the bible.
- Through building various churches.
- By going for church fellowships.
- By taking part in the Lord's Supper.
- Through composing Christian songs and hymns.

## **HOW HAVE CHRISTIANS MISUSED THEIR CHRISTIAN FREEDOM TODAY?**

The following are some of the ways Christian freedom has been misused;

- Some Christians engage themselves in immoral activities like fornication, adultery, corruption.
- Some Christians dress indecently
- Some rich Christians exploit the poor Christians. That is to say, giving them little pay for hard work done.
- Some Christians are divided basing on personality grounds and denomination. This is common in Pentecostal churches.
- Some Christians have misused their freedom by sparing no time for God. That is to say, **they the business oriented.**
- Some Christians have misused their freedom by turning the churches into money creating ventures (business) for example in pastor Namutebi's church Liberty Worship Centre there are special seats and baskets for the poor and the rich.
- Some Christians misinterpret the gospel for their selfish interests thus misusing their Christian freedom for example Yesu Muto, Pastor Yiga.
- Some Christians still worship idols in the society which is a misuse of their freedom in Christ.
- Some Christians have misused their Christian freedom by consulting witch doctors for instance instead of praying for a boy child they go to a witch.
- Some Christians today misuse their freedom in Christ by practicing human sacrifices in order to get rich quick for example Kato Kajubi who sacrificed Kasirye from Masaka.
- Some church leaders have tended to fuel political conflicts and instability in the country.

- Some Christians are thieves as well as being murders.
- Some Christians continue to doubt Jesus Christ as the son of God.
- Some Christians misuse their Christian freedom when they carryout corruption and embezzlement of funds.

**“Christian freedom is the main teaching in Paul’s letter to Galatians”. Asses the validity of this statement.**

**To what extent is Paul’s teaching on Christian freedom a major theme in his letter to the Galatians?**

To a larger extent Christian freedom is a dominate theme in Paul’s letter to the Galatians because of his teaching on Christian freedom in the following ways;

- By accepting Jesus Christ as the savior the Galatians had been set free from the curse of the law.
- Since Jesus Christ died to set them free, they were not becoming slaves to the law again.
- He encourages them to preserve and guard the Christian freedom they had got.
- Christian freedom means having faith in Jesus Christ as a means to being put right with God.
- Christian freedom does not require circumcision and other food prohibitions, otherwise this would mean that Jesus Christ died for nothing.
- Christian freedom is not a license to sin . That is to say, a license to live amoral life.
- Christian freedom means being controlled by the Holy Spirit.
- Christian freedom means to love one another.
- Christian freedom means to serve one another.
- Christian freedom calls for the manifestation of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in one’s life like love, peace, self control, kindness, goodness.
- A person who is controlled by the Holy Spirit means is not subject to the law.
- Christian freedom does not mean being controlled by one’s physical desires.
- Christian freedom means the remove of sins from society because small as it is, it may affect the whole church.
- Christian freedom unites all people with Jesus Christ regardless of race, sex, slave or free people or circumcised or uncircumcised.
- Christians are children of free women, Sarah who represents the Jewish nation freed from the law.

**However to a smaller extent, Paul’s letter to the Galatians also had other teaching to the audience**

- Paul defends his gospel when he says the gospel he preaches came directly from Jesus Christ.
- He also defends his gospel when he says there is no any other gospel apart from the gospel of faith he had preached.

- Paul also his gospel when he warns should anyone preach a different gospel from that he had preached, that person was to be condemned to hell.
- Paul defends his apostleship when he says his call to be an apostle come from man but from Jesus Christ.
- Paul defends his apostleship when he said he was called to be an apostle to the Gentiles.
- Paul defends his apostleship when he said he was called to be an apostle before he was born.
- Paul's teaching on faith says a person is put with God through faith and faith alone instead of the law.
- Paul's teaching on faith says even Abraham believed in God and God accepted him as righteous.
- His teaching on faith says both Jews and Gentiles are put right in God by faith in Jesus Christ.
- Paul encourages Christians to always carry one another's burdens.
- By carrying one another's burdens, means to love one another.
- Paul advises the spiritual Christians to put right those who are caught in wrong doing but in a Gentile way.
- Paul teaches that the purpose of the law was to enslave mankind.
- Paul also teaches that the law was custodian of mankind.
- Paul also teaches that the law was a curse for mankind.
- The conflict between Peter and Paul shows that both Jews and Gentiles are equal before God.

#### **THE CONTROL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT/ CONTRAST BETWEEN THE DESIRES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND DESIRES OF THE HUMAN NATURE(Gal 5:16-26)**

- 1. How did Saint Paul in his letter to the Galatians teach about the life guided by the Holy Spirit?**
- 2. Examine Paul's teaching on the contrast between the desires of the Holy Spirit and those of human nature.**
- 3. "For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the spirit and the spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature they are in conflict with each other". Explain the above statement in light of Paul's teaching on the control of the Holy Spirit in a life of a Christian.**
  - Paul stresses that the life of a Christian who has found freedom is guided by the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a Christian overcomes all weakness of the human nature.
  - There is a constant war between the desires of the Holy Spirit and the desires of the flesh.
  - In the power of Jesus, the weaknesses of the human nature can be overcome.
  - Such evil desires will always confront a Christian who seems to be committed to his faith.
  - However at the end of the temptation a Christian will always overcome for as long as he is guided by the Holy Spirit.
  - A Christian who is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit shall always be beyond the control of the law.

- He says the demand of the flesh are full of immoral filthy and indecent actions like worship of idols and witchcraft, drunkardness and divisions.
- Paul says evil forces in a sinful man affect his social relationships.
- People quarrel and fight, they become jealous angry and self ambitions. These are opposed by a Christian who is guided by the Holy Spirit.
- The sin due to the desires of the flesh affects tempers and human emotions which make men envious.
- On the other hand Paul taught under the control of the Holy Spirit manifest agape love, joy and peace.
- The Holy Spirit will produce good relationship among one another, produces virtues like patience, justice and tolerance.
- A person is not tempered.
- A Christian becomes faithful, gentle, has self control and puts his word in action.
- The Holy Spirit unites a person with Jesus Christ.
- A person becomes spiritually rich and does things that please God.
- The power under the Holy Spirit brings a Christian closer to God and strengthens him in a much deeper relationship with God.
- He shows that there is no body who will ever satisfy the demands of the human flesh.
- Paul says when we walk in the spirit of the Lord we no longer do as we wish but as God wishes.
- The Holy Spirit enables Christians to take the right decisions in most tricky situations of life.
- Saint Paul taught that those guided by the Holy Spirit should not boast over others . That is to say, they should not be proud of themselves.
- Paul also said that those who belong to Jesus have put to death their human flesh with its desires and so should rest their faith in him.
- Paul also taught that those who are driven by sinful nature shall not inherit God's kingdom.

#### **BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDEN/CARRYING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDEN (Gal 6:1-10)**

- 1. Examine Paul's appeal to the Galatians to carry one another's burdens.**
- 2. "Help to carry one another's burdens and in this way you will obey the law of Jesus Christ". What is the teaching of Paul on the above.**
  - Paul advises spiritual Christians to put right fellow Christians in any kind of wrong doing.
  - He also advises spiritual Christians to exercise gentility, care and concern when putting right fellow Christians caught in wrong doing.
  - Paul advises spiritual Christians in Galatia to guard themselves against being tempted in the process of bearing one another's burdens.

- Paul appealed to the Galatians to continue doing good to one another instead of getting tired for they will be rewarded.
- He also teaches helping one another's burdens mean loving one another which is the law of Jesus Christ (Gal 6:2)
- Paul appealed to the Galatians that each one should be ready to carry his own responsibility even before trying to bear other people's burdens.
- The statement indicated that each person had to judge his own conduct and if it is good then one would be proud of what he has done for others.
- Paul warns Galatians about self pride but encourages pride desired by God which comes from the desire to bear one another's burdens.
- Paul discourages them from comparing their contributions with what someone else has done in the process of bearing one another's burdens.
- He encourages those Christians who are being taught the gospel to share all the good things they have with their religious leaders as a sign of carrying one another's burdens (Gal 6:9)
- Paul appealed to them to take it as an opportunity to do well everyone especially to fellow Christians.
- Paul encourages the Galatians to take the opportunity of their freedom to share those in need like the sick.
- Paul discouraged the Galatians from fooling themselves by thinking that they were superior to others. He says each person will reap what he sows.
- Paul encourages them to sow in the field of the Holy Spirit by producing love, joy, kindness, peace so as to get eternal life.
- He also appealed to the Christians of Galatia to carry one another's burdens through living exemplary lives.
- Paul also advises the Christians to always have a spirit of forgiving one another.

### **HOW RELEVANT IS PAUL'S TEACHING ON CARRYING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDEN TO MODERN CHRISTIANS?**

- The strong Christians in faith should help in putting right fellow Christians caught in wrong doing just as Paul emphasized to the Galatians.
- The spiritual Christians should exercise gentility, care and concern while putting right fellow Christians caught in any kind of wrong doing.
- Like Paul advised Christians of Galatia to carry one another's burden, Christians today should also take care of religious leaders by giving them financial and material health like transport to carryout their work well.

- Christians today are called upon to carry one another's burden by showing a spirit of love to each and everybody including their enemies.
- Lazy Christians are called upon to work hard to carry their own burden so as to live happy life.
- Christians today should live holy lives as a way of carrying their burdens in order to be rewarded at the end.
- Modern Christians are called upon to continue doing good even during difficult times like in wars without getting tired.
- Christians today are called upon to seek for the power of the Holy Spirit to guide them as they carry on their burdens.
- Like Paul advised the Galatians to promote peace and harmony, so Christians today learn to promote the same as they carry their burdens.
- Modern Christians should be humble to one another while bearing one another's burden instead of being proud.
- Modern Christians should get rid of comparing their contribution or conduct with what other people have done for the same as Paul advised the Galatians.
- Christians should always do well to others as a way of carrying one another's burden. This is not only for the sake of benefiting from them.
- Modern Christians should sow what they would wish to reap since we are living in the period of eminate parosia this is in line with Paul's advice to the Galatians of bearing one another's burden.

### **DISCUSS THE MAIN TEACHING FOUND IN PAUL'S LETTER TO GALATIANS**

- According to Paul he taught that man cannot save himself from sin by his own efforts like obeying the law and following all religious practices but by God's grace one is saved.
- He also stressed that there is only one true gospel that he preached. That is to say, the gospel of faith indeed he pointed out that anyone preached a different gospel he needed to be condemned to hell.
- Paul confined to the Galatians and Judaizers that his call to be an apostle came directly from Jesus Christ not from a human being.
- He went ahead to defend his apostleship when he stated that he was called to be an apostle even before he was born.
- In this letter Paul teaches how he was a persecutor of the church of God but later was saved by the grace of God when he was on his way to Damascus going to persecute Christ's followers.
- Paul teaches how he rebuked Peter at Antioch to show him that even the Gentiles are saved by faith in Jesus Christ instead of law and circumcision.

- In this letter to the Galatians Paul teaches that it is through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross that all men were saved.
- Paul taught that Christians are put right with God through faith and faith alone and not by doing what the law requires.
- In this letter uses Abraham as an example to stress that a person is put right with God not by following the law but by being faithful.
- Paul taught much about the purpose of the law and says it was to enslave mankind and show mankind what sin was.
- Paul teaches in the letter that Jesus Christ emphasized equality or union of all people regardless of sex, race, background or status.
- Paul also teaches about Christian freedom in this letter where he says freedom means having faith in Jesus Christ and loving one another as well as serving one another.
- He encourages Christians to be controlled by the power of the Holy Spirit who can help them to fight their physical desires.
- Paul teaches the Galatians to carry one another's burden as a sign of loving one another.
- He advises spiritual Christians to put right those Christians who are caught in any kind of wrong doing but in a gentle way.

### **THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL OF PAUL THAT HE PREACHED**

- 1. Explain what Paul meant by “my gospel” or “the gospel is preached to you” (Gal 1”11)**
- 2. Discuss the nature of the gospel that Paul preached to Galatians.**
- 3. In his letter to the Galatians Paul referred to his previous teaching as the gospel I preached to you. Examine the nature of this gospel.**
  - Paul does not imply or mean that he taught a gospel different from that which the Jerusalem apostles had preached but presented a gospel of Jesus Christ to the Galatians.
  - By talking of the gospel that Paul had preached he was talking about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ . That is to say, a gospel that centered on death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
  - Paul by saying my gospel that the gospel he preached was directly got from God . That is to say, the gospel was not of human origin.
  - Paul's gospel was that which centred on Gentile Christians mainly.
  - It was a gospel which even the Jerusalem apostles were preaching and they had approved it when he attended the Jerusalem council.

- Paul said to the Galatians the gospel I preached to you meaning it was a gospel of faith in Jesus Christ and the grace of God.
- Paul's gospel to the Galatians emphasized that what puts a person right with God is faith in Jesus Christ but not obedience to the Jewish law.
- Paul saying my gospel meant that the gospel he preached stressed Christian freedom from the Jewish law and sin instead of being slaves to the law.
- It was a gospel that liberated people from cultural practices like circumcision which he had seen as an external mark to identify Jewish Christians.
- Paul's gospel that he preached to the Galatians was a gospel calling upon to be controlled by the power of the Holy Spirit instead of being controlled by their physical desires.

## **THE CHARACTER OF PAUL AFTER HIS CONVERSION**

### **Examine the nature/identity of Paul after his conversion to Christianity.**

- When Paul got converted he changed from Judaism to Christianity by the power of God on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians (Acts 9)
- Paul's name changed from Saul to Paul.
- He became a recognized eyewitness of Jesus Christ because he had met Christ in the vision he received on his way to Damascus.
- Paul became an apostle of Jesus Christ and an eyewitness of the risen Jesus.
- He was spiritually an apostle to the Gentile Christians.
- Paul was baptized by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- After his conversion he became blind for over three days but he was given sight by the help of Ananias who placed his hand on him.
- Paul physically met the Jerusalem council/apostles and they recognized him as a fellow apostle.
- Paul wrote about 14 Christian letters of the New Testament . For example Paul's 1 and 2 letter to the Corinthians, Paul's letter to the Galatians which add up to the 27 books of the new testament canon.
- After conversion he carried out three major missionary journeys to Corinth, Ephesus, and Philippi.
- He sacrificed some of his apostolic rights like the right to carry a woman with him in order to preach the gospel with little obstacles.
- Paul was of a Jewish background which assisted him much in his work.
- He was a determined man who decided once and made sure that he had achieved his objectives. This is why he rebuked Peter at Antioch who was bringing discriminative tendencies between Jesus and Gentiles.
- He spread the gospel through baptism of new converts like Crispus, Gaius and Stephan's family in Corinth.



- After his conversion Paul lived a life of celibacy . That is to say, no marriage.
- He had strong belief in the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- He faced opposition from the judaisers for preaching the gospel of faith at the expense of the law and circumcision so he was persecuted and martyred in Rome around 60AD.
- He was a man full of love and concern and that is why in his letters he gave homely advice to his converts.
- He was an intelligent man who was needy to face any situation as well as answering difficult questions.

## THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER

- The first letter of Peter is believed to have been written by Peter himself around 64AD.
- The writer was one of the apostles of Jesus and he makes it clear from the beginning of the letter.
- The author is Peter whose original name was Simon but later he was named Peter by Jesus Christ.
- The author was the brother of Andrew who was also an apostle of Jesus.
- The author was Peter who was among three most beloved disciples of Jesus the other two James and John.
- The author was Peter the first disciple to dispose Jesus as Messiah.
- The author was Peter who wanted to discourage Jesus from his mission of saving sinners through suffering and Peter rebuked him.
- The author is Peter who denied Jesus three times at the critical time when Jesus was being convicted.
- The author is Peter who was the son of John.
- The writer is the first disciple to enter the empty tomb of Jesus as Jesus' body was raised (John 20:1-19)
- The author was Peter the disciple who dwell the sword and cut off he right hand side ear of one of the high priests soldiers who came to arrest Jesus.
- The author was Peter handed in the leader of Jerusalem church and was assisted by John and James.
- The author is Peter the disciple who conducted the earliest elections in the church to get the replacement of Judas Iscariot who was Mathias.
- The writer was Peter the disciple who gave a powerful (Speke) speech on the day of Pentecost leading to the conversion of 3,000 people the same day.
- He was given opportunity to take care of the church by Jesus.
- The writer was Peter who arrested and imprisoned by the Roman church officials but was released from the prison by the holy spirit (Acts 12:6-19)
- The writer is Peter who tried to walk on water sunk due to little faith.
- The author was Peter the apostle who died a martyr death in Rome.
- The author was Peter the apostle who was served by Mark as a friend and as personal secretary as an interpreter.

## **WHY SOME SCHOLARS DOUBT PETER AS THE AUTHOR**

- Some biblical scholars like Dr. Beare doubt Peter's authorship of his letter first on the ground.
- According to some scholars Peter was an illiterate and a fisherman who got a chance of going to school and hence couldn't be the author.
- He put too much emphasis on suffering showing that Peter was their writer because the climax of persecution of the church found that Peter was already dead.
- There is no direct reference to Jesus as in the letter meaning that a man like Peter who was close to Jesus could not be the writer.
- The letter was written to the Gentile community that had been evangelized by Paul and above all Peter was a special apostle of the Jews.
- The letter greatly resembled Paul the letter suggesting that Peter was not the author since he never worked closely with Paul.
- The fact that there was no reference with the holy spirit in the letter made some scholars to doubt Peter's authorship because he was so much empowered by holy spirit in his words of action.
- There is too much reference made to Greek mystery religion meaning that the author could be the pagan other than the preacher like Peter.
- The letter was originally baptismal sermon but a letter to any community in that some information was added at the time of canonicity.
- Some scholars urge that the first version of the letter was in best Greek style and grammar which could not approve Peter as the author because he was not a Greek.
- Peter was known as the apostles of Jesus yet the letter was major addressing the Gentile communities.

## **TO WHOM WAS PETER'S LETTER ADDRESSED (AUDIENCE)**

- Generally Peter refers to his audience as God's chosen province of Asia, Pontius, Galatia, Cappadocia and Bithynia among others.
- Peter's audience were strangers in sense that their nearly how was in heaven.
- He referred to his audience as strange who scattered among the pagans.
- Peter's audience were Christians who were faced by persecution and lived in foreign hands where they were regarded as strangers.
- They were already baptized Christians whom he referred to as spiritual babies (1 Peter 2:2)
- His audience were the Gentiles who were about the reveal of the sacrament of baptism.
- They were suffering Christians who were being persecuted extremely by the Romans and the Jewish authorities.
- His audience were the Gentiles whose Christianity was not approved by the Jewish laws.
- He also addressed the Jews who needed to be transformed from their Jewish mentality.

- He also addressed Christian husband whom he wanted to remind their duties to support their wives.
- Alternatively, Peter had women Christians as his audience whom he wanted to advise on their wives.
- The church elders and leaders plus shepherds were also his audience whom he wanted to remind their responsibilities of looking after the flock.
- His audience also consisted of the masters and their slaves.

## **EVIDENCE TO SHOW THAT PETER WAS PRIMARILY ADDRESSING GENTILES AND SECONDARY T THE JEWS**

To what extent was the first letter of Peter written to the Gentile Christians?

To a greater extent, it was primarily addressing the Gentile Christians as discussed below:

- The places.....his audience in the letter like Galatia, Cappadocia were gentile ones.
- The words Peter used to address the audience “that one time you were not God’s people” proves that his concern were the Gentiles.
- The past evil life of the people referred in the letter like drinking proves that he was writing to the Gentile Christians.
- In 1 Peter 1:14 he referred to the audience as Peter who was at once time evil and ignorant showing that they were the Gentiles.
- Peter used Greek names and terms in his letter to attract the attention of the Gentiles.
- In his letter, Peter refers to the empty ways of his audience which was a reflection of the Gentile life.
- One of the secretaries of Peter was a Gentile meaning that he largely Gentiles.

## **PURPOSE OF PETER’S FIRST LETTER**

- Peter’s first letter was to encourage and strengthen Christians during that time (suffering).
- Peter wanted to explain the meaning of a new life in Jesus Christ which brought his death and resurrection.
- He also wanted to teach about the meaning of baptism which makes Christians to repent and turn away from pagan ways.
- He wanted to advise the wives on the proper conduct in family with the help of the Holy Spirit.
- He wanted to remind the Christian husbands about their duties of their religion.
- He wanted to discourage the belief in idols which was threatening to take up the believers of the Christianity.
- Peter wanted to inform the Christians that they were the Israel in the kingdom God.
- He wrote the letter to advise the Christians to have respect for the civil rulers without discrimination.
- He wanted to encourage the married people to have love for one another and encourage monogamous marriage.

- He wrote his letter to encourage the Christian slaves to maintain their status although they were experiencing trials and suffering.

### **PETER'S TEACHING ON TRIALS AND SUFFERING**

- 1 Peter wrote that suffering is part and parcel of Christians meaning that as long as a Christian he is bound to suffering (1 Peter 4:4-12)
- He advised Christians of his time to be glad and joy during the time of suffering.
- He teaches that trials are aimed at testing of genuine mass of Christian faith.
- He teaches that suffering and trials are temporal and that they are going to be passed away and be replaced by joy, peace, praises and comfort (Peter 5:10)
- He advises Christians to endure all forms of suffering that come their way for the sake of Jesus.
- He teaches that all those who endure trials and suffering will get a big reward.
- He advised the suffering slaves to be rather submissive to their masters.
- He promised God's blessings to all those who endure under served suffering.
- He discouraged slaves from revenging and threatening their harsh masters.
- He consoled the suffering Christians that they were suffering for doing what was right and therefore they should be happy.
- He teaches that their persecutions will be ashamed.
- Peter called upon the suffering Christians to be gentle and honour Christ even in terms of suffering.
- He also advised them to avoid evils like murder theft etc.
- He assured the suffering Christians of his time of the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- He advised them to have self control, serve others and be hospitable even to those who make them suffer.
- He assured victory to all the suffering just as attained it after suffering.

### **RELEVANCE OF PETER'S TEACHING TO THE MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- Christians should endure suffering according to Peter's teaching because suffering is part and partial of Christian life.
- Christians who suffer should have genuine faith when faced with trials.
- Christians who suffer should keep themselves spiritually alert.
- The suffering Christians should remain in monotheism by avoiding all forms of witchcraft during the time of suffering.
- Christians should read and listen to the word of God during moment of suffering.
- Christians should rejoice, guide and counsel one another.
- Christians should forgive those who harass and persecute them.
- Christians should pray to God for the help of Holy Spirit in moments of suffering.

### **PETER'S TEACHING ABOUT LIVING HOPE (1:3-12)**

- He advised Christians of his time to understand that their real home is in heaven.
- He also calls upon Christians to be thankful to God because it wasn't of his mercy that sent his son to die for the salvation of mankind.
- He assured his teachers that the heavenly hope is full of blessing for all Christians.
- He teaches that the living hope is under divine protection and it can't be attacked.
- He teaches that the resurrection of Jesus is an assurance of the living hope.
- He advised Christians to endure trials and suffering in order to qualify for heavenly rewards.
- He also assured the Christians that their sufferings were temporal and they would give way to the heavenly hope.
- He also reminded the Christians of the second coming of Jesus which was soon and that it would be a day of joy for the faithful ones.
- He stressed that those who were seeking for the living hope needed to live holy life by repenting.
- He also encouraged Christians of his time to forgive those who made them suffer.

### **RELEVANCE OF THE TEACHING TO CHRISTIANS**

- Christians should strive to attain the heavenly kingdom which is their real home.
- Christians should have faith in God and Jesus Christ in order to attain heavenly hope because it is out of the faith that Christians can attain heavenly hope.
- Christians should believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ which can enable them to have their own resurrection to attain heaven.
- Christians should promote peace and joy in order to attain the heavenly peace and joy.
- Christians should endure trials and suffering with joy in order to qualify for heavenly rewards.
- Christians should prepare themselves for the second coming of Jesus which leads them to their heavenly hope.
- Christians should strive to meet the Messiah in heaven since all Christians of faith are assured of seeing Jesus Christ in heavenly kingdom.
- Christians should live holy lives in order to attain living hope.

### **PETER'S TEACHING ON HOLY LIVING**

The entire letter of first Peter can be referred to as a call for holy living because Peter specifically deals with the subject matter of holy living.

### **CONTENT OF PETER'S TEACHING**

- In his teaching he reminded Christians of his time about the returning of Jesus Christ and he told them to be alert and to set their hope completely on blessings.
- He teaches that holy living calls for obedience to God therefore he calls upon the Christians to show their total obedience to God in order to be holy.
- He teaches that Christians should be holy just as their God is holy because God doesn't associate with unholy people.
- He teaches that Christians should pray to have a holy living.
- He teaches that Christians should honour the blood of Jesus Christ if they have to maintain holy living.
- Peter teaches that Christians should get rid of all evil behaviours and attitudes if they are to have a holy living.
- He teaches that to have a holy living Christians should always strive to be pure and innocent.
- He teaches that Christians should strive to walk in the light in order to have holy living.
- He teaches that its important to maintain the baptism which the Christians have received in order to live a holy living.
- It teaches that holy living calls Christians to believe in Jesus Christ.
- He calls upon Christian slaves to obey their masters in order to attain a holy living.
- He also teaches that Christians should use their Christian freedom properly in order to live a holy life (2:15-17)
- He teaches that Christians should endure suffering without cursing and revenging if they are to live a holy living life.
- He teaches that in Christian families good conduct should be maintained in order to make a holy life.
- He emphasized that Christians should live holy lives because the end of the world is near.

### **PETER'S TEACHING ABOUT BAPTISM**

Baptism was one of the major ways of worship in the early church and it was carried out through emersion or deeping someone into a pool or water.

Owing to the fact that some people had forgotten the true purpose and meaning of baptism Peter had to write partly to remind them about the implications of baptism.

### **CONTENT OF HIS TEACHING**

- Peter teaches that its through baptism that a person is introduced into God's community.
- He teaches that through baptism a person becomes a child of God and a member of Christian community.
- Peter teaches that before baptism the Gentiles weren't God's people and therefore it is through baptism a status of a person is transformed.

- He teaches that through baptism, Christians receive new kind of life which is characterized by new freedom in Jesus Christ.
- He also teaches that baptism enable Christians to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit . For example love, preaching etc.
- Peter teaches that baptism is more than physical washing of the body and it means spiritual washing which cleans one's soul.
- In his teaching, Peter compares baptism with the ark of Noah of the Old Testament and that baptism saves just as the ark of Noah saved people from floods.
- He teaches that baptism is opposed to the evils like telling lies, sexual immorality, worship of idols among others.
- In his teaching, Peter compares baptism challenges, trials and that's why a newly baptized Christian has strong faith.
- Baptism means being born again and he stressed that Christians should maintain their new birth by listening to the word of God.
- Peter teaches that the baptized Christians should turn away from worthless manners of worship.
- He teaches that baptism assures a person of resurrection and sharing the glory with Jesus Christ.
- He teaches that to accept baptism is the same as accepting Jesus Christ.
- Peter teaches that the baptized Christians should at according to Christian demands.

### **RELEVANCE OF PETER'S TEACHING**

- Christians should take baptism seriously because it makes to become members of God's community.
- Christians should share in the living hope of attaining heavenly things and their benefit this baptism.
- Christians should attain spiritual re-birth and cleansing through baptism.
- Christians should seek for the audience of the Holy Spirit through baptism because baptism enables Christians to receive the gift of the holy spirit.
- He mature Christians should strive to baptize the young ones in their families and communities.
- Christians should seek to understand the meaning of symbols like water, white cloth candles.
- The baptized Christians should endure all forms of suffering because suffering with joy tests their faithfulness in God.
- Christians should exercise readiness to bear the cross with which they assigned during baptism.
- Christians should act as the salt of the earth in terms of behaviours in spreading the good news.

### **PETER'S TEACHING ABOUT RELATIONSHIP OR SUBMISSIONS**

- The first category, he dealt with Christian submission to the state and civil authorities.
- The second category, he dealt with wives and husbands.



- The third head dealt with submission of slaves to their masters.
- The forth category was the submission of the flock or Christians towards their shepherd.

### **PETER'S TEACHING ON CHRISTIAN'S SUBMISSION TO THEIR CIVIL AUTHORITIES**

The Christians to whom Peter wrote his first letter were living in a pagan environment where they were under the political authority and Roman emperor and his officials.

Some other Christians were under chiefs and kings unfortunately some of the leaders were naturally very dictatorial and oppressive which forced some of the Christians to disobey them hence providing Peter to advise them as follows;

- In his teachings, Peter called upon the Christians to submit to the Roman emperor and all his officials.
- He told them to obey and respect their leaders for the sake of Jesus.
- Peter had a belief that civil leaders were chosen by God so Christians had to obey them because obeying God who chosen them.
- He informed them that the purpose of authority was too bring law or order. Peter also told them that which leaders punish wrong doers. It's a way of binging about law order.
- He also teaches that Christians should love, respect and co-operate with their leaders because such co-operation brings harmony.
- Peter advised Christians of his time to respect, love or fear God whose heavenly authority is above that of the emperor.
- He also advised that the reason for obeying human authority was because the end of the world was soon.
- He advised them to live as fire men by avoiding all sorts of evils . For example refusing to pay taxes.
- He emphasized the need to co-operate and avoid rebellion against the authority.

### **RELEVANCE OF HIS TEACHING TO CHRISTIANS**

- Christians should obey and respect the human leaders . For example president, ministers etc.
- Christians should use their authority to serve and leaders instead of ruling.
- Christians leaders should their authority to maintain law and order in the society with their subjects to live in harmony.
- Leaders should lead their subjects by example . That is to say, living by what they tell their members.
- Christian leaders should listen to their subjects, views and complaints and criticism which can be of help to them and to the society.
- Christians should avoid revenging with insults when insulted.
- Christians should advise one another just as Peter did incase one goes astray.
- Christian leaders who serve as civil servants should punish wrong doers and give rewards to the obedient.

- Leaders should set their list of rules and regulations for good governance.
- Political leaders should be demonstrate.

### **PETER'S TEACHING ON SLAVES SUBMISSION T THEIR MASTERS**

- The fact that slavery was deeply rooted in the ancient society made the apostles and other Christians to condemn it just as Jesus condemned it. This made Peter to write a teaching about the submission of slaves to their masters.
- Peter teaches that Christian slaves should be submissive to their master and that they should respect their masters with obedience (1 Peter 2:18)
- He teaches that slaves should obey both the kind and harsh masters.
- Peter also teaches that Christian masters should be glad to suffer for the right things under their masters.
- He also teaches that God will bless Christian slaves as a reward of suffering and he therefore advised them to endure under their masters.
- He teaches that Christian slaves should show love patience and image of God in their status.
- He told the Christian slaves that their suffering is a call from God.
- He teaches that Christian slaves should use Jesus' example of suffering and that they should remember how Jesus Christ suffered without committing any crime.
- He told them that they should keep hopes in God which suffering in the hands of their masters.
- He advised them to avoid quarreling, fighting and rebelling against their harsh masters.
- He also told them to obey their masters because of the end of the world is near.
- Peter consoled them that both the masters and the slaves are equal before God.

### **RELEVANCE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- Christians who are employers should respect their employees.
- Those who sense their employees as slaves should respect their masters.
- Christian employers should improve on working conditions of their employees.
- Christian employees should improve on the living conditions of their workers in form of giving them allowances and other fringe benefits.
- Christian employers should advise the employees when they go astray.
- Christian employers should approach their employees in a humble way in case they do wrong.
- Workers should make realistic demands basing on the prevailing circumstances.
- Working Christians should use peaceful means to settle their difference with their masters.
- Christians should avoid strikes and demonstrations as a way of solving their problems.

### **PETER'S TEACHING ABOUT WIFE AND HUSBAND RELATIONSHIP**

- In Peter's teaching about wife and husband relationship he called upon women (wives) to be submissive to their husbands.
- According to first Peter he teaches that this behaving well wives can easily win their unbelieving and believing husbands to Christ.
- He also teaches that wives should have the beauty of the heart which can strengthen their relationship with their husbands.
- He also teaches that the inner character of wives should out weigh the external decoration.
- He encourages wives to emulate Sarah's example who submitted to her husband Abraham.
- He teaches that the wives husbands are equal in the kingdom of God.
- Peter urges husbands on the other hand to have a considerate attitude towards their wives by treating them fairly.
- In his teaching, Peter refers to wives as a weaker sex and that husbands should learn to bear with them in their weakness.
- Peter shows had good relationships between wives and husbands promotes God's answering of their prayers.
- He reminded the husbands of their duties towards their wives like giving them support.
- He strongly advised husbands to live with an indirect way of calling for monogamy.
- He calls upon the husbands who are married to pagan wives to bring them to Christ.

#### **RELEVANCE TO THE MARRIED COUPLE**

- Christian wives should be humble and respectful to their husbands just as Peter advised them.
- They should accept to make leadership to their employers.
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- Peter also emphasizes that husbands should respect their wives.
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#### **RELEVANCE TO THE MARRIED COUPLE**

- Christian wives should be humble and respectful to their husbands just as Peter advised them.
- They should accept to make leadership to their families since both are equal before God.
- Christian wives should mind about their physical beauty so as to attract the love and attention of their husbands.
- Christian wives should also value their internal beauty more than the external beauty.
- Christian husbands should treat their consideration.
- Christian husbands should love and respect their wives.
- Christian husbands should cater for the material, social and spiritual needs of their wives.
- Christian husbands and wives should emphasize and practice equality in their families.
- Christian husbands should treat their wives as weaker sex and fairness.
- Christian husbands and wives should resolve misunderstanding that arise in their families in a friendly way.
- Christian wives and husbands should regularly conduct prayers from their family setting.
- Christian husbands and wives should maintain and promote good relationships.

#### **PETER'S TEACHING ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHEPHERDS AND THEIR FLOCK (1 Peter 5:1-11)**

- Peter advised shepherds/church leaders to take care of the flock because it's their God-given duty (1 Peter 5:2)
- He advised church leaders to do their work willingly without complaints and regrets.
- He called upon the church leaders to avoid the spirit of materialism and to work for the extension of God's kingdom.
- He advised them to preach to the people and counsel them.
- He also advised the shepherds to visit and help the needy like the sick.
- He called upon the shepherd to be exemplary to the flock by being faithful, humble, honest, loving and kind.
- He also advised the shepherds to be democratic but not dictatorial in their approach. (1 Peter 5:3)
- He assured the shepherds of rewards from the chief shepherd who is Christ.
- Peter also turned to the flock/young men and advised them to obey and respect the church leaders/elders.
- He called upon the flock/laity to be humble and avoid pride because God resisted the proud (5:5-6)
- He called upon the flock to serve one another through love, faith and correcting each other's mistake.
- He called upon the young men to address all their worries to God through prayers (1 Peter 5:7)
- Peter warned the shepherds and the flock of the presence of the devil and told them to be alert so as to avoid temptation (8:5-8)
- He called upon both the shepherds and the flock to endure trials and suffering.
- He assured the shepherd and the flock for the reward awaiting for them in the heavenly kingdom.

### **RELEVANCE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- Christian leaders should resume their duties of looking after God's flock.
- They should be exemplary in their behavior for the flock to emulate.
- They should be humble just as Jesus.
- They should be democratic and should avoid dictating over the proud.
- They should be humble and avoid pride because God resisted the proud.
- Church leaders should do the work of guiding and counseling people of the problems.
- Christians should support their church leaders.
- Christians should be contented while doing the work of God and should always accept advice from their church leaders.
- Christians should advise their church leaders instead of criticizing them.
- Christians including their church leaders should pray to God in times of trouble, temptations for God's guidance and wisdom.

### **WHY AND HOW FIRST PETER IS CONSIDERED AS AN EXTENSION OF THE KERYGMA**

- The first letter of Peter is considered to be an extension of the kerygma because it refers to the prophetic messages concerning the messiah or savior.
- The letter refers to the Old Testament prophecies concerning suffering of Jesus Christ which was also contained in the kerygma.
- This letter is an extension of the kerygma because it talks about Jesus' death on the cross.
- The letter stresses that the end time is near just like the kerygma.
- The letter calls for repentance by being alert and watching which the kerygma also emphasized.
- The letter stresses the meaning and importance of baptism as a channel to salvation just as the kerygma stressed.
- The letter teaches about the heavenly hope blessing for those with faith.
- The letter calls for faith during suffering and this was stressed in the kerygma.
- The letter calls for living in preparation for parousia which the kerygma also stressed.
- The letter shows that Jesus suffered and he was persecuted for the sake of believers and this also shows it as an extension of the kerygma.
- The letter minds believers that judgment is near just as the kerygma talked about in the last days.

## **THE LETTER OF JAMES**

### **BACKGROUND**

The letter of James is one of the seven New Testament books referred to as catholic letters. This is because it is not attributed to any specific audience but instead it is addressed to all Christians scattered all over the world.

It is a practical letter calling upon Christians to put the faith into God actions . That is to say, they were verbally claiming to be faithful yet their actions did not show their faith in God.

The letter is believed to have been a sermon but later it was transformed to appear like a letter written to some people.

It is unfortunate that the letter contains few direct quotations from the teachings of Jesus Christ.

James's letter was addressed to the twelve tribes of Israel who were scattered allover the world in the Diaspora in places like Asia minor, Cappadocia and Galatia.

### **THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE LETTER OF JAMES**

**Comment on the authorship of the letter of James**

**Who is James the author of the letter?**

The authorship of the letter of James himself is unclear because the writer only identifies himself as James yet in the apostolic age there were about three personalities with the same name James as discussed below;

- There was James the disciple of Jesus Christ as well as the brother of John the sons of Zebedee (Mark 1:19)
- However James the disciple and brother of John cannot be given the authorship of the letter because he was martyred by King Herod Agrippa around yet the letter is believed to have been written about 62AD.
- There was James the disciple of Jesus Christ and the son of Alphaeus. However he could not be the author also because he played a minor role with the apostolic age.
- The author of the letter appears to have been a person who played a great role during the first century basing on the themes he hinted on like endurance and patience.
- James the brother of Jesus Christ is the author of the letter/epistle because of the following reasons;
  - ✓ The traditional church attributes the letter to James the brother of Jesus Christ because he had a great influence in the early church and at times moved with Christ himself for example when Jesus met Moses and Elijah.
  - ✓ James the brother of Jesus Christ was the bishop of the church of Jerusalem as recorded in Acts 15:13.
  - ✓ It was James the brother of Jesus who wrote the letter because he was among the eyewitnesses of the risen Christ and his experience converted him as his follower.
  - ✓ James was the head of the Jerusalem council meeting that resolved how Gentiles were to become Christians and given Paul was granted permission to go and preach there the word of God.
  - ✓ The writer James was among the people who waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Pentecostal day as recorded in Acts 1:14 from then he became a great Christian.

## **WHY THE EPISTLE OF JAMES TOOK LONG TO BE ACCEPTED INTO THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON**

### **Account for the delayed canonization of the letter of James into the New Testament canon.**

- The letter took long to be accepted because of unclear authorship . That is to say, the author only identified himself as James yet there were three personalities with the same name James in the early church.
- The letter appeared to contradict with the letter of Paul to the Galatians on the subject of faith yet Galatians was already in circulation before James's letter had emphasized faith to be put right with God but James emphasized faith and actions.
- The letter of James gives few specific references to Jesus Christ as the central figure yet for the book to be canonized it had to emphasize Jesus Christ as the central figure.



- The letter delayed to be canonized in the New Testament because it hardly gives any direct quotations from the teachings of Jesus Christ compared to the other New Testament books/letters like Paul's letter to the Galatians and the gospels.
- It gives few refers to the old testament scriptures yet at that time for a book to be canonized had to refer to some old testament scriptures like others those of prophet Isaiah and Jeremiah.
- The letter delayed to be accepted in the New Testament because it even had little message of the Kerygma yet for the book in the early church to be canonized had to contain the good news of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God.
- James the brother of Jesus Christ was not among the original disciples of Jesus Christ during his public ministry so his letter was accepted only because he was an associate of Jesus Christ.
- James' letter delayed to be canonized in the New Testament because James was known at first to have been a developed follower of Judaism instead of Christianity.
- The letter being more of a practical letter than a doctrinal letter . That is to say, it leaves out the most important Christian doctrines like baptism and the Lord 's Supper made it to delay being accepted.
- Finally the letter was accepted I the New Testament canon.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF JAMES' LETTER**

### **Catholic in Nature**

- This does not mean that it was written for Roman Catholics. Rather, it means that the letter is universal. The other universal letters of the New Testament are 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John and the letter of Jude.
- It defers from letters of Paul because it was written to wider audience. Unlike the letters of Paul in which the audience is specific . For example Galatians and 1 Corinthians the target audience of James is not specific.
- He refers to his audience as “the 12 tribes of Israel in dispersion” or God’s people scattered allover the world”.  
Certainly, he wasn’t writing to the 12 tribes of the Old Testament. Rather he was referring to the Christians in the early church, Christians were referred to as the “new Israel” because they had replaced “the old disobedient Israel”. Like the old Israel the new Israel was founded on the 12 pillars – the 12 apostles.
- It is characterized by opening greetings (James 1:1)

- The writer uses the term “Brethren” or “Dear Brothers” when addressing his readers . For example Dear Brethren, consider yourselves fortunate when all kinds of trial come your way (James 1:2) also James 1:19, James 2:1 etc.
- There is constant reference or allusion to the Old Testament scriptures and personalities. For instance, James refers to Abraham, Elijah and Job as people pleased God with their action. On this basis, he challenges the Christians to emulate them. (James 2:21ff, 5:5:17ff, 5:11ff)
- It is characterized by a strong belief in the second coming of Jesus Christ and the last judgment (parousia). In James 5:7, he says “be patient then my brothers, until when the Lord comes....”
- Is it characterized by a major theme which is practical Christian living. In all the topics he handles such as riches and poverty, prayer and patience, wisdom from above and so on, he calls upon his readers to be practical Christians . That is to say, to demonstrate Christianity in good actions.
- The teachings in the letter are given in form of a sermon or homily. When one reads it attentively, it sounds as if he or she is listening to a priest or pastor giving his Sunday sermon or preaching.
- The writer uses day to day examples to drive his points home . For example he refers to the patience of the farmer (James 5:7), a plant and a flower, a man who looks in (James 1:23), a poor man in rugged clothes and well dressed man (James 2:2-4) a hungry person (James 12:2-15)
- The letter does not refer directly to the teachings of Jesus Christ. That is it isn't possible to trace Jesus' teachings and ways of life in this letter but this is indirect.
- The writer refers to himself as “James the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” (James 1:1). This description does not help us to know who exactly wrote the letter. The new testament alludes/refers to three people with the names of James
  - (a) James the son of Zebedee (Mark 3:17) he was a brother of John.
  - (b) James the son of Alphaeus (Mark 3:18, Acts 1:13)
  - (c) James the brother of the Lord (Mark 6:3, Acts 12: 17)

## **THE EVILS AND CHALLENGES OF JAMES' TIME**

- Most Christians were no longer praying to God (James 4:2). The few who prayed had doubts (James 1:6)
- Some prayed with wrong motives (James 4:3)
- There was neglect of orphans, widows and other poor categories (James 1:27)
- Quarrels and fights (James 4:1-2)
- Materialism and friendship with the world (James 4:1-10)
- There was pride (James 4:6) and boasting (James 4:13-17)
- Judging fellow Christian (James 4:11-12)
- They were not putting their faith into good actions (James 2)
- The rich dishonest the poor (James 2:6)

- Oppression of the poor by the rich, dragging them into courts of law (James 2:6)
- Over reliance on human wisdom which made them selfish and jealous (James 3:13-18). They misused their tongues through cursing others (3:9)
- There was slandering
- Impatience during prayer
- They were blaming God for their temptations (James 1:13)
- The rich were not paying the wages of poor People who worked in their field (5:4)
- They were swearing/taking offerings in the name of the Lord (5:12) yet they were hypocritical in their promises.
- Selfishness, envy and disorder (13:16)
- They were not repenting genuinely (James 5:16)
- They were yielding to temptations
- There was prejudice and discrimination in the church (James 2:1ff)

## **THE PURPOSE OF THE LETTER/AIMS OF WRITING THE LETTER**

### **Justify the need for writing the letter of James**

- James wanted to teach about the true meaning of Christian faith. Most of the early Christians refer to themselves as “faithful” or “believers” and yet they were not demonstrating them to put their faith into practical action (2:14-26)
- He wrote to remind the early Christians about the meaning, value and effects of prayer. Most Christians had stopped praying or took prayer lightly (James 5:13-20)
- James wanted to encourage and strengthen the suffering Christians. Trials and sufferings were common in the early church and tended to quench the faith of believers.
- He wanted to advise Christians on the proper use of the tongue through gossiping, slandering and boasting seem to have been common (James 3:1-12)
- He wanted to call upon Christians to yearn for heavenly wisdom. This would help them solve most of their impurities (3:13-20)
- He wanted to warn against over reliance on earthly wisdom. He believed it to be the source of selfishness, boasting and jealous (3:13-18)
- James wanted to warn Christians against prejudice, favouritism and sectarianism. Gradually, Christians had started discriminating, under looking and favouring others. This was unbecoming of Christians and made James write.
- He wanted to teach Christians about the proper attitude to riches and wealth. Many Christians had started acquiring wealth via dubious ways. For example cheating their workers, James was concerned about the proper accumulation and utilization of wealth (4:1-10)

- He wanted to console the poor who were facing all sorts of injustices such as non payment of the wages of their labour, being dragged into courts of law etc (2:6)
- James wanted to remind the Christians about the end of the world and the second coming of Jesus. This, to James was soon. They had to repent, be patient and behave well.
- He wanted to warn Christians about the dangers of befriending the world . That is to say, letting one's self to be taken up by worldly pleasures instead of them controlling their pleasures. In short he wanted to call for self control (5:1-16)
- He wanted to warn Christians against boasting. Most Christians had started making their plans, boasting of various things without putting God in their plans. To James this was deadly (4:13-17)
- James wrote to call upon Christians to show practical love to the under privileged especially the widows, orphans and other poor categories.
- He wrote to condemn the evil of judging other. Some Christians had started judging themselves as spiritually superior and terming their fellow Christians as spiritually inferior. To James, this was and is un Christian (2:1-3)
- To remind the early Christians that God is the only upright and righteous judge of mankind (James 4:11-12)
- James wanted to educate early Christians about temptations. Many were blaming God for tempting. He informed them temptations come from man's inner evil desires (1:1-14)

### **THE MAJOR CONCERNS OF JAMES**

From the above, the following can be outlined as the major concerns of James

- He was concerned about the proper use of the tongue.
- He was concerned about unprayerful lives. Christians should pray.
- He was concerned about people who pray with wrong motives.
- Riches which were accumulated in dubious ways.
- Rich people who did not help the poor.
- He was concerned about the theological faith.
- He wanted Christians to practice what they believed.
- Joy amidst trials.
- True religion consists in helping the poor such as widows.
- True wisdom versus earthly wisdom
- Prejudice
- Boasting
- Patience in suffering and prayer

## THE CONCERNS OF THE LETTER OF JAMES IN DETAILS

### Explain the concerns of the epistle of James

- James wrote about temptations and trials in which he called upon Christians to endure and trials since they were a test of their faith. Besides he said the temptations and trials come from the evil desires within one's mind but not from God.
- James was concerned about the poor. He advised them to be glad when God lifts them up, besides the kingdom of God according to James belonged to them hence giving them hope.
- About the rich/wealthy people James advised them to be glad also when God brings them down and to also take care of the poor.
- The letter of James was concerned with teaching the Christians to combine their faith with good actions. Here James encouraged Christians to copy the example of Abraham whom God accepted as righteous because of his faith and good actions.
- The letter of James had a concern of wisdom from above. In this case James advised those who lacked wisdom to pray to God to give them wisdom. He said true wisdom is characterized with peacefulness, patience, goodness instead of trusting in human wisdom which was demonic.
- James was concerned about the issue of discrimination, prejudice that existed among believers. He encouraged his listeners to treat each other equally in church instead of discriminating the poor because of their outward appearance.
- Concerning patience James encouraged the Christians to keep waiting patiently until the day Jesus Christ would return instead of being impatient.
- James was concerned about the issue of hearing and doing. He advised the Christians to be quick at hearing the word of God and also put it into good actions instead of just hearing the word of God.
- The letter of James concerned with teaching Christian to be friends of God by submitting to him alone instead of being friends to the world which is the cause of wars, fights and various killings in society.
- For the use of the tongue, James wanted to teach the listeners to control the tongue however hard it was to control it. This was because people had misused the tongue for a double purpose . That is to say, to curse mankind and at the same time praise God.
- James was concerned about judgment of one another. He advised the audience to leave judgment of fellow believers to God because he is the law giver with the power to punish and save one.
- The letter has an element of swearing falsely in God's name. James advised the Christians to always speak the truth by saying yes when one meant yes and no when one meant no instead of swearing falsely in God's name when making a promise.
- The letter had a concern of boasting about tomorrow/pride. James advised the rich always to include God in making business plans by saying "if the Lord is willing I will do this and that".

## **HOW RELEVANT IS JAMES' TEACHING ABOVE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- Christians are called upon to endure temptations and trials since they come from the evil desires within one's mind and not from God.
- Christians are called upon to be quick in listening to the word of God and practicing it in deep action instead of just hearing.
- Rich Christians are called upon to be glad when God brings them down and to also take care of the poor.
- The poor Christians are called upon to be glad when God lifts them up just like James wrote in his letter.
- Christians are called upon to treat each other equally in church instead of discriminating just as James taught to his audience.
- Christians are called upon to combine their faith with good actions just as James encouraged the Christians to copy the example of Abraham whom God accepted as righteous because of his faith and action.
- James' teaching reminds Christians to face challenging needs of the world in faith and endurance just as James wrote in his letter.
- Christians ought to keep waiting patiently until the day Jesus Christ return instead of being impatient just like James taught to his listeners/leaders.
- Christians should pray to God to give them wisdom instead of human wisdom which is demonic that James even condemned his listeners.
- Christians should be friends of God by submitting to him alone instead of being friends to the world which is a cause of war as James said in his letter.
- Christians are called upon to control the use of the tongue however hard it is to control unlike the early Christians who used the tongue to curse mankind and at the same time to praise God which James condemned.
- Christians are called upon to leave judgment of fellow believers to God because he is the law giver with the power to punish and save as James taught in his letter.
- Christians should speak the truth like saying "yes" when one means "yes" and "no" when one means "no" instead of swearing falsely in God's name when making a promise as James said.
- Rich Christians should always include God in making business plans as James taught in his letter.
- Christians need to know sometimes trials are imaginary extents that should not be given a chance to disturb their minds as James taught in his letter.

## **THE ASPECT OF JAMES' EPISTLE BEING A SERMON VERSUS BEING A LETTER**

The letter refers to any written or printed medium of communication between two or more distant parties.

A sermon is a Christian message/teaching that is delivered before a congregation concerning moral behavior by the clergy.

Scholars have urged that the epistle of James was originally a sermon but later it was transformed into a letter to be delivered to the scattered Christians all over the world. This belief is because the epistle of James has both sides of a sermon and features of a letter.

- 1. Discuss the view that the letter of James is a sermon in form of a letter.**
- 2. “The letter of James is a sermon but presented in form of a letter”. Discuss.**
- 3. To what extent is the epistle of James a sermon but presented in a letter form?**

To a larger extent, James’ epistle is a sermon but presented in form of a letter because of the following features of a sermon it contains:

- The epistle of James lacks formal greetings to the audience which is typical of a sermon.
- Besides the short introduction to the letter, the letter does not refer to the author himself.
- It has no particular audience to which it was addressed instead it was addressed to Christians present in that congregation.
- It lacks consistency and order. That is to say, the topics discussed in the letter are scattered throughout the letter instead of organizing them systematically.
- It is a collection of practical moral instructions which were intended to bring about the right attitude about behavior towards God.
- It hardly refers to Jesus Christ as the central figure, only twice does it talk about him.
- It quotes few Old Testament scriptures like the scriptures of Abraham and Rahab as people who were put right with God and that of Elijah and Job.
- It lacks a final conclusion to the letter. That is to say, it ends abruptly which is typical of a sermon.
- The author uses an appealing and polite language like “my brothers and sisters, you should never treat people in different ways” this is typical of a sermon.
- He uses a strong language full of threats and warnings which suits a sermon, like the warning of the rich people to wail and weep over the miseries that were coming over them.
- It uses rhetoric language or questions. That is to say, he asks his audience questions but goes on to answer them instantly without a response from the audience like “who are those who oppress you? The rich”.
- It is full of challenges which demand total change from his readers like the demand to put faith into actions, hearing the word of God and putting it into action.
- It deals with many aspects of Christian conduct in a short letter hence a sermon.
- The letter has no particular problem to be solved.

James' epistle is a sermon because it deals with a variety of sermons/topics which will include the following;

- It talks of trials and temptations and the need to endure them.
- It talks of poverty and riches.
- It talks about the discrimination based on outside appearance.
- It talks about hearing and doing the word of God.
- Talks about the misuse of the tongue.
- It talks about friendship with the world.
- It talks about boasting tomorrow.
- It talks about true wisdom and false wisdom.
- It talks about judging one another.
- It talks about the need for patience.
- It talks about the need for prayer.
- It talks about the need for love for one another.

**However to a smaller extent like any other letter, the epistle of James has features of a letter namely;**

- The letter was a mode of communication between James the author and his audience that scattered allover the world.
- The letter has its author as James the servant of God as well as the brother of Jesus Christ.
- The letter has its audience as the twelve tribes of Israel scattered allover the world.
- The letter has some form of greetings to the audience . That is to say, greetings to all God's people scattered allover the world.
- It has a purpose for which it was written . That is to say, to encourage the Christians to put their faith into practice.

### **EXPLAIN WHY THE EPISTLE OF JAMES FAILS TO QUALIFY AS A LETTER**

- Because its more of a sermon than a letter.
- Because it's a catholic letter.
- Because it is not addressed to any particular church or audience instead it is addressed to all Christians scattered allover the world.
- This is because if is a collection of practical moral instructions about the right attitude and good behavior.
- It does not talk about a particular problem in church.
- The author just talks about moral issues in the society.
- There is no conclusion to the letter . That is to say, it ends abruptly.
- It lacks consistence and order in its presentation of the topics.
- It hardly refers to Jesus Christ as the central figure.



- The topics in the letter apply to any community anywhere and anytime. The letter was not concerned with the message of kerygma.
- It hardly refers to the Old Testament scriptures.
- It hardly contains any formal greeting to the audience.
- It uses an appealing and polite language.
- It uses a strong full of threats and warnings to the audience.
- It uses rhetoric language and questions.

## **EVILS/IMMORALITY IN THE LETTER OF JAMES**

- 1. Examine the particular evils of his time that James speaks against in his letter.**
- 2. Comment on the nature of immorality that existed in the audience of James' letter.**
- 3. Account for the teaching of James on faith in his letter.**

- Most Christians were no longer praying to God as noted in chapter 4:4 the few who prayed had doubts in God's providence (1:6)
- Rich Christians neglected the orphans, widows and the poor category which is indicated in 4:7.
- There were constant quarrels and fights among Christians which James noted in James 4:1-2.
- Christians were greedy for material wealth and so friendly to material wealth other than being friendly with God 4:1-10.
- Many Christians were so proud of themselves (4:6) and even beautiful (4:13-17).
- Some Christians took on God's role by judging fellow Christians (4:11-12)
- James noted that Christians were not putting their faith into good action as seen in chapter 2.
- The rich dishonored the poor (2:6) and dragged them into courts of law.
- People over relied on human wisdom which made them selfish and jealous other than relying on wisdom from above (3:13-18)
- James noted that many Christians were misusing their tongue . That is to say, instead of praying to God and blessing other they cursed others (3:9)
- People were impatient during prayers and fasting. There was blasphemy of God for their temptation but James said God doesn't tempt anyone (1:13)
- The rich committed an evil of not paying the wages of the poor who worked in their fields (5:4)
- People were evilous in that they took oath in the name of the law as noted in 5:12 but at the same time they were hypocritical in their promises.
- People failed to make genuine repentance. There was prejudice and discrimination in the church as noted in 2:1ff.

## **JAMES' TEACHING ABOUT TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS**

Trials are problems and tests in a Christian life. The early church was characterized by several trials arising out of poverty and persecution.

Therefore James taught the early church Christians about trials and temptations in the following ways;

- James said that trials, difficulties, suffering and temptations are part of Christian's life. Actually he termed it as normal features of a Christian life.
- He said that Christians should consider themselves fortunate when various trials comes their way because there was no other easy way to salvation than facing trials and temptation (1:2)
- He encouraged his readers to endure trials and difficulties in all ways possible (1:4). He added on that if they endure they would be perfect and complete Christians lacking nothing.
- James teaches that trials are aimed at testing the strength of one's faith so Christians should regard themselves as privileged to prove their faith in God (1:3)
- James also teaches that a person who maintains faith amidst trials and temptations will be rewarded with eternal life and this shows God's love (2:12)
- James called upon Christians to be patient during trials and sufferings. He advises the Christians to take the example of Job and the Old Testament prophets who suffered patiently and were rewarded (5:10-11) . For example Elijah.
- According to James 5:7 he teaches that during suffering a Christian should not loose heart instead should maintain high hope in the Lord Jesus preparing for his second coming.
- James taught his audience to endure trials and suffering for the sake of Jesus Christ who suffered too.
- James stressed that poverty is a kind of trial but however he advised the poor to be glad and rejoice because they would be awarded with heavenly reward.
- James called upon those in trials and suffering to pray and assures them that God will answer their prayers (5:1)
- James pointed out that sickness is a type of trial. He said those who are sick should pray for church leaders to pray for them (5:14-15)
- James teaches that temptations do not come from God but trials may come from God (1:13)
- James goes on to say that temptation originates from a person's inner desires. They don't come from God as God tempts no one (1:13-14)
- James warns that temptation leads to sin which internally leads to death (1:15) so Christians should avoid tempting situation.

## **LESSONS MODERN CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM JAMES TEACHING ABOUT TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS**

- Christians should preserve their faith amidst trials and suffering because this is one way to achieve salvation.
- Christians today are called upon to stand firm to overcome evils like corruption prostitution cheating exams which are trials of one's faith.
- Modern Christians should understand trials are part and parcel of Christian life as James taught but amidst them a Christian should be praying.
- Poor Christians should put up with tempting situation and pray to God so that he can lift them up.
- Modern Christians ought to understand trials that come their way are aimed at testing their faith so they should regard the privileges and opportunities to pursue their faith in God.
- Christians today facing trials and suffering are called upon to take the example of Job and other Old Testament prophets who suffered patiently and were rewarded by God.
- Christians should avoid or guard against friends who lead them astray especially those who take them to the witch doctors when they face temptation and suffering . For example poverty and severe sickness.
- Modern Christians should understand those who endure trials and temptation will be rewarded in heaven as James teaches that those who endure for God's sake and Jesus' sake will achieve heavenly salvation.
- Christians today are called upon to work so hard in order to avoid poverty because its one way which causes suffering and temptation like stealing or sexual immorality.
- Modern Christians should pray with hope knowing that God will answer their prayers as James advised his readers.
- Christians should believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ and also copy the example of Jesus Christ who endured trials and sufferings and overcome persecution at least.
- During trials and persecutions a Christian should maintain his/her love for God and fellow men. This will enable him/her to keep his/her faith.

## **JAMES' TEACHING ABOUT HEARING AND DOING**

### **How did James address his audience about hearing and doing?**

- According to chapter 1:19 James cautions the Christians to be quick to listen but slow to speech . That is to say, they have to analyse the message before reaching out to others.
- Similarly James advised the Christians of his time to be quick at listening but slow in getting angry. This is because getting angry is a sin that can lead to several other sins (1:19)
- He reminded the Christians that anger cannot achieve God's righteous purpose James (1:20)
- James 1:20 calls upon the brothers and sisters in Christ to repent their sin and get rid of filthy habit and all wicked conduct.
- James also called upon the Christians to accept the word of God and to allow it change their heart and ways of conduct.

- He advised his listeners to put the word of God in good practice. According to James (1:22) listening to God's word's self deception.
- James used the example of a person who looks into a mirror but in a short time forgets how he looks like comparing it to a person who listen to the word of God but failed to put it into good practice (1:23)
- James promised his readers that whoever listens to the word of God puts it into practice and submits to God will be blessed by God in whatever he does 1:25.
- James reminded the readers that true religion consist of proper use and control of the tongue (1:26) emphasized that if one did not control the tongue his religion is worthless and deceives him/herself.
- He also assisted that true religion manifest itself in action of mercy such as taking care of orphans and widows.
- James also stressed that one has to keep away from being corrupted by the world (1:23)

### **JAMES' TEACHING ABOUT PREJUDICE (2:13)**

#### **1. How did James teach about the issue of prejudice?**

#### **2. Indicate areas in the letter of James which show that there was tendency of prejudice.**

During James' time, the church had a tendency of giving special attention and treatment to the rich and influence members of the congregation. The rich were given front seats kin the synagogue while the poor were ordered to either seat on the floor or stand at the back.

James responded to people's behavior in the following ways;

- James called upon believers to treat each other equally by not basing on external appearance (2:1)
- He used an example of a rich man wearing a gold ring and fine clothes coming together with a poor man in ragged cloth and the rich man is given a warm welcome and the poor neglected (2:2-3)
- James told his readers that the poor are rich in faith and they are these to posses God's kingdom which he promised to those who love him.
- James advised the brothers and sisters in Christ to recall the ways Jesus used to treat people equally in order to be true Christians.
- He said/taught that discrimination based on classes can result into the division of the church yet Christ wants a united church (James 2:4)
- He warns Christians who discriminate one another that their judgment are based on evil motives (James 2:4) such judgment led Christians into sin for which they will be answerable.
- James taught the rich that those who do not show love and respect to the poor will find it difficult to enter the kingdom of God . That is to say, James 2:3.
- James condemned the rich for oppressing the poor by dragging them into courts of law and speaking lies against them.

- James 2:7 teaches that the poor are poor because of the exploitative tendency of the rich towards them.
- James called upon Christians to exercise love for one another which is the loyal law of the kingdom of God. It was given by Jesus himself and can help to remove prejudice (2:8).
- James teaches that treating people according to the external look is a sin to him its like breaking the law of love and one who breaks one law is guilty of breaking others as well (2:9-11).
- James reminds the rich about the last judgment by saying those who judge the poor basing on economic and social status are merciless and also God will not be merciful to them (2:12-13)
- James appeals to the rich to behave as people who will be judged by the law. In other words he advised them to be wise and start extending mercy to the poor (James 2:12-13)

### **HOW RELEVANT IS JAMES' TEACHING ABOUT PREJUDICE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS TODAY**

- Christians should treat each other equally not basing on external appearance.
- Christians should recall the ways Jesus used to treat people with equality in order to be a true Christian.
- Christians are called upon to exercise love to one another.
- Christians are called upon to be united in church just as Christ wants a united church.
- Christians should respect and love to the poor in order to enter God's kingdom.
- Modern Christians are called upon to forgive the poor just as James told the rich to stop oppressing by dragging them to the courts of law.
- Modern Christians are called upon to be merciful to one another just as James taught his listeners that God will not be merciful to those who are merciless.
- Christians should be wise and extend their mercy to the poor just like James appeal to the rich to behave as people who will be judged by the law.

### **DISCUSS THE TEACHING OF JAMES ON POVERTY AND RICHES/WEALTH (James 1:9-11, 2:5-7, 5:1-6)**

By the time of James' writing some Christians had become extremely rich and began boasting about their wealth while despising the poor. Therefore James taught or advised both the poor and the rich in the following ways:

#### **James taught about the poor/poverty as follows;**

- James taught about the poor people to be rich in faith that is to say spiritually mature. Therefore he said they would inherit the kingdom of God (James 2:5)
- James advises the poor Christians to be patient in their poverty as time come when God would lift them up.
- James advised/advises the poor Christians to pray to God for whatever they did not have for he says God would provide them.

- He advised the poor always to pray with the right motives instead of praying with bad motives as God would not answer their prayers.
- James still advised the poor Christians to endure the trials of being poor because with faith they would inherit God's kingdom.
- He used the example of Job whose wealth was taken away and remained poor but he did not lose his faith in God and later was rewarded more.

**Concerning wealth/riches James teaches/taught the following;**

- James advised the rich to be glad when their wealth is no more, this can help to keep him prepared for the kingdom of God.
- According to James 1:9-11 James taught that riches are temporary, short lived and will disappear like the flowers of the wild plant. By this he meant that Christians have to take care because wealth away at any time.
- James advised the rich to take care of the orphans and widows. This is what he considered to be true religion and proper use of one's wealth (James 1:27)
- James felt unhappy about the evil acts of the rich towards the poor who take the poor into courts of law and even speak lies against them. He warned them that they are guilty of breaking God's law of love your neighbor as you love yourself. He said they will be judged without mercy. (James 2:6-13)
- He warns the rich about the future miseries awaiting them like he says that their clothes have been eaten by moth, their gold and silver have rusted (James 5:1-3)
- James attacked the way the rich obtained their wealth using dubious ways like non payment of wages to the workers (James 5:4), murdering of innocent people (James 5:6), speaking lies in courts of law (James 2:6)
- James reminds/reminded the rich that God sides with the oppressed and exploited poor. He said the cries of the poor have reached God and was going to take serious action against the rich (James 5:4-6)
- James warned the rich that their wealth was to rot away and lose value to the owners and predecessors (James 5:2)
- He discouraged the act of boasting about one's riches. He used the example of smoke which disappears in a moment to describe how life is like (James 4:13-17)
- James advised the rich to make their business plans by following/putting God first because it is God who enables everyone achieve his goals.
- James advises the rich to avoid being taken up by worldly pleasures which causes them even to quarrel and fight (James 4:4)
- He condemns the rich people for the luxurious and extravagant way of life they had yet the poor were living in total need.

- James still related the luxuries and extravagant way of life of the rich to one fattening himself for the Day of Judgment. Therefore he called upon them to make proper use of their wealth because the parousia is nearer.
- James condemned the Godly wishes that the rich gave to the poor like “eat well, dress and sleep well and that may God bless you” but when in actual sense they did not help them.

## **WHAT SHOULD BE THE ATTITUDE OF RICH CHRISTIANS IN UGANDA ACCORDING TO THE LETTER OF JAMES?**

### **1. How can James’ teaching on wealth help the rich Christians in Uganda to live a proper Christian life?**

### **2. What is the relevance of James’ teaching on wealth to the rich Christians in Uganda today?**

- The rich Christians should treat all people equally regardless of their economic status other than basing on outward appearance.
- The attitude of modern Christians should be to associate with these in need like the widows, orphans and street kids as James advised the rich to do during his time.
- The rich Christians should give respect and honour to the poor in society unlike those Christians whom James talks about that oppressed the poor.
- The modern rich Christians should take up James’ advise to the rich by putting more trust in God than trusting in earthy wealth which is temporary.
- The rich Christians should use their wealth to promote love for another in society not to be like those Christians who were guilty of breaking God’s law of love your neighbor as you love yourself.
- Rich Christians today are called upon to take up James’ advise o putting God In their business plans instead of boasting about tomorrow.
- Christians should use proper and moral channels of getting wealth like working hard not to be like the rich Christians James talks about that obtained wealth though dubious means like murdering innocent people.
- Rich Christians are called upon to be glad even when God brings them down as James taught his readers.
- The rich Christians should promote peace and justice in society instead of dragging the poor to courts of law like James talked about.
- The rich Christians should endeavor to be friends of God instead of being friends of the world which will not benefit them.
- Rich Christians are called upon to follow James’ teaching of humbling themselves before others instead of being proud.
- James teaches the rich Christians today to live holy lives lest they face God’s judgment.
- James taught that it was mainly the rich who spoke evil against God, this calls upon the rich Christians today to speak and promote the good name of God instead of blaspheming it.

- The rich Christians are called upon to use their wealth in expanding the church and facilitate church ministries other than using their wealth to boast around.
- Church leaders should work hard to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor within and outside the church.

### **EXAMINE THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH LEADERS ABOUT RICHES IN UGANDA TODAY**

Church leaders today have both positive and negative attitudes towards riches.

The positive attitude of church leaders about riches are;

- Many church leaders consider wealth as a gift from God therefore they encourage the believers to work hard and pray to God to acquire wealth.
- Some church leaders look at riches as a means of serving God as well as serving mankind.
- Some church leaders are kind and sympathetic to the poor to the point that they call upon members sometimes to collect money and help the needy like the widows who may need food or housing facilities.
- Church leaders have taken up the campaign of encouraging the poor to work hard to get riches.
- Some church leaders have taken up the campaign of encouraging the poor to work hard to get riches.
- Some church leaders have set up economic projects to help the church and spread the gospel . For example the charitas organizations at Nsambya, MADO in Masaka Kitovu.
- Church leaders have emphasized spiritual wealth more than earthly wealth.
- Some churches have built homes for the orphans and choools like Watoto church which has homes for orphans at Mpigi.

**However some church leaders have shown a negative attitude about the desire for riches in the following ways;**

- Some church leaders have commercialized church services to get more wealth like some ask for money from the poor in order to pray for them to receive blessings.
- Some church leaders have strived to get wealth through dubious means like Pastor Muwanguzi who used to have false prophecies.
- Some church leaders discriminate the poor in society well as God called us all to love one another.
- Some church leaders put a lot of trust in worldly wealth than concentrating on preaching the word of God . That is to say, many of them have involved in businesses.
- Some church leaders have tended to misuse church funds for their own benefits like buying luxurious cars and buildings.
- Some church leaders praise only those who give more money in the church than those who give less money in the church. This is a sign of discrimination that is un Christian.
- Some church leaders only associate with the rich people so as to get money from them.



- Some church leaders have misadvised their followers to sell all their material wealth and bring the proceeds to church for blessings . For example pastor kiwedde but end up remaining poor.
- Some leaders preach that more money one offers to God the more blessings one would receive from God. This is why the more blessings one would receive from God. This is why they even separate offertory baskets like pastor Namutebi's church (Liberty Worship Centre) at Lubaga.

## **REASONS WHY JAMES TAUGHT ON POVERTY AND RICHES IN HIS LETTER**

- 1. Account for James' teaching on wealth and poverty.**
- 2. Why did James condemn the rich Christians in his letter?**

The following are some of the reasons why James taught about poverty and wealth in the letter;

- It was because the rich Christians were discriminating against the poor Christians as noted in James 2:6-13.
- James was condemned to write about the rich and the poor because he noted that in the church meetings church leaders discriminated the poor which was un Godly where they gave the rich front seats and the poor were at times told to sit on the floor (James 2:1-4)
- James taught about wealth and poverty with an aim of warning the rich to stop trusting more in worldly wealth than of God's providence. He said riches are temporary and can disappear like flowers of a wild plant (James (1:9-11)
- James condemned the rich Christians in his letter because the rich were oppressing the poor by dragging them in courts of law.
- James was concerned with the poor whom the rich ere exploiting by not paying them the wages they had worked for so he advised the rich to pay the wages of their employees promptly.
- James wrote the letter to warn the rich who were blaspheming the good name of the Lord.
- In his letter James condemned the rich Christians because they failed to share their wealth with the poor Christians.
- James taught on wealth and poverty to teach the rich Christians to make their business plans involving the will of God not just to boast about tomorrow.
- James in his letter condemned the rich Christians because they had failed to show mercy to the poor when they passed judgment over them in courts of law.
- Some rich Christians were condemning and murdering the innocent people which made James to teach about wealth and poverty in other words he wanted to teach the people to avoid acquiring wealth through dubious means like murder.
- James condemned the rich Christians in his letter because many had acquired their riches through killing one another which was causing wars and fights in society.

- James wrote about wealth and poverty to teach the rich their wealth was not permanent as they thought especially if they didn't follow God's commands.
- The rich had become arrogant by not listening to the cries of the poor Christians who were working for them. This also made James to write about it.
- James condemned the rich Christians in his letter because many had piled up a lot of riches which made them to live a luxurious and extravagant life at the expense of the poor.
- James wanted to encourage the poor Christians not to get scared but they would inherit the kingdom of God with their faith.
- James taught on wealth and poverty to show that both the rich and poor Christians are equal before God.

### **THE DANGERS OF WEALTH/WARNING AGAINST THE SNARES OF RICHES (James 5:1-16)**

- 1. What justification is there in James' letter to show that material wealth is dangerous to Christians?**
- 2. Discuss the dangers of riches as recorded in the letter of James.**
- 3. Analyse James' teaching on the snares of riches in his letter.**

James noted the following dangers of riches in his letter;

- James noted that wealth made Christians to create social class distinctions . That is to say, a distinction between the poor and the rich was evidenced which was anti Christian.
- He noted that wealth had led to discrimination of people basing on outward appearance in church. The rich were given front seats while the poor could be told to sit down on the floor.
- James also taught that because of too much love for riches, it made the rich people to oppress the poor like failing to pay them their wages promptly.
- James in his letter showed that material wealth made the rich to drag the poor to courts of law and indeed the poor could not win the cases.
- James taught that due to love for wealth the rich failed to pay the wages of the poor who had worked for them.
- He warned the rich people to trust more in God than trusting more in their physical wealth.
- James noted that wealth or riches were dangerous because it led the rich to neglect the power of prayer to God. Many rich Christians were ignoring praying to God when making their business plans.
- James in his letter noted that wealth was dangerous for Christians as it made the rich people become arrogant and failed to listen to the complaints of the poor.
- James noted that too much love for riches made some people materialistic . That is to say, they piled up a lot of wealth in their houses which to him was equivalent to fattening themselves for the day of slaughter.
- James also noted that wealth was dangerous because it made the rich people to speak evil about the good name of God . That is to say, practiced blasphemy.

- James warned against the snares of riches because it made the rich people the murder and condemn innocent ones because they could not resist them.
- James showed that material wealth dangerous to Christians by indicating that riches exposed the rich to the judgment of God.
- He showed that the high desire for wealth is dangerous for Christians in that it made the rich to be friends of the world instead of being friends of God.
- James also noted that wealth was dangerous because it meant the rich to live a luxurious and extravagant life at the expense of the poor.
- He also noted that the riches were dangerous for they would make the rich people to weep and wail upon the miseries that were coming up to them.

## **REASONS WHY JAMES TAUGHT ABOUT DISCRIMINATION**

### **Account for James' teaching on discrimination in his letter (my brothers in our Lord.**

Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory you must never treat people in different ways according to their outward appearance) (James 2:1). What made James utter such a statement?

James uttered or mentioned the statement because of the following reasons;

- The people in the early church had created class distinctions between the poor and the rich Christians which was endangering the expansion of the church.
- James said so because there was discrimination noted in the church where the rich were offered better seats than the poor which was un Godly.
- James taught about discrimination in his letter because the Christians were giving more respect to the rich and well dressed men than the poor who dressed in rags.
- It was because people were making judgment of one another basing on evil motives that made James to teach against discrimination.
- James uttered the statement above to teach his audience that the act of discrimination should be stopped because it was a sin before God.
- James was concerned with the Christians who were not showing a spirit of loving one another which Christ had emphasized to them.
- James uttered the statement as a way of warning the rich Christians to stop blaspheming the name of the Lord.
- James taught about discrimination as a way of warning some Christians to stop judging one another without mercy for God is the only judge.

- James was prompted to utter the above statement because he wanted to remind the Christians that the rich whom they gave respect were the very people who oppressed the poor by dragging them to courts of law.
- He wanted to discourage people from trusting in worldly wealth which was temporary but trust in Godly wealth which was permanent.
- James taught about discrimination to console the poor who were being discriminated that the kingdom of God belonged to them.
- James wanted to encourage the poor to continue maintaining their faith in God despite being discriminated by the rich and some church leaders.
- James taught about discrimination because he wanted to encourage the Christians to treat each other equally before God.

### **TO WHAT EXTENT IS JAMES TEACHING ON DISCRIMINATION APPLICABLE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS IN UGANDA**

To a larger extent the teaching of James on discrimination is applicable to Christians in Uganda in the following ways;

- ✓ Christians ought to respect one another regardless of their sex, race and economic status.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to treat one another equally unlike the rich Christians whom James says discriminated the poor.
- ✓ The poor Christians ought maintain their faith in God despite being poor as James advised his readers.
- ✓ The poor Christians ought to hope for the inheritance of the kingdom of God as James teaches that happy are the poor they would inherit the kingdom of God.
- ✓ Modern Christians who are rich are called upon to accept the poor in their homes and public places like churches.
- ✓ The rich Christians are called upon to use their wealth to bring happiness to the poor.
- ✓ Rich Christians ought to glorify the good name of God instead of speaking evil of it.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to live holy lives by respecting all laws of God because is the giver of all laws.
- ✓ Christians should have mercy passing judgment to other Christians.
- ✓ Christians ought the trust in God more than material wealth which James teaches is temporary.
- ✓ Modern Christians should promote unity among themselves instead of creating distinctions in society like what James talks about in his letter.
- ✓ Christians ought to be conscious of what they speak and do especially the rich otherwise they face God's judgment.

**However to a smaller extent James' teaching on discrimination is irrelevant in some modern situations as follows;**

- ✓ James calls for equality in treatment of people in places of worship and work but this is irrelevant in some situations like when a cabinet minister visits the church, a special seat should be reserved for him/her for security reasons.
- ✓ In some cases children should be discriminated in the church by taking them to Sunday school so as to create order during church worship.
- ✓ James consoles the poor to continue being rich in faith by promising them to inherit the kingdom of God but this may also be irrelevant because there is need for poor to work hard to get the basic needs of life instead of spending much time in praying or other church duties.
- ✓ James encourages the rich to be glad when God brings them down but this is also hard to cope up with and actually some people instead lose faith.
- ✓ James condemns the rich for dragging the poor to court of law but this is partly irrelevant because sometimes the courts of law help to settle misunderstandings between defaulters and owners.

### **JAMES' TEACHING ON FAITH AND ACTION (James 2:14-26)**

**What does James teach about the concept of faith in his letter?**

- ✓ To James faith means putting one's belief into actions. In other words he encourages people to put their faith in their day today actions.
- ✓ James teaches that faith without actions does not exist. In case it does exist, then it cannot save anybody (James 2:14)
- ✓ James encourages his readers to put their faith into good actions in order to be called true Christians.
- ✓ James gives an example of need brothers and sisters who may need clothes and food to eat. He says it is not good to say to them "God bless you keep warm and eat well" but you do not give them what to use (James 2:15-16)
- ✓ He teaches that faith without action is dead (2:17). By saying this he was criticizing Christians who referred to themselves as faithful but ignored the needs of others.
- ✓ According to James 2:19 he teaches that faith without action is even demonic because even demons believe there is God and fear him.
- ✓ To emphasize his point James used the example of Abraham as a man who had practical faith. He was obedient to God even when he was told to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice (James 2:21)
- ✓ James advises Christians that their faith and actions should go hand in hand like Abraham who had faith and accompanied it with actions (James 2:22-23)
- ✓ James taught that one who puts his faith into good actions becomes a friend of God. For this reason Abraham became a friend of God and received the title "father of faithful" due to his practical faith.

- ✓ Similarly James teaches that a person who accompanies his faith with good actions becomes blessed as Abraham blessed with a child Isaac.
- ✓ He also uses an example of a prostitute Rahab (James 2:25) who was put right with God through her good actions of welcoming the Israelites spies and helping them to escape by a different route where there were no enemies.
- ✓ In 2:26 James teaches that just as the body without a spirit is dead, even faith without actions is dead.
- ✓ He further teaches that true religion manifests itself in the good actions of assisting the orphans, widows and other poor people (James 1:27)
- ✓ James taught the people to be hearers and doers of the word, that is he called upon people to listen to the gospel and go ahead to spread it to others or do what they hear.
- ✓ He teaches that temptations and trials should not threaten one's heart instead they are intended to test the strength of one's faith.
- ✓ James calls upon Christians to put their faith into actions or praying for others especially the sick and also pray for true wisdom.
- ✓ James taught that a prayer said in faith has the capacity to heal a sick person and the Lord will restore him to his normal health.
- ✓ Similarly James encouraged his readers to use the tongue responsibly (James 3:1-12)

### **DISCUSS THE LESSONS MODERN CHRISTIANS LEARN FROM THE TEACHING OF FAITH AND ACTIONS IN HIS LETTER**

- ✓ Christians are called upon to backup their faith with good actions because James says faith without actions is dead.
- ✓ Modern Christians should remain faithful during times of trials and temptations because James teaches that some of them are tests to our commitment to God.
- ✓ Christians today pray ought to pray to God with faith in order to acquire his wisdom.
- ✓ Modern Christians are called upon to put the word of God they receive into practice as James called upon his readers to go ahead and put into actions the gospel message.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to help the needy as a sign of showing their faith by giving the basic necessities of life like food, shelter than giving the mere sympathy like God bless you.
- ✓ Christians today are called upon to treat each other equally whether men or women as a sign of faith.
- ✓ Modern Christians ought to copy the example of Abraham as a man who backup his faith with good actions and God gave him a lot of blessings like many years.
- ✓ Modern Christians are called upon to put their faith into good actions so as to be saved by God on the judgment day.

- ✓ The faith of Christians today should go hand in hand with good actions like helping the sick, the orphans, widows and preaching the word of God.
- ✓ Christians should pray with faith as James taught that a prayer said in faith has the capacity to heal a sick person.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to remain faithful even when they suffer long poverty because the poor will inherit the kingdom of God.
- ✓ Christians should endure temptations and trials because of their faith they will receive a reward from God.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to believe in one God by doing his will to differentiate themselves from demons that also believe there is God.

### **COMPARE JAMES' AND PAUL'S TEACHING ABOUT FAITH**

- ✓ Both Paul and James have the following similarities in their teaching about faith and good actions.
- ✓ Both Paul and James use the example of Abraham as a man who was put right with God through his faith.
- ✓ The fruits of the Holy Spirit mentioned by Paul as faith, love, joy and peace can be equivalent to the works that James demanded from his readers to exercise.
- ✓ Both authors believe that genuine faith results from good actions which involve love, joy and helping the needy.
- ✓ Both writers show that Christians should have strong faith in Jesus.
- ✓ Both Paul and James criticized Christians who misuse their freedom just because they had faith in Jesus.
- ✓ Paul and James discouraged discrimination among Christians in their teaching.
- ✓ Both authors emphasize the idea of love which meant justice, kindness and honesty.
- ✓ Paul in his letter to the Galatians encouraged them to carry one another's burden. This is similar to the teaching of James who encouraged his audience to carry out charitable works.
- ✓ Both writers discouraged Christians from living according to worldly standards like using human wisdom.
- ✓ Both Paul and James emphasized that faith is total commitment of one's self to God.

### **Differences**

- ✓ For Paul says it is only faith in Jesus that puts a person right with God yet James emphasizes that faith alone without good actions is dead and cannot put a person with God.
- ✓ To James honesty, justice and love are needed to be put into practice while Paul believed that if a person had faith then good deeds would come spontaneously.
- ✓ James says that faith without works is dead and useless like saying to a brother to go eat well, sleep well and dress well and may God bless you but without giving him what to eat.
- ✓ James uses personalities like Abraham and Rahab as examples to his teaching on faith and actions while Paul uses personalities like Abraham, Sarah and Isaac as examples of his teaching on faith.

- ✓ Paul urge that Abraham was approved by God because of his faith alone while James urge that Abraham was approved by God because of his faith and actions.
- ✓ Paul challenged judaisers who misled on the law and circumcision in order to be put right with God yet James mainly challenged the people who were verbally claiming to be faithful yet they did not have good actions.
- ✓ Paul's background influenced his teaching on faith because he was a teacher of the Jewish law and circumcision yet James the brother of Jesus Christ stressed charitable works instead of mere faith in God.
- ✓ Paul was writing to the Galatians who had just been new converts in the Christians faith and what mattered most was stressing faith in Jesus Christ but James was speaking to people who were mature in Christian faith and now it was time to put their faith into good actions.

### **EXAMINE THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH TO CHRISTIANS TODAY**

- ✓ Faith helps Christians to perform miracles in Jesus' name.
- ✓ Faith helps Christians to endure persecution and suffering.
- ✓ Faith helps Christians to be committed to the will of God.
- ✓ Help the needy.
- ✓ Helps Christians to pray to God.
- ✓ Helps Christians to preach the gospel.
- ✓ Faith helps Christians to wait for the parousia courageously.
- ✓ It helps Christians to have hope for eternal life.
- ✓ Faith makes Christians to practice the love for one another.
- ✓ Makes Christians to have unity among themselves.
- ✓ Makes Christians to carry out fellowships and missionary journeys.
- ✓ To establish new churches for worship.
- ✓ Makes Christians to lay hands on the sick and are healed.
- ✓ It helps Christians to convert others to Christianity.
- ✓ It helps Christians to baptize.
- ✓ Carry out the Lord's supper
- ✓ To praise and worship God.
- ✓ To attend church services.
- ✓ Respect civil authority.
- ✓ Pay tithe and offerings.

### **JAMES' TEACHING ON THE TONGUE (3:1-12)**

**What prompted James to teach on the control of the tongue?**



James taught about the tongue because of the following reasons;

- ✓ James wanted to warn the rich who were speaking evil words against the poor (James 2:7)
- ✓ The Christians had failed to tame the tongue so James wanted to teach them to control their words.
- ✓ James wanted to caution the religious leaders to control their tongues because they were to be judged with greater strictness (James 3:1-3)
- ✓ The tongue was causing Christians to curse others who were created in the image of God which James wanted to stop (3:9-10)
- ✓ James taught about the tongue to warn people that the misuse of the tongue can cause quarrels and later fighting as said (James 4:2)
- ✓ People were using the tongue to pass judgment to fellow human beings in an unfair way and moreover that was God's role.
- ✓ James taught about the tongue to show his audience that no human being has ability to control the tongue if he or she does not depend on God's power.
- ✓ People were praying with wrong motives by use of the tongue which prompted James to teach about it (4:3)
- ✓ James was not happy with people who used the tongue to criticize one another and had to warn them (4:11)
- ✓ Because people were using the tongue to boast about great things which James did not like (James 4:13-17, 3:5)
- ✓ The people were complaining against each other and abusing each other (5:9)
- ✓ James wanted to warn his audience who were misusing the tongue by swearing in the Lord's name (5:12)
- ✓ Similarly James taught about the tongue to caution people who were false promises by the use of the tongue (5:12)
- ✓ Some people were speaking vulgar language and backbiting fellow Christians hence making James to teach about the tongue.

### **ANALYSE JAMES' TEACHING ON THE CONTROL OF THE TONGUE**

James teaches the following about the use of the tongue;

- ✓ James advises Christians to be quick at listening but slow at speaking (James 1:19)
- ✓ James says the control of the tongue is a sign of true religion (James 1:26)
- ✓ In 3:1 James cautions his audience not many of them to become teachers because they will be judged with greater strictness by God.
- ✓ He admits that mistakes are normal and says it is impossible to make new mistakes while speaking (3:2)
- ✓ James credits any person who makes no mistakes in his speech. He says such a person is perfect and is lucky because to control one's tongue is to control the entire body (3:2)

- ✓ James says that a tongue is a small part of the body but it can boast of great things and can set Christian lives on fire (3:5) if uncontrolled.
- ✓ James goes ahead and compares the power of the tongue to a small fire which can burn a large forest. Even the tiny tongue can cause troubles in our lives and the entire church (3:5-6)
- ✓ In 3:6 James refers to the tongue as a world of Rome that occupies a big place in our bodies. It can spread evil and poison Christian relationship.
- ✓ James also compares the tongue to a small bit of metal or wool which tames a horse when put into its mouth. He meant that the tongue also has power like the metal to direct the course of our lives.
- ✓ He laments that man has failed to control and tame the tongue though he has tamed wild animals and birds, reptiles, fish but the tongue is full of deadly poison (3:7-8)
- ✓ However James mentioned some good aspects of the tongue like being used to praise and give thanks to the Lord (3:9)
- ✓ James wonders how the person can use the mouth to thank God at the same time uses it to curse others (3:9-11)
- ✓ He advises Christians to stop cursing fellow men because man was created in the image and likeness of God (3:9-10)
- ✓ He teaches that a fig tree cannot bear figs and a grape vine cannot bear figs or a salty spring cannot produce sweet water (3:12)
- ✓ He reminds Christians that what the tongue pours out comes from a person's inner spirit and each person will be judged by what he says.
- ✓ James warns against using the tongue to play with wrong motives (4:3)
- ✓ He also warns against using the tongue to criticize and judge others. He says God alone is the judge (4:11-12)

## **APPLICATION OF JAMES' TEACHING ON THE TONGUE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

- 1. Show how James' teaching on the tongue is applicable to Ugandans today.**
  - 2. Discuss the importance of James' teaching on the tongue to modern Christians.**
- ✓ Christians should be careful about what they speak because a small rumour can spread quickly and cause trouble.
  - ✓ Christians should evaluate their speeches for peace and harmony to exist in the society.
  - ✓ Christians are called upon to use the tongue to preach the word of God not to curse others.
  - ✓ Christians should control their tongue to avoid being judged by God especially the teachers.
  - ✓ Christians should also use the tongue to bless mankind created in the image of God.

- ✓ Religious leaders are called upon to evaluate or watch their speech since they are responsible for many people and God will judge them harshly.
- ✓ Professionals like teachers, doctors, lawyers should emphasize secrecy in their work as part of their ethics or code of conduct.
- ✓ Religious leaders and politicians should speak carefully otherwise their words can cause destruction in the church or in the country.
- ✓ Modern Christians are called upon to get rid of rumour mongering because this can destroy relationship in society and divisions in the church.
- ✓ Christians should be polite and humble in what they speak instead of boasting which is dangerous in society and can cause conflicts.
- ✓ Modern Christians are called upon to be quick to listen but slow to speak back because sometimes rumours are not correct and may cause misunderstandings.
- ✓ Christians should pray to God to give them the wisdom to control their tongue as James says it is not easy to control it by human nature.
- ✓ Christians should be sincere and speak the truth instead of swearing falsely in the name of God.
- ✓ Christians should use the tongue to leave exemplary lives.
- ✓ Christians should practice true religion by controlling their tongue and speaking carefully.
- ✓ Christians should use the tongue to negotiate instead of having quarrels and wars.

## **THE TONGUE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE CAUSES OF WARS**

### **How and why has the tongue caused quarrels and wars in the world?**

- ✓ The use of the tongue through gossiping has led to quarrels, conflicts and wars.
- ✓ Passing on false information has led to wars in various parts of the world.
- ✓ The tongue has led to use of abusive language that has led to wars. For example the war between the president and vice president of Sudan.
- ✓ The tongue has led to annoyance through boasting which has led to conflicts and wars.
- ✓ The tongue can misinterpret the bible truth and other messages hence causing quarrels and wars between believers.
- ✓ Making false promises can lead to complaints, quarrels, riots or strikes and wars. This may come in a way when the employer fails to fulfill his or her promises in terms of payment.
- ✓ Telling of lies can lead to quarrels and destruction of relationship. For example in the family.
- ✓ Slandering others, judging and backbiting others can lead to open conflicts and even wars.
- ✓ Uttering false prophecies can lead to conflicts especially among politicians.
- ✓ Giving false witness in courts of law may cause future misunderstanding for example Kyakuwa who defended that Besigye raped the house girl.

- ✓ Making exaggerations like for someone's words spoken can also cause a war.
- ✓ Unsatisfaction and selfish desires can lead to wars like the dictatorial governments may be overthrown by force.

### **JAMES' TEACHING ON TRUE WISDOM AND FALSE WISDOM (3:13-18)**

- 1. According to James true wisdom is the knowledge and understanding which is given to man by God to enable him practice what is right before God?**
- 2. Comment on the teaching of James on true wisdom and false wisdom.**
- 3. Discuss James' teaching on the contrast between divine wisdom and human wisdom.**

- ✓ James teaches that true wisdom is God given to mankind.
- ✓ He advises those who lack wisdom to always pray to God for true wisdom.
- ✓ James teaches that God gives man wisdom without any reservation in other words God gives wisdom to those who wish for it in its fullness.
- ✓ James also teaches that a person who claims to be **wish** should prove his wisdom by leading a good life and by his good actions performed with humility.
- ✓ James teaches a person should not boast of his wisdom if his heart produces selfishness, bitterness and jealousy.
- ✓ A person who boasts of his wisdom yet his heart produces selfishness, jealousy and bitterness sins against God.
- ✓ James continues to teach that a person with acts of selfishness, jealousy and bitterness does not have God's wisdom instead his wisdom comes from the world.
- ✓ James says false wisdom is unspiritual and demonic.
- ✓ He teaches that true wisdom is characterized by being pure, gentle, peaceful and friendly.
- ✓ James continues to teach that true wisdom is full of compassion and produces good deeds.
- ✓ According to James divine or Godly wisdom is free from prejudice, discrimination, pride, selfishness, hypocrisy etc.
- ✓ James teaches that true wisdom is seen in the control of the tongue . That is to say, a person guided by heavenly wisdom does not make mistakes in what he says because he is perfect.
- ✓ He also teaches that true wisdom is shown in enduring temptations and trials.
- ✓ James teaches false wisdom causes pride that is to say it puts up a person and destroys the relationship between man and God.

### **HOW APPLICABLE IF JAMES' TEACHING ON THE CONTRAST BETWEEN HUMAN WISDOM AND DIVINE WISDOM TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

Modern Christians are called upon to;

- ✓ Christians are called upon to pray to God for wisdom.
- ✓ Pray to God with faith such that he can give them true wisdom.
- ✓ Trust more in divine wisdom other than human wisdom.
- ✓ Lead a good/holy life.
- ✓ Promote peace and harmony in society which is a true characteristic of wisdom from God.
- ✓ Love one another as God commands his followers.
- ✓ Show their wisdom by their good deeds in society which indicates one having God's wisdom.
- ✓ Get rid of selfishness, jealousy, hypocrisy, pride which are characteristics of human wisdom.
- ✓ Have self control instead of being bitter.
- ✓ Control their tongue so as to be perfect.
- ✓ Be humble with one another which is a sign of divine wisdom.
- ✓ Promote friendship in society which true wisdom seeks for.

#### **FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD/CAUSES OF WARS/FIGHTS/QUARRELS IN SOCIETY (James 4:1-10)**

**According to James what are the causes of wars, fights, quarrels and what are his suggestions for ending them?**

- ✓ According to James the term "world" means the whole sinful state of mankind. That is to say, mankind living according to the standards of the world instead of the will of God.
- ✓ Therefore according to James quarrels, wars, fights and divisions in society are caused by the following;
- ✓ James says that such come as a result of people's inner desires for pleasure which are constantly within them.
- ✓ He says that when people fail to get what they strongly desire, they resort to killing, fighting and quarreling.
- ✓ James teaches that people fail to get what they desire because they do not ask from God. So they end up using force to get what they want.
- ✓ James says wars are caused by people who pray to God with bad motives and he ends up not answering their prayers.
- ✓ He says the cause of fights; quarrels and divisions in society are because the people are friendly to the world instead of being friendly to God.
- ✓ According to James wars and fights come as a result of people being naturally unfaithful to God.
- ✓ The proudness of people and lack of humbleness to God is another cause of wars, fights and quarrels in society according to James.
- ✓ Trusting much in human wisdom which is characterized by selfishness, jealousy and bitterness is also a cause of misunderstanding in society.
- ✓ James also says wars are caused by misuse of the tongue which spreads evil throughout the world.

- ✓ To James fights and quarrels were a result of the influence of Satan because people had failed to resist the devil.
- ✓ James says wars are a result of people's hypocrisy.

### **JAMES SUGGESTED THE FOLLOWING ON HOW TO END FIGHTS, QUARRELS AND WARS IN SOCIETY:**

James advised the Christians to do the following;

- ✓ To submit to God as a means to end the quarrels, wars and fights in society.
- ✓ To resist the devil that will run away from them in the end.
- ✓ To purify their hearts. That is to say, to repent of their sins.
- ✓ To be friends of God instead of being friends of the world.
- ✓ To come near to God who will in turn come near to them.
- ✓ To humble themselves before God because he resists the proud.
- ✓ To pray to God with the right motives and their prayers will be answered.
- ✓ To be faithful to God instead of being unfaithful to him.
- ✓ To pray for true wisdom which is characterized by being pure, friendly and peaceful
- ✓ To control the tongue in order to create peace and harmony.
- ✓ To be sincere to God instead of being hypocrites.

### **APPLICATION OF JAMES' TEACHING ON FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD TO THE CHURCH TODAY**

**How applicable is the teaching of James on friendship with the world to Ugandans faced with wars, fights and quarrels?**

Christians should;

- ✓ Pray to God for wisdom
- ✓ Pray to God with the right motives and their prayers will be answered.
- ✓ Submit themselves to God.
- ✓ Have absolute faith in God.
- ✓ Promote peace and harmony in society.
- ✓ Humble themselves before God because he resists the proud.
- ✓ Become friends of God instead of being friends of the world.
- ✓ Purify their hearts and come near to God who will in turn come near to them.
- ✓ Resist the devil who is the cause of fights and quarrels in society.
- ✓ Promote love for ne another.
- ✓ Work hard to get what they desire instead of killing and grabbing what does not belong to them.
- ✓ Promote unity in society.

- ✓ Control their desires for pleasures so as to get rid of selfish desires which can lead to wars, quarrels and fights.

## **JAMES' TEACHING ON WARNING AGAINST JUDGING OTHERS**

### **(James (4:11-12))**

What does James' letter teach about the ideas of judgment?

- ✓ James discourages Christians from criticizing one another because whoever judges a brother also judges the law.
- ✓ If one judges the law then it means that one no longer obeys it but judges it instead.
- ✓ God is the only giver and judge of the law so one who judges others makes himself supreme over God as the final judge.
- ✓ God is the only one who can save and destroy if one passes or fails his judgment respectively.
- ✓ James warns those who passed judgment to others to be careful the way they carry out their judgment.
- ✓ James cautions the religious leaders to be careful in their work because God would judge them with greater strictness.
- ✓ God will not show mercy when he judges a person who has not been merciful to others.
- ✓ Man's judgment is based on evil motives and outward appearance of a person like the one that was practiced in the church.
- ✓ Judging one according to his outward appearance is a sin before God because God is the only fair judge.

## **JAMES' TEACHING ON WARNING AGAINST SELFISH, BOASTING AND PRIDE**

### **(4:13-17)**

- ✓ James advises Christians to stop boasting about tomorrow because they did not know what their life would be like tomorrow.
- ✓ He warns them against trusting in worldly wealth instead they were to put their trust in God.
- ✓ James says boasting, meaning being proud is wrong in the eyes of God.
- ✓ James advises them to say "if the Lord is willing we will live and do this or that" hence involving God in their plans.

### **1. "My brethrens sow no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lord of glory".**

**Examine James' concern about self confidence in view of the above statement.**

### **2. How does James warn his audience about self deception or self confidence?**

James teaches the following about self deception;

- ✓ He attacks people who claim to be wise when their actions are far from true wisdom.
- ✓ James teaches that true wisdom should be shown in his good life and good works performed with humility.

- ✓ He discourages one from boasting of his wisdom in his heart because it produces selfishness, bitterness and jealousy.
- ✓ James teaches that self confidence leads to discrimination against the poor which was practiced in the church.
- ✓ James says self confidence makes people friends of the world which in turn makes them to be enemies of God.
- ✓ James also teaches that those with self confidence are pre-occupied with worldly desires for pleasure and so end up forgetting God.
- ✓ He also teaches that self deception comes as a result of trust in earthly wisdom which is the root cause of all disorders, wars and quarrels in society.
- ✓ James also teaches that self deception leads to pride and boasting yet God resists the proud.
- ✓ James advises his readers to pray to God in order to fight self deception and to enable one to get what he wants from God.
- ✓ James advises those who make business plans without the will of God to involve God if they wish to succeed in business.
- ✓ He also teaches that self deception hinders one from repenting his sins which turns one to be a habitual sinner.
- ✓ James teaches that true relationship among people cannot exist where there is self deception.
- ✓ He teaches that self deception leads to self ambitions which can force one to fight and attain things forcefully if they do not give them easily.
- ✓ James teaches that wars, fights and quarrels originate from man's evil desires that are constantly fighting within him.
- ✓ He also teaches that self confidence leads one to piling up a lot of riches on his side disfavoring the poor.
- ✓ James teaches his readers to come near to God and to humble themselves before him so as to be lifted up.
- ✓ James also advised his audience to pray with the right motive so as to get what they wished for instead of praying with bad motives to satisfy their evil desires.

#### **HOW RELEVANT IS JAMES' TEACHING ON SELF CONFIDENCE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

Modern Christians should;

- ✓ Treat each other equally instead of carrying out discrimination based on nepotism, tribalism or sex relation.
- ✓ Be humble to one another to avoid discrimination.
- ✓ Pray to God as a way of placing their ambitions to God and this will reduce cases of fights or quarrels.
- ✓ Promote peace and harmony in society instead of creating disorder and strife.



- ✓ Get their wealth through hard work instead of exploiting and oppressing the poor.
- ✓ Leave judgment of one another to God who is the law giver.
- ✓ Show their true wisdom through exemplary life.
- ✓ Invest their wealth into the kingdom by helping the poor.
- ✓ Pray to God with rich right motives instead of praying to God with selfish motives.
- ✓ Repent their sins.
- ✓ Be friends of God and not friends to the world.
- ✓ Involve God when making their business plans and this will avoid forceful accusations of wealth and pride.
- ✓ Trust in Godly wisdom than earthly wisdom.

### **ACCOUNT FOR JAMES' TEACHING ON PATIENCE**

#### **What prompted James to teach about patience?**

- ✓ Christians had lost hope in the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ The Christians had become impatient with one another and were carrying out conflicts and quarrels among themselves.
- ✓ Some Christians were complaining with one another and not agreeing with how Christ will return.
- ✓ James taught about patience because many Christians had failed to endure the persecution imposed to them by the pagans.
- ✓ They were swearing falsely in God's name when making promises which made James to teach against it and encouraged them to be patient.
- ✓ There was a problem of quick listening and speaking back which ended into many quarrels therefore James encouraged them to be patient and first scrutinize.
- ✓ James wanted to teach the audience that even Old Testament went through trials but they endured patiently like even Job.
- ✓ James wanted to teach them that those who are patient God gives them his mercy and compassion.
- ✓ James taught about patience to show the audience that those who endure patiently the trials and temptations receive a reward from God.

### **ANALYSE THE TEACHING OF JAMES ON PATIENCE TO HIS AUDIENCE (5:7-12)**

James advises his audience on the subject of patience in the following;

- ✓ James advises the audience to continue being patient until the Lord comes back.
- ✓ James uses the example of a farmer who waits patiently for the harvest and rain to come but does not give up at all.
- ✓ He also calls upon the audience to keep their hopes high for the day of the Lord was nearer.

- ✓ James discourages the people from complaining against one another as they were waiting in order to avoid God's judgment on them.
- ✓ He gives the example of the Old Testament prophet who spoke about God under hardships but still endured patience.
- ✓ James used the example of Job to emphasize his point and says he endured temptations and trials but received a reward at the end.
- ✓ James teaches that the Lord is full of mercy and compassion to those who patiently wait for his promises.
- ✓ James advises his readers to speak the truth by saying "yes" when one means 'yes" and "no" when one means "no" instead of making an oath by swearing falsely in God's name when making promises.
- ✓ He suggested that people should be quick to listen but slow to speak back.
- ✓ He advises the audience to count the temptations and trials as joy in view of the emanate paraousia.
- ✓ James teaches that patience under trials and temptations is a test of their faith and produces steady fastness and perfection.

#### **HOW APPLICABLE IF JAMES' TEACHING ABOUT PATIENCE TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

Modern Christians are called upon to;

- ✓ Be patient until the parausia.
- ✓ Keep their hopes high until the day comes (parausia)
- ✓ Expect the day of the Lord anytime because it is nearer.
- ✓ Endure patiently the hardships, trials and temptations.
- ✓ Keep their faith as they patiently wait.
- ✓ Copy the example of the farmer who patiently waits for the rain and harvests to come.
- ✓ Leave judgment of one another to God instead of complaining against one another.
- ✓ James teaches the audience to be compassionate and merciful to others just as the Lord is.
- ✓ Should be quick to listen but slow to speak out as a sign of being patient.

#### **JAMES' TEACHING ON PRAYER**

**1. Account for James' teaching on prayer in his letter.**

**2. What prompted James to teach about prayer?**

James taught about prayer because of the following reasons;

- ✓ James taught about prayer because Christians were praying without faith and so wanted them to have faith in their prayers.
- ✓ Some people who lacked wisdom did not pray to God so he wanted them to pray to God to get true wisdom.

- ✓ He realized that many people were praying to God with bad motives therefore he wanted to teach them to pray with good motives to receive what they wanted.
- ✓ James taught about prayer because he wanted to teach people to pray to God for what they wanted as many were not praying.
- ✓ James' teaching was because the rich failed to pray to God when making their business plans so, he advised them to put God in their business plans.
- ✓ James wanted to teach people to always pray even in times of happiness as they did in times of sorrow.
- ✓ He wanted to teach those who were in trouble to keep praying to God and have some patience.
- ✓ James aimed at teaching his audience that those who were sick had to seek for church leaders to pray for them.
- ✓ It was because people were not praying for one another so James wanted to teach them to have spirit for one another.
- ✓ He wanted to wake up those Christians who had neglected praying completely.
- ✓ Many Christians lacked patience during times when they prayed to God so James taught them to have patience.
- ✓ He taught about patience because some Christians failed to know about the power of prayer that it could heal the sick, James wanted to teach it to them.
- ✓ James wanted to encourage the Christians to pray earnestly just like Elijah who prayed for no rain in Israel for a period of 3½ years and later prayed for it after the long drought.

#### **DISCUSS JAMES' TEACHING ON PRAYER IN HIS LETTER**

- ✓ He advises those who lacked wisdom to pray to God for wisdom.
- ✓ James advises them to pray to God with right motives in order to receive what they wanted.
- ✓ James advises them to pray with faith instead of doubting.
- ✓ He advises them to pray to God for whatever they wanted instead of failure to ask from him.
- ✓ He advises those in times of trouble to pray to God.
- ✓ James advises those in times of happiness to pray to God and sing praises to him.
- ✓ He advises those who are sick to seek for church elders who will pray for them.
- ✓ He advises them to pray for one another and to confess of their sins to one another.
- ✓ James says a prayer made in faith has powerful effect to heal a sick person and his sins will be forgiven.
- ✓ He gives the example of Elijah who prayed with faith for drought to come on the land of Israelites for 3 ½ years and after that drought, he also prayed for the rain to come back.
- ✓ He advises the rich to pray to God as a sign of involving him when making future business plans by saying "if the Lord is willing, we will do this and that."

## **TO WHAT EXTENT, JAMES' TEACHING ON PRAYER RELEVANT IN MODERN CHRISTIAN SITUATIONS?**

To a larger extent, James' teaching on prayer is relevant because of the following lessons we learn from it;

- ✓ Christians who lack wisdom should pray to God for it.
- ✓ Christians should pray to God with total faith instead of doubting.
- ✓ Christians should pray to God with right motives instead of praying with bad motives.
- ✓ Christians should pray to God for whatever they want in life instead of failure to ask from him.
- ✓ Christians in times of happiness should pray to God and sing praises to him.
- ✓ Christians in times of trouble and hardships should also pray to God to help them in such situation.
- ✓ Christians should always pray for one another.
- ✓ Christians who are sick should send for religious leaders who will pray and anoint them.
- ✓ Christians should copy the example of Elijah who prayed with absolute faith to God.
- ✓ Christians should pray to God as a sign of involving him when making their business plans.

**However to a smaller extent James' teaching on prayer is irrelevant under the following circumstances;**

- ✓ James advises Christians to confess of their sins in public but this may not be applicable because of public embarrassment and fear to be arrested especially if a person confessed that he had committed murder, robbery, rape and defilement.
- ✓ James advises the sick to send for church elders to pray and anoint them but this may not be applicable because one has to seek for medical treatment before thinking of inviting church leaders like in situations where one has got an accident or poisoning or a snake bite.
- ✓ James advises Christians to pray with faith and patience but in today's situations, people believe in immediate answers hence losing trust in the power of prayers.
- ✓ James advises people to pray to God during times of happiness but in today's situation this is rare because people normally pray to God when faced with hardships and in life like poverty, unemployment, accidents and several illness.

## **HOW DOES JAMES IN HIS LETTER DEMONSTRATE THAT CHRISTIANS FAITH SHOULD BE PRACTICAL**

**"The letter of James is a practical letter" justify.**

James' letter is a practical letter because it calls upon Christians to put their faith into good actions in the following ways;

- ✓ He calls upon Christians to listen to the word of God and go ahead and put into practice.
- ✓ He advises them to practice true religion which involves taking care of the poor, orphans and widows in society.

- ✓ He advises the rich people to provide basic necessities of life to the poor like food, clothes, shelter and many others instead of giving them Godly wishes.
- ✓ He gives the example of Abraham as a person who put his faith into good actions.
- ✓ He gives the example of Rahab who saved the Israelites spies by directing them to take a different route where there were no enemies.
- ✓ He advised them to treat each other equally instead of practicing discrimination against the poor in the church.
- ✓ He advises them to show love to one another as a way of fulfilling God's commandment.
- ✓ He advises them to continue being patient until the day the Lord comes.
- ✓ He gives the example of the Old Testament prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord as an example of patient endurance.
- ✓ He gives the example of Elijah as a prophet who prayed with faith for drought to come on the land of Israel for 3½ years and rain to come again.
- ✓ Advises the rich to involve God when making future business plans.
- ✓ Advises them to trust more in divine wisdom that is pure, peaceful and full of compassion than earthly wisdom which is demonic.
- ✓ Advised those who lacked wisdom to pray to God for wisdom.
- ✓ Advised them to endure and resist the temptations and trials and to be happy during times of hardships.
- ✓ Advises them to bring back fellow Christians who wander away from the truth in order to save them from death.
- ✓ Advised them to speak the truth by saying 'yes' when one meant 'yes' and 'no' when one meant 'no' instead of swearing falsely in the name of God.
- ✓ Advises them to pray with total faith instead of doubting.
- ✓ Advised them to be friends of God by submitting to him instead of being friends to the world.

#### **HOW HAVE CHRISTIANS IN UGANDA TODAY FAILED TO PUT THEIR FAITH INTO PRACTICE?**

- ✓ Rampant murder of people in the city and other towns.
- ✓ There are rampant human sacrifices so as to get riches.
- ✓ Rampant corruption in government and private enterprises.
- ✓ Christians pray with doubt.
- ✓ There is lack of love for one another.
- ✓ Rampant cases of false creatures.
- ✓ Selfishness among Christians and so fail to take care of the poor in the society.
- ✓ Political instability in Uganda.
- ✓ Rampant examination malpractice in the national exams.

- ✓ Rampant cases of divorce.
- ✓ Failure of church leaders to leave exemplary lives.
- ✓ Increased sexual immorality among Christians. For example prostitution, fornication, rape etc.
- ✓ Business man exploiting consumers by tampering with weight and over charging, selling expired goods and drugs.
- ✓ Rigging of parliamentary and presidential elections.
- ✓ Belief in science and technology.
- ✓ Belief in African culture and witchcraft.

### **WITH CONCRETE SITUATIONS DISCUSS THE APPLICABILITY OF THE LETTER OF JAMES TO MODERN CHRISTIANS**

#### **Examine the relevance of James' teachings to Christians today.**

- ✓ Christians should control their tongue in order to get rid of insulting people.
- ✓ Christians should use their tongue for praising God and blessing mankind created in the image of God.
- ✓ Christians should pray to God with faith instead of doubting.
- ✓ Should pray both in happiness and trouble Christians who are sick should send for religious leaders.
- ✓ Should be friends to God instead of being friends to the world.
- ✓ Should promote peace, unity and harmony in society instead of fights, quarrels and wars.
- ✓ Should pray to God with good motives instead of bad ones.
- ✓ Should trust more in spiritual wealth than worldly wealth which is temporary.
- ✓ Should take care of the people by giving them basic necessities instead of sympathizing with them.
- ✓ Should speak the truth by saying 'yes' when one meant 'yes' and 'no' when one mean 'no'.
- ✓ Should be quick to listen but slow to speak back to avoid becoming angry.
- ✓ Should put the word of God they have heard into practice instead of just listening to it.

### **TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE LETTER OF JAMES RELEVANT TO CHRISTIANS IN UGANDA TODAY**

To a larger extent, James' letter is relevant/ valid because of the same situations happening in our society, so we learn the following from it;

- ✓ Christians should control their tongues in order to get rid of insulting people.
- ✓ Should use the tongue for praising God and blessing mankind created in God's image.
- ✓ Christians should pray with faith to God instead of doubting.
- ✓ Christens should pray both in times of happiness and trouble.
- ✓ Christians should be friends Of God instead of being friends to the world.
- ✓ Should pray to God with good motives instead of bad ones.
- ✓ Christians should promote love for one another in society.
- ✓ The poor ones should maintain their faith in God and be glad when God makes them rich.

- ✓ Christians are called upon to accept and endure all forms of temptations and trials in life.
- ✓ Should live judgment of fellow human being to God because he is the law giver with the power to save and destroy.
- ✓ Christians are called upon to remain patient until the day Jesus Christ comes back.

**However to a smaller extent the letter of James is relevant in some modern situations to Christians in the following ways;**

- ✓ James advises the sick Christians to send for church elders but this is irrelevant because there is need to first go to the hospital.
- ✓ He advises the rich to take care of the poor but this may encourage laziness among the poor.
- ✓ Advises the rich to be glad when God brings them down but this is irrelevant because of the miseries and embarrassment one may pass through.
- ✓ In times of epidemic like Ebola, cholera it may be difficult to be kind to the sick if a religious leader is going to anoint some people for fear of contradicting the disease.
- ✓ He advises Christians to control their tongues but this may not be possible because at times a strong language and warning should be used to deter bad behavior or if one is being accused falsely.
- ✓ Advises Christians to live judgment to God but this is irrelevant because of the modern courts of law where judgment is passed.
- ✓ He advises Christians to be patient until the Lord comes back but for the poor Christians to be patient without food, clothes and shelter may be impossible.
- ✓ James encourages equal treatment of all Christians instead of discriminating but today discrimination should be allowed in church and functions in situations where the president is the chief guest, special seats should be reserved for him for security reasons.
- ✓ Besides children should be separated from adults during church worship so as to maintain order in worship so they should be taken to Sunday school.
- ✓ James advises Christians to confess of their sins to one another in public but this is not applicable because of the public embarrassment and fear to be arrested in case one confessed of having killed a person, defiled or raped.

