

University of Malta
Faculty of Theology
January/February 2011 Examination Session

SHG1000 - Foundations of Theology

Monday 31st January 2010

Time: 13.00 – 16.00

Answer ONE question from EACH section.

Use SEPARATE scripts for each question

SECTION A: Old Testament

1. The Christian Old Testament books are basically those that constitute the Hebrew Scriptures. However there are some books in the Catholic Old Testament that are not present in the Hebrew Scriptures. Besides, the books are arranged differently in the two canons. Discuss.
2. The Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Yet their human authors should be considered as true authors. Discuss.
3. The Bible can be interpreted in a literal sense and in a more-than-literal sense. Discuss.
4. What do we mean by the literal meaning of Scripture and what is needed to attain a good grasp of this literal meaning?

SECTION B: New Testament

5. Show how the purpose of Jesus' parables is to persuade the reader to adopt a particular view of God and of life in God's realm.
6. Explain why the miracles of Jesus in the gospels are presented as signs and realizations of the gracious power of the God of Israel.
7. Show how the Gospel of John differs from the Synoptic Gospels in many ways.

Section C: (Ancient Christian Writings)

8. Write a **short note** (not more than 10 lines) defining **each** of the following:
- i) an *Apology* in Christian antiquity;
 - ii) a *Father of the Church* and an *Ancient Christian Writer*;
 - iii) *Gnosis*.
9. “Let us **gaze intently at the blood of Christ** and realize that it is precious to God his Father, since it was shed for our salvation and brought the grace of repentance to the whole world....through him we gaze at the heavenly heights; through him we see, as in a mirror, the perfect and exalted face of God; through him the eyes of our hearts were opened; **through him our ignorant and darkened understanding springs up toward the light**; through him the lord wished us to taste immortal knowledge”.
- i) who is the author of the text?
 - ii) to whom was the writing addressed?
 - iii) write a short note on the reasons for which the *text* was written;
 - iv) discuss very briefly the **underlined sections** of the text.
10. Write an essay discussing the origins and characteristics of the ***ascetic and monastic phenomenon (or movement)*** in early Christianity.