

**UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

TRS 301 MAIN EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2019

TITLE OF PAPER : Studies in the New Testament I
COURSE CODE : TRS 301
DURATION : 2 Hours

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Choose and answer three (3) questions in all.
2. Write in clear, grammatically correct sentences.
3. The paper consists of three (3) printed pages including the cover page.
4. All questions carry equal marks.

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TRS 301 Studies in the New Testament I, (M) November 2019

Question 1

Explain the reasoning behind the thinking that (a) the more difficult or awkward (b) shorter reading is more preferred when determining the exact reading of a text whose original is lost. [20]

Question 2

Do you find the reasons given to support the view that Mark was the first gospel to be written quite convincing? Give concrete examples from the primary text in support of your views. [20]

Question 3

Discuss the rationale behind the thinking that the Gospel According to Luke was written by a Gentile Christian and for a Gentile audience. [20]

Question 4

Give a critical explanation of the function of the miracles of Jesus as reported in all the four canonical gospels. [20]

Question 5

With reference to the Acts of the Apostles, identify and discuss reasons why early Christian communities were persecuted from within and outside the church.

Question 6

Write a critical commentary on the passage below taken from Matthew 23:1-36. [20]

23 Then said Jesus to the crowds and to his disciples, ²“The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat; ³so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice. ⁴They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, ^[a]and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger. ⁵They do all their deeds to be seen by men; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, ⁶and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷and salutations in the market places, and being called rabbi by men. ⁸But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren. ⁹And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. ¹⁰Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ. ¹¹He who is

greatest among you shall be your servant; ¹² whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

¹³ “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who would enter to go in.^[b] ¹⁵ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell^[c] as yourselves.

¹⁶ “Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If any one swears by the temple, it is nothing; but if any one swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ ¹⁷ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? ¹⁸ And you say, ‘If any one swears by the altar, it is nothing; but if any one swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’ ¹⁹ You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? ²⁰ So he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; ²¹ and he who swears by the temple, swears by it and by him who dwells in it; ²² and he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.

²³ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. ²⁴ You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

²⁵ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of extortion and rapacity. ²⁶ You blind Pharisee! first cleanse the inside of the cup and of the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

²⁷ “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.