

Section B Topic 3.1 Conflict with the Establishment (Example 1)

Q.1 Identify two key elements of Jesus' person and message that were perceived as a threat to Roman imperial values

Q.2 Identify two key elements of Jesus' vision of renewal and restoration that threatened the Jewish religious establishment

What follows is one student's response to this question. Using the AfL technique of *comment only marking*, how would you respond to this student? What assessment criteria might you apply? Try to address the following:

- Aspects of the work that deserve merit and praise
- Understanding of the relevant objectives (refer to KUSA square)
- Detail and coherence of the work
- Relevance to the question asked
- Any errors or omissions?
- Advice / recommendations / suggestions for improvement
- Other

Answer 1: Jesus was seen as a real threat to the Roman Empire. He proclaimed himself 'King of the Jews' and he did not co operate with the Romans. He even chose one of the zealots, who hated the Roman occupation of Palestine, as one of his disciples. The fact that he would even associate himself with this radical militant group sent out a warning sign to the Romans: Jesus appeared to be a radical and a trouble maker. There was always the possibility that he was working among the people to support violent resistance against the Roman authorities and they feared this potential loss of power. Jesus challenged Roman power and even the whole concept of what power meant. He said at his trial 'my kingdom is not of this world' when Pilate asked him if he was the King of the Jews. Jesus did not deny that he was a king (of sorts) and this was grossly misunderstood. When Jesus spoke about the Kingdom of God the Romans became worried. It seemed like he was challenging Caesar's right to rule the Empire. They did not understand what Jesus actually meant when he spoke about the Kingdom of God. He was called the Messiah or anointed one and this was also a threat to Rome. Therefore they wanted to put a stop to this man's apparent defiance of their right to rule. This seemingly justified their decision to charge him with treason and hand him over for sentencing to death by crucifixion.

In addition to this Jesus preached about the one true God. He called God 'abba' or dad. He had no time for the paganism or Emperor worship of the Romans – he wanted people to worship only God. The Romans resented this as it was perceived not just as an offence to the Roman Emperor but also a way of misguiding the people and turning them against the Empire.

Answer 2: Jesus was also a threat to the Jewish religious authorities. In the gospels we read about him entering the temple and turning over the tables and driving out the money changers. Then he had the cheek to say that he would destroy the temple and in three days rebuild it. What an insult this must have been to the Jewish authorities who revered the Temple as the key place of worshipping Yahweh! It was also perceived as a direct attack upon the Pharisees and the scribes who had prominent places in Temple worship and in the Sanhedrin.

Then of course we read about him constantly sharing meals with trouble makers, sinners, tax collectors and prostitutes. He sat talking to a Samaritan woman at a well – an act involving two distinctive elements of defiance: speaking to a woman in public and being friendly with a Samaritan (Samaritans were disliked by the Jews). He picked ears of corn

on the Sabbath and even healed people on the Sabbath, like the paralysed man and the blind man. The Pharisees were raging with him for this since he had broken the Law of Moses. Then he adds insult to injury by saying that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath, and the Pharisees thought that he was totally disrespecting the Law of Moses, which they revered, and God himself by committing these acts of blasphemy. Jesus had harsh words to say about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and their fundamentalist interpretation of the Law. When Jesus healed the paralytic he goes on to forgive his sins in the name of God to demonstrate the power of God. This was a gross insult to the Pharisees and religious authorities who believed that only God had the power to forgive sins. This also upset the scribes who were very influential members of the Sanhedrin. Jesus also stood up and read the scriptures in the synagogue and told those present that the scriptures were being fulfilled through him. He said that he came to bring sight to the blind and to liberate captives. Then he heals people in God’s name. This is not at all what the Jews had been expecting of their awaited Messiah. Jesus had caused serious offence to the Jewish authorities and would not repent. He was seen as defying the rule of God and guilty of blasphemy. The only way to have him silenced was to put him to death. *(734 words)*

	Answer 1	Answer 2
Merits of this work		
Understanding of relevant objectives		
Detail and coherence of work		
Relevance to the question asked		
Errors or omissions		
Advice /recommendations/ suggestions for improvement		
Other:		