

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES
BA HUMANITIES IV/ IDE BA HUMANITIES IV
FINAL EXAMINATION MAY 2013

COURSE TITLE : GOSPEL TRADITION II

COURSE CODE : TRS 403

DURATION : TWO (2) HRS

INSTRUCTIONS :

- a. Choose and answer three (3) questions only.
- b. Write in clear, grammatically correct sentences.
- c. All questions carry equal marks.

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TRS 403/ IDE TRS 403 (M) Gospel Tradition II, May 2013

1. Given the variety of portrayals of Jesus and different reports of what actually the historical Jesus said and did and that some of the accounts are difficult to harmonize with parallel passages, how can the historian establish what actually happened during the life, ministry and death of Jesus? [20]
2. "Reading the gospels as literature can prove quite valuable. We recognize their artistic merit – their ability to affect our emotions as well as our intellects – as they captivate, encourage, and convict us. We are sensitive to what is more central and what is more peripheral in individual stories. We understand how they function to create multiple levels of meaning – main themes, subordinate motifs, and allusive echoes to well-known traditions" (Blomberg, 2009:117).

In light of this submission, apply your knowledge of narrative criticism to analyse the "surface features" of the following passage:

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. **2** This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him." **3** Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." **4** Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" **5** Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. **6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **7** Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.' **8** The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit." **9** Nicodemus said to him, "How can this be?" **10** Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand this? **11** Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen; but you do not receive our testimony. **12** If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? **13** No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man. **14** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, **15** that whoever believes in him may have eternal life." **16** For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. **18** He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. **19** And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **20** For every one who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. **21** But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God.

3. With special reference to any TWO Christological titles, discuss the problem behind Jesus' self consciousness. In your answer, draw examples from the primary text. [20]
4. In your opinion, who framed Jesus and why? Critically discuss. [20]
5. Do you think the empty tomb is evidence for the resurrection of Jesus? [20]
6. Write a critical commentary on the portrayals of Jesus in the canonical gospels and any ONE non-canonical gospel in early Christianity. [20]

END OF PAPER