



EVANGELICALS AND THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM

by

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Dedication

To Mary: *Amor Fidelis*.

In Memoriam:

Charles Irwin Strickland
My father
(1947-2006)

Through many delays, occasioned by a variety of hindrances, the detail of which would be useless to the Reader, I have at length brought this part of my work to its conclusion; and now send it to the Public, not without a measure of anxiety; for though perfectly satisfied with the purity of my motives, and the simplicity of my intention, I am far from being pleased with the work itself. The wise and the learned will no doubt find many things defective, and perhaps some incorrect. Defects necessarily attach themselves to my plan: the perpetual endeavour to be as concise as possible, has, no doubt, in several cases produced obscurity. Whatever errors may be observed, must be attributed to my scantiness of knowledge, when compared with the learning and information necessary for the tolerable perfection of such a work.

Adam Clarke
from the Introduction
to his first commentary in 1810

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Evangelicals and the Synoptic Problem

Introduction

The purpose of this work is to discover how evangelical Christians have approached the classic puzzle in NT criticism known as the Synoptic Problem (SP) throughout their history as well as engage with recent scholarly discussion among evangelicals about solutions to the SP. Attempts will be made to answer at least five crucial questions. First, for how long have those with evangelical convictions sought to explain the similarities and differences between the synoptic gospels by appealing to the evangelists' sources? Second, as they considered these sources and the evangelists' use of them, how were the individual views of inspiration held by those evangelicals affected and explained? Third, how have evangelical solutions to the SP evolved as biblical criticism has changed over the centuries? Fourth, how have evangelicals advocated their preferred solutions to the SP and characterized those solutions different from their own? Fifth, how has ecclesiology factored into evangelical discussions of the SP?

A. Definitions

Evangelicals

Several attempts have been made to give a definition for the term *evangelical*, and each has met with varying degrees of acceptance. Olson gives seven distinct definitions, ranging from the scholarly to the popular, with some stretching back to include the earliest Protestants and others referring to a predominantly twentieth-century movement. For the purposes of this study, *evangelicalism* is defined as the movement that arose “out of the Pietist and revivalist attempts to reform and revive Protestant Christianity in Germany, Great Britain, and North America in the early eighteenth century.”¹ This is the meaning used by David Bebbington in his puissant *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A*

¹ Roger E. Olson, *The Westminster Handbook to Evangelical Theology* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2004) 4.

*History from the 1730s to the 1980s*² (though he specifically investigates evangelicalism in the British Isles) in which he offers what has become the working definition for much of the scholarly discussion of evangelicalism, and has been aptly described as the “Bebbington quadrilateral.”³ Bebbington describes four basic characteristics of evangelicalism that spread across denominational lines: *conversionism* (emphasis on the need for repentance in response to the work of God); *activism* (in spreading the gospel and helping the needy); *biblicism* (the role of the bible is central); *crucicentrism* (stressing the death of Jesus on the cross).⁴ These characteristics have remained fundamental to evangelical thought from the eighteenth century up to modern-day. Moreover, *evangelical* is a title that most appropriately applies to those who claim it, thus care is taken in this study to avoid mislabelling the religious outlook of the biblical scholars considered.

Early Orthodox Protestants

However, the study of the synoptic problem had begun in earnest long before the subset of Protestant Christianity now known as evangelicals came into being. In constructing a history of evangelical arguments about the SP, it is also necessary to consider the way in which the SP was discussed by the forebears of evangelicalism, who in this study will be referred to as *early orthodox Protestants*. These early orthodox Protestants advocated views which at a later period came to dominate evangelicalism at large.

An attempt to trace the history of evangelical thought before the Protestant Reformation all the way back to the first century was originally made in the late

² David W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

³ Timothy Larsen describes the overall agreement by many scholars of Bebbington’s definition, as well as its limits, in “The Reception Given ‘Evangelicalism in Modern Britain’ Since its publication in 1989,” in M.A.G. Haykin, et al., eds., *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2008) 21-36. See also Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism* (Leicester: IVP, 2004) 19.

⁴ Bebbington, 2-3.

eighteenth century by Joseph Milner.⁵ Milner attempted to prove that the “most precious Evangelical principles”⁶ could be observed throughout the existence of Christianity in people who were “real, not nominal Christians... who believed the doctrines of the gospel” and were willing to suffer because of their faith.⁷ For the purposes of this study, an early Protestant scholar will be considered to be an early orthodox Protestant if the individual expressed a Christian faith consistent with Bebbington’s four pillars of evangelicalism, or more specifically never advocated beliefs contrary to those four.

Using these criteria, it is likely that most early Protestant theologians could be considered orthodox. In fact, until recent decades, in some places the terms *evangelical* and *Protestant* had practically the same meaning.⁸ However, even in the early days of Protestantism in continental Europe, there were those scholars whose views on the bible and inspiration would preclude their classification as *early orthodox Protestant*. Due to the nature of this thesis as an investigation into the consideration of a biblical puzzle, the primary concern when trying to decide whether a scholar is appropriately labelled *early orthodox Protestant* will be in the category of biblicism. In particular, many early Protestant leaders held views of the inspiration of the gospels which would be considered inimical to later evangelical convictions. While no implication is made here to fault the faith of those Christians, the distinction between their work and their early orthodox Protestant contemporaries is appropriate. For example, Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) was an early Protestant scholar who advocated the Augustinian Hypothesis (see “Solutions to

⁵ *History of the Church of Christ* (London, 1794–1809). Quotes are from the 1835 edition (Philadelphia: Hogan & Thompson, 1835).

⁶ Milner, 15.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸ Olson, *Westminster Handbook*, 4. For example, in the early twentieth century, R.W. Paterson remarked, “In Germany [evangelical] is commonly used as the antithesis of Catholic, and as a positive synonym for Protestant,” in his article “Evangelicalism,” *ExpT* 14, 6 (1903) 250. Though twenty-first century Germany uses separate words to denote evangelical – *evangelikal* – and the more general Protestant – *evangelische*. See Haykin, 228-229 for a discussion. See also Elisabeth Arweck, *Researching New Religious Movements: Responses and Redefinitions* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006) 312 note 20.

the Synoptic Problem” in the *Introduction* below) in his *Annotationes in libros evangeliorum* (Amsterdam, 1641). However, Grotius specifically denied the inspiration of most of the bible, especially the historical parts, unless explicit claim to divine inspiration was made. This was especially true of the evangelists, whom he “secularised” by treating as “ordinary writers.”⁹ He explained that the gospel authors did not need the Spirit’s guidance because “it was enough that the writer had a strong remembrance about matters observed, or a careful copying from the notes of earlier writers.”¹⁰ Grotius’ view of inspiration, though not completely rejected by all of early Protestantism, stands in direct opposition to later evangelical belief in the inspiration of all four gospels. Though evangelicals were, until the nineteenth century, less interested in notions of inerrancy and infallibility, from the outset they considered that each gospel was inspired.¹¹ Thus, while Grotius could be considered a faithful Protestant scholar, his views on the synoptic problem will not be considered in this thesis. Likewise, J.J. Griesbach, an integral figure in the history of the SP, is excluded from consideration because of his belief that the apostolic gospels (Matthew and John) were inspired but not the others (Mark and Luke).¹² So also the Swiss Protestant theologian Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736), who was a proponent

⁹ H.J. de Jonge, “Grotius’ View of the Gospels and Evangelists,” in H.K.M. Nellen, et al, eds., *Hugo Grotius, Theologian: Essays in Honour of G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes* (Leiden: Brill, 1994) 65-76, at p.72.

¹⁰ *Votum pro pace ecclesiastica*, OTh III, columns 672-673. The Latin reads, “*satis fuit scriptorem memoria valere circa res spectatas, aut diligentia in describendis veterum commentaries.*”

¹¹ For a thorough discussion of the various stances on inspiration, especially as conceived of by evangelicals, see I. Howard Marshall, *Biblical Inspiration* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982), esp. chapter 1. Though there have always been disagreements over its nature, divine inspiration of the bible is a cornerstone of evangelical belief and can be found in doctrinal statements of the Evangelical Alliance (founded in 1846; see www.eauk.org), the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (formerly Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship) of which the Tyndale Fellowship is a part (see uccf.org.uk and www.tyndalefellowship.com), the World Evangelical Alliance (see www.worldevangelical.org), the Lausanne Covenant (with John Stott chairing the drafting committee; see <http://www.lausanne.org>), the Evangelical Theological Society (www.etsjets.org), the National Association of Evangelicals in America (see www.nae.net). Of course, this list is far from exhaustive.

¹² In fact, Griesbach wrote, “Those who argue that Mark wrote under the influence of divine inspiration must surely regard it as being a pretty meager one.” See J.J. Griesbach, “A Demonstration That Mark Was Written After Matthew and Luke,” translated by Bernard Orchard, in Bernard Orchard and Thomas R.W. Longstaff, eds., *Griesbach, Synoptic and Text-Critical Studies. 1776-1976* (SNTSMS 34; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978) 103-135, at p. 135. For a further discussion of Griesbach’s view of inspiration and his disparagement of Mark, see W. Baird, *History of New Testament Research From Deism to Tübingen, vol. 1* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 147.

of the Independence Hypothesis but held views of inspiration contrary to later evangelical belief, will be excluded from consideration.¹³ For the purposes of this study, Protestant biblical scholars in continental Europe before 1700 will be considered to be *early orthodox Protestants* unless they professed beliefs contrary to later evangelical convictions, especially with regards to the inspiration of the gospels. For those who came after 1700, the term *evangelical* will apply to those who professed solidarity with the evangelical cause.

In England, where the Protestant nature of the Church of England was markedly different than the Protestantism found in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and even Scotland, evangelicals (outside the Anglican Church) were preceded by nonconformists,¹⁴ both before and after the English Civil War of 1642-1651. The numbers of dissenting churches in England grew in the late seventeenth to mid-eighteenth centuries when Baptist and Methodist movements sprang up alongside the Presbyterian and Independent (Congregationalist) nonconformists,¹⁵ and a proper evangelical movement was underway, often referred to as “the Evangelical Revival.”¹⁶ The revival did not remain outside the established Church of England. In

¹³ Le Clerc stated, “It is very plain that the historians of the Scripture were not inspired; by the contradictions that are found in the several circumstances of their histories” in *Five Letters Concerning the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures* (London, 1690) 66. This was an anonymous English translation published five years after the French original, *Sentimens de quelques théologiens de Hollande sur l’Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (Amsterdam, 1685). The entire work is dedicated to refuting the notion of the inspiration of all the bible. Interestingly, when Le Clerc later addressed the synoptic problem, he considered it a disparagement to the character of the evangelists to suggest that one copied from the other – “*Multo rectius sentire videntur, qui evangelistas tres priores scripsisse suas historias censent, cum neuter aliorum consilii conscius esset.*” Jean Le Clerc, *Animadversiones in Augustini Librum De Consensu Evangeliorum* (Antwerp, 1703) 532. As quoted by Thomas Hartwell Horne, *An Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures*, vol 2 (Philadelphia, 1836) 393.

¹⁴ Nonconformists, or dissenters, were those Protestants who refused to conform to the practices of the established Church of England. The terms have been practically synonymous since the 1640s. See R. Tudur Jones, et al., eds., *Protestant Nonconformist Texts: 1550 to 1700* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2007) 1.

¹⁵ The two Puritan forms of nonconformism, Presbyterian and Independent (or Congregationalist), were allowed freedom of worship in the Act of Toleration of 1639, but were still considered among the dissenters.

¹⁶ Noll, *The Rise*, 18. Noll and Bebbington emphasise the strong links between nonconformist (Puritan) churches before the eighteenth century and the evangelical movement that followed, while recognizing there were also differences which would preclude labelling all nonconformists before the eighteenth century as evangelical. See Noll, *Rise*, 48-5, and *American Evangelical Christianity* (Oxford:

the early-to-mid eighteenth century, certain leaders within the Church also began to promote “heart religion, Bible-centered piety and holiness,” much as their nonconformist counterparts were doing.¹⁷ Thus, evangelicals in England were (and continue to be) found inside and outside the established church. As a rule for this study, English biblical scholars before 1800 will be considered *early orthodox Protestants* if their beliefs were consistent with later evangelical convictions. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, a clearer determination can be made whether an English scholar ought appropriately to be labelled *evangelical*.

In sum, those scholars considered herein who are labelled early orthodox Protestant are categorised as such because they were *early* (before the advent of evangelicalism among their communities), *orthodox* (according to their own Protestant traditions and consistent with Bebbington’s quadrilateral, with a special emphasis on the inspiration of the gospels) and *Protestant*. While it could be argued that several Catholics fit the description of early and orthodox, there is likely no danger in incorrectly categorising a Catholic scholar as an early orthodox Protestant (or failing to do so) because Catholic scholarship appears to have mostly neglected the SP until the nineteenth century,¹⁸ when evangelicalism was already a significant force in the Western world and the designation *early orthodox Protestant* no longer applies in this thesis.

Blackwell, 2001) 47-50. See also Bebbington, 34-35. For further discussion, see John Coffey, “Puritanism, Evangelicalism and the Evangelical Protestant Tradition,” in M.A.G. Haykin, et al., eds., *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2008) 252-277.

¹⁷ Noll, *Rise*, 199. Kenneth Hylson-Smith, *Evangelicals in the Church of England: 1734-1984* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark 1993) 3, locates the beginning of the evangelical party in the CoE in the 1730s, but admits that finding a definitive starting point for the movement is difficult.

¹⁸ The first Catholic scholar to address the SP directly appears to have been Johann Leonhard Hug in his *Einleitung in die Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (Stuttgart, 1808), where he argued for the Augustinian Hypothesis.

B. Solutions to the Synoptic Problem

Though there are certainly more hypotheses than those described below to solve the SP, this study will focus primarily on five different proposed solutions to the SP.¹⁹

1. The Independence Hypothesis (IH) - This theory works on the assumption that none of the evangelists used the work of the others in producing his gospel. In Protestantism, the IH is the oldest solution²⁰ to the SP and modern evangelical advocates consider it to be the unequivocal position of the early church.²¹

2. Utilization / Dependency Hypotheses - This phrase refers to proposed solutions which argue that one or more of the synoptic evangelists utilized the work of another synoptic evangelist in the writing of the synoptic gospels. In these theories, the order in which the gospels were written is obviously important, because an author may depend only on that which has already been written. There are several solutions that suppose utilization or dependency.

i. Augustinian Hypothesis (AH) - This hypothesis, based on the original ideas of Augustine,²² attributes Mark with having used Matthew's gospel in composing his own. In the AH, the order in which the gospels were written is the traditional canonical order –

¹⁹ The terms hypothesis and theory will be used interchangeably throughout to refer to the proposed solutions to the SP. The primary reason for treating the words as synonyms, other than to avoid monotonous repetition, is that the various scholars considered tend to do so, and in quoting or summarising their arguments the different terms are used.

²⁰ The earliest known proponent of the IH was John Calvin *Commentarii in Harmoniam ex Tribus Evangelistis* (Paris, 1551) in the *Argumentum*. For more on Calvin's view, see below, Chapter II, A .

²¹ See, for example, F. David Farnell, "The Case for the Independence View of Gospel Origins," in Robert Thomas, ed., *Three Views on the Origins of the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002) 226-309, at p. 235-237.

²² See *De consensu* , 1.2.4.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. Many proponents of the AH also suggest that Luke used Matthew and Mark in the composition of his gospel.²³

ii. Owen / Griesbach / Two Gospel Hypothesis (2GH) - This hypothesis, proposed separately by Henry Owen²⁴ and J.J. Griesbach²⁵ in the late eighteenth century, considers Matthew to have been the first gospel written, with Luke then making use of Matthew, and Mark making use of Matthew and Luke.²⁶

iii. Farrer Hypothesis (FH) - This hypothesis, whose best known advocates were Austin Farrer²⁷ in the middle twentieth century and Michael Goulder²⁸ until recently, adheres to the priority of Mark but does not include a Q document. Matthew wrote second and made use of Mark's gospel, and Luke wrote last, making use of Matthew and Mark. The FH has received little attention in the evangelical world to date.²⁹

iv. Two-Source / Four-Source Hypothesis (2SH) – Many *documentary hypotheses* have been proposed by biblical scholars over the centuries. Solutions of this nature hypothesize a non-extant document that served as a common source for the synoptic evangelists.

²³ The first Protestant scholar to argue for the AH was Martin Chemnitz in his *Harmoniae Evangelicae* (1593). Chemnitz is considered below in Chapter II, B. The best-known modern evangelical scholar to endorse the AH is John Wenham, who is discussed below in Chapter VIII, B.

²⁴ Henry Owen, *Observations on the Four Gospels, tending chiefly to ascertain the time of their Publication, and to illustrate the form and manner of their Composition* (1764).

²⁵ J. J. Griesbach, *Commentatio qua Marci Evangelium totum e Matthaei et Lucae commentariis decerptum esse monstratur*, I-II (Jena, 1789-90).

²⁶ Modern evangelical proponents of the 2GH include James Breckenridge, "Evangelical Implications of Matthean Priority," *JETS* 26/1 (March 1983) 117-121 and John H. Niemelä, "The Case for the Two-Gospel View of Gospel Origins," in *Three Views*, 126-197.

²⁷ See Austin Farrer, "On Dispensing with Q," in D. Nineham, ed., *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in the Memory of R. H. Lightfoot* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955) 55-88.

²⁸ See Michael D. Goulder, *Luke: A New Paradigm* (JSNTSS 20, 1989), for one example.

²⁹ Though see contributions by evangelical authors in Mark Goodacre & Nicholas Perrin, eds., *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004). Goodacre is perhaps the best-known non-evangelical FH advocate at present.

Various explanations and labels have been used to describe the common document or documents over past 250 years— among them are *Ur-evangelium*,³⁰ *Ur-Markus*,³¹ *Logia*,³² and Q.³³ Some documentary hypotheses allow for one synoptic evangelist's use of the common document or documents and another synoptic gospel as sources. Foremost among documentary hypotheses is the 2SH.³⁴ The two main features of this theory are Markan priority and a common written source, normally referred to by the siglum Q, for the German *Quelle*. The four-source hypothesis³⁵ also posits a unique source for Matthew and another for Luke, but retains the standard elements of the Two-Source Hypothesis and will thus be grouped with it.

Scholars have described their own versions of these competing theories in their own unique ways, so these five terms – IH, AH, 2GH, 2SH, FH – give only the general characteristics of an author's views. In this study, the uniqueness of each of the evangelical scholar's approach will be considered, some of which could be said to fit more than one of the five solutions.

³⁰ First proposed by G.E. Lessing, "Neue Hypothese über die Evangelisten als bloss menschliche Geschichteschreiber betrachte" in Karl Lessing, ed., *Theologischer Nachlass* (Berlin, published posthumously in 1784) 45-72.

³¹ First proposed by Ch. H. Weisse, *Die Evangelienfrage in ihrem gegenwärtigen Stadium* (Leipzig, 1856).

³² First proposed by F. E. D. Schleiermacher, "Über die Zeugnisse des Papias von unsern beiden ersten Evangelien" in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* 5 (1832) 735-768, based on Papias' statement that Matthew composed τὰ λόγια in the Hebrew language (Eusebius, *HE* 3.39.16).

³³ First suggested by Johannes Weiss, "Die Verteidigung Jesu gegen den Vorwurf des Bündnisses mit Beelzebul" in *ThStKr* 63 (1890) 555-569.

³⁴ Originally proposed by Christian H. Weisse, *Die evangelische Geschichte kritisch und philosophisch bearbeitet* (Leipzig, 1838). Of the many modern evangelical scholars who are advocates of the 2SH, two considered repeatedly in this study are Robert H. Stein, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2001) and Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010) 35-38.

³⁵ First proposed by B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (1924).

C. Plan of this Study

Beginning with early orthodox Protestant scholars of the sixteenth century, this study will trace the opinions expressed in various publications concerning the SP. Because of the paucity of publications that mention issues related to the SP in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they are considered in 100-year increments, 1500-1599 and 1600-1699. In the eighteenth century, Protestants began to address the SP in earnest. From 1700, the scholarly opinions considered below are grouped into fifty-year time periods, 1700-1749, 1750-1799, etc. until modern-day. The goal has been to discover and include every applicable written discussion of the SP in print before 1899, though some scholars and publications were almost certainly missed.³⁶ The reader will notice that the subjects of the thesis come from geographically wide range, from continental Europe, the UK, the US, and Australia. Because the approach taken is chronological in nature, frequent moves from place to place occur depending on the country of residence of the scholar considered.³⁷

After 1900, because of the tremendous volumes of work produced on the SP by evangelicals, certain representatives have been chosen to represent the various approaches and viewpoints. As will be seen, while the first part of the century saw evangelicals learning to interact with and reproduce arguments for certain theories, by the middle of the twentieth century evangelical scholars were beginning to offer new ideas and novel approaches to solving the SP. Though solutions to the SP are most specifically a source critical issue, they are often interwoven with scholar's use of and opinions on historical criticism and redaction criticism. A palpable growth in the

³⁶ As provided by early orthodox Protestant and evangelical scholars. While the author of this thesis attempted to trace all possible references to the synoptic problem, there is little doubt that a few early orthodox Protestant or evangelical scholars were overlooked.

³⁷ Thus, the first chapter begins on the mainland by considering the contributions of John Calvin and Martin Chemnitz, but moves in chapter two to the UK, then back and forth in chapters three and four. Calvin is considered before Chemnitz because his contribution to the SP came in 1551, whereas Chemnitz's was published in 1593. The same pattern of consideration by date of publication is followed throughout the first seven chapters.

discussion of these related issues occurs in the literature after 1850, and especially after 1950. Thus, the reader will notice that some of the scholars considered in this thesis, such as Robert Gundry, are included mainly for their use of these critical methods. In Chapter 9, attention is given to the role in which ecclesiology has or has not played a part in discussions of the synoptic problem among early orthodox Protestants and evangelicals. Finally, the concluding chapters will attempt to summarise the major discoveries of this thesis, including the prospects for the future. In addition, the appendix is provided to track the coverage of the SP in the pages of the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. There, every mention of the synoptic problem made from the inception of the journal has been documented in an attempt to gauge evangelical scholarly opinion and to reveal any trends.

D. Rationale for this Study

In March of 2000, the evangelical scholar Robert L. Thomas published an article challenging the use of historical criticism by evangelical scholars.³⁸ In the article, Thomas claimed, “Throughout the centuries of the Church’s history since the earliest written records, leaders of orthodox Christianity... have reported that the three Synoptic Gospels were literarily independent of each of other,” even denying that Augustine held to a dependence theory.³⁹ Further, Thomas posited that the IH had been “the perspective in the Church for 1800 years,” though certain scholars during the Enlightenment had begun to challenge this view. Interestingly, when Grant Osborne offered a response to Thomas in the same volume in defence of evangelical use of historical criticism, he admitted, “the independence view predominated for 1700 years.”⁴⁰ However, it is clear that no thorough investigation into the antiquity of

³⁸ “Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View,” *JETS* 43/1 (MARCH 2000) 97–111.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 97, see footnote 1.

⁴⁰ “Historical Criticism: A Brief Response To Robert Thomas’s ‘Other View,’” *JETS* 43/1 (March 2000) 113–117 at 113.

differing solutions to the SP has been made which focuses on the solutions advocated by proto-evangelicals and evangelicals. As evangelicals debate the appropriate methods and solutions to consider when approaching the SP,⁴¹ this study will serve as a useful resource for referencing how early orthodox Protestants and evangelicals answered many of the questions and recognized many of the problems facing modern students of the SP.

E. The Stance of the Early Church

A natural question to ask before considering early orthodox Protestant and evangelical opinions on the SP is: When was the SP first discussed? The answer appears to be that the subject was addressed once or twice in the fourth or fifth centuries CE, and perhaps briefly in the 15th century. There is general agreement today among scholars that the early church did not address the SP specifically until Augustine suggested, “Mark appears to have followed [Matthew] closely, as if his attendant and abbreviator.”⁴² Some scholars debate whether Augustine intended to imply that Mark copied from Matthew’s gospel,⁴³ but most believe that Augustine finally determined that Mark had Matthew in hand when composing his gospel.⁴⁴ However, it is clear (as seen below) that many early Protestant reformers interpreted Augustine’s words to mean that Mark used Matthew’s gospel.

Evangelical scholars are also divided over the implications of statements made by Chrysostom in his *Homilies on Matthew*. In the first homily, he stated that the

⁴¹ In addition to the debates between Thomas and Osborne in the Evangelical Theological Society, recent monographs such as David A. Black, ed., *Rethinking the Synoptic Problem* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001) and Thomas, ed., *Three Views* have highlighted the historical appeals made by evangelical scholars to their preferred solutions to the SP.

⁴² *De consensu*, 1.2.4. Latin: *Marcus eum subsecutus tamquam pedisequus et breviator*.

⁴³ For example, see Henk Jan de Jonge, “Augustine on the Interrelations of the Gospels” in Van Segbroeck et al., eds. *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (BETL 100; Leuven: 1992) 2409-2417. See also David B. Peabody, “Augustine and the Augustinian Hypothesis: A Re-examination of Augustine’s Thought in *De consensu evangelistarum*,” in William R. Farmer, ed., *New Synoptic Studies: The Cambridge Gospel Conference and Beyond* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1983) 37-64.

⁴⁴ See J. Wenham, *Redating*, 192f, for a fuller discussion.

evangelists wrote, “not at the same times, nor in the same places, neither after having met together, and conversed one with another”⁴⁵ and further, “the discordance which seems to exist in little matters delivers them from all suspicion.”⁴⁶ These remarks have been cited by advocates of the IH to argue that Chrysostom ascribed to their view.⁴⁷ However, in the fourth homily on Matthew, Chrysostom addressed the genealogy of Jesus, and Mark’s lack of a genealogy, by stating, “Matthew was before the rest in entering on the subject,”⁴⁸ while “Mark came after him, which is why he took a short course, as putting his hand to what had been already spoken and made manifest.”⁴⁹ Evangelical proponents of the 2GH have used this statement to argue that Chrysostom believed Mark used Matthew when writing his gospel.⁵⁰ That advocates of competing solutions to the SP cite the same ancient authors to prove their views indicates the non-specific nature of the comments by Augustine and Chrysostom, and reinforces the conclusion offered by Wayne Meeks that the early church fathers “were completely uninterested in the ‘Synoptic Problem.’”⁵¹

Almost a millennium after Chrysostom’s brief comments on the synoptic gospels, the Catholic scholar Jean Gerson (1363-1429) echoed Chrysostom in the *Prooemium* to his gospel harmony, entitled *Monotessaron* (1420). Gerson wrote, “The

⁴⁵ Alexander Roberts, *NPNF* 10, 3. The Greek reads, “μήτε κατὰ τοὺς αὐτοὺς καιροὺς, μήτε ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς τόποις, μήτε συνελθόντες καὶ διαλεχθέντες ἀλλήλοις.” *Homiliae in Matthaeum*, Vol. 1, ed., Frederick Field (Cambridge, 1839) 4.

⁴⁶ *NPNF* 10, 3. Greek: ἡ δοκοῦσα ἐν μικροῖς εἶναι διαφωνία πάσης ἀπαλλάττει αὐτοὺς ὑποψίας. *Homiliae*, 4.

⁴⁷ See *NPNF* 10, 3 note 1, where Roberts states, “The independence of the Gospels is thus emphasized by the most competent exegete of the Nicene period.” This statement is also used in favour of the IH by F. David Farnell, “The Case for the Independence View of Gospel Origins,” in Robert L. Thomas, ed. *Three Views on the Origins of the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002) 241.

⁴⁸ *NPNF* 10, 20. Greek: Ματθαῖος πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἤρχθαι τοῦ πρᾶγματος. *Homiliae*, 38-39.

⁴⁹ *NPNF* 10, 20. Greek: Μάρκος μετ’ ἐκείνων. διὸ ἐπὶ σύντομον ἦλθεν ὁδόν, ἅτε τοῖς ἤδη λεχθεῖσι καὶ δήλοις γεγεννημένοις ἐπιχειρῶν. *Homiliae*, 39.

⁵⁰ See John H. Niemelä, “The Case for the Two-Gospel View of Gospel Origins,” in Thomas, ed., *Three Views*, 126-197, at p. 149ff.

⁵¹ “Hypomnemata from an Untamed Skeptic,” in William O. Walker, ed., *The Relationships among the Gospels: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 1978) 170.

four Evangelists have spoken, not by mutual conspiracy, but by divine inspiration.”⁵² The result of their labour was a “harmonious dissonance,”⁵³ given by the Holy Spirit “to move the minds of the faithful to the more humble, and more vigilant.”⁵⁴ Gerson’s language betrayed the same apologetic concern shown by Chrysostom, which aimed to refute the notion that the evangelists conspired together in writing their gospels, but the vague nature of his description sheds little light on the status of the SP at the time.⁵⁵ It does not appear that anyone, outside of these brief statements by Augustine, Chrysostom, and Gerson, attempted to address a potential literary relationship between the gospels until the sixteenth century,⁵⁶ when John Calvin rejected the notion and Martin Chemnitz endorsed it (see below). Thus, though the SP is now a subject of interest to Christians and non-Christians alike, it was first a puzzle in earliest Protestant Christianity.

⁵² Quotations are from the 1728 edition, Jean Gerson, *Opera Omnia* (Antwerp: 1728) 91. Latin: *quatuor Evangelistas, non mutua conspiratione, sed divina inspiratione fuisse locutos.*

⁵³ Gerson, 90. *Ibid.* Latin: *concordissima... dissonantia.*

⁵⁴ Gerson, 90. *Ibid.* Latin: *mentes fidelium commovere ad humiliores, vigilantioresque.*

⁵⁵ The Lutheran scholar Martin Chemnitz cited this passage from Gerson in the *Prolegomena* to his own gospel harmony (see Chapter I, B below).

⁵⁶ See Theodor Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2, trans. John Moore Trout, et al. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909) 403–405 for a thorough discussion. Zahn noted that, after Augustine, the topic went practically unaddressed in Christian literature until the Enlightenment. Zahn was apparently unaware of Chemnitz’s treatment of the subject.

CHAPTER I: A Calvin(ist) and a Lutheran and the Synoptic Problem – Sixteenth Century

A. John Calvin (1509-1564): Using Parallel Columns to Compare the Synoptic Gospels

The first early orthodox Protestant scholar to address the SP was none other than John Calvin. The categorization of Calvin as an *early orthodox Protestant* is most clearly demonstrated in Sung Wook Chung's *John Calvin and Evangelical Theology: Legacy and Prospect*.¹ Of all the immense volumes Calvin produced, he addressed the interrelated nature of the synoptics in only one, his *Commentary on the Harmony of the First Three Gospels* (Paris, 1551).² While the attempt to produce a harmony of the gospels was far from novel in Calvin's day, the Reformation leader was the first to offer parallel columns to compare the three synoptic gospels without including the gospel of John (see figure 1a below). Calvin commented that for an interpreter to properly consider a synoptic passage, a comparison to the other two synoptic gospels must be made, and that his parallel columns would allow the reader to see "one unbroken chain, [even as] a single picture... the resemblance or diversity that exists."³ Calvin's method stood in stark contrast to that of his fellow Protestant, Andreas Osiander, who published a harmony only 13 years prior.⁴ Osiander's harmony was a laboured volume based on the assumption that each evangelist kept chronological order. Thus, Osiander separated events in Christ's life if any details, whether in chronology or information, varied in the slightest from one gospel to the

¹ (Milton Keynes: Paternoster and Westminster John Knox, 2009). For Calvin's evangelical convictions concerning conversion, see pages 85-106; concerning the bible, see pages 1-31; concerning activism, see 181-198; and concerning crucicentrism, see 107-127. Interestingly, Paul Helm has argued that Calvin was *evangelical*, contra Bebbington. See Paul Helm, "Calvin, A.M. Toplady and the Bebbington Thesis," in Haykin, et al., eds., *The Advent*, 199-220.

² *Commentarii in Harmoniam ex Tribus Evangelistis* (Paris, 1551). Latin quotations are from the 1667 Amsterdam edition: John Calvin, *Commentarii in Quatuor Evangelistas* (Amsterdam: 1667).

³ John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, Vol. 1., William Pringle, trans. (Calvin Translation Society: 1845; Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003) 18. Latin: *continua serie velut in una tabula... quid simile habeant vel diversum. Commentarii*, from the *Argumentum*.

⁴ Andreas Osiander, *Harmonia Evangelica*, 4.vols. (Basel, 1537).

next. Thus, Christ experienced three temptations, cleansed the temple three times, etc. Calvin rejected such an approach, and even mentioned Osiander's strange method on his commentary on the healing of the blind man (men) in Mt 20:29-34 = Mk 10:46-52 = Lk 18:35-43. Osiander handled the differing accounts by positing that there were four blind men healed. Calvin remarked of Osiander's explanation that, though it was clever, "nothing can be more frivolous than this supposition."⁵ Instead of separating similar synoptic accounts (as Osiander had done) or merging them into one, Calvin preferred to leave them side-by-side in his harmony. He did not explain why he chose to omit a column for the gospel of John, though from his earlier comments in the *Dedicatory* before the commentary he stated his desire to honour "Christ riding magnificently in his royal chariot drawn by four horses."⁶ Whatever his reason for omitting John from his harmony, it was not because he considered it to be a contradictory witness to the other gospels. Though J.J. Griesbach popularised the term *synopsis* to denote his parallel comparison of the synoptic gospels,⁷ Calvin produced a three-parallel-column harmony over two centuries earlier for the purpose of analysing the similarities and differences. While Calvin's Latin harmony allowed for a side-by-side comparison of the synoptics, it did not allow the reader to compare in minute detail the verbal coincidences *in Greek* that Griesbach's *Synopsis* afforded, as is clearly seen in the figures below.

⁵ Calvin, *Commentary*, Vol. 2, 428. Latin: *Atqui ejus commento nihil est magis frivolum. Commentarii*, 230.

⁶ Calvin, *Commentary*, Vol. 1, 13. Latin: *Christum regis suis quadrigis vectum magnifice. Commentarii*, from the *Dedicatory*.

⁷ J. J. Griesbach, *Libri historici Novi Testamenti Graece. Pars prior, sistens synopsis Evangeliorum Matthaei, Marci et Lucae* (Halle, 1774) and *Synopsis Evangeliorum Matthaei Marci et Lucae una cum iis Joannis pericopis quae omnino cum caeterorum Evangelistarum narrationibus conferendae sunt* (Halle, 1776). But see F.W. Farrar, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London, 1891) 8 note 1, where Farrar cited a use of the term *synopsis* "as applied to a tabular view of the first three Gospels" by Georg Sigelii almost two centuries before Griesbach. M. Georg Sigelii, *Synopsis historiae Iesu Christi, quemadmodum eam S. Matthaeus, Marcus, Lucas describere in forma tabulae proposita* (Nuremberg, 1583). It is not clear whether Sigelii coined the term, or if his *Synopsis* influenced Griesbach. Sigelii's *synopsis* is apparently no longer extant.

MATTH. III.	MARC. I.	LUC. III.
1. In diebus autem illis adest Joannes Baptista, prædicans in deserto Judææ,	1. Initium Euangelii Jesu Christi Filii Dei.	1. Anno autem decimo quinto imperii Tiberii Cæsaris, Pontio Pilato Præside Judææ, Tetrarcha vero Galilææ Herode, Philippo autem fratre ejus Tetrarcha Iturææ & Trachonitidis regionis, & Lyfania Abilenes Tetrarcha,
2. Ac dicens, Pœnitentiam agite: appropinquavit enim regnum cælorum.	2. Sicut scriptum est in Prophetis, Ecce ego mitto nuncium meum ante faciem tuam, qui præparabit viam tuam ante te.	2. Sub Pontificibus Anna & Caiapha factum est verbum Domini super Joannem Zachariæ filium in deserto.
3. Nam hic est ille de quo dictum est ab Jesaia Propheta, qui ait, Vox clamantis in deserto, Parate viam Domini, rectas facite semitas ejus.	3. Vox clamantis in deserto, Parate viam Domini, rectas facite semitas ejus.	3. Et venit in totam regionem circumjacentem Jordani, prædicans baptismum pœnitentiæ in remissionem peccatorum.
4. Ipse vero Joannes habebat indumentum suum ex pilis camelorum, & zonam pelliceam circum lumbos suos: cibus autem erat locustæ & mel sylvestre.	4. Baptizabat Joannes in deserto prædicans baptismum pœnitentiæ in remissionem peccatorum.	4. Sicut scriptum est in libro sermonum Jesaia Prophetæ,
	5. Et egrediebantur ad eum tota Judææ regio, & Hierosolymitæ: & baptizabantur omnes ab illo in Jor-	

Figure 1a (above): Excerpt on John the Baptist from Calvin's Latin Three-Column *Harmony*.⁸

Figure 1b (below): Excerpt on John the Baptist from Griesbach's Greek Three Column *Synopsis*⁹

SECTIO XIV.			21
MAT. III.	MAR. I.	LUC. III.	
2 Καὶ λέγων μετανοή- τε ἡγγικε γὰρ ἡ βα- σιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.			
3 Οὗτος γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ῥη- θεὺς ὡς ὑπὸ ἡσάϊα τῷ προφῆτῃ, λέ- γοντος. - Ἰσ. 40/3	2 Ὡς γέγραπται ἐν β ἡσάϊα τῷ προφῆτῃ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἀγγελόν μου πρὸ προ- σωπῆς σου, ὃς κατα- σκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν σου.	4 Ὡς γέγραπται ἐν βί- βλῳ λέγων ἡσάϊα τῷ προφῆτῃ ἡ λέγων τος	
Φωνὴ βο- ῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιῶ- τε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ.	3 † Φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐτοιμάσα- τε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ.	5 τῷ προφῆτῃ ἡ λέγων τος Φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐ- θείας ποιῶτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ. Πᾶσα φάραγξ πληρωθή- σεται, καὶ πᾶν ὄρος καὶ βουνὸς ταπείνω- θήσεται, καὶ ἔσται τὰ σκολία εἰς εὐθεῖαν, καὶ αἱ τραχεῖαι εἰς ὁδοὺς λείας. Καὶ ὄψε- ται πᾶσα σὰρξ τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ.	

⁸ Calvin, *Commentarii*, 42.

⁹ Griesbach, *Synopsis*, 21.

Though Calvin's parallel comparison of the synoptic gospels may potentially have inspired Griesbach's three-column synopsis, the two scholars held divergent opinions concerning the SP. In the *Argumentum* to his *Commentary on the Harmony of the Gospels*, Calvin, like most interpreters before him, was not terribly concerned with the sources of the gospels beyond the traditional explanations. He noted that Matthew's firsthand experience was well documented and sufficient to inform his gospel. Similarly, Mark most likely received his information from Peter, another apostle and eyewitness. However, Mark's source of information was of little importance because Mark's pen was guided by the Holy Spirit. Calvin then offered some revealing remarks:

There is no ground whatever for the statement of Jerome,¹⁰ that [Mark's] Gospel is an abridgment of the Gospel by Matthew. He does not everywhere adhere to the order which Matthew observed, and from the very commencement handles the subjects in a different manner. Some things, too, are related by him which the other had omitted, and his narrative of the same event is sometimes more detailed. It is more probable, in my opinion — and the nature of the case warrants the conjecture— that he had not seen Matthew's book when he wrote his own; so far is he from having expressly intended to make an abridgment. I have the same observation to make respecting Luke... so under this diversity in the manner of writing the Holy Spirit suggested to them an astonishing harmony, which would

¹⁰ Apparently Calvin misattributed Augustine's statement that Mark was Matthew's abbreviator to Jerome instead of Augustine. See David L. Dungan, *A History of the Synoptic Problem: The Canon, the Text, the Composition, and the Interpretation of the Gospels* (New York: Doubleday, 1999) 182.

almost be sufficient of itself to secure credit to them, if there were not other and stronger evidences to support their authority.¹¹

Thus, Calvin argued that the synoptic evangelists worked independently of one another, and that the Holy Spirit was the source of their agreements as well as their differences. Calvin did not offer a fuller explanation of the IH, but contented himself and his readers with the advice that, on the subject of the evangelists' sources, "we need not give ourselves much trouble."¹² Throughout the remainder of *Harmony*, Calvin failed to revisit the sources behind the synoptics. However, he was not the only early orthodox Protestant biblical scholar to offer a solution to the SP in the sixteenth century. If Calvinism's earliest proponent of a solution to the SP could be considered an advocate of the IH, Lutheranism offered the first scholar to champion the Augustinian Hypothesis.

B. Martin Chemnitz (1522-1586): Nascent Redaction Criticism

An appropriate figure to consider next among the early orthodox Protestants who wrote about the SP is the Lutheran theologian Martin Chemnitz. Chemnitz studied at the feet of Martin Luther and Philipp Melanchthon from 1545-1547 at Wittenberg, where he would later serve as faculty member from 1554 until his death. His background as a conservative orthodox Lutheran is without blemish, as demonstrated by his extensive publications on church government, theology, and devotional literature,¹³ as well as his formative role in constructing the *Formula of*

¹¹ Calvin, *Commentary*, Vol. 1, 17. Latin: *Quod tamen dicit Hieronymus, ratione prorsus caret, epitomen esse Evangelii a Matthaeo scripti. Nam neque servatum a Matthaeo ordinem ubique sequitur, et ab ipso statim initio dissimilis est quantum ad tractandi rationem, et quaedam refert ab altero illo omitta, et in eiusdem rei narratione interdum prolixior est. Mihi certe magis probabile est, et ex re etiam ipsa conicere licet, nunquam librum Matthaei fuisse ab eo inspectum, quum ipse suum scriberet: tantum abest, ut in compendium ex professo redigere voluerit. Idem et de Luca iudicium facio... ita Spiritus sanctus in diversa scribendi forma mirabilem illis consensum suggessit, qui solus fere ad fidem illis astruendam sufficeret, si non aliunde maior suppeteret auctoritas. Commentarii, from the *Argumentum*.*

¹² Calvin. *Commentary*, Vol. 1, 17. Latin: *non est anxie nobis laborandum. Commentarii, from the Argumentum*

¹³ For a complete bibliography of Chemnitz's works, see D. Georg Williams, "The Works of Martin Chemnitz: A Bibliography of Titles, Editions, and Printings" *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 42 2

Concord in 1577 and the *Book of Concord* in 1580, seminal documents outlining Lutheran doctrine.¹⁴ It is not an overstatement to reckon Chemnitz as more than an orthodox Lutheran of the sixteenth century, but as one who defined Lutheran orthodoxy at that time.¹⁵ As early as 1673, it was said that “if the second Martin [Chemnitz] had not come along the first Martin [Luther] would not remain.”¹⁶

The work of interest for this study from Chemnitz’s extensive list of publications is his *Harmony of the Gospels*.¹⁷ Chemnitz was only able to finish the first volume before his death, with the remaining two being taken up by Polykarp Leyser and Johann Gerhard. Chemnitz’s volume was first published in 1593, some seven years after his death, and ended with the description of the ministry of John the Baptist in Matthew 3, Mark 1 and Luke 3. Because so much of Chemnitz’s approach in *Harmony* bears directly on the synoptic problem, his *Harmony* will receive more attention in this study than any others.

In the lengthy *Prolegomena* to his *Harmony*, Chemnitz explained his views on the gospels. Though the gospels contain no contradictions, quoting the argument of Jean Gerson,¹⁸ they do have a “very harmonious disharmony” in which the Spirit “was pleased to stir up the minds of the faithful to a more humble and more watchful investigation of the truth.” Like Chrysostom, Chemnitz felt the minor differences in

(1978) 103-114.

¹⁴ Carter Lindberg, *The Reformation Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Early Modern Period* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002) 140-142.

¹⁵ Chemnitz believed the authority of the scriptures came from the fact that the biblical writers were all specially equipped by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and approved by the Church. See his *Examen Concilii Tridentini* (1565-73) I 85. See also H. F. F. Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1876) 103-104.

¹⁶ *Si Alter Martinus non venisset, prior Martinus non stetisset*. See Theophilus Spizel, *Templum Honoris Reseratum* (1673) 399.

¹⁷ *Harmoniae Evangelicae* (1593). Latin quotes are from the 1628 Amsterdam Edition. English quotes are from *The Harmony of the Four Evangelists*, translated by Richard J. Dinda (Malone, Texas: Center for the Study of Lutheran Orthodoxy, 2009).

¹⁸ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 13. See above, Introduction, E.

the gospels reflected the fact that the four evangelists did not conspire (*non mutua conspiratione*) but were led by divine inspiration (*sed divine inspiratione*).¹⁹

However, Chemnitz posited that it was appropriate to seek to reconcile the narratives in a gospel harmony for these primary reasons:²⁰

Apologetic: “To crush the false charges of the wicked” (*retundendas igitur impiorum calumnias*), and therefore, to deliver the “devout” (*piis*) from those who are “overly-anxious” (*scrupulos*).²¹

Devotional: To offer a “pleasant help for the memory” (*iucundum memoriae subsidium*) and “very sweet encouragements” (*incitamenta suavissima*) for “devout meditations on the life and office of Jesus” (*pias meditationes vitae & officii Jesu*).²² Chemnitz could claim this result because of his previous personal experience with a gospel harmony which he had privately constructed, one that allowed him to memorize the life of Christ and “carry it about in [his] mind” (*mente circumferre*).²³

Biographical/Historical: To better comprehend in completeness “how Christ passed over the entire world” (*quomodum Christus totum terra*) in his ministry by “investigating and observing the order of history” (*historiae investigetur & observetur*).²⁴

While not neglecting the former harmonies already published — Chemnitz discussed the Harmonies of Tatian (c.a 170 CE), Ammonius of Alexandria (c.a. 230 CE), Eusebius of Caesarea (c.a. 320 CE), Augustine (c.a. 400 CE), Victor of Capua (c.a. 450 CE), Peter Comestor (c.a. 1160), Ludolph the Carthusian (c.a. 1300), Jean Gerson (1420), and Andreas Osiander (1537) — Chemnitz sought to follow

¹⁹ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 5. *Harmoniae* 1.1.1.

²⁰ This summary of Chemnitz’s motivations is adapted from H.J. De Jonge, “Sixteenth-century Gospel Harmonies: Chemnitz and Mercator,” in *Theorie et pratique de l’exegese*, EPH 43 (Geneva, 1990), 155-66.

²¹ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 3. *Harmoniae* 1.1.2.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 6. *Harmoniae* 1.1.2.

²⁴ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 3-4. *Harmoniae* 1.1.2.

Augustine’s method, which was to be preferred over that of Osiander.²⁵ As discussed above, Osiander approached his harmony by assuming that each evangelist kept chronological order, so that even almost identical pericopae were deemed to describe different events if they were arranged differently. As Chemnitz remarked, Osiander’s plan seemed to be suitable because it preserved each evangelist’s order. There was, however, one major weakness to his method, that Osiander was “forced to make into different episodes that which (by the consensus of all antiquity and by the circumstances bearing obvious witness of this) are the same episodes in different evangelists and to separate them by a long interval of time.”²⁶ Though Osiander maintained that his arrangement could be explained by the fact that Christ repeated the same words at different times, Chemnitz judged that his comparison “nearly perishes” (*ferme perit*) by its implausibility.²⁷

Chemnitz rejected this approach, and instead agreed with Augustine that no single evangelist maintained strict chronological order, though there was a general sequence. The job of the harmonist was to take the clues purposely given by the evangelists and reconstruct one continuous narrative, and Chemnitz sought to perform this task in a disciplined way. In chapter five of his *Prolegomena*, Chemnitz provided a list of eighteen rules that guided his decisions vis-à-vis determining the true chronological order. Providing the entire list of rules here would be beyond the scope of this study, but it suffices to note that Chemnitz believed that there was almost always a way to deduce the correct chronological order. He did this by looking at the verbal cues, provided in phrases such as “in those days,” and “as He was going,” etc.,

²⁵ Chemnitz also disagreed with Osiander, a fellow Lutheran, over matters of theology. See Lindberg, 141.

²⁶ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 14. Latin: *Quod historias, quae consensu totius antiquitatis, & circumstantiis hoc manifeste testantibus apud diversos Evangelistas eodem sunt, ipse cogitur alias seu diversas facere, & longo temporis intervallo divellere. Harmoniae* 1.3.7. For Calvin’s similar opinion of Osiander’s harmony, see above, Chapter I, A.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

to determine which evangelist was most specific at any given point, and by allowing that any time two evangelists agreed on a context apart from the third, the context of the two would be given preference.²⁸ Though he applied this latter principle only to chronology, Chemnitz recognised that “multiple attestation” was a good criterion for determining authenticity of the actual timing of the events recorded. His concern was not to be sceptical of the accounts, but a more positive conviction that when two evangelists agreed on timing and sequence, then there was a good indication that the genuine order was intended. Chemnitz believed that by his strict method almost all of the differences in the gospels could be reconciled, but he also admitted that there were times when his reckoning of events was only probable, and even rare occasions when his eighteen rules were unable to provide clarity.²⁹

Chemnitz’s Solution to the Synoptic Problem

Chemnitz assumed a chronological sequence of the gospel events could be constructed because each evangelist worked with knowledge of the gospels that preceded his. Matthew wrote first with a “very special reckoning of matters” in which the order of events was sometimes specific. Chemnitz then explained the origin of the other gospels:

We conclude this quite clearly because (according to the opinion of Epiphanius and Augustine) those among the evangelists who wrote after the others both saw and read the writings of the others (as Luke confesses concerning himself in the preface and as the history of the Church bears witness regarding John).³⁰

²⁸ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 35.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 37.

³⁰ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 4. Latin: *Et manifestius hoc inde colligitur, cum, juxta Epiphanii et Augustini sententiam, inter evangelistas illi, qui post alios scripserunt, priorum scripta et viderint et legerint: sicut Lucas de se in praefatione profitetur, & de Johanne Ecclesiastica historia testatur. Harmoniae, 1.1.2.*

Chemnitz considered that these two early church fathers, Augustine and Epiphanius,³¹ had believed in a dependency hypothesis and used them to justify his own conclusions. Mark's reason for writing was to reveal "the order of things done in the narrations of Matthew."³² Further, Luke wrote to "arrange his Gospel account in greater detail and put it together in some sort of formal arrangement."³³

Chemnitz began the harmony with Luke's preface and concluded that, in verses 1 and 4, Luke admitted to knowing the gospels of Matthew and Mark.

"Moreover, one can also take these words to refer to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, which were published before the writing of Luke, for ἐπεχείρησαν – 'to take in hand' does not mean a vain attempt but means literally to set one's hand to a job"... For if this were to mean the false evangelists, he would simply say: 'Because many have written in an untrustworthy manner, it seemed good to me...' But now he says: 'It seemed good to me also...', and lists himself with those who first dealt with this subject matter."³⁴

Chemnitz used Luke's preface to show that when an evangelist incorporated the material of his predecessors it added to the trustworthiness of those gospels. He stated that when he and his readers assumed Luke was speaking of Matthew and Mark as the "many" of Lk 1:1, "we canonize the writings of the prior evangelists."³⁵ Luke's knowledge of Matthew and Mark validated both gospels as apostolic and eyewitness

³¹ Though he did not specify the location, Chemnitz's mention of Epiphanius was apparently based on his reading of *Panarion haer* 51.6.10-13, where Epiphanius stated that Mark came after Matthew, and Luke came after both.

³² Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 4. Latin: *in narrationibus Matthaei ordinem. Harmoniae* 1.1.3.

³³ *Ibid.* Latin: *altius historiam Evangelicam ordiatur, & ordine quodam illam contexit.*

³⁴ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 64. Latin: *Possunt vero etiam haec verba intelligi de Matthaei & Marci libris Evangelicis, ante Lucae scriptionem editis ἐπεχείρησαν enim non significat vanum conatum: sed ad verbum significat, manum operi admove... Si enim pseudoevangelistas intelligeret, simpliciter diceret: Quoniam multi infideliter scripserunt, visum est mihi. Iam veto dicit [visum est mihi] annumerans se illis, qui prius hoc argumentum tractarunt. Chemnitz, *Harmoniae* 1.1.3.*

³⁵ *Ibid.* Latin: *canonisantur priorum Evangelistarum scripta.*

testimony. This conclusion was predicated on a positive interpretation of Luke's language that did not disparage the "many" who had undertaken to write prior gospels.

Chemnitz's Recognition of Double and Triple Tradition

To be able to construct a single continuous story from four separate accounts required the combination of the verbiage of all. But how could this be done in such a way that none of the individual evangelists' voices were lost? Chemnitz devised a scheme that used letters of the alphabet to denote the various permutations of arrangements of gospel texts. They were:

(a) denotes the words of Matthew; (b) denotes the words of Mark; (c) denotes the words of Luke; (e) denotes the words of Matthew and Mark; (f) denotes the words of Matthew and Luke; (h) denotes the words of Mark and Luke; (l) denotes the words of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Letter (f) is akin to "double tradition" in modern terminology, and (l) corresponds to "triple tradition." The use of letters to denote the material of the evangelists had already been done by Jean Gerson, though his system used (M) for Matthew, (R) for Mark, (L) for Luke and (J) for John but failed to further distinguish the material.³⁶ Chemnitz's ingenious method allowed him to unify the accounts, yet keep them distinctive. A sample of Chemnitz's text is provided below.

³⁶ See Gerson's *Prooemium to Monotessaron*.

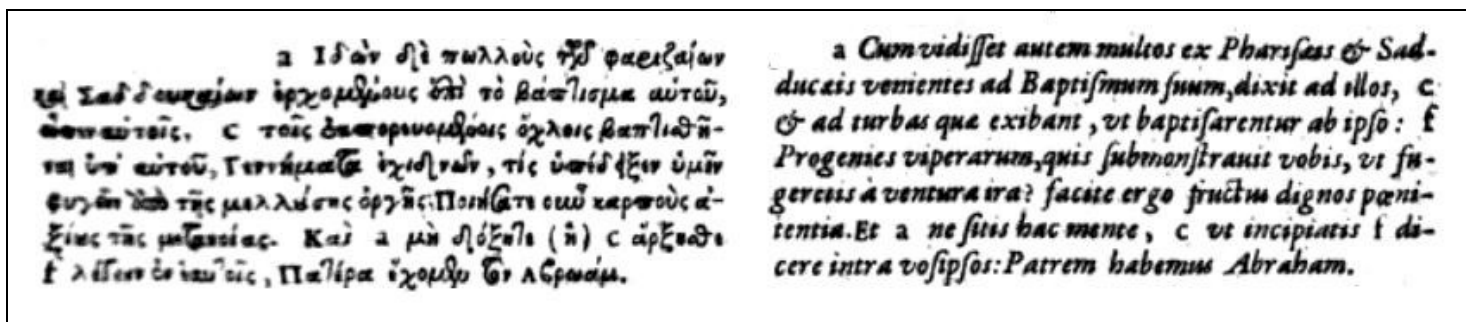


Figure 2c: Chemnitz's harmony of the preaching of John the Baptist. Cf. Mt 3:7-9=Lk: 7-8.

Chemnitz's Nascent Redaction Criticism

By constructing a harmony that combined all of the synoptic accounts and, at the same time, preserved the wording of each evangelist, the additions and omissions of the subsequent evangelists were brought into sharp contrast. Though Chemnitz's general tendency to reconcile discrepancies was to use traditional harmonizational methods, on at least two occasions he offered what might be described as a nascent form of redaction criticism. The first occurred in his handling of the introduction to Mark's gospel (Mk 1:1), which Chemnitz placed after Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2. Chemnitz posited that Mark chose to begin his gospel by calling Jesus Christ "the son of God" to prevent misuse of Matthew's gospel:

You see, because Matthew had shown in great detail that Christ was the Son of David, Mark calls him "the Son of God" at the very beginning to show that... people are not preaching the Gospel properly if they are not preaching Christ simultaneously as the Son of David and the Son of God.³⁷

The notion that one evangelist might provide what another lacked was not original to Chemnitz,³⁸ but his explanation of Mark's motive was new. Mark, having read

³⁷ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 264. *Quia enim Matthaeus multis ostenderat, Christum esse filium Davidus: Marcum statim in principio vocat Dei filium, ut ostendat... Et Evangelium non recte annunciati, si Christus non simul & Davidus & Dei filius praedicetur. Harmoniae 1.16.151*

³⁸ Cf. Chemnitz's citation of Clement's description of John's gospel from Eusebius, *HE* 6.14.7.

Matthew, knew that preachers might misinterpret Matthew and thus sought to correct potential problems. To achieve this purpose, Mark began his narrative by proclaiming Jesus as “the Son of God” from the outset.

The second place where Chemnitz appeared to use a redaction-critical approach was in his comments on the preaching of John the Baptist. Chemnitz’s harmony had the following account:

(a) When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his Baptism, he said to them (c) and to the crowds which were coming out to receive his baptism: (f) “O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore produce fruits worthy of repentance. And (a) do not be of this mind (c) that you begin (f) to say within yourselves: ‘We have Abraham as our father.’”³⁹

As is clear in Chemnitz’s harmonized text, Matthew’s account has the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to John, while Luke includes crowds coming to be baptized. Likewise, Matthew and Luke give slightly different wording to John’s instructions, so that Chemnitz quoted “do not be of this mind” from Matthew (Mt 3:9) and added “that you begin” from Luke (Lk 3:8). He then quoted from both, “to say within yourselves.” But why did the evangelists attribute slightly different words to John the Baptist? Chemnitz explained:

Those variations that Luke has the verb “ἄρχησθε - begin” and Matthew, “δοξήτε - suppose” are not insignificant. When a word of repentance is set before a human mind, and when fruits are demanded thereof, it begins to look for various escape routes of

³⁹ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 263. See figure 2c above for the Greek and Latin as they appeared in *Harmoniae* 1.16.149.

pretexts, grabbing first at this, and next at that. Luke therefore says:

“Do not even begin to say”; that is, do not grab at this escape route

that you wish to oppose this to the word of repentance.⁴⁰

According to Chemnitz, Luke (3:8) used ἄρξῃσθε instead of Matthew’s (3:9) δόξῃτε to remove the potential escape route an interpreter might take by using Matthew’s words to justify the lack of repentance. One can easily see how the combination of letters in Chemnitz’s scheme — (a) - (c) - (f) - (a) - (c) - (f) — might cause Chemnitz to see a pattern provided by Luke, a pattern which could lead to the conclusion that Luke was careful to adapt Matthew’s wording in order to correct a potential misuse of Matthew’s record. Indeed, Chemnitz’s devotional goals are evident in his observation that the human mind looks for ways to escape repentance, a point he saw in Luke’s departure from Matthew’s account.

Unfortunately, Chemnitz’s volume ends after the account of the Baptist’s preaching, and the opinions of Leyser and Gerhard, who composed the later volumes of *Harmony*, concerning the synoptic problem are unknown. Chemnitz’s *Harmony*, like many of his writings, continued to have an impact hundreds of years after his death. A half century after the publication of *Harmony*, Francis Roberts cited Chemnitz’s opinion of the gospel origins in *Clavis Bibliorum*.⁴¹ When George Townsend composed his chronological NT in 1825, he stated that Chemnitz’s “rules are so valuable” that he adopted them to aid in arranging his harmony.⁴² In 1828, in his gospel harmony, John S. Thompson declared the Chemnitz-Leyser-Gerhard

⁴⁰ *Harmony*, 286. Latin: *Et variationes illae, quod Lucas habet verbum ἄρξῃσθε Mattheus δόξῃτε non sunt otiosae. Sed quia mens humana, quando ipsi proponitur concio poenitentiae, & exiguntur fructus, varia pretextuum effugia incipit quaerere, arripiens nunc hoc, nunc illud. Lucas igitur dicit, ne coeperitis dicere, hoc est non arripiatis hoc effugium, ut illud velitis opponere concioni poenitentiae. Harmoniae 1.16.167.*

⁴¹ (London, 1648) 469. For more on Roberts and *Clavis*, see below, Chapter II, C.

⁴² George Townsend, *The New Testament, Arranged In Chronological and Historical Order*, Vol 2. (Philadelphia, 1825) 9.

Harmony to be “the most extensive, and probably the most valuable work on the Gospels, that has ever been published.”⁴³

Chemnitz showed in his *Harmony* a remarkable familiarity with previous attempts to make gospel harmonies throughout the centuries. He also evinced a keen sense of the issues at stake for Protestant biblical interpretation. It is surprising how Chemnitz’s approach to harmonizing the synoptic gospels led him to appreciate notions such as multiple attestation (in the case of chronology) and what would later be dubbed ‘double and triple tradition,’ and, further, to provide a nascent redaction-critical approach to explaining certain differences in the synoptics. Almost 200 years before Owen and Griesbach revolutionized the landscape of biblical scholarship with their modified Augustinian Hypothesis, or 2GH (Mt-Lk-Mk-Jn), Chemnitz was propounding the Augustinian Hypothesis to the young Protestant movement.

⁴³ John S. Thompson, *A Monotessaron; or The Gospel of Jesus Christ, according to the Four Evangelists* (Baltimore, 1828) iv.

CHAPTER II: Puritans and the Synoptic Problem

The middle of the seventeenth century in Britain was full of political and religious turmoil. In the years before the English civil war began, leaders from the Church of England vied with nonconformist, or Puritan, leaders for control of congregations.¹ The nonconformist ministers found themselves persecuted by the authorities of the Church and Crown in the 1630s, then later favoured by Parliament in the late 1640s and 1650s, and ultimately ejected from their posts after the Restoration of the Crown of 1660. These tumultuous times were clearly evidenced in the lives of three nonconformist ministers of the age, Sidrach Simpson, Benjamin Needler, and Francis Roberts, each of whom, along with their views on the SP, will be considered in this chapter.

A. Sidrach Simpson (1600–1655)

William Laud, royalist ally of Charles I, was named Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633, and immediately set out to restrict the influence of the nonconformists in the Church of England.² Laud exerted pressure by making it increasingly difficult for nonconformist ministers to offer lectures to congregations. These lecturers, who offered their sermons in the afternoons after official services, were paid by the congregation and independently from the Church of England and were viewed by

¹ Some historians consider Puritanism to be a branch of evangelicalism, including John Coffey, “Puritanism, Evangelicalism and the Evangelical Protestant Tradition,” in Michael A. G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart, eds., *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman, 2008) 252-277, and Ted A. Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1991). Most historians consider Puritanism to have had a strong influence on evangelicalism while not properly being evangelical. See, for example, Gordon T. Smith, *Transforming Conversion: Rethinking the Language and Contours of Christian Initiation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010) 67; Roger E. Olson, *Reformed and Always Reforming: The Postconservative Approach to Evangelical Theology* (Acadia Studies in Bible and Theology, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007) 48; W.R. Ward, *Early Evangelicalism: A Global Intellectual History, 1670-1789* (Nyack, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 87; Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2003) 53; Sydney Ahlstrom, “From Puritanism to Evangelicalism: A Critical Perspective,” in David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge, eds., *The Evangelicals* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon, 1975).

² For an excellent discussion of Laud’s role, see the chapter Leo F. Stolt, “The Laudian Counter-Reformation,” in idem, *Church and State in Early Modern England 1509-1640* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) 164-205.

Laud as dangerous. During Laud's tenure as Archbishop, many nonconformist ministers fled to the Netherlands where their views were more welcomed. One such minister was Sidrach Simpson, who had lectured at St Margaret's, New Fish Street Hill, London, beginning in 1629, but resigned his post in late 1637 or early 1638 and went to Holland where he began his association with the Independents, or Congregationalists. By 1641, just before the outbreak of the civil war, London became a safe place for Simpson to return, and he resumed his position at St Margaret's, New Fish Street Hill, as well as taking a new place lecturing at Blackfriars. Indicative of the religious change of fate the Puritans were experiencing at the time, in 1643 Simpson was chosen to participate in the Westminster Assembly of Divines, a select group of clergy chosen to help Parliament restructure the Church of England. While in Westminster, Simpson associated with Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, William Bridge, and Jeremiah Burroughes, and together the five voiced the Independent view of church hierarchy.³ These five were known as "The Five Dissenting Brethren," because their views dissented from the majority Presbyterian voice in the Westminster Assembly of Divines. In 1650, Simpson was named Master of Pembroke Hall at Cambridge, though he continued preaching in London at St. Mary Abchurch.⁴

In a sermon delivered in London, Simpson revealed some of his opinions concerning the origins of the synoptic gospels. The sermon was entitled "A Short and Excellent Treatise of Covetousness," and in one section Simpson defended Paul's assertion – "Covetousness which is Idolatry" (1 Cor 6:10). As proof that Paul was not

³ Tai Liu, 'Simpson, Sidrach (c.1600–1655)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25592>, accessed 18 Jul 2010]. The Independent, or Congregationalist, Puritan view was espoused by none other than Oliver Cromwell. During his time in Westminster, Simpson was an ally of Cromwell, who asked him to preach to the Army in 1648. For further discussion of Cromwell's views, see John Morley, *Oliver Cromwell* (New York, 1900) 161-162.

⁴ Tai Liu, 'Simpson, Sidrach.'

“in a heat or (*sic*) passion” when he made the statement, Simpson asked the congregation to consider the words of Jesus in Mark 7:22, “From the hearts of men arise Theft, Adultery, Covetousness (*sic*), etc.” Simpson continued with this suggestion:

And it’s worth observation, That when the Evangelist Matthew doth repeat those words, he leaves out Covetousness: But when Mark came to add unto that which Matthew [15:19] wrote (which was the manner of the Evangelists to add unto others) he puts in Covetousness.⁵

Several conclusions can be reached from this paragraph. First, Simpson appeared to assume the priority of Matthew. Second, Simpson appears to have attributed Matthew with the choice of “leaving out Covetousness” when he was repeating Jesus. Third, Simpson considered Mark to be aware of Matthew’s written gospel by his statement that “Mark came to add unto that which Matthew wrote.” Fourth, Simpson implied his belief that such alterations were common in the gospels, as evidenced by his statement that it “was the manner of the Evangelists to add unto others.” And fifth, Simpson did not refrain from mentioning his opinions out of concern that his congregation would be bothered by his conclusions. In fact, the statement appears to have been included in the sermon almost in passing while the preacher focused on a more important point about covetousness.

B. Benjamin Needler (1620–1682)

Of course, Simpson’s view was not the unanimous opinion of the clergy in London at that time. Benjamin Needler was also a nonconformist Puritan minister active in London before, during, and after the English Civil War, though unlike

⁵ *Two Books of Mr. Sydrach Simpson* (London, 1658) 228. These sermons were published after Simpson’s death in 1655. All capitalization in the paragraph is Simpson’s.

Simpson, Needler advocated the Presbyterian system of church government.⁶ Like Simpson, his ministry was impeded by the political situation in England of the time. In 1641, Needler went up to St. John's College, Oxford, but his education was interrupted when, in 1645, he was forced to leave due to the fact that Oxford had become the royalist capital. He eventually returned to Oxford and received a BCL degree in 1648. In that same year, Needler was chosen as rector of St. Margaret Moses in London, a position he occupied for the next fourteen years.⁷ It was during that time that Needler wrote *Expository Notes with Practical Observations towards the opening of the five first Chapters of the first book of Moses called Genesis* (London, 1654). Needler dedicated his "small manuall" to "the Parishioners of Margaret Moses, Friday Street, London" and listed his reasons for composition 1-4, which were: 1) That he, their pastor, "might be instrumentall to establish [them] in some of the truths of Christ in [those] erroneous dayes"; 2) That they "might be confirmed concerning the sweet harmony of the Scriptures, how one Scripture embraces and kisses each other" though there were an unspecified many "who would make them to fall out, and mutiny"; 3) That they "might take notice of the obscurity of some texts"; and 4) That as long as he was allowed to live, he "might leave something in [their] hands which might be for [their] spiritual advantage."⁸

After concluding his notes on Genesis, Needler attached a list of thirty-six rules in "Directions for the understanding of the scriptures," often with scriptural examples.⁹ His twenty-third rule, which is of particular interest to this study, states,

⁶ For a discussion of the similarities and differences between Independent Puritanism and Presbyterian Puritanism in London, see Tail Lui, *Puritan London: A Study of Religion and Society in the City Parishes* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986).

⁷ E. C. Vernon, 'Needler, Benjamin (1620–1682)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19850>, accessed 20 Jul 2010].

⁸ Needler, Preface to *Expository Notes*. The five pages of Needler's preface are not numbered. All divergences from modern spelling are the work of Needler.

⁹ Needler, 233-288.

“Although we should find the holy Penmen of God differ from each other in things of a lesser import, or consideration, we should not from hence in the least scruple the divine authority of the Scripture.”¹⁰ In his explanation of this rule, Needler used the example of the different ordering of the temptations of Christ in Matthew and Luke. He first noted that, in a modern (seventeenth century) court of law, a man would not be accused of falsehood if he failed to give the chronological order of events unless he had specifically promised to do so. Likewise, though the order of the temptations differs in Matthew and Luke, “there is still an harmony” between them. At the conclusion of the section, Needler clearly revealed his opinion on the origins of the synoptic gospels:

Yea, some think that it is a good argument to prove the divine authority of the Scriptures, viz. that the Holy Penmen did not lay their heads together, about the framing of the Gospels, nor did they transcribe one anothers copies; they agreeing in the maine and yet differing in things of lesser consideration.¹¹

Like Simpson’s comment before, Needler statement reveals several components of his belief about the evangelists. First, just as Chrysostom had argued centuries before,¹² Needler acknowledged that some interpreters consider the lack of collaboration, or “laying their heads together,” of the evangelists a good argument for scriptural authority. Second, this authority was displayed in the fact that the evangelists agreed on the important matters but not on the lesser details, which from the context appears to mean chronological order. Third, and taking the argument one step further than Chrysostom, Needler suggested that not only did the evangelists fail to collaborate, but that they also did not “transcribe one anothers copies,” ruling out a dependency

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 267.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 268.

¹² See above, *Introduction: The Stance of the Early Church*.

hypothesis. It may be that Needler included this clause because it was becoming more common for scholars to consider one gospel dependent upon another. Fourth, much as Simpson had done, Needler considered this subject an appropriate topic of consideration for his congregation. Needler's and Simpson's mention of synoptic issues in sermons opens up the possibility that the SP was being discussed by churchgoers in London during the turbulent years of the mid-seventeenth century, and that their pastors sought to influence their opinions.

C. Francis Roberts (1609–1675)

One of Needler's older brethren in Presbyterian nonconformism was Francis Roberts, a graduate of Trinity College, Oxford, who first ministered in Birmingham until the Battle of Birmingham in 1643 (in the midst of the English Civil War), at which point Roberts narrowly escaped to London.¹³ In that year, Roberts was made rector of St. Augustine Watling Street, where he remained until 1650 when he took a position in Somerset.¹⁴ In London, Roberts joined Needler and other nonconformist signatories to the pamphlet *A Vindication of the Ministers of the Gospel, in and about London* (London, 1648), a document signed by Presbyterian ministers denying their role in the execution of Charles I.¹⁵

It was during his seven years at St. Augustine that Roberts composed his seminal work, *Clavis Bibliorum, The Key of the Bible* in 1648.¹⁶ In the *Epistle*

Dedicatory of *Clavis*, his stated purpose was to aid Christians in their duty to:

¹³ Joseph Hill reported that royalist troops attacked and killed a minister in London during the battle, presuming him to be Francis Roberts, in *The Book Makers of Old Birmingham: Authors, Printers, and Booksellers* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1971) 16.

¹⁴ Nicholas Keene, 'Roberts, Francis (1609–1675)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23748>, accessed 12 Sep 2010]

¹⁵ See Tai Lui, *Discord in Zion: The Puritan Divines and the Puritan Revolution 1640-1660* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973) 162-163, for a list of all the signatories.

¹⁶ The full title is *Clavis Bibliorum: The Key of the Bible, unlocking the richest treasure of the Holy Scriptures : whereby the 1. order, 2. names, 3. times, 4. penmen, 5. occasion, 6. scope, 7. principall parts containing the subject matter of every book of Old and New Testament are familiarly and briefly opened for the help of the weakest capacity in the understanding of the whole Bible* (London, 1648). After his move to Somerset, Roberts continued revising and publishing *Clavis*.

1) Know and understand the Holy Scriptures sufficiently. 2) To prize and esteem them highly. 3) To love them and delight in them exceedingly. 4) To study and search them accurately. 5) To believe them stedfastly. 6) To apply them to their own particular Cases and Conditions impartially. 7) To obey and practice them sincerely, entirely, and continually.¹⁷

In this massive volume, Roberts detailed his views on the origins of the synoptic gospels, citing Chemnitz's "learned observations" that the apostle Matthew wrote first, nine years after the Ascension. Mark epitomized Matthew's work a year or two later, though Mark insisted "more on the ordering and timing of things done."¹⁸ Of the other synoptic evangelist, Roberts wrote:

Luke who wrote in the fifteenth year after Christ's Ascension, having seen others writings, propounds to himself to write of things and that methodically... but in many things he shews the order of things in circumstances, and in most agrees with Mark (Whence *Tertullian* calls *Luke's* gospel an *orderly digesting of the Evangelical story*) but sometimes things manifest in Matthew and Mark he puts not in their own place.¹⁹

Roberts appears to have been a proponent of the AH, as Simpson was, marking the second Puritan minister to advocate the AH in London in the mid-seventeenth century, and the third (along with Simpson and Needler) to address the subject for the benefit of the layman.

The Synoptic Problem: A Matter of Debate in Puritan London?

¹⁷ Roberts, *Clavis*, "Epistle Dedicatory." All spellings are Roberts'.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 469.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

An intriguing question about this time is whether clergy were debating the issue of the SP in London, even at the time of great tumult in the church. That Roberts and Needler knew each other is almost certain, demonstrated by the fact that they were co-signers to the pamphlet *A Vindication*. Considering the proximity of their ministries, there is also the strong possibility that either or both of the men were familiar with Simpson, though there is no direct evidence. From 1641-1650, Simpson was preaching again at St. Margaret's, New Fish Street Hill and Needler began at St. Margaret Moses on Friday Street in 1648. Besides being the only "St. Margaret" churches in London, these buildings were very close to one another, as seen in the map below (Figure 2a). When Simpson began preaching at St. Mary Abchurch in 1648, his church was even closer to Needler's. All three of those churches were situated very near Roberts' church, St Augustine Wadley Street. The close proximity of all of these churches can be seen in the map below.



Figure 2a: Newcourt's *Map of London*, drawn in 1658, facsimile by Edward Stanford 1863. The four dots near the center indicate the location of the churches under consideration. See Figure 2b below. The digital version is copyright © Sara Douglass Enterprises Pty Ltd 2006, and used by permission.

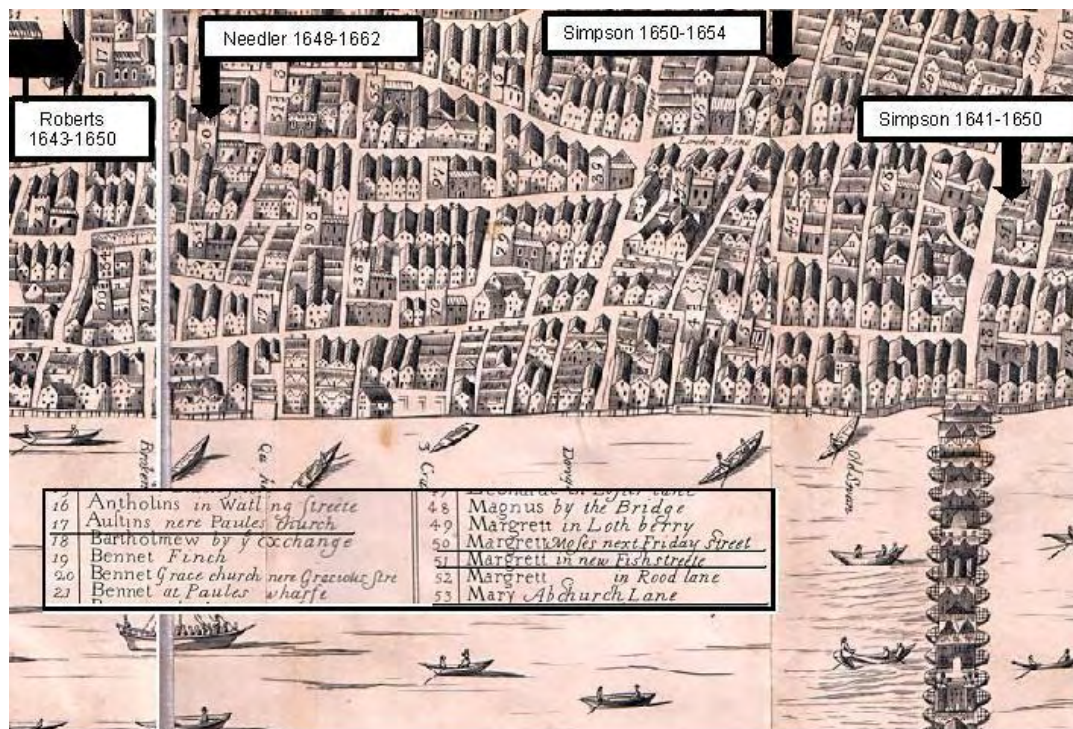


Figure 2b: Close-Up of the area near London Bridge with a key to churches. Indicated churches are underlined in the key. Adapted from Newcourt's map by permission.

Though St. Margaret Moses on Friday Street was destroyed in the Great Fire of London,²⁰ and St. Augustine on Watling Street was destroyed in WWII,²¹ they were located practically around the corner from one another. The closeness of their proximity is easily seen on modern maps of London (see figure 2c), as well as the short distance (less than a quarter mile) from the church to St. Mary Abchurch, which still stands.

²⁰ Simon Bradley and Nikolaus Pevsner, *London: The City Churches* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998) 143.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 61.



Figure 2c: Map of modern London showing the proximity of St. Augustine on Watling Street, St. Margaret Moses on Friday Street, and St. Mary Abchurch on Abchurch Lane. Map made using Open Street Map, an open source mapping effort: <http://www.openstreetmap.org>

It is reasonable to assume that Simpson and Needler and/or Simpson and Roberts would have at least been acquaintances, considering the proximity of their ministries for several years and their similar Puritan beliefs. Further, combining the almost certain acquaintance of Needler and Roberts with the fact that their churches were within earshot, it seems likely that they had occasional discussions. Whether they ever discussed their views of gospel origins is a matter of intrigue. Regardless, it is evident some Puritan ministers and churchgoers in mid-seventeenth-century London were aware of the SP and its related issues, with some advocating the AH and others the IH. It is also clear that Chemnitz's *Harmonia*, though written in Latin and composed by a Lutheran on the continent, played a role in the shaping of the Puritan Roberts' views on the SP. Though it appears that neither Needler nor Simpson produced any great theological works, Roberts' *Clavis* was an influential work that continued to be used by ministers and scholars long after its publication, as seen by

citations in 1790,²² in 1827,²³ in 1836,²⁴ and in 1884,²⁵ over 230 years after its initial publication.

The brief comments by these Puritans are quite possibly the only clear indications that the SP was alive and well in the seventeenth century among early orthodox Protestants.²⁶ However, as will be seen in the next chapter, an interest in the subject in the eighteenth century is evident among textual critics, both in England and on the continent.

²² Thomas Oliver, *A Full Refutation of the Doctrine of Unconditional Perseverance* (London, 1790) 156.

²³ *The Christian Remembrancer*, Vol. IX (Jan-Dec 1827) 14. No author cited.

²⁴ Thomas Hartwell Horne, *An Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures*, Vol. 2 (Philadelphia, 1836). Multiple citations.

²⁵ Charles Augustus Briggs, *Biblical Study: Its Principles, Methods and History* (New York, 1883) 430.

²⁶ Though the subject was almost certainly discussed, no published works had been discovered as of the composition of this thesis. At the moment, Stephen Carlson, of Duke University in the US, who is one of the most knowledgeable scholars on the historical discussions of the SP, has catalogued references to the SP before 1700 in Calvin, Chemnitz, and Grotius (whose exclusion is explained in the Introduction, A). He bases his conclusions on the statements of Herbert Marsh, *Introduction to the New Testament and a Dissertation on the Origin and Composition of the Three First Gospels*, vol. 3, pt. 2 (2d ed.; London: F. & C. Rivington, 1802) 173-4, though Marsh apparently knew nothing of Chemnitz, and Henk Jan de Jonge, 3:2417, n. 22. See Carlson's weblog at <http://hypotyposeis.org/weblog> for a thorough discussion.

CHAPTER III: Textual Critics and the Synoptic Problem – 1700-1749

A. Textual Critic #1: John Mill (1645-1707)

John Mill was born too late to face the challenges of the clergy during the civil war, but he did not escape controversy. Born in 1645, he went to Oxford after the Restoration of the Crown in 1661, receiving the BA in 1663 and the MA in 1666. After serving in various roles in the Church of England throughout the country, he became a royal chaplain in 1682, and in 1685 was selected principal of Edmund Hall at Oxford, a position he held until his death in 1707. While at Oxford his allegiances to the king after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 were often challenged, and he developed the reputation for vacillating, a characteristic which earned him the nickname “Johnny Wind-Mill.”¹ Not much of Mill’s theology is known outside of his major life’s work, *The Greek Testament*,² which he published only a fortnight before he died.³ Mill devoted enormous amounts of his own time and resources to complete the task begun by his mentor, John Fell,⁴ of finding and compiling the variant readings of the NT into a single volume. The project at the time was Herculean and the result was unprecedented. Mill composed a Greek NT based on Stephen’s Textus Receptus of 1550, but with 30,000 variant readings, frequent references from the Greek fathers, and material from early editions of the Vulgate and oriental

¹ Stuart Handley, ‘Mill, John (1644/5–1707)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18710>, accessed 6 July 2010]

² *Ἡ ΚΑΙΝΗ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ, Novum testamentum græcum, cum lectionibus variantibus MSS. exemplarium, versionum, editionum SS. patrum et scriptorum ecclesiasticorum, et in easdem notis. Accedunt loca Scripturæ parallela, aliaque, & appendix ad variantes lectiones. Præmittitur dissertatio, in qua de libris N.T. & canonis constitutione agitur: historia S. Textus N. Fæderis ad nostra usque tempora deducitur: et quid in hac editione præstitum sit, explicatur. Studio et labore Joannis Millii S.T.P.* (Oxford, 1707).

³ S. P. Tregelles, *An Account of the Printed Text of the Greek New Testament, with Remarks on Its Revision Upon Critical Principles* (London, 1854) 41.

⁴ Fell had provided variants from 100 different manuscripts in his *ΤΗΣ ΚΑΙΝΗΣ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗΣ ΑΠΑΝΤΑ, Novi Testamenti Libri Omnes. Accesserunt Parallela Scripturæ Loca, necnon variantes Lectiones ex plus 100 MSS* (Oxford, 1675).

manuscripts, all of which combined into a critical apparatus below the text.⁵ Mill's *Greek Testament* eventually became the standard Greek version of the NT in Britain – "Mill's text has been commonly reprinted in this country having thus become *our* current text."⁶

For the purposes of this study, the most important elements of Mill's *Greek Testament* appeared in the *Prolegomena*, an introduction that ran to almost 200,000 words and took Mill seven years to complete (1698-1705).⁷ The first section of *Prolegomena* detailed the history and canonicity of the books of the NT using traditional arguments for authorship and dating. When he came to the synoptic gospels, Mill made clear his opinion of their origins. He accepted the canonical order, with Matthew being written in 61 CE,⁸ Mark in 62 CE,⁹ and Luke in 64 CE.¹⁰ He concluded:

It was not Mark's design was to abridge Matthew's gospel, as some have supposed, because Mark does not always follow Matthew's order (as an abridger would have done). Also, he is often more lengthy in his accounts than Matthew and has inserted additional material, some of great moment for elucidating the evangelical history.¹¹

⁵ Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, and Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) 44-45.

⁶ Tregelles, 35. Emphasis by the author.

⁷ William Baird, *History of New Testament Research, Volume 1: From Deism to Tübingen* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1992) 26.

⁸ Mill, *Prolegomena*, 7, 61. Quotations and citations are from the Second Edition by Ludolph Kuster (Leipzig, 1723). In the citations from the *Prolegomena*, the first number indicates the page and the second number indicates the section number added by Kuster.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 12, 101.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 13, 112.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 12, 103. This translation adapted from Nathaniel Lardner's in *Supplement to The Credibility of the Gospel History* (London: 1756-57), reprinted in Richard Watson, *A Collection of Theological Tracts*, Volume 2 (London: 1791) 173. The Latin reads, "*Ipsam Evangelii structuram quod attinet neutiquam Marco institutum fuit, quod nonnullis videtur, Evangelium Matthaei in epitomen redigere. Praeterquam enim quod servatum a Matthaео ordinem non ubique sequatur, quod sane epitomatoris foret, in ejusdem rei narratione Matthaео haud raro prolixior est, ac plurima passim inserta habet.*"

In fact, Mill was “inevitably, plainly, and necessarily compelled” (*inevitabili plane necessitate coactus*) to conclude that Mark “had Matthew’s gospel in hand” (*Matthaei Evangelium habuerit ad manum*) when he wrote.¹² The cause for Mill’s conclusion was his comparison of Mark’s gospel to Matthew’s, which demonstrated that the two agreed “in many things exactly and practically verbally” (*in plurimis exacte ac veluti ad verbum convenit*), a result of Mark copying Matthew almost verbatim (*propemodum αυτολεξει*).¹³ Likewise, the fact that Luke followed both Matthew and Mark was “clearer than day” (*luce clarius*) because Luke took into his gospel “many phrases and expressions, and even whole sections, verbatim” (*quam Lucam Evangeliorum Matthaei et Marci ipsas φησεις, phrases et locutiones, imo vero totas periochas, in suum nonnunquam αυτολεξει traduxisse*).¹⁴ After these arguments, Mill provided a list of examples to show the verbal similarity between Luke and the other synoptics to prove his thesis that Luke copied from Matthew and Mark. He urged the reader to compare Matthew 3:7 with Luke 3:7, Matthew 5:39-40,42 with Luke 6:27-30; Matthew 12:24-28, 30 with Mark 3:12, 23-24, 27 and Luke 11:15-26, 29-32; and Matthew 13:3-15 with Mark 4:4-13 and Luke 8:4-11,¹⁵ though he did not place these texts in columnar form for comparison nor explain exactly how these parallel passages proved his argument.

Repeatedly, Mill made clear that it was through the comparisons of the texts that he had practically no choice but to conclude literary dependence. Of course, because the traditional order was correct (a notion that Mill left unchallenged),¹⁶ then by necessity Mark must have used Matthew, and Luke must have used Matthew and

¹² Mill, *Prolegomena*, 13, 109.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 14, 116.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Indeed, it is not clear whether Mill concluded that Mark used Matthew and Luke used both from a synoptic comparison, or if he uncritically accepted the traditional order and failed to take into account other possibilities.

Mark. Mill's argument based on verbal coincidences became the standard approach to proving literary dependency of one synoptic gospel upon another, and centuries later proponents of dependency hypotheses would continue to refer to the data in the text as the basis for their conclusions. Because the purpose of Mill's *Greek Testament* was to provide a critical text and apparatus, he did not address the SP outside of the *Prolegomena*.

Mill's Motivation for Publishing the Greek Testament

In the *Prolegomena*, Mill made it clear that his goal was not to weaken faith in the bible, but to “restore the authentic letter of our Lord's testament, and the genuine reading of the sacred volumes, which he himself gave to the Church through his inspired Apostles”¹⁷ Instead of aiding opponents of the Church, Mill set out to destroy “the opportunity for atheists and other enemies of our religion to sneer.”¹⁸

But was Mill's work orthodox? Little of the scholar's theology is known, though his *A Sermon Preached on the Feast of the Annunciation* (London: 1676) was orthodox, espousing a belief in the literal truth of the bible and the virgin birth. Likewise, Mill defended the canonicity of the books of the NT, claiming the authorship of Jude is authentic because of its association with 2 Peter.¹⁹ However, any of the author's orthodox credentials were dismissed by many of his day because of the supposedly great damage done to the confidence in the received text by his *Greek Testament*. As J.D. Michaelis described:

The great diligence which he displayed in collecting so many thousand readings exposed him to the attacks of many writers both in England and

¹⁷ Mill, *Prolegomena*, 154, 1414, as translated by Sheehan, 45. Latin: *Testamenti Domini nostri litera Authentica, & genuina lectione sacrorum Voluminum, quae Ipse per Apostolos suos Θεοπνευστος Ecclesiae tradidit.*

¹⁸ Mill, *Prolegomena*, 154, 1415. Sheehan, 45. Latin: *Quinimo Atheis hoc pacto, caeterisque nostrae religionis hostibus cavillandi occasionem praecides.*

¹⁹ Mill, *Prolegomena*, 17. 147.

Germany who formed not only an unfavourable but unjust opinion of his work. Not only the clergy in general but even Professors in the Universities, who had no knowledge of criticism, considered his vast collection of various readings as a work of evil tendency and inimical to the Christian religion.²⁰

By far, Mill's biggest critic was Daniel Whitby, who considered Mill's *Greek Testament* an attack on the reliability of the word of God. Whitby composed *Examen variantium lectionum Johannis Millii* (London, 1710)²¹ in an attempt to refute Mill's work. His displeasure with Mill was obvious in the statement, "I grieve therefore and am vexed that I have found so much in Mill's *Prolegomena* which seems quite plainly to render the standard of faith insecure, or at best to give others too good a handle for doubting; or to add strength and support to the wretched arguments of the Papists and others against this Rule."²² For many religious leaders of the time, doubting the accuracy of the received text was tantamount to denying inspiration. It was presumably for this reason that Mill did not correct the Textus Receptus and merely provided the critical apparatus below.²³ However, Whitby's rejection of a Greek text critical apparatus did not hold back the potential which Mill's lifework had released, and textual criticism came to be viewed by evangelicals as a necessary tool for

²⁰ J.D. Michaelis, *Introduction to the New Testament*, Vol II Part 1, trans. Herbert Marsh, Cambridge, 1793) 458.

²¹ The full name embodied the defensive nature of Whitby's work – *Examen variantium Lectionum Johannis Millii STP, Or An Examination of the Various Readings of John Mill DD upon the New Testament In which it is shewn, I. That the foundations of these various Readings are altogether uncertain and unfit to subvert the present Reading of the Text, II. That those various Readings which are of any moment and alter the sense of the Text are very few and that in all these Cases the Reading of the Text may be defended, III. That the various Readings of lesser moment which are considered at large are such as in which we must very seldom recede from the vulgarly received Reading IV That Dr Mill in collecting these various Readings hath often acted disingenuously that he abounds in false Citations and frequently contradicts himself* (London, 1710). See Tregelles, 47. Ironically, Anthony Collins, in his *A Discourse on Free Thinking* (London, 1713), used the very arguments of Whitby against Mill to reject the authority of the bible. See Tregelles, 48.

²² Quoted in Adam Fox, *John Mill and Richard Bentley* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956) 106.

²³ William Baird, *History of New Testament Research, Volume 1: From Deism to Tübingen* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1992) 28. However, Mill was preceded in the practice of leaving the text untouched but providing the variants below the text by John Fell.

understanding the bible.²⁴ This was the hope of Mill from the outset. It is noteworthy that Mill's *Greek Testament* may have been used by John Wesley and his small group of Oxford students that "began to spend some evenings in a week together in reading chiefly the Greek Testament" in 1729.²⁵ These meetings are considered by some to be the beginning of evangelicalism at Oxford. The *Greek Testament* mentioned was quite possibly Mill's, as evidenced by the fact that John Wesley's *Oxford Diary* of 1726 contains Mill's volume in a list of books (which Wesley had read) written on the inside cover.²⁶

It appears Mill's arguments for the AH were overshadowed by the novelty of his critical apparatus. No critics voiced objections to Mill's endorsement of the AH until Nathaniel Lardner did so, fifty years later (see below).

B. Textual Critic #2: J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)

Johann Albrecht Bengel's faith and work closely paralleled Mill's a generation later, though in Germany and not England. Like Mill, Bengel is primarily known because of his work in textual criticism and, akin to his English counterpart, Bengel sought to use his scholarship to increase confidence in the bible. Though Mill faced sharp criticism for his critical notes on the NT, Bengel's work helped legitimise the compilation of a critical text because he was known for his strong faith and was "universally esteemed a man of piety."²⁷ Bengel was born in Württemberg and educated at Tübingen, where as a university student he experienced a crisis of faith. When he originally had doubts about the integrity of the NT text, Bengel spent many

²⁴ See for example, J. Harold Greenlee, *The Text of the New Testament: From Manuscript to Modern Edition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2008) 2-3.

²⁵ George Reginald Balleine, *A History of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England* (London, 1908) 3.

²⁶ Randy L. Maddox, "John Wesley's Reading: Evidence in the Kingswood School Archives," *Methodist History* 41.2 (2003) 49-67, at p. 62.

²⁷ "Scripture," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Volume 19 (1823) 26.

hours reading Mill's *Greek Testament*.²⁸ But rather than undermining his faith, his experience strengthened it. He later wrote to one of his former students:

“If the sacred volume, considering the fallibility of its many successive transcribers, had been preserved from every seeming defect whatsoever, this preservation itself would have been so great a miracle, that faith in the written word of God could be no longer faith. I have only to wonder that there is not a much larger number of those readings than there is; and that there are none which in the least affect the foundation of our faith. You may therefore safely and securely have nothing to do with doubts, which at one time so distressingly perplexed myself.”²⁹

Bengel published his *Greek New Testament* in 1734, denoting in the subtitle its dependence upon and revision of Mill – “*apparatus subjunctus criseos sacrae Millianae praesertim compendium limam supplementum ac fractum exhibeat*.”³⁰

Of particular concern to this study is Bengel's solution to the SP provided in his second best-known work, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti* (Tübingen, 1742).³¹ Oddly enough, Bengel is perhaps the only biblical scholar of the eighteenth century to be the subject of a twenty-first century article written to prove that scholar's evangelical convictions concerning inspiration. In March of 2004, in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Alan J. Thompson used Bengel's *Gnomon* as a test case for the Pietist view of biblical inspiration, and concluded from an examination of

²⁸ As described in his letter of June 15, 1726 to Reuss. J.C.F. Burk, *A Memoir of the Life and Writings of John Albert Bengel: Prelate of Wurtemberg*, transl. R.F. Walker (London, 1842) 56.

²⁹ Letter to Jeremiah Frederic Reuss, Nov. 5, 1721. Burk, *Memoir*, 51. A portion of this same passage was noted by Baird, 72.

³⁰ Bengel, *H KAINH ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ. Novum Testamentum Graecum* (Tübingen, 1734).

³¹ Bengel, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti, in quo, ex nativa Verborum Vi, Simplicitas, Profunditas, Concinnitas, et Salubritas sensuum coelestium, indicatur* (Tübingen, 1742), trans. by Charlton T. Lewis and Marvin R. Vincent (Philadelphia, 1864).

Gnomon that Bengel, if he were alive today, would subscribe to the ETS doctrinal statement on the bible (see Appendix A below).³²

In *Gnomon*, Bengel explained that the canonical order of the gospels was the correct one, with Matthew being presupposed and completed by Mark, and with Luke presupposing both.³³ Agreeing with the AH, Bengel considered Mark an abridgement of Matthew, with the addition that Mark paid “particular attention to the noviciate (*sic*) of the apostles.”³⁴ However, though Luke presupposed the existence of Matthew’s gospel, he did not “appear to have seen Matthew’s book.” Bengel considered the “many” of Lk 1:1 to include Mark, as indicated by “forms of expression and the order of the narratives.” Luke’s desire to provide information “from the beginning” (1:2, 4) was meant to “supply what Mark had omitted,” namely the birth narrative.³⁵ Thus Bengel partially adopted Mill’s solution to the SP (the AH), but with the adjustment that Luke was aware of Matthew without having read it.

That Bengel addressed the SP is not surprising considering his work making a *Harmony of the Gospels*³⁶ and in creating a critical Greek text of the NT, two exercises which served among the primary catalysts for evangelical consideration of the subject.³⁷ Bengel’s *Gnomon* was highly influential upon later evangelical thought, with John Wesley basing his *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* primarily on it.³⁸ Wesley also wrote, “I know no commentator on the Bible equal to Bengel (*sic*). His *Gnomon* is a jewel.”³⁹ Jaroslav Pelikan described Bengel’s influence on the biblical scholarship of his time as comparable to that of “Luther in the sixteenth

³² Alan J. Thompson, “The Pietist Critique of Inerrancy? J.A. Bengel’s *Gnomon* as a Test Case,” *JETS* 47/1 (March 2004) 71–88.

³³ *Gnomon*, 44.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 44–45.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 375.

³⁶ *Richtige Harmonie der vier Evangelisten*, 8vo. (Tübingen, 1736, 1747, 1766).

³⁷ See below, Chapter IX, A.

³⁸ See Wesley’s *Preface*, number 7, in his *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament* (London, 1755).

³⁹ John Telford, ed., *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley*, Volume 8 (London: Epworth, 1931) 67.

century,” and *Gnomon* continued to be a standard volume in evangelical pastors’ libraries two centuries after its publication.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Jaroslav Pelikan, “In Memoriam: Johann. Albrecht Bengel, June 24, 1687 to November 2, 1752,” *Concordia Theological Monthly* 33 (November 1952) 785-796, at p. 785. Also noted by Donald K. McKim. *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007) 188.

CHAPTER IV: Two Britons, a German Evangelical and the Synoptic Problem

A. Nathaniel Lardner (1684-1768): Considering the Consequences of

Dependency Hypotheses

Nathaniel Lardner was born the son of an Independent nonconformist (Puritan) minister in Kent. He attended the prestigious Presbyterian academy in Hoxton Square, London, and then studied on the continent in Utrecht in 1699 and Leiden in 1702. Lardner's sympathy for the Independent and Presbyterian views and exposure to European biblical scholarship were evident in later years. He first served as an Independent minister in London, and then joined a wealthy family as chaplain and tutor until 1721. In the years 1716-1719, he contributed to *Occasional Papers*, a joint publication between Independents and Presbyterians. It was *The Credibility of the Gospel History* (12 vols., London: 1727–55) that earned him a reputation as “front rank of Christian apologists.”¹ Alexander Kippis described Lardner's *Credibility* as “highly approved not only by the Protestant Dissenters, with whom the author was more immediately connected, but by the clergy in general of the established church.”² In 1757, he published *Supplement* to volume two of part one of *Credibility*, in which he included a lengthy discussion of gospel origins and devoted an entire chapter to the discussion of “The Question Considered, whether any of the first three evangelists had seen the gospels of the others before he wrote.”³ Lardner demonstrated exposure to a wide range of scholarship and opinion on the subject in what was, at that time, the longest discussion of the synoptic problem in print.

Lardner first surveyed the “sentiments of learned moderns” and then provided a lengthy argument for his own preferred solution.⁴ He began by detailing Calvin's

¹ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 35 (1893) 148.

² Alexander Kippis, “Life of the Author,” in Volume I of Lardner, *Credibility*.

³ Lardner, *Supplement*, 172-180. All quotes and page numbers are from the reprint of Lardner's *Supplement* in Richard Watson, *A Collection of Theological Tracts*, Vol. 2 (London: 1791).

⁴ *Ibid.*, 172-174.

opinion that the synoptic evangelists had no exposure to each others' gospels, and deduced that Samuel Basnage was of the same opinion because he deemed Luke to be the first gospel (which would have made it impossible for Luke to borrow from Matthew or Mark).⁵ Lardner translated a large section of Henry Dodwell's *Dissertationes in Irenaeum* (Oxford, 1689) from the Latin, in which the author argued that none of the evangelists had seen the other canonical gospels "otherwise there could not have been in them so many seeming contradictions."⁶ It was important for Lardner, and presumably Dodwell, that the contradictions were only "seeming" but not in fact, a point which Lardner made later in the chapter. Lardner continued quoting Dodwell's opinion that Luke would never have included his own markedly different genealogy if he had seen Matthew's. Dodwell considered the order of the composition of the gospels to be Matthew, Luke, Mark (much later) and John. All of this Lardner included in his protracted quote of Dodwell. Lardner briefly mentioned that Le Clerc held a similar opinion but provided no citation.⁷

Lardner moved on to consider the contrary evidence, first by noting that Hugo Grotius considered Mark to have used Matthew's gospel, then providing lengthy arguments from Mill's *Prolegomena* that Mark used Matthew and that Luke clearly copied both.⁸ However, Lardner did not include the list of synoptic passages Mill had provided as evidence of literary dependence. Up to this point, Lardner had not revealed his disposition toward any of the arguments, but after quoting Mill, he indicated, "there is not sufficient foundation for such strong assertions."⁹ Mill, as has already been discussed, dated the synoptic gospels within three years of each other (Matthew in 61 CE, Mark in 63 CE and Luke in 64 CE), a fact that Lardner seized

⁵ Samuel Basnage, *Annales politico-ecclesiastici* 60 vol 31 (Rotterdam, 1706).

⁶ Lardner, *Supplement*, 172.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 173-174. For more on Mill, see above, Chapter III, A.

⁹ Lardner, *Supplement*, 174.

upon. Lardner suggested it was unlikely that Luke could be familiar with both of his predecessors' work in such a short time period.¹⁰

Lardner then moved to the arguments made by Wetstein (*sic*) that Mark made use of Matthew and Luke made use of both.¹¹ He detected a contradiction in Wetstein's timeline because the German scholar appeared to place Mark's gospel at the time of Mark's interactions with Peter in the mid 60's CE, but Luke's gospel he dated a mere fifteen to twenty two years after the Ascension.¹² Lardner had by this time twice used the dating of the gospels to argue against the conclusions of others who espoused dependency hypotheses, here and contra Mill.

Having considered the opinions of other scholars, Lardner proceeded to offer his own arguments in a seven-point manifesto for the Independence Hypothesis.¹³ First, "It does not appear that any of the learned ancient Christian writers had a suspicion, that any of the first three evangelists had seen the other histories before they wrote."¹⁴ Lardner allowed that Eusebius had recounted an episode where the apostle John was shown the synoptic gospels, admitted the truth of their narratives, and then supplied some things that they had omitted.¹⁵ Lardner mentioned that this opinion was also held by Epiphanius, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Jerome. It was not until Augustine, "about the end of the fourth century or the beginning of the fifth," that any suggestion was made that any of the evangelists had knowledge of his predecessors, when he wrote that Mark abridged Matthew. Lardner noted that it did not "appear that [Augustine] was followed by succeeding writers."¹⁶ The lack of

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ J. J. Wettstein, *Novum Testamentum Graecum* (1730).

¹² Lardner, *Supplement*, 174-175.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 175-180.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 175.

¹⁵ Eusebius, *HE* 3.24.

¹⁶ Lardner, *Supplement*, 176.

reference in patristic sources to a literary relationship between the gospels would continue to be an argument used by IH advocates centuries later.

Second, Lardner posited, “It is not suitable to the character of any of the evangelists, that they should abridge or transcribe another historian.”¹⁷ The apostle Matthew would have obtained his information as an eyewitness, or from Jesus, Jesus’ family or other acquaintances. Mark, if he was not one of the seventy disciples, knew many eyewitnesses, foremost among them Peter, and was thus “well qualified to write a gospel.” Likewise, Luke, if he was not among the seventy, was acquainted with Paul. Additionally, Luke’s preface makes clear that he “knew not any authentic history of Jesus Christ, that had yet been written,” according to Lardner. How could Luke, who purported to have “a perfect understanding of all things from the very first,” have copied from one historian and then another without contradicting his own claims?¹⁸

Third, “the nature and design of the first three gospels manifestly show, that the evangelists had not seen any authentic written history of Jesus Christ.”¹⁹ Following Le Clerc’s argument that, if any of the synoptic evangelists had seen his predecessors’ work, he would have been satisfied with it, Lardner extended the principle by observing that Matthew, Mark and Luke each contain an entire gospel – a history of John the Baptist’s ministry and death, the baptism and temptation of Jesus, his preaching the kingdom around Israel, his selection of disciples and appointing of apostles, the transfiguration, his cleansing the temple, his Passover supper with the disciples, his betrayal, his last sufferings and death, his burial and resurrection, and his commissioning of the apostles to preach throughout the world – and are thus “properly filled up.” If it were the case, argued Lardner, that Mark and Luke knew of

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Matthew's gospel, then the gospel canon would only include Matthew and John, there being no need for the others to write. This third element of his argument Lardner considered "most satisfactory and decisive."²⁰

Fourth, he reiterated Dodwell's point that the "seeming contradictions," which have puzzled thoughtful persons for ages are evidence of the independence of the gospel authors.²¹

Fifth, Lardner observed, "in some [gospel] histories... there are small varieties and differences, which plainly show the same thing," and then provided three pericopae from the triple tradition as evidence – the curing of the demoniac(s) (Mt 8:28-34 = Mk 5:1-20 = Lk 8:26-40), the transfiguration (Mt 7:1-13 = Mk 9:1-13 = Lk 9:28-36), and the descent from the mountain after the transfiguration (Mt 7:14-21 = Mk 9:14-29 = Lk 9:37-42) – in which significant details were added by one evangelist but omitted by the others.²² Why, Lardner wondered, would the evangelists overlook certain facts but include others, some unique to their narratives? This question helped frame the next two points.

Sixth, Lardner remarked, "there are some things in Matthew's gospel, very remarkable, of which no notice is taken either by St. Mark, or St. Luke."²³ Lardner referenced the visit of the Magi, the flight to Egypt and slaughter of the innocents, Pilate's wife's dream, the affair of the Roman guard at the tomb, the earthquake and accompanying resurrection of the saints. Contrariwise, if Luke were assumed to be the first gospel, why were so many of his events overlooked by Matthew and Mark? To Lardner, it was unthinkable that an evangelist would willingly omit such important material from his predecessor's gospel.²⁴

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 177.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, 177-178.

²³ *Ibid.*, 178.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 179.

Seventh, Lardner mentioned the large amount of unique material found in each synoptic gospel, “which shows that they did not borrow from each other, and that they were all well acquainted with the things of which they undertook to write a history.”²⁵ While acknowledging that Matthew and (to a lesser extent) Mark each have their own peculiar content, Lardner singled out Luke’s unique material for consideration. He noted the preface, as well as the unusual situations surrounding the birth of John the Baptist and the unique elements in the birth narrative of Jesus. Lardner documented the important historical information included by Luke, such as the names of important people and Luke’s differing genealogy. Luke provided a wealth of miracles, encounters, and parables not mentioned by the others, information which rendered Mill’s assertion of dependency based on “similitude and style of composition” insufficient. Lardner opined that the gravity of implying a dependency hypothesis, when no writer gave “any hint of their doing so, is a great disparagement to them.” Lardner quoted Le Clerc, “when witnesses agree who have first laid their heads together, they are suspected,” but if no collusion took place, “they are justly credited.”²⁶

Lardner’s final paragraph of the chapter summed up his assessment of dependency hypotheses. He maintained that his opinion, the IH, was a not new one, and it was not taken in opposition to any other theory. It was simply his observation of several years – “I have all my days read and admired the first three evangelists, as independent and harmonious witnesses.” And while he insisted he was not refuting anyone in particular, he ominously warned that any opinion contrary to the IH, “as well as groundless assertions in which critics too often indulge themselves, without considering the consequences” he knew not “how to forbear”.²⁷

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 180.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Thus in 1757, seven years before Henry Owen first proposed what would later be considered the Owen-Griesbach Hypothesis, or 2GH, Lardner had linked the dangers of source criticism with the notion of dependency hypotheses and rejected them both. That he was aware of the works of critics in mainland Europe and Britain was evident, and his familiarity with several competing arguments that spanned the previous centuries was impressive. However, his arguments were less than robust in many areas. First, while frequently citing the works of other scholars, he did not always provide adequate context for his selections. For example, when citing Dodwell, Lardner conveniently left off the initial section of the author's argument, which was that the canonical gospels were very late in their acceptance by the early church. The same passage from Dodwell that Lardner provided had also been quoted at-length by sceptic John Toland in *Amyntor*,²⁸ but Toland also included the preceding paragraphs in which Dodwell argued that the apocryphal gospels might have predated the canonical. Dodwell had a low opinion of the transmission process of the traditions of the early church, and his arguments for the late dates of the canonical gospels and the early church's ignorance of their provenance suited Toland well. It is odd that the author of a work on the credibility of the gospels (Lardner) would use the arguments from a work that flatly contradicted the premise of his own (Dodwell) without at least acknowledging the discrepancy.

Another weakness of Lardner's arguments appeared in his admission that John was familiar with the synoptics but still chose to write his own gospel. Lardner described in his first point the purpose of John's undertaking as "supplying" things "which had been omitted by the former evangelists," but did not explain how this admission was not a contradiction of his fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh points. Have

²⁸ *Amyntor; Or a Defence of Milton's Life* (1699) 68-79. Toland was a freethinker who rejected the supernatural elements in the bible and approached scripture from a Rationalist perspective.

not the “seeming contradictions” between John and the synoptic puzzled great thinkers for centuries? Similarly, why would John, after seeing all the “very remarkable” accounts contained in the first three exclude any one of them from his gospel? And, lastly, did not John provide a plethora of unique material even after his exposure to the synoptics?

Regardless of any potential weaknesses, Lardner’s contribution to the study of the SP was great. First, he provided the longest single address on the topic to date, including many references to British and continental European scholarship. These references would allow a new generation of scholars and clergy to pursue the study of the SP. Lardner’s chapter on the SP was also the major source for Thomas Hartwell Horne’s arguments concerning the SP in his influential *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*.²⁹ Second, Lardner offered the first systematic and lengthy defence of a solution to the SP, early orthodox Protestant or otherwise. In many ways, his seven points in defence of the IH continued to be repeated, adapted, and expanded by advocates of the IH well into the twenty-first century.³⁰ Third, though concern that a dependency hypothesis in some way disparaged the evangelists had been voiced by other early orthodox Protestants such as Benjamin Needler,³¹ Lardner was the first to suggest that the very consideration of borrowing among the synoptic evangelists would lead to undesirable consequences.

In a sense, Lardner’s *Supplement* serves as a bridge from the almost pre-critical approaches to the SP, which were extant before Henry Owen, to modern critical methods. Interestingly, Lardner’s work refutes a standard assumption made by modern evangelical scholars, both those who hold to the IH and those who

²⁹ Vol. 4 (London, 1821) 310-324. For more on Horne, see below, Chapter V, C.

³⁰ For examples, see below, Chapter IX, C.

³¹ See above, Chapter II, B.

advocate dependency hypotheses. Scholars of the (early and late) twentieth century,³² as well as the twenty-first,³³ have wrongly assumed that the SP was neglected until the late 1700s, but Lardner's thorough documentation of two centuries of attention to the SP refutes the notion that interest in the subject was merely a product of the Enlightenment.³⁴

B. Henry Owen (1716-1795): An Anglican Pioneer

Henry Owen was born in 1716 near Dolgellau, Wales. He went up to Oxford in 1736 where he studied theology and medicine, later working as a physician for three years before devoting the rest of his life to ministry. Although Owen grew up sympathetic to the dissenting cause, he conformed to the Church of England early in his ministry³⁵ and spent the majority of his years as minister at St. Olave's Hart Street, London and then vicar of the Edmonton church in Middlesex.³⁶ Recent evangelical scholars have debated Owen's religious convictions, with his detractors describing him as an "Enlightenment Rationalist"³⁷ with little respect for the bible and his defenders claiming him as a "defender of biblical accuracy."³⁸ Because of these divergent descriptions of Owen's faith, greater consideration of his writing outside of the primary source for this study, *Observations on the Study of the Four Gospels* (London: 1764), will be given.

³² Zahn (1909), *Introduction*, vol 2, 403-405, considered Lessing to be the first modern critic to address the SP. Likewise, Farmer (1976), *The Synoptic Problem*, 2, began his history of the SP with Lessing. Similarly, Dungan (1999), 309ff, began his modern history of the SP with Griesbach.

³³ Thomas (2000), "Historical Criticism," 111.

³⁴ Contra Dungan, 309-310, and Thomas "Historical Criticism," 111.

³⁵ Edmund Calamy, *An Historical Account of My Own Life with Some Reflections on the Times I Have Lived In (1671-1731)*, ed. John Towill Rutt (London, 1830) 504. Cf. Robert G. Ingram, *Religion, Reform and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century: Thomas Secker and The Church of England* (Suffolk: Woodbridge, 2007) 24 note 22.

³⁶ B. W. Young, 'Owen, Henry (1716-1795)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21003>, accessed 14 July 2010]

³⁷ F. David Farnell, "Independence Response to: The Case for the Markan Priority View of Gospel Origins," in *Three Views on the Origins of the Synoptic Gospels*, ed. Robert L. Thomas (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002) 112.

³⁸ Grant Osborne and Matthew C. Williams, "Markan Priority Response to: The Case for the Independence View of Gospel Origins," in Thomas, ed., *Three Views*, 317.

To date, no serious study of Owen's beliefs has taken place. One of the best sources for determining the nature of Owen's faith is his *Sixteen Sermons on Various Subjects* (London, 1797) published posthumously by his son. In these sermons, the correct categorisation of Owen as an *early orthodox Protestant*³⁹ is evident, and there is reason to suspect that Owen may have identified with the evangelicals in the Church of England during his life.⁴⁰ Over his career in print, Owen's biblicism is evident in the fact that he often acted as an apologist for the truthfulness of the bible, publishing *The Intent and Propriety of the Scripture-Miracles Considered and Explained* (1755) in defence of biblical miracles,⁴¹ and *The Modes of Quotation used by the Evangelical Writers Explained and Vindicated* (1789) to validate the citations of OT prophecy in the NT.⁴² In *Sixteen Sermons*, his concern for that the bible be paid "a becoming regard" is evident:⁴³

Christ comes now virtually to us... He comes to us now in his word
and ordinances; and it concerns us diligently to attend to his word,
and faithfully to observe his ordinances.⁴⁴

These *Sixteen Sermons*, written near the end of Owen's life, demonstrate his pastoral concerns, as well as the validity of including him in the list of early orthodox Protestant scholars.⁴⁵

³⁹ See above, Introduction, A.

⁴⁰ The strongest evidence that Owen may have identified himself as an evangelical is provided by the fact that he served as chaplain to Rev. Dr. Shute Barrington, Bishop of Durham, who gave Owen his first vicarage at Edmonton. Barrington was claimed by traditional as well as evangelical Anglicans of his time. See George W.E. Russell, *A Short History of the Evangelical Movement* (London: Mobray, 1915) 23, and Peter Nockles, "Church parties in the pre-Tractarian Church of England 1750-1833: the 'Orthodox' – some problems of definition and identity," in J. Walsh, C. Hayden and S. Taylor, eds., *The Church of England, c.1689-c.1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge) 334-359, at p.347. Admittedly, this connection to Barrington is far from proof that Owen identified as an evangelical. Thus, he is considered an early orthodox Protestant for the purposes of this thesis.

⁴¹ He explained that scriptural miracles "demonstrate the truth [and] breathe forth the very spirit and temper of the Gospel." Owen, *The Intent*, 38.

⁴² Owen argued that the evangelists were "inspired" and that "their interpretations of the [OT] prophecies were certain and infallible." Owen, *Modes*, 109.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁴⁴ Owen, *Sixteen Sermons*, 112.

⁴⁵ Some examples of his thinking with regards to repentance, the cross, and activism are: Owen, *Sermons*, 236, on repentance: "Without Repentance and a Change of Life, his condition must be

The work germane to this study is Owen's *Observations on the Four Gospels* (London, 1764), which famously outlined the author's argument for the 2GH, also known as the Owen-Griesbach Hypothesis. While Owen's solution was practically identical to that proposed by Griesbach a few years later, Owen's purpose and argumentation, in contrast with Griesbach's, were decidedly apologetic. Owen began his preface stating that he believed "could we discover at what time, for whose use, and on what occasion, the Gospels were respectively written" then the outcome would be understanding and profit for the student of the bible. He aimed to help provide a method to solve the "seeming contradictions, which obstruct our progress in these sacred studies," and to add "lustre, force and propriety" to the Christian's argument for the faith. Owen made clear he simply sought the "investigation of the truth," and that his conclusions were simply reached "by the tide of evidence."⁴⁶

Owen's first observation was that the early testimony regarding the order in which the gospels were written was doubtful. He noted the discrepancies in dating the gospels provided by Irenaeus, Eusebius, Theophylact and Nicephorus. He concluded, "Thus, traditions of every sort, true or false, passed on from hand to hand without examination, until it was almost too late to examine them to any purpose."⁴⁷ Owen's

dreadful indeed... What remorse must he feel for his offences past? And how anxious must he be for the time to come lest the day of vengeance should unhappily overtake him before he is delivered from the snares of sin?" All capitalization is Owen's. Owen, *Sermons*, 303-304, on the centrality of the cross in the Christian faith: "[Christianity is] a Religion whose chief article was to believe in a despised and crucified Saviour— a Religion that proposed nothing to its professors on earth but tribulation, affliction, persecution and death... in order to evince the truth of the gospel." In *Sixteen Sermons*, Owen also demonstrated a concern for activism by emphasizing evangelism's importance in providing the impetus by which Christianity was "diffused through all ranks and degrees of men" so that it "advanced and flourished," (p. 89) as well as admonishing his parishioners to attend "to the welfare and benefit of our neighbour": "To this end, we must be constant and devout in the worship of our God, and ready in all acts of benevolence to our neighbour.... When we have thus discharged our duty to God, then, our neighbour claims our attention" (p. 231-233). Contra Farnell, "How Views of Inspiration Have Impacted Synoptic Problem Discussions," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 13/1 (Spring 2002) 33-64, who uses quotes from Owen's *Observations on the Four Gospels* (1764) in an attempt to prove Owen's heterodoxy. However, Farnell, a critic of all dependency hypotheses, appears to base his entire argument against Owen's orthodoxy on the fact that the scholar was bold enough to suggest a new solution to the SP. Further, the quotes Farnell includes (pages 57-59) reinforce the conclusion here that Owen carefully combined respect for the biblical text with critical observations.

⁴⁶ Owen, *Observations*, iv. See Eusebius, *HE* 3.24.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

purpose in describing the situation in the early church was to prepare the way for suggesting a different order for the synoptics than they appeared in the canon, one not based on “external proofs” but on the “internal construction” of the gospels.⁴⁸

Having already noted Eusebius’s explanation that John “perused and ratified the first three gospels; and afterwards added his own as a proper Supplement to them,”⁴⁹ Owen suggested that it was reasonable to assume that each evangelist had read the gospels written beforehand. But what was the correct order? Owen argued that the circumstances of the earliest Christians clearly demonstrated that Matthew was the first gospel. Because Christianity was at first a Jewish faith, the content of preaching and teaching was directed at Jews and Jewish converts. Very soon this Jewish church required a written gospel, which Matthew provided:

To guard therefore, against many inconveniences which inevitably attend oral Tradition, and to fix these Churches on a stable footing, it was evidently necessary, that some one or other of the Apostles should deliver to them a written narrative of their Master’s life and doctrine.⁵⁰

Owen made the case that external⁵¹ and internal⁵² testimony bore witness to the Jewish nature of Matthew’s audience. For external evidence, he cited Origen,⁵³ Jerome,⁵⁴ and Theophylact.⁵⁵ For internal evidence, he drew upon the fact that Matthew began his genealogy with Abraham and followed it through David, as well as the evangelist’s inclusion of references to Jewish customs and the Jewish

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 9. While Owen was suspicious of patristic sources when they disagreed with him, he used them when they suited his arguments, even if they were late. The most glaring case appeared on page 21, where Owen cited Cosmas of Alexandria as his best evidence that Matthew wrote during a great persecution, though Cosmas wrote in the sixth century.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵³ Eusebius, *HE* 6.25.

⁵⁴ Jerome, *Comm. On Matthew, Proemium*.

⁵⁵ Theophylact, *Comm. On Matthew, Proemium*.

scriptures.⁵⁶ Owen made an important observation concerning the original communities for which the gospels were written. He asserted that when the evangelists wrote they always had “a constant regard for... whose use they wrote,” which “frequently determined them (*sic*) in the choice of their materials.” They chose to “expand, contract, or enlarge as they judged expedient,” thus giving the gospel histories “their own colourings.”⁵⁷ The appeal to the communities behind the gospels would later become the norm in Jesus studies by the twentieth century. However, when Richard Bauckham was rebutting the notion that the gospels were written for specific communities in his *The Gospels for All Christians*,⁵⁸ the earliest reference he could find to the appeal to target communities was from H.B. Swete’s *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1909), the first edition of which Swete penned in 1898.

Contrary to the conventional opinion of his day, Owen suggested that Luke was the second gospel and was written to a Gentile Christian audience, citing Eusebius⁵⁹ and Origen.⁶⁰ Owen used a two-column comparison of the gospels to show that Luke’s changes to Matthew revealed the differing communities behind the gospels. In his preface, Owen suggested he was potentially introducing “a new field of Criticism” by comparing similar pericopae and encouraging the “learned [to] usefully employ their abilities” in determining how one author adapted another.⁶¹

Figure 4a shows an excerpt from his first comparison of Mt 3 and Lk 3.

⁵⁶ Owen, *Observations*, 14.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁵⁸ (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 13.

⁵⁹ *Observations*, 24. Owen cited *H.E.* 5.10.

⁶⁰ *Observations*, 25. The Origen citation came from *Comm. in Matthew* I, 203.

⁶¹ *Observations*, iv.

VER. 11, 12.	VER. 16, 17.
Ἐγὼ μὲν βαπτίζω ὑ-	Ἐγὼ μὲν ὕδατι βαπτίζω
μᾶς ἐν ὕδατι, εἰς μετά-	ὑμᾶς.
νοίαν [c]. ὁ δὲ ὀπίσω μὲν	ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρό-
ἐρχόμενος, ἰσχυρότερός	τέρος μου, ὃς ἐκ εἰμὶ ἰκα-

[c] St. MATTHEW inserts *εἰς μετάνοιαν* to remind the Jews of the necessity of *Repentance*: the Gentiles *acknowledged* it, which accounts for the omission in the other Gospel.

Figure 4a: Owen's side-by-side comparison of Mt 3:11 (left) and Lk 3:16 (right). Notice remark [c] attached to Mt 3:11 in explanation of Luke's redaction.

Before proceeding, it is appropriate to consider whether two of Owen's procedures were novel at the time he wrote. First, though it appears Griesbach coined the term *synopsis* to describe his parallel comparisons of Mt-Mk-Lk after Owen wrote *Observations*, the side-by-side comparison of synoptic texts was already well established by the time Owen and Griesbach wrote. In addition to Calvin's Latin *Harmony* in 1551 that placed the synoptic gospels in parallel columns,⁶² in 1592 Gerhard Mercator composed *Evangelicae Historiae Quadripartita Monas* (Duisburg, 1592), a complete parallel comparison of the gospels in Latin. Whether Owen was familiar with Mercator's volume is unknown, but it is extremely unlikely that he was unaware of the similar work from 1647 of the English harmonist, Rev. John Lightfoot (see Fig. 4B below).⁶³

⁶² See above, Chapter I, A.

⁶³ *The Harmony of the Four Evangelists, Among Themselves, and with the Old Testament* (London, 1647).

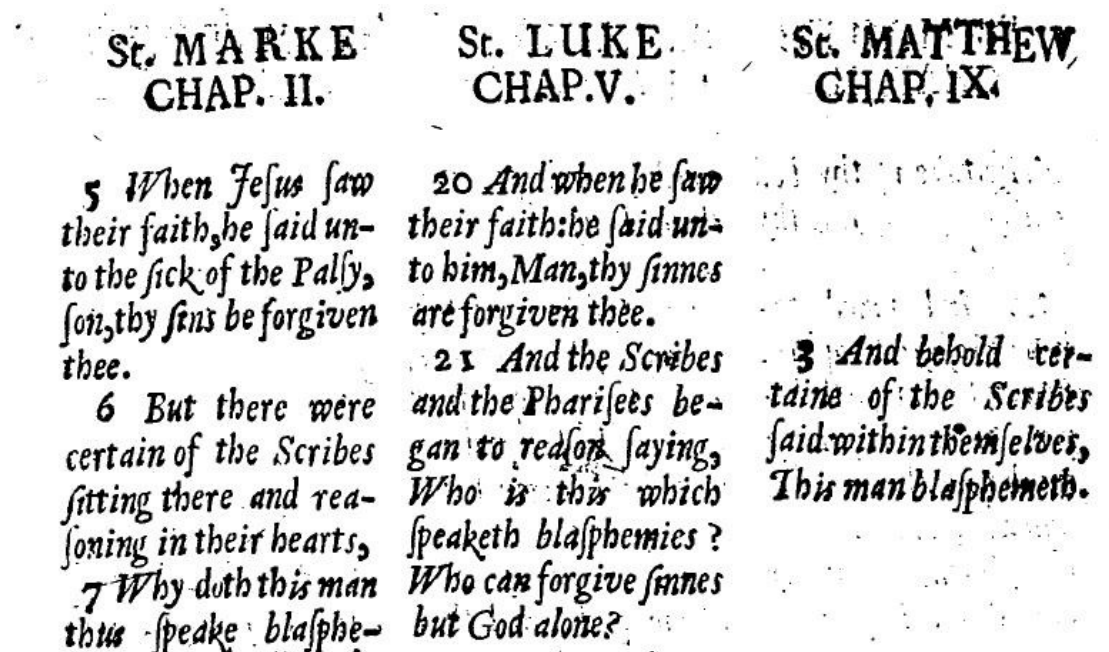


Figure 4B: From page 209 of John Lightfoot's *Harmony* of 1647. Image taken from Early English Books Online (EEBO): <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/>

Similarly, Jean Le Clerc had published his own harmony, *Harmonia Evangelica* (Amsterdam, 1699), in parallel columns in both Latin and Greek. That Owen would use a similar practice, and Griesbach soon after, is hardly unexpected. The difference, noticeable in both Owen's and Griesbach's texts, was the willingness to put breaks in the middle of verses so that parallel words could align for comparison. Prior to the eighteenth century, harmonists such as Calvin, Lightfoot, and Le Clerc often left gaps between verses so that they might align with those in the other gospels, but refrained from diffusing verses for a comparison of verbatim agreements. Before Le Clerc's Greek harmony, which also changed the order of verses when necessary (see figure 4c below), the need for such precision was not so great, because the Latin and English texts in gospel harmonies were mere translations.⁶⁴ Owen and Griesbach took the process even further than Le Clerc by allowing the Greek pericopae to be compared in greater detail. However, Owen dealt with the synoptic parallels two at a time, first comparing Matthew and Luke, then

⁶⁴ Although Le Clerc later produced an English *Harmony of the Evangelists* in 1701, based on his Greek version.

Matthew and Mark, then Luke and Mark. The continued popularity of Griesbach's three-column synopsis⁶⁵ attests to its utility over Owen's version. In addition, the fact that Owen only compared a few pericopae instead of the entire synoptic canon, as Griesbach had done, meant that his arguments were incomplete.

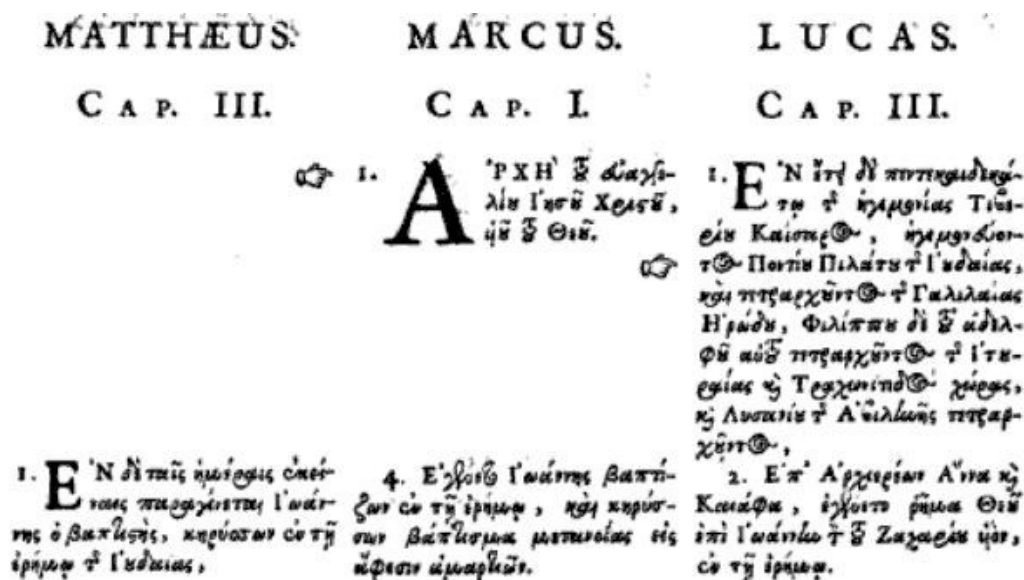


Figure 4c: From page 36 of LeClerc's 1699 *Harmonia Evangelica*, the first parallel-column gospel harmony in Greek.

Second, Owen's willingness to depart from the traditional order of the gospels was uncommon, but not without precedent. Owen later cited Clement of Alexandria's statement that the gospels with the genealogies were written first in support for his order of Mt-Lk-Mk.⁶⁶ There were scholars before Owen who had addressed the subject of a different order for the gospels. In his *Annotationes in Libros Evangeliorum* (Amsterdam, 1641), Hugo Grotius mentioned but did not name "some who held the opinion that Luke was prior in writing to Matthew and Mark."⁶⁷ In 1706, the French scholar Samuel Basnage argued for the priority of Luke.⁶⁸ And decades before Owen wrote, Lardner admitted that the order of Matthew, John, Luke,

⁶⁵ See figure 1c above.

⁶⁶ Eusebius, *HE* 6.14.5-7; see Owen, *Observations*, 75.

⁶⁷ *Quod vero quidam existimant Matthaeo & Marcum priorem in scribendo Lucam fuisse*. Hugo Grotius, *Annotationes* Luke 1.1, 594.

⁶⁸ Basnage, *Annales* (1706).

Mark was found in some manuscripts.⁶⁹ While Owen carefully challenged the traditional order, he likely did so knowing that others had gone before him on several occasions.

After arguing for the order of Matthew-Luke, Owen offered several examples to demonstrate how his method could be used. In all of them, when Owen compared parallel passages from Matthew and Luke, he explained Luke's differences by appealing to the evangelist's consideration of his target audience. The first was a comparison of Matthew 3:3 and Luke 3:4-6, where both evangelists include a quotation from Isaiah 40:3. Owen noted that both quotations vary slightly from the "Greek version" and it was probable that Luke followed Matthew's adaptation of Isaiah words. Luke, however, naturally included the rest of the prophecy "all flesh was to see the salvation of God" to demonstrate the admission of the gentiles into the Church.⁷⁰

In Owen's second example, in the narrative of Jesus' temptation (Mt 3:7-10 = Lk 3:7-9), Luke "found himself obliged to make some particular alterations" to Matthew's "phraseology." Owen explained that Matthew gave the temptations in the original order so that they "rise progressively in strength above one another." Matthew chose this order because he was "considering the natural temper of the Jews." Luke changed the order of the temptations to "preserve the climax with regard to the Gentiles."⁷¹

In the third example (Mt 6:25-33 = Luke 12:22-31), Owen noted that Matthew says, "Behold the birds of the air" because Jesus frequently "alluded to things present," but conjectured that Luke altered the phrase to "Consider the birds of the

⁶⁹ Lardner, *The Credibility of the Gospel History*, vol. 1 (London, 1727) 662. A work that Owen cited on pages 3 and 20 of *Observations*. Owen also cited the opinions of Mill on pages 36-37.

⁷⁰ Owen, *Observations*, 33.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 35-36.

air” due to the fact that “the Gentiles were to make the reflexion for themselves.”⁷² In the same example, after recounting Jesus command to “Seek first the kingdom,” Matthew included the admonition “and his righteousness” because the Jews believed the “possession of a religion without the practice of a holy life would entitle them to salvation.” Luke omitted the final phrase because “the Gentiles had not so learned Christ.”⁷³ By adapting Matthew in this way, Luke was offering Matthew and his gospel a special recommendation – “not by name indeed, but by a better, and more common method – that of quoting and copying his words.”⁷⁴

If Matthew were for the Jewish Christian church, and Luke for the Gentile Christian church, then Mark was for the “world at large.”⁷⁵ Owen pointed to Mark’s opening in which Jesus is called “the son of God” to engage the “Romans, those Lords of the earth.”⁷⁶ Mark copied from both Matthew and Luke, almost never failing to follow one or the other. As he had done with Matthew and Luke, Owen then compared Matthew and Mark in a side-by-side fashion. His first example was the parable of the sower (Mk 4:1-9 = Mt 13:1-9 = Lk 8:1-8), where Mark changed Matthew’s plural “them” (seeds) to singular “it” (seed) to conform to Lk 8:5. He also noticed that, when Mark came to Matthew’s conclusion of Jesus’ explanation of the parable in Mt 13:19-23, Mark made a transition to Luke 8:16-18.⁷⁷

Owen’s explanation of the differences between Peter’s denials (Mk 14:26-46 = Mt 26:30-50) is especially noteworthy. Both gospels have Peter denying Christ three times, but Mark says that Jesus prophesied the rooster would crow two times, and Matthew mentions only one crowing. Owen explained that Matthew noted the Jewish reckoning of time, with the rooster crowing at the third watch, or 3 a.m., while

⁷² *Ibid.*, 38.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 55.

the Romans reckoned “a double crowing of the cock” at midnight and at 3 a.m. Mark was obliged to change Matthew’s version to two crowings “to denote the same hour to *them*.”⁷⁸

Owen then provided several parallels between Mark and Luke, though he mostly refrained from offering his opinion on how and why Mark adapted Luke. He did offer the explanation that Mark (2:9) changed Luke’s (5:24) κλινίδιον to κράβαττον because the word was more familiar to the Romans.⁷⁹ He answered the potential objection that Luke might have borrowed from Mark by positing that Luke was known to be “an original writer,” but that Mark was an abbreviator.⁸⁰ Further, in places common to both, Luke agrees more with Matthew than Mark.⁸¹ Owen recognized a natural question would result concerning how the canonical order came about if Luke wrote before Matthew. His explanation was that, just as the book of Romans came to be placed before earlier letters of Paul, Mark superseded Luke because of its value “from a regard to the persons to whom it was written.”⁸²

Owen acknowledged that his book was groundbreaking and contrary to many long-held opinions. He had admitted in his preface that he might be presenting an argument which the Church did not want (that the gospels were literarily dependent, with Luke being second), but in the process he was providing it “with another... of which it really stood in need” (to explain the differences in the synoptics).⁸³ In the process, he opined that the popular assumption of the evangelists’ independence was “founded on a common mistake.”⁸⁴

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 57. Emphasis Owen’s.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 75.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, vi.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 82.

Like most biblical scholars, Owen claimed merely to follow where the available evidence took him. The mixed testimony of the early church concerning the timing and order of the gospels caused him to consider the possibility that the best answer should come from within the gospels. By comparing the Greek of the synoptics in a parallel manner, it was clear to Owen that copying had taken place. These notions, though uncommon for his time, are now espoused by many, if not most, evangelical scholars.⁸⁵ Owen's justification for his assumed audiences of the gospels (Matthew to the Jewish Christians, Luke to the Gentile Christians, Mark to all) was at times suspect. On two separate occasions Owen recognized parallel passages contained Matthew's reference to Gentiles, which seemed to contradict his argument that Matthew was only for Jewish Christians. Owen argued that Matthew's remarkable mention of the call of the Gentiles (21:43; 12:18, 21; 24:14) only proved that the later writers did not invent a "crafty scheme" to justify the ill success among the Jews and later appeal to the Gentiles.⁸⁶ Such a convoluted explanation was only necessary because Owen had tried so vigorously to argue that Matthew did not write with the Gentiles in mind. Likewise, to justify the fact that so many of Luke's arguments are similar to Matthew's, Owen admitted that their designs coincided because both also aimed to convert unbelieving Jews, Matthew with an eye toward Palestinian Jews and Luke toward foreign Jews.⁸⁷ Again, this conclusion was only necessary because Owen based so much of his method on the fact that the audiences of the evangelists were very different. Finally, Owen never questioned his extremely negative view of oral tradition. He assumed that the written gospels must have come

⁸⁵ See Chapter X below for a discussion of current evangelical scholarly opinion concerning solutions to the SP.

⁸⁶ *Observations*, 21.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

early because of it was unthinkable that the early church lacked dependable documents “so highly important not only to its edification, but also its very being.”⁸⁸

Unfortunately for Owen, while *Observations* met with initial acclaim,⁸⁹ Griesbach’s more developed explanation overshadowed it quickly.⁹⁰ Still, his work stands out as an important early contribution to the SP from an early orthodox Protestant point of view.

C. Johann G. Herder (1744-1803): Principles for Comparing the Evangelists

Johann Gottfried von Herder was born in Mohrungen, Prussia and enrolled at the University of Königsberg at the age of 17. After university, Herder became a Lutheran pastor, a role he continued to fill until his death. He served as teacher and preacher in Riga, then moved to Bückeberg as court preacher, and was named superintendent of the Lutheran clergy at Weimar in 1776. Herder’s interests were so varied and his writings so immense that to sum up his theology in a few lines is practically impossible.⁹¹ In many ways, his thinking was so far ahead of his time that Nietzsche later called him an “uncomfortable guest of the 18th century.”⁹² Herder’s views were so complex that a Herder scholar once declared that one can “refute Herder by Herder.”⁹³ In a similar vein, Herder’s solution to the SP could be described as partly consistent with the IH, and partly consistent with Markan priority and dependency hypotheses (as seen below).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸⁹ See the glowing review in *The Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal*, Vol 32 (1764) 49-54. In 1767, the Presbyterian minister Edward Harwood in *New Introduction to the Study and Knowledge of the New Testament* (London, 1767) based his section on the gospels on Owen’s *Observations*.

⁹⁰ J. J. Griesbach, *Commentatio qua Marci Evangelium totum e Matthaei et Lucae commentariis decerptum esse monstratur*, I-II (Jena, 1789-90).

⁹¹ For a Select Bibliography of Herder’s works, see Herder, *Against Pure Reason: Writings on Religion, Language, and History*, ed. and trans. by Marcia Bunge (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) xii-xviii. Many of the English translations provided here are from this work, as indicated by the abbreviation *APR*.

⁹² Herder, *APR*, 1.

⁹³ K.R. Hagenbach, *German Rationalism, In Its Rise, Progress, and Decline* (New York, 1865) 197.

Herder may appear to some to be an odd fit in a study of evangelicalism, but it is appropriate to group Herder with the evangelicals of his time. It is true that his views caused some Lutheran officials of his day to question his orthodoxy and pass him over for a position at Göttingen. However, as German scholar Wulf Kopke wrote, “Herder always considered himself to be a true evangelical Lutheran Christian.”⁹⁴ Kopke referred to Herder’s letter to Georg Friedrich Brandes, in which Herder defended his (Lutheran) orthodoxy in no uncertain terms. Herder pointed out that his critics were from abroad – “In meinem Lande hat noch niemand an meiner Orthodoxie gezweifelt”⁹⁵ – and insisted that his pledge to adhere to the Augsburg Confession confirmed his adherence to the truth. Herder argued that, instead of advocating heterodoxy, his writings were “directly contrary to the current of the deistic century of our wrong believing theologians.”⁹⁶ Just as some doubted Herder in his own day, a few modern scholars have also questioned his orthodoxy. Claiming that Herder held an unorthodox view of inspiration, Baird cites Herder’s insistence that the bible be read in a “human way.”⁹⁷ However, Herder’s appeal to his readers to appreciate the human nature of the bible did not, in his mind, devalue the doctrine of inspiration. Instead, Herder argued that the literary characteristics of the bible should be appreciated and that Christians should be allowed to appreciate these characteristics. In the same *Letters Concerning the Study of Theology*, which Baird cites, Herder counselled the young theologian to realize the dangers and limits of biblical criticism – “Do not let the misuse, the frequently downright impious application, of so-called biblical criticism frighten you.”⁹⁸ Instead, Herder advocated

⁹⁴ Kopke, *Johann Gottfried Herder, Innovator Through the Ages* (Bouvier, 1982) 138.

⁹⁵ Herder, *sämtliche Werke in vierzig Bänden*, Volumes 39-40 (1853) 255.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 256. The German reads: *gerade dem Strom des deistischen Jahrhunderts unsrer unrechtgläubigen Theologen entgegen*.

⁹⁷ Baird, 179. Alistair McGrath also unfittingly describes Herder’s view of inspiration in purely human terms in his *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007) 135.

⁹⁸ Herder, *APR*, 220.

learning the biblical languages, consulting a critical biblical text, and knowing the various interpretations, while withholding final judgment until biblical criticism had time to mature. However, Herder counselled, even when using the “human way” to approach the bible, the student should “always preserve your childlike simplicity and respect for the bible, even when you see it has been profaned in the hands of its critics.”⁹⁹ In fact, Herder was known as an advocate for the inerrancy of the bible. While the potential for scribal error to creep into the texts existed, the bible was not merely a human book. To the contrary, “It may be the bible contains many mistakes concerning geology, history and astronomy (although it has been shown that these are not mistakes).”¹⁰⁰ Near the end of his life, Herder offered similar advice: “When you approach the holy scriptures, enter as if you were entering a holy place of God... Do not feed your inquisitiveness, pride or scepticism with questions or comments prompted by idle curiosity.”¹⁰¹

To Herder, scripture was a form of art, and he resisted approaching it on purely rationalistic terms.¹⁰² It would be inappropriate to classify him as rejecting miracles in the gospels, as some have argued,¹⁰³ because he evinced “a strange vacillation between their symbolical interpretation and adherence to their real historical character.”¹⁰⁴ Herder would have it both ways.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁰⁰ *APR*, 210.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 211. Baird, 195, also documents the repeated efforts by Herder to encourage readers to respectfully approach the scriptures.

¹⁰² While it is admitted that William Farmer, *The Gospel of Jesus: The Pastoral Relevance of the Synoptic Problem* (Louisville, KY: Westminster / John Knox Press, 1994) 6, is correct in his description of Herder as “a romanticist,” Herder’s writings over time show that he developed an increasing suspicion of emotions. See Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992) 344.; and *APR*, 1. Isaiah Berlin even labeled Herder a critic of the enlightenment – Isaiah Berlin, *Three Critics of the Enlightenment: Vico, Hamann, Herder*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). Further, Hans Adler, “Johann Gottfried Herder’s Concept of Humanity,” *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture* 23 (1994), 56, even consider him an “irrationalist.”

¹⁰³ See Hugh B. Nisbet, *Herder and the Philosophy and History of Science* (Cambridge: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1970) 260.

¹⁰⁴ Otto Pfliegerer, *The Development of Theology in Germany Since Kant and Its Progress in Great Britain Since 1825*, trans. J. Frederick Smith, 3rd edn. (London, 1909) 37.

Herder first offered his opinions on the SP in 1796.¹⁰⁵ He explained that the first gospel was the “oral gospel,” embodied in the NT in passages such as Acts 2:22-29, where Peter delivered in his sermon “a complete, Christian gospel.”¹⁰⁶ Herder rejected the ways in which Lessing¹⁰⁷ and Griesbach¹⁰⁸ addressed the SP, and he was particularly displeased with the depiction of the evangelists in modern synoptic hypotheses.

Instead of wearily patching these things together, why did the evangelists not go and talk to eyewitnesses, who enjoyed respect in the church and were still alive? ... What should we think of apostles who were so unsure of things that their closest daily friends and yearly companions had to patch together the entire historical foundation on which Christianity, the work of their entire lives, was based? People confuse themselves with hypotheses of this kind to such a degree that not only are the evangelists’ contradictions even more glaring, but in the end people do not even know which evangelist copied from, amplified, shortened, separated, improved, worsened and stole from the other... It is certain that no evangelist was born in our century or wrote his gospel in order to practice higher or lower criticism on his neighbour. No evangelist wanted to build over the others or to overpower them... Perhaps not one of the evangelists saw the gospel of another; if he did he did not use it as he wrote his own.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Herder, *Vom Erlöser der Menschen* (1796).

¹⁰⁶ *APR*, 178. Herder also saw the same general gospel content in Acts 3:12-26; 4:10-12; 10:36-42; 13:26-41; 17:30-31.

¹⁰⁷ G.E. Lessing, “Neue Hypothese,” (1784).

¹⁰⁸ J. J. Griesbach, *Commentatio* (1789-90).

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 183.

The earliest apostolic message was not a written one, but was passed on by “ministers of the word” (Lk 1:2), who relied on “a sound, a voice, a living epistle in the heart – not an edited letter.”¹¹⁰

Principles for Comparing the Evangelists

A year later Herder built on his previous ideas¹¹¹ and offered “Twenty Three Principles for Comparing the Evangelists” in an attempt to correct the misguided attempts of biblical critics. In these principles his groundbreaking solution to the SP became evident. Building on his earlier arguments that the first gospel was “oral,” and labelled Lessing’s search for a nonexistent *Urevangelium*, “a presumptuous race without a goal.”¹¹²

However, the synoptics were based on a “common gospel” (*evangelium commune*) as could be observed “in any genuine synopsis.” Herder specifically mentioned Griesbach’s synopsis, which consisted of “specific units, narratives, parables, sayings and pericopes,”¹¹³ a precursor to the form criticism that developed in the twentieth century.¹¹⁴ About thirty years after the oral gospel was formed, the Gospel According to the Hebrews (GOH) was the first written gospel based on the oral gospel to be circulated among the churches.¹¹⁵ However, Mark was the first gospel written in Greek and retains the original structure of the oral gospel.¹¹⁶ He based his reckoning of Mark’s priority by appealing to the primitive nature of that gospel:

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Herder, *Von Gottes Sohn der Welt Heiland* (1797).

¹¹² Herder, *APR*, 195.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ See, for example Detlev Dortmeyer, *The New Testament Among the Writings of Antiquity* (Sheffield Academic Press, 1998) 20, and W.G. Kummel, *The New Testament: The History of Its Problems*, trans. S. M. Gilmour and H.C. Kee (London: Abingdon, 1972).

¹¹⁵ Herder, *APR*, 198-199.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 196.

Mark's gospel is not an abbreviation, but a gospel in its own right.

Whatever the others have in a more expanded and different form has been added by them – not 'omitted' by Mark. Moreover, Mark is witness to an original briefer version. Whatever the others include above and beyond what is in this (gospel) is to be regarded as an addition... Is this not the natural point of view, usually the more primitive to which, then, other circumstances add later explanation, elaboration, polishing?¹¹⁷

Herder determined that all three synoptics were composed between 61-64 CE, and that Mark could be used as the basis for determining what the other evangelists had added for their specific purposes.¹¹⁸ Luke, a companion of Paul, wrote for the "Hellenists," and he could not have known Matthew's gospel, because it had not yet been written.¹¹⁹ Luke perhaps made use of Mark as well as the GOH "in a very liberal way." The Greek gospel of Matthew was written last of the synoptics, and was a liberal translation of the GOH,¹²⁰ though Herder was unclear whether he thought the apostle Matthew was the author or merely the translator.

Compared to Griesbach's, Herder's was not a critical approach. While he made reasoned arguments that were revolutionary at the time, they were basic and left for others to explore. His determination that Mark was the earliest canonical gospel, based on its primitive nature, was consistent with Herder's understanding of the development of human history from primitive to advanced.¹²¹ Herder's theory was influenced by Lessing,¹²² but at the same time, refuted Lessing's *Urevangelium*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 197.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 198.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 199.

¹²¹ See J.M. Andrews, *Johann Gottfried Herder as an Educator* (New York, 1916) 275-276. See also Baird, 177-178.

¹²² Both men "begin with the earliest testimony, that found in the New Testament writings themselves" instead of the accounts of the church fathers. Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem*, 32.

hypothesis. Like Lessing, Herder saw behind the gospels a primitive tradition, but unlike Lessing that tradition was not a written document, but the oral teaching of the apostles. Rather than Mark being an abbreviator of Matthew, Herder argued that Mark should be given primary importance, with Matthew and Luke seen as expansions of it. At the time, the priority of Mark was a new idea, having been proposed by G. C. Storr only a decade earlier.¹²³ Herder's oral gospel theory influenced Gieseler¹²⁴ and Ewald in the next century,¹²⁵ and presaged discussions of oral tradition until the present.¹²⁶ By the close of the eighteenth century, almost all of the components were in place in early orthodox Protestant and evangelical biblical scholarship to influence the next two centuries of investigation into the SP. To wit, the AH, IH, and 2GH had already been advocated, and essential elements of the 2SH had been theorized separately, before 1800.

¹²³ G.C. Storr, *Über den Zweck der evangelischen Geschichte und der Briefe Johannis* (Tübingen, 1786).

¹²⁴ J.K.L. Gieseler, *Historisch-kritischer Versuch über die Entstehung und die frühesten Schicksale der schriftlichen Evangelien* (Leipzig, 1818).

¹²⁵ G.H.A. Ewald, *Die drei Evangelien* (Göttingen, 1850).

¹²⁶ See, for example, from earliest to latest, R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (New York: Harper & Lee, 1968) 321-322; Birger Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1961); Werner Kelber, *The Oral and Written Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983); Bo Reicke, *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) 180; and J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered: Christianity in the Making*, Vol 1 (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2003) 195.

Chapter V

Evangelicals and the Synoptic Problem – 1800-1849

A. Mary Cornwallis: The First Female Scholar to Address the SP

During the subsequent half century in Britain, no significant evangelical contribution to the study of the SP occurred, though awareness of the various opinions surrounding the issue was growing. While few women were given the opportunity for formal education at the time, fewer still were afforded the opportunity to publish works on theological matters. However, Mary Cornwallis (1758-1836) was one female scholar of the era who did both, and in her writings she briefly addressed the SP. Cornwallis was an evangelical Anglican, and though much about her early life and educational background is unknown, records show her husband was rector of an Anglican parish in Kent and her writings indicate that she was fluent in several languages, including Hebrew.¹ In 1817, Cornwallis published a four-volume commentary on the bible entitled *Observations, Critical, Explanatory and Practical, on the Canonical Scriptures* (London), a work over 2,000 pages in length. Her explanation of the relationship between the evangelists was nuanced, and without considering her statements throughout volume III of *Observations*, one could falsely conclude that she advocated the IH, when in reality she appeared to favour the AH. She wrote:

As to those variations which by a little observation are easily reconciled... that the holy penmen, published in singleness and simplicity of heart, only that which they had each noticed, and knew to be fact... they prove also that there could be no collusion, no artifice amongst them, since, if there had been, they could scarcely

¹ Christiana De Groot, and Marion Ann Taylor, eds, *Recovering Nineteenth-Century Women Interpreters of the Bible* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2007) 32-33.

have been so incautious as not to have copied more exactly from each other.²

However, Cornwallis did not completely reject a dependency hypothesis. Instead, she argued against “collusion,” or the notion that two or more of the authors wrote in cooperation. If that were the case, Cornwallis reckoned, then the evangelists would have been careful to copy exactly the same details and words of their partners. So, when describing Mark, she quoted the conclusion of the renowned classicist Anthony Blackwall³ that “St. Mark follows the steps of St. Matthew, and sometimes interprets and explains him.” She concluded that Mark is rightly considered the second gospel because “it confirms and enlarges on St. Matthew.”⁴ Luke offered different details than Matthew in his birth narrative because he “omits those things which were already known.”⁵ She also noted that “St. Luke follows St. Matthew” in revealing that Jesus went to the desert to be tempted,⁶ though she admitted many instances where Mark and Luke agreed against Matthew.⁷

B. Other Female Evangelical Authors and the Synoptic Problem

Apparently no other author female scholar of the era addressed the SP in print in as much detail as Mary Cornwallis. However, the Baptist writer Esther Copley (1786-1851) briefly touched upon the subject in her *Scripture History for Youth* (2 vols, London: 1829).⁸ Copley, in describing and defending the evangelists, wrote,

“The history of Jesus Christ is related by four different persons, without any intentional concurrence among themselves, or dependence one upon another. They all relate the same story, but each tells it in his

² Cornwallis, 83.

³ Blackwall, *The Sacred Classics Defended and Illustrated* (London: 1725) 327.

⁴ Cornwallis, 112.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁷ See Cornwallis, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 43, 47, 51, 60, 66, 83 and 86.

⁸ Marion Ann Taylor and Heather E. Weir, eds., *Let Her Speak for Herself: Nineteenth-Century Women Writing on the Women of Genesis* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006) 32.

own way. No one copies, or abridges from, or confirms, or contradicts, the statements of another.”⁹

Copley’s choice of the phrase, “abridges from,” is revealing because it almost certainly alluded to Augustine’s statement that Mark abbreviated or abridged Matthew.¹⁰

One more female author from the nineteenth century deserves mention at this point. Favell Mortimer (1802-1878) was an evangelical writer of children’s literature, with her most famous work being *Peep of the Day* (London: 1836).¹¹ However, she occasionally composed material for the general reader, and in 1858 she published *Light in the Dwelling; or, A Harmony of the Four Gospels*. It appears that, among the many gospel harmonies and synopses before the twentieth century, Mortimer’s was the only one composed by a female. This fact perhaps explains why Mortimer published *Light* with the only indication of authorship being, “by the author of ‘Peep of the Day.’” Likewise, though her husband, Rev. Thomas Mortimer, served as editor of *Light*, the title page merely states, “revised and corrected by a clergyman of the Church of England,” to preserve some anonymity (see figure 6A below).

⁹ Copley, *Scripture History*, Vol 2, 234-235.

¹⁰ See above, Introduction: The Stance of the Early Church.

¹¹ Rosemary Mitchell, ‘Mortimer, Favell Lee (1802–1878)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2010 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19345, accessed 13 Aug 2010].

LIGHT IN THE DWELLING;

OR,

A Harmony of the Four Gospels;

WITH VERY SHORT AND SIMPLE REMARKS ADAPTED TO

READING AT FAMILY PRAYERS,

AND ARRANGED IN 365 SECTIONS,

FOR EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "PEEP OF DAY," &c.

REVISED AND CORRECTED

BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Fifteenth Thousand.

"But all the children of Israel had LIGHT in their DWELLINGS."

Ex. x. 23.

Figure 6A: Title page for Favell Mortimer's Gospel Harmony published in 1858.

While Mortimer did not mention the SP specifically, she stated (of a gospel harmony), "it is interesting to place [the evangelists'] accounts together, endeavouring to observe, as well as we can, the order of time in which the events occurred."¹²

C. Thomas Hartwell Horne (1780-1862): Synthesis of Scholarship

One of the "prominent evangelicals"¹³ of the early nineteenth century in England was Thomas Hartwell Horne, who received no formal university education, but still provided a monumental literary effort on behalf of conservative Christian scholarship. In 1818, he published the first volume of *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures* (3 vols., 1818; 4 vols., 1821), with revisions and volumes added through the years. The work was immensely popular all

¹² Mortimer, *Light*, 1.

¹³ G.L. Hurst, *An Outline of the History of Christian Literature* (New York: Macmillan, 1926) 486

over the English-speaking world and was often used as a textbook for the study of the scriptures in Anglican universities. Horne's *Introduction* earned him an honorary MA from King's College, Aberdeen and had great influence in the still young United States.¹⁴

Though Horne contributed no new theories in his discussion of gospel origins, in *Introduction* he revealed his extensive research on and exposure to scholarship from Britain and Continental Europe. In an appendix devoted solely to the SP, he set out three potential solutions:

1. That one or two of the Gospels were taken from another;— 2. That all three were derived from some original document common to the evangelists ;— and 3. That they were derived from detached narratives of part of the history of our Saviour, communicated by the apostles to the first converts to Christianity.¹⁵

After stating these options, Horne cited arguments for and against each. For the first option, he mentioned authors (without references) such as Augustine, Grotius, Mill, Wettstein, Owen, Griesbach and Storr, and explained the differences in their ordering of the synoptics.¹⁶ To refute these, he quoted most of Lardner's arguments against a literarily dependent relationship between the first three evangelists.¹⁷

Horne mentioned scholars who adhered to solution 2, such as Le Clerc, Koppe, Michaelis, Lessing, Eichhorn and Marsh. The arguments against this solution, provided by the likes of scholars Hug, Randolph, and Gleig, were summarised by Horne. The extreme complexity of the various hypotheses, combined with the lack of

¹⁴ S. Austin Allibone, *A Critical Dictionary of English Literature*, vol. 1 (London, 1877) 890.

¹⁵ Thomas Hartwell Horne, *Introduction*, vol. 2 (1818) 443. All quotations and page numbers are from 1818 edition.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 443.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 443-447. For more on Lardner, see above, Chapter IV, A.

references to earlier documents in patristic sources and the lack of agreement between the proponents argued against the second solution.¹⁸

For the third solution, Horne simply made mention of the works of Veysie and Schleiermacher. Against that solution, he cited Fritsch, Plank and Gersdorf as well as British High Churchmen Robert Nares and William Beloe, publishers of *The British Critic*, whose arguments centred on the language and structure of Luke's gospel.¹⁹

Horne's summary thus far had reached over 8,000 words! However, Horne had presented the three options only to reject them all in favour of a fourth, that the synoptics were composed independently without the use of a common document. Horne provided no argument against this option, but provided a lengthy quote from the Bishop George Gleig in support, which included the statement "I admit, then, of a common document, but that document was no other than the preaching of our blessed Lord himself."²⁰ In his closing remarks, Horne tersely stated that any "copying or documentary" hypothesis disparages the evangelists and their testimony.²¹

Though it provided little depth of argumentation for any solution to the SP, Horne's *Introduction* helped expose many evangelicals to a world of scholarship they barely knew. However, Horne was not unique among evangelicals in his familiarity with the critical works of continental Europe and Britain, as seen below.

D. Adam Clarke (1762–1832):

The English Evangelical Father Contributes

In the early nineteenth century, the Methodist minister Adam Clarke was one of the most prominent evangelical scholars in the world. On three separate occasions, Clarke was selected as President of the Methodist Conference, and he was considered

¹⁸ Horne, *Introduction*, vol. 2, 447.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 453.

²⁰ George Gleig, *A History of the Holy Bible* (London, 1817) 105.

²¹ Horne, *Introduction*, vol. 2, 459.

“Methodism’s principal link with the Anglican evangelicals.”²² Though he published many works, his most famous by far were his commentaries on the entire bible, in which he briefly addressed the SP. From the commentaries were published a 6 volume set on the NT entitled, *The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (New York, 1825). Like Horne, Clarke’s familiarity with the works of British and Europeans scholars was evident in his textual notes. However, he differed with Horne on his preferred solution to the SP.

In volume one, Clarke rejected Augustine’s suggestion that Mark was an abridger of Matthew, preferring to leave unanswered whether Mark used Matthew because most conjectures regarding Mark’s sources “have little foundation.”²³ He did, on five separate occasions in the commentary, provide evidence that Mark had not abridged Matthew: Mark’s unique parable (Mark 4:25-29);²⁴ Mark’s unique healings (7:34-36; 8:23-26, 34-36);²⁵ Mark’s unique details (9:29);²⁶ and Matthew’s lack of Mark’s story of the widow’s mite (Mark 12:41-44).²⁷ However, Clarke was more definite concerning Luke’s sources. Concerning the “many” in Luke’s preface, he stated, “Probably this alludes to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, which it is likely were written before St Luke wrote his; and on the models of which he professes to write his own.”²⁸ That this view did not harm Luke’s integrity, Clarke made plain in his explanation that Luke did a detailed investigation which was presided over by the Holy Spirit and free from “every particle of error.”²⁹ Interestingly, Clarke’s opinion that Luke came after Mark was contrary to his earlier published argument that Luke

²² Ian Sellers, ‘Clarke, Adam (1762–1832)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5483>, accessed 15 July 2010].

²³ Clarke, *New Testament*, 267.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 280.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 292, 294.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 298.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 309.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 332.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

wrote around 60CE and Mark around 64CE,³⁰ indicating that sometime after 1807 Clarke changed his mind. Though Clarke acknowledged the probability that Luke was familiar with the other synoptic gospels, it is worth noting that he made no redaction-critical remarks based on that assumption. It would appear that Clarke made the conscious decision to refrain from allowing his solution to the SP to affect his interpretation of the gospels. He was not alone in this approach.

E. John David Macbride (1778-1868):

The Synoptic Problem and One Gospel from Four

A contemporary of Clarke's, also of the "old evangelical school," who wrote about the SP, was John David Macbride, born 1778 in Devon. Macbride went up to Oxford as a student in 1795, where he would eventually receive BA (1799), BCL and DCL (1811) degrees and become principal of Magdalen Hall in 1813.³¹ Though he had interests in and publications relating to Arabic and Islam, in 1824 he published his *Lectures Explanatory of the Diatessaron, or the Life of our Lord and Saviour* (Oxford, 1824), the contents of which "were drawn up for the instruction of Members of Magdalene Hall" embarking on Divinity studies.³² He pledged to have "never forgotten that the edification of believers or the conversion of infidels should be our object in our explanation of the Bible" and chided those "who expound the words of eternal life... with no higher reverence than an ancient classic."³³

In *Lectures*, Macbride aimed to survey many of the works written on the making one gospel from four, which he called the *Diatessaron*. To Macbride, the SP had three potential types of solutions: 1) Independence; 2) The use of one or more of

³⁰ Clarke, *A Concise View of the Succession of Sacred Literature: In a Chronological Arrangement of the Authors and Their Works* (London, 1807) 68-71.

³¹ R. S. Simpson, 'Macbride, John David (1778-1868)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17364>, accessed 13 Aug 2010].

³² Macbride, iii.

³³ *Ibid.*, iv.

evangelist's work by other evangelist(s); and 3) A common document shared by the three synoptic evangelists, which Macbride attributed to German critics.³⁴

Interestingly, Macbride acknowledged that the assumption of independence was “still the common opinion” of his day,³⁵ but he quickly dismissed it because of the frequency and nature of the verbal similarities between the synoptics.³⁶ Thus, Macbride considered the reasonable choice to be made between 2) and 3). In weighing the arguments for multiple documents, Macbride considered the work of Eichhorn, Marsh, and Veysie but deemed them “in the highest degree improbable” due to the fact that not even one common document was mentioned in antiquity.³⁷

The notion of underlying documents was further suspect because it depended on “supposed compilations by unknown disciples, of whose character we know nothing.”³⁸ Macbride opted for solution 2, and concluded that a dependency hypothesis with the canonical order is the correct one, i.e. the AH.³⁹ He acknowledged that proponents of a common document referred to the many discrepancies between the synoptics, but that their argument was “overrated”⁴⁰ because the discrepancies and similarities pointed to the same conclusion: The evangelists were not “mere transcribers” but writers who adapted the other narratives and relied on other “independent sources of information.”⁴¹ He concluded that a direct dependency hypothesis was valid because of the ancient tradition that John had perused and confirmed the synoptics.⁴² In addition, he argued that, if an apostle such as Matthew composed a gospel, the early Christians would been aware and sought it

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 8-9. Macbride rejected Griesbach's order and accepted Mill's conclusions, instead, concerning the order.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 17. See Eusebius, *H.E.* 3.24.

out. Moreover, those who were acquaintances of the apostles, Mark and Luke, would desire to add their own narratives, but also recommend the apostle's gospel without replacing it, as Luke's preface seems to show. Instead of disparaging the gospel authors, this view complemented them, according to Macbride – "one Gospel supplies the deficiencies of the others, and [we] are the more strongly convinced of the credibility of all."⁴³

While not adding any original arguments to his survey, Macbride offered an important judgment that bears upon the subject of *Evangelicals and the Synoptic Problem*. Though Macbride complimented and recommended Lardner's work in *Lectures*,⁴⁴ he took exception to Lardner's presumption that dependency hypotheses diminish "the value of [the evangelists'] testimony." Macbride detected an *a priori* assumption in Lardner's remarks that precluded the consideration of any borrowing or copying among the synoptic writers, and he offered this advice to all his young students:

Our unwillingness to admit certain consequences can never justify our rejection of any opinion, against which we have nothing of more weight to urge: it may even happen, that upon more mature consideration, this very unwillingness may appear unreasonable.⁴⁵

Here Macbride touched upon a central question for evangelicals debating the SP: Should certain conclusions concerning gospel origins be rejected pre-emptively, before "mature consideration" takes place, because of the potentially embarrassing results? Some, like Lardner, seemed to say, "Yes,"⁴⁶ but Macbride gave a resounding "No!"

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁴⁴ See pages 9, 13, 15, and 59.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁶ See Lardner, *Supplement*, 180.

Macbride concluded *Lectures* with a harmony of the gospels, or *Diatessaron*, in which he followed Chemnitz in assuming that no single evangelist followed strict chronological order.⁴⁷ In the harmony, much as his contemporary Adam Clarke had done, Macbride appeared to avoid allowing his solution to the SP to affect his interpretation of the gospels.

F. Moses Stuart (1780-1852):

First American Scholar to Address the Synoptic Problem

Moses Stuart was born in 1780 in Wilton, Connecticut near the end of the American Revolution. He graduated from Yale in 1799 and served as tutor there from 1802-1804. It was during this time that Stuart joined the Congregationalist Church, and was soon named pastor of the Centre Church in New Haven, Connecticut in 1806. In 1810, he left New Haven and accepted a position as professor of Sacred Literature at the newly founded Theological Seminary in Andover, Massachusetts. During his 38 years at Andover, Stuart developed the reputation as an evangelical scholar renowned for providing young men with a thorough education and propelling them to become teachers and missionaries. By 1831, he was already described as “the father of biblical learning in America.”⁴⁸

It appears that Stuart was the first American scholar to address the SP at length. Interestingly, he did not address the SP in the published gospel harmony he assigned the junior class at Andover to produce in 1814,⁴⁹ but he wrote at length upon the subject in notes he attached to a translation of J. L. Hug’s *Introduction to the New Testament*.⁵⁰ In Stuart’s endnotes, he addressed Hug’s supposed sources of Matthew,

⁴⁷ Macbride, 43.

⁴⁸ Bernard Whitman, *Two Letters to the Reverend Moses Stuart on the Subject of Religious Liberty* (Boston, 1831) 52.

⁴⁹ Andover Theological Seminary, *A Harmony in Greek of the Gospels* (1814).

⁵⁰ John Leonhard Hug, *Introduction to the New Testament*, trans. David Fosdick, Jr. and notes by Moses Stuart (Andover, 1836).

Mark and Luke, a point at which he and Hug disagreed.⁵¹ First, Stuart noted many passages in the synoptics where chronology and wording were very similar, and mentioned the solutions of Augustine, Grotius, Mill, Storr, all of whom proposed dependency hypotheses. He singled out the work of Griesbach as “most laboured and very able,” as well as noting that Owen had, earlier than Griesbach, provided a very similar solution.⁵²

In order to distinguish his opinion from Hug’s, Stuart outlined Hug’s arguments before offering his own solution to the SP.⁵³ Considering Luke’s preface, Stuart concluded that the evangelist saw deficiencies in previous narratives of Jesus’ life and based his gospel on research he did in Palestine.⁵⁴ Luke was not, however, referring to the gospels of Matthew and Mark – “If Luke copied from the Gospels of Matthew and Mark how could he have omitted so many important things which they contain?”⁵⁵ If, as Griesbach argued, Mark was abbreviator of Matthew and Luke, why did he include no introduction, nor the Sermon on the Mount/Plain? Again, contra Griesbach, why would Mark include so many Hebraisms and minute details not included by Luke and Matthew?⁵⁶

To Stuart, any solution that involved one evangelist copying from another, or a common document between them, did not fit the textual evidence. He encouraged his readers to “take up a Greek Harmony” to carefully scrutinize all the similarities and differences. If one were to approach the gospels in this way, “no critic... will satisfy him that these [gospel] historians are not after all independent writers.”⁵⁷ Though there is a remarkable sameness to the synoptics, the diversity indicates the evangelists

⁵¹ See Stuart, *Introduction*, 710 note 16.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 712.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 714-715.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 717.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 718.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

were not “plagiarists.”⁵⁸ Indeed, ancient Greek and modern Eastern poets have displayed the ability to memorize and recount enormous amounts of oral tradition. Concerning sources, Stuart argued that the evangelists wrote early enough that they could seek out eyewitnesses. In addition, Matthew had his personal experience and perhaps even memoranda of the events. Likewise, Mark had access to the testimony of Peter, and Luke sought out apostolic testimony in Palestine. Thus, the exposure of the evangelists to reliable oral tradition, and, in Matthew’s case, personal experience, explained the *genesis*⁵⁹ of the gospels. Stuart concluded his discussion of “an almost endlessly disputed subject” with one final complaint, which was that almost all writers on the SP “seem to have left out of sight any consideration of the inspiration of the authors,”⁶⁰ a mistake certainly not made by his Swiss contemporary Gausson.

G. Louis Gausson (1790-1863):

Opponent of Investigation into the Synoptic Problem

François Samuel Robert Louis Gausson was born and raised in Geneva, where he also graduated from university in 1814. In 1816, he became minister at a Reformed church in Satigny. A staunch Calvinist, Gausson frequently ran afoul⁶¹ of the authorities of the National Church and eventually lost his pastorate in 1831 because of his activities with the Evangelical Society, an association he helped form to distribute bibles and tracts. In 1834, he became Professor of Systematic Theology at the newly founded Swiss evangelical school of theology, Oratoire.⁶² Over the years, Gausson was an active member in the Evangelical Alliance and for a period served as organization chairman of the Committee.⁶³

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 718.

⁵⁹ A term Stuart seemed to prefer. See 719, 721

⁶⁰ Stuart, 721.

⁶¹ By refusing to replace Calvin’s catechism with a revised one provided by church authorities.

⁶² John Robbins, “Review of Gausson’s *Theopnuestia*,” *Western Reformed Seminary Journal* 10/2 (August 2003) 31-34.

⁶³ *Evangelical Christendom: Its State and Prospects*, Vol 5 (London: British Evangelical Alliance, 1851) 93.

It was in defence of his ideas on plenary inspiration that Gaussen addressed his disdain for discussion of the SP, in his *Théopneustie, Ou, Inspiration Plénière Des Saintes Écritures* (Paris, 1840).⁶⁴ To Gaussen, the very inspiration of the bible was at stake when the SP was considered. Though he briefly endorsed the IH, as will be seen below, he spent most of his energy arguing against the entire idea of investigating the origin of the gospels. It is difficult to summarize in brief the extreme language Gaussen incorporated to convey his disapproval of contemporary biblical criticism on the issue. He considered the purpose of “Sacred” criticism was to “gather facts concerning the Scriptures,” not to construct “vain hypotheses” that “embrace a thousand conjectures” and “degrade inspiration.”⁶⁵ The source of his displeasure was the question, “did the evangelists read each others’ writings?” The question was improper because it could not “throw light on one single passage of the sacred books, and establish their truths more firmly.”⁶⁶

However, Gaussen’s contempt was not a result of lack of familiarity with scholarship produced on the issue. He referenced the works of Mill, Hug, Lardner, and Michaelis as advocating dependency hypotheses. He noted that Geiseler appealed to oral tradition, and that Le Clerc, Kopp, Lessing and Eichhorn proposed a common document between the evangelists.⁶⁷ When he considered all the various theories and their complicated comparisons of the gospels, he admitted that it caused him to “feel, in the view of all such science, profoundly painful.” He compared these solutions to the SP to the pseudo-science of astrologers, and labelled scholars who proposed them “the astrologers of theology.”⁶⁸ Gaussen lamented that no good come from such

⁶⁴ The French work was so popular that an English translation was quickly published the next year with the title *Theopneustia: The Plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*, translated by David Scott (London, 1841). All quotations are from the English edition.

⁶⁵ Gaussen, 265.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 267.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 268.

comparisons because “they teach us to doubt, where the word of God teaches us to believe.” The invective unleashed can be seen in this excerpt:

Would to God indeed that there were nothing more in these studies than vain fantasies and an enormous loss of time! But it is worse than the dissipation of time: faith is engulfed (*sic*) in them; the mental eye is fascinated by them, and they turn away our studious youth from hearing the first and great author of the Scriptures. It is evident that these idle researches can proceed only from a want of faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures.⁶⁹

Stuart had warned that too few scholars considered inspiration when addressing the SP, but Gaussen took this argument one step further by explicitly stating that the various hypotheses “sap by degrees the doctrine of inspiration.”⁷⁰

However, in reality it was Gaussen’s particular theory of inspiration that conflicted with exploration into the SP. His notion of inspiration is demonstrated in Gaussen’s revealing statement, “The Scriptures are the word of God; they are *dictated* by him.”⁷¹ Gaussen concluded that it did not matter how many times Luke heard accounts from apostles and other eyewitnesses, because he afterward “received it from the Holy Spirit.” The evangelists received their information directly from the same source as Moses did for his account of the creation and the fall of man, and again that source was the Holy Spirit.⁷² At the end of his diatribe, Gaussen provided the words of George Gleig, earlier quoted by Horne, that the “common document” shared by the evangelists was the preaching of Jesus. Gleig’s iconic statement seemed to mildly contradict Gaussen, however, because Gleig meant that the

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 269.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 270.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, emphasis mine.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 271

evangelists relied on the reliable tradition of Jesus' preaching from the apostles, and not the dictated words of the Holy Spirit supposed by Gaussen.⁷³

Gaussen offered a final opinion that "a sound doctrine of inspiration would shelter our studious youth from the excessive aberrations of modern criticism."⁷⁴ It should be noted that Gaussen is the only scholar thus far considered who advocated the plenary inspiration of scripture, a belief that was rejected by other faculty members at Oratoire.⁷⁵

H. August Tholuck (1799-1877):

Evangelical Scholarship Battles the Quest for the Historical Jesus

Like his evangelical counterparts in Britain, Switzerland and America, Friedrich August Gottreu Tholuck did not contribute any new ideas to the study of the SP, but also akin to them, he wrote about the SP from an evangelical point of view. In a sense, Tholuck symbolises a distinct shift in the argument for evangelical scholars vis-à-vis the SP. In the previous centuries, the need to solve the SP primarily arose out of the desire to construct a viable harmony of the Gospels (so Chemnitz and Macbride) and in the frequent comparison of manuscripts, fragments and codices involved in constructing a critical text of the gospels (so Mill and Bengel). However, as the mood of biblical scholarship became more sceptical about the historicity of the bible, evangelicals were forced to deal with questions of gospel origins on less familiar grounds. The 'Quest for the Historical Jesus' would change the manner in which evangelicals dealt with the SP, and the beginnings of this change can most clearly be seen in Tholuck's criticism of D.F. Strauss.

⁷³ *Ibid.* Cf. Gleig, 105.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 272.

⁷⁵ Robbins, 31.

August Tholuck was born in Breslau and attended university in Berlin. Though in his youth Tholuck had been a religious sceptic,⁷⁶ during his university years he began to develop the personal faith that later resulted in the frequent description “pious Tholuck.”⁷⁷ Tholuck was a professor at Halle almost his entire career, though he briefly filled a position at the Prussian embassy in Rome (1827-1829).⁷⁸ In 1846, Tholuck came to London to participate in the founding of the Evangelical Alliance, the international interdenominational association of evangelical Christians.⁷⁹

In 1837, Tholuck published *Glaubwürdigkeit der evangelischen Geschichte* (Hamburg, 1837) as a response to D.F. Strauss’ *Das Leben Jesu kritisch bearbeitet*.⁸⁰ Strauss’ monograph was a pioneering effort in the modern ‘Quest for the Historical Jesus,’ and Tholuck was the first evangelical to attempt to refute Strauss’ *Leben*. In *Glaubwürdigkeit*, Tholuck was particularly critical of Strauss assumption that Mark was a “compilation... from the first and third gospels,” a notion Strauss considered “clearly demonstrated by Griesbach.”⁸¹ Tholuck admitted the popularity that Griesbach’s theory had garnered in Germany during his time – “It is true that the view that the gospel of Mark is only a mosaic of the first and third Gospels has won for itself not a few advocates.” Tholuck disagreed with Strauss that Griesbach had “proved the matter,” and reckoned that “a more mature consideration will perhaps lead the more discerning reader to the opinion that it is rather the incorrectness of this

⁷⁶ Baird, 283.

⁷⁷ For example, see J.T. Cooper, *The Evangelical Repository*, Vol 6 (Philadelphia: 1847) 389; also *Presbyterian Quarterly Review*, 34 (Jan 1861) 526, and A.J. Gordon, *The Twofold Life, or Christ’s Work for Us* (1884) 171.

⁷⁸ Baird, 283.

⁷⁹ David Crowner and Gerald Christianson, eds., *The Spirituality of the German Awakening* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2003) 49.

⁸⁰ David F. Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu kritisch bearbeitet* (Tübingen, 1835-1836). Quotes are from *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, translated from the fourth German edn. by George Eliot (London, 1892).

⁸¹ Strauss, *Life of Jesus*, 71.

hypothesis which has been ‘proved.’⁸² Strauss’ depiction of the evangelist Mark was unacceptable because of its absurdity:

And such aimless wandering back and forth between the scrolls of his predecessors... copying a snippet now from the right, now from the left – should one have to expect such a procedure from any ancient author?... And to what author should it occur, when excerpting another, to write *eisporeuontai* where the original has *katelthen*, to write *spraxan* for *rhipsan*, to substitute *ethambethesan* for *egeneto thambos*, etc.? To a plagiarist, who doesn’t want to have his thievery noticed? To an English fop who has the cut of his jacket altered because someone else has something like it?⁸³

Baird correctly surmised that Tholuck had no great interest in the SP, but was more concerned to offer an apologetic defence of Mark’s reliability against the attacks of critics such as Strauss.⁸⁴ Rather than describe his own theory at length, Tholuck sought to save the gospel of Mark from modern critics whose “results are often the product of a dialectic which drives its subject now into one corner, now into another, as a whip does to a spinning top.”⁸⁵

Though later seen in a slightly different fashion in the work of the Princeton school in the early nineteenth century,⁸⁶ Tholuck pioneered the evangelical use of arguments for Markan priority against the ‘Quest for the Historical Jesus.’ According to Stoldt, Strauss’ *Leben* coincided with the decline of the 2GH in Germany. Perhaps Tholuck, building on the general arguments of Lachmann against the 2GH two years

⁸² This English translation from Hans-Herbert Stoldt, *History and Criticism of the Marcan Hypothesis*, translated by Donald L. Niewyk (Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1980) 229. The German original can be found in Tholuck, *Glaubwürdigkeit*, 440.

⁸³ Translation provided in Stoldt, 229-230. The German original can be found in Tholuck, *Glaubwürdigkeit*, 249.

⁸⁴ Baird, 285.

⁸⁵ Stoldt, 230.

⁸⁶ See Chapter VII, A.1 and 2 below.

earlier, offered the framework for future criticism of *Leben* by non-evangelical scholars.⁸⁷

I. John James Blunt (1784-1855):

The Irrelevance of the Synoptic Problem for Apologetics

In the discussion of evangelicals and the SP in the first half of the nineteenth century, a brief consideration of J.J. Blunt's *The Veracity of the Gospels & Acts Argued from the Undesigned Coincidences* (Boston, 1829) is in order. Blunt was a brilliant Anglican clergyman whose "service to the evangelical cause was rendered chiefly through his defence of the veracity of scripture upon which the evangelical preachers relied for their authority in teaching."⁸⁸ Blunt's unique approach to proving the truthfulness of the gospels was to identify all of the "Undesigned Coincidences" in the gospels. These coincidences were, by Blunt's definition, instances where independent elements of the evangelists' details verified the gospel tradition. For example, Blunt contrasted Matthew's account of the calling of Levi/Matthew in Mt 9:9 with that in Mk 2:15 and Lk 5:29. Mark and Luke related that Jesus went to eat at "his house," i.e. the house of Levi/Matthew, but Matthew simply said that Jesus ate "in the house." The minor unplanned difference revealed the personal eyewitness nature of the encounter for Matthew, and thus he spoke of his own house as "the house."⁸⁹ The gospels, and indeed all parts of the bible, were full of undesigned corroborating evidence like this.

Of interest in this study is Blunt's consideration of the SP in *Veracity*. He stated,

⁸⁷ Stoldt mentions the arguments provided by C.G. Wilke, *Der Urevangelist* (Leipzig, 1838) 443, J. Kuhn, *Leben Jesu, wissenschaftlich bearbeitet* (1838) 33, and H.J. Holtzmann, *Synoptic Evangelien* (1863) 345, all of whom criticized Strauss' use of the 2GH and antedated Tholuck's *Glaubwürdigkeit* of 1837. Lachmann published a critique of the 2GH in 1835, but its timing was most likely too near to Strauss' publication of *Leben* to have been prompted by it. Lachmann's arguments were cited against the 2SH were cited by Tholuck. See Stoldt, 229.

⁸⁸ Hurst, 486.

⁸⁹ Blunt, 14-15.

The argument derived from coincidence without design has further claims, because, if well made out, it establishes the Evangelists as independent witnesses to the facts they relate; and this, whether they consulted each other's writings, as some maintain, or not; for the coincidences, if good for any thing, are such as could not result from combination, mutual understanding, or arrangement... Truths known independently of each of them, must be at the bottom of documents having such discrepancies and such agreements as these in question. The point, therefore, whether the Evangelists have or have not copied from one another, which has been so much laboured, is *thus rendered a matter of comparative indifference*. Let them have so done, as the adversaries of Christianity might be disposed to insist, still by our argument would their independence be secured, and the nature of their testimony be shown to be such as could only result from their separate knowledge of substantial facts.⁹⁰

Blunt strove to prove the reliability of the gospel message without appealing to any solution to the SP. Whether or not dependency was involved, he still saw independent characteristics in the gospels that could only be supplied by truthful witnesses. One detects Blunt's confidence that no contemporary solution could shake the foundation of the gospels, and also his knowledge of the misgivings many evangelicals had with critical assessments of gospel origins. It is also obvious that some scholars, perhaps Blunt himself, were already espousing the view that arguments over gospel origins had become complicated and tedious. But, instead of rejecting the entire discussion as Gaussen had done, Blunt maintained that solutions to the SP were ultimately immaterial to proving the “veracity” of the gospels.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-3. Italics mine

J. Non-evangelicals and their Influence on Evangelical Arguments

Before concluding this chapter on the contributions of evangelical scholars to the SP in the first half of the nineteenth century, it is worth noting the works of two non-evangelicals who indirectly factor into the discussion. The American Andrews Norton (1786-1853) was a Unitarian minister, but that did not prevent Moses Stuart heartily endorsing Norton's *The Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels* (Boston, 1837) in an almost 80 page review in 1838, with an especially glowing recollection of Norton's advocacy for the IH.⁹¹ In fact, Stuart's quotations of Norton were greater in length than Stuart's own arguments for the IH cited above! Later, when the Primitive Methodist minister James A. Bastow compiled his bible dictionary, Norton was his only source and the IH the only option mentioned.⁹²

Likewise, George Gleig (1753-1840), Bishop of Brechin, provided arguments many evangelical authors found suitable for defending the IH, and one of his statements was perhaps the most quoted phrase in favour of the IH until the middle 1800s. That Gleig's work is not considered in this study is explained by the fact that, as a "High Churchman," he opposed the evangelicals within the Anglican church, both with his pen and his influence.⁹³ In addition to the above citations of Horne and Gaussen in favour of the IH, Gleig's statement that the "common document... the preaching of our blessed Lord himself"⁹⁴ explained the similarities and differences in the gospels, Gleig's comment was practically the only argument provided by the renowned evangelical commentator Thomas Scott in his consideration of the origin of the gospels.⁹⁵

⁹¹ *American Biblical Repository*, Vol. 11, No 30 (April 1838) 265-343.

⁹² James A. Bastow, *A Bible Dictionary* (London, 1859) 304.

⁹³ See William Walker, *Life of Right Reverend George Gleig Bishop of Brechin* (Edinburgh, 1878) 347ff, and Michael Snape, *The Royal Army Chaplains' Department, 1796-1953: Clergy Under Fire* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2008) 70.

⁹⁴ Gleig, *History*, 105.

⁹⁵ Matthew Henry and Thomas Scott, *A Commentary upon the Holy Bible*, vol. 5 (London, Religious Tract Society, 1835) iv.

VI. Evangelicals and the Synoptic Problem – 1850-1899

A. The Synoptic Problem and Original Languages

The first half of the nineteenth century saw several evangelical scholars offer solutions to the SP based on arguments concerning the original language of Jesus and the apostles. The Scottish scholar Alexander Roberts preferred Greek, while the English Baptist professor J.T. Marshall proposed Aramaic, and the Australian Baptist layman Joseph Palmer made arguments for both.

1. Alexander Roberts (1826–1901): Jesus Predominantly Spoke Greek

Alexander Roberts, was born at Marykirk, Kincardineshire, Scotland in 1826, and went to King's College, Aberdeen where he received awards for his skill in Greek, classics and philosophy. He received the MA in 1847, and then went to New College, Edinburgh before becoming minister at the Stonehaven Free Church in Scotland in 1852. After the Great Division of the Church of Scotland in 1843, several English Presbyterian congregations aligned with the Free Church of Scotland,¹ so it was fitting that, when Roberts went to London in 1857, he served the Presbyterian Church at Carlton Hill, St. Johns Wood, remaining there until 1871.² It was during his time in London that Roberts worked on his most famous work, a collaboration with James Donaldson in the editing and translation of *Ante-Nicene Christian Library* (24 vols., 1867–72). These volumes opened patristic sources to the greater English-speaking world in a manner unknown before their publication.

Perhaps Roberts' second-best known work was on the language of Jesus and his disciples. Over the course of almost thirty years, he published four monographs³

¹ *The Free Church Magazine* Vol. 8 (1851) 30, and *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record*, (May 1, 1856) 805.

² Joanna Hawke, 'Roberts, Alexander (1826–1901)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35767>, accessed 12 Jun 2010].

³ *Inquiry into the Original Language of St Matthew's Gospel* (London, 1859); *Discussions on the Gospels* (London, 1862); *The Bible of Christ and his Apostles* (London, 1879); *Greek the Language of Christ and His Apostles* (London, 1888).

in which he argued that Greek was Jesus' primary language for teaching. One of the major benefits of this view, according to Roberts, was that it provided a simple explanation to the SP.

While it is beyond the scope of this study to attempt to cover the many volumes Roberts produced on the subject of Christ's language, it is appropriate to outline his major arguments here. His *Discussions on the Gospels* (1862) offers most of the ideas he put forth and can serve to inform this study.⁴ Roberts contended that Jesus usually spoke Greek and, only on rare occasions, would he use Aramaic in public discourses.⁵ First, Roberts argued, before the time of Christ, Greek was a "widely and generally known language throughout the world,"⁶ i.e. the Roman Empire. He cited evidence that Roman historians wrote in Greek, that the senate conducted its debates in Greek, and that Paul wrote to the Romans in Greek.⁷ He considered it unlikely that Palestine would resist this trend, and noted that the intertestamental literature documents the disputes over Hellenization in Jerusalem.⁸ Second, Roberts referenced writings from around Palestine, including the numismatic evidence,⁹ and the fact that the "Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament... exist only in Greek."¹⁰ His strongest evidence was the NT itself, written entirely in Greek, though it contained books by "unlettered men" such as Peter, James, and John.¹¹ The few Aramaic quotations in the gospels demonstrate that Jesus rarely used the language. Second, the fact that the NT writers used the LXX was evidence of their comfort and familiarity with it, with even Mary using "Septuagintal expressions" in

⁴ All quotations are from the second edition (1864).

⁵ Roberts, *Discussions*, 99.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 30-34.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 35-39.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 71.

her hymn.¹² Third, though Roberts admitted that early testimony stated that Matthew wrote in Aramaic, he deemed the patristic evidence unreliable¹³ and argued internal evidence demonstrated Matthew was originally composed in Greek.¹⁴ The gospel of Matthew did not contain the frequent Hebraisms common in the LXX, and Matthew's fluid Greek bore no resemblance to a translation.¹⁵ Fourth, Roberts pointed to the potential benefits evangelicals might receive from acknowledging that Greek was the language of Jesus because of the confidence that the Greek NT contains "the very words which issued from His lips."¹⁶

The benefits to faith of his hypothesis could best be seen, said Roberts, when addressing the SP. He suggested that, if it were allowed that Greek was Jesus' primary language, much of the damage done by biblical critics to the doctrine of inspiration would be confounded.¹⁷ Conversely, if Matthew first wrote in Hebrew, would that mean that his anonymous Greek translator was also inspired? The apostle Matthew could be assumed to be "a sure and infallible guide," but there would be no guarantee from a translator.¹⁸ Roberts concluded that a happy result of Jesus' having primarily spoken Greek would be that the "vexed question" of the SP "may be regarded as settled." He explained:

According to the hypothesis which I have proposed, both the coincidences and diversities observable between the evangelists are altogether such as were to be expected. They agree because they were all well acquainted with the subjects of which they treated, and because

¹² *Ibid.*, 254.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 553. Roberts explained that he had decided to reject "blind reverence for some statements of antiquity... which can be proved absurd and contradictory" in favour of a personal investigation of the topic, which produced a better result.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 402-412.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 377.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 524.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 540.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 543.

they all wrote in the same language that our Lord had spoken. They differ because they were all independent writers, and naturally expressed themselves in their own individual manner and style, according to their several dispositions and acquirements.¹⁹

His investigation could give modern readers the confidence that “Divine Redeemer is yet speaking to [them] in the same tones in which he addressed His contemporaries.”²⁰

Roberts’ confidence in his solution to the SP induced him to some overstatements concerning the state of synoptic studies at his time. He claimed that Augustine was mistaken with his dependency hypothesis, that the independence of the synoptic writers “may be said to be generally admitted among our leading biblical scholars,” and even opined that reaching a conclusion of the evangelists’ independence is “irresistible by almost every earnest and candid mind.”²¹ In a sweeping statement, Roberts maintained that any “original-Gospel theory” or “copying theory” must ultimately lead its advocates to “reject the doctrine of inspiration altogether.”²²

Though Roberts was highly respected for his scholarly work in translating the Ante-Nicene fathers, his arguments in favour of Greek being Jesus’ primary language did not win many followers, though some modern advocates of the IH seem to be reconsidering his arguments.²³ As John Newton, an early reviewer of *Discussions* critiqued, there was little dispute that many first-century Palestinian Jews spoke some Greek, but Roberts’ major error was his failure to adequately consult Josephus, who

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 550.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 555.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 550.

²² *Ibid.*, 552.

²³ See Thomas and Farnell, *TJC*, 367-368, and also Aaron Tresham, “The Languages Spoken By Jesus,” *TMSJ* 20/1 (Spring 2009) 71-94.

persuasively argued that Aramaic was the primary language of first-century Palestinian Jews.²⁴

2. J.T. Marshall (1850-1923): The Aramaic Gospel

John Turner (J.T.) Marshall was born in Yorkshire in 1850 into a Strict Baptist family. He received the BA from London University in 1870, and, in 1878, became Classical Tutor at Manchester Bible College, affiliated with the Strict Baptists. He moved on to the position of lecturer at Manchester University in 1904 where he eventually became Dean of the Faculty of Theology.²⁵ Marshall was well respected within the Baptist fellowship and was elected president of the Baptist Union in 1909-1910.²⁶ Of interest to this study is a series of contributions Marshall made to *The Expositor* and its sister publication, *Expository Times*, over the years 1891-1897.²⁷ In the year 1891 alone, *The Expositor* included nine separate articles by Marshall under the title “The Aramaic Gospel,” all of which were contributed to argue his hypothesis that the synoptic evangelists relied on an early Aramaic source. The basis for Marshall’s argument was Papias’ statement that Matthew originally composed the *logia*, which Marshall translated “discourses,” in Hebrew, presumably meaning Aramaic.²⁸

In his discussion of the SP, Marshall posited that, if one offered a hypothesis, it must have been resuscitated “because every possible theory has been advocated, and every one has also been stoned and dragged out for dead.”²⁹ He mentioned theories by Eichhorn, Schleiermacher, Geiseler and Weisse but found them all

²⁴ *Proceedings of the Literary & Philosophical Society of Liverpool* Number 20 (1867) 51-108.

²⁵ C.A. Briggs, “Marshall, John Turner: Biography,” *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. 7 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1910) 208.

²⁶ W.R.H. Caine, *Lancashire: Biographies, Rolls of Honour* (London, 1917) 272.

²⁷ J. T. Marshall, “The Aramaic Gospel,” *Expositor*, 4th ser., 3 (1891) 1-17, 109-124, 205-220, 275-291, 375-390, 452-467; 4 (1891) 208-223, 373-388, 435-448; 6 (1892) 81-97; “The Aramaic Gospel,” *ExpT*, 4 (1892-93) 260-267, 515-516; “The Aramaic Gospel: Reply to Dr. Driver and Mr. Allen,” *Expositor*, 4th ser., 8 (1893) 176-192; “The Semitic and Greek Gospels,” *ExpT*, 8 (1896-7) 90-91.

²⁸ Marshall, “The Aramaic Gospel,” *Expositor*, 4th ser., 3 (1891) 13.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

lacking. Marshall classified the synoptic contents into three categories: unique material, parallel accounts with verbatim agreement, and parallel accounts with agreement in thought but not word.³⁰ The *logia* were of the third category and could be explained by the fact that they were separately translated from an Aramaic original. For example, the difference between Matthew's and Mark's "There *came* the birds" (Mt 13:4 = Mk 4:4) and Luke's "It *was trodden down*" (Lk 8:5) in the parable of the sower could be explained by Luke inserting different Aramaic vowel points – ܕܪܝܬ instead of ܕܪܝܬ.³¹ Similarly, Matthew 6:12 speaks of forgiving "debts" (ὀφειλέταις) and Luke 11:4 of forgiving sins (ἁμαρτίας), an indication of a different translation of the original Aramaic ܕܠܝܬ. Marshall included over thirty such examples in the *Expository Times* articles.

As his articles were published, Marshall began to reconsider some of his arguments. At first, Marshall advocated one Aramaic common document, but then decided there were at least two, a sayings source and a narrative source. It appeared to Marshall that the content of Aramaic narrative source was very much like the Greek gospel of Mark.³² Further, he noticed that his hypothesis did well to explain the differences in the parallel passages, but did not completely explain the verbatim agreements, a realization which compelled him to appeal to a common oral Greek source as well.³³ The original Aramaic documents, before being used to write gospels, were translated extemporaneously into Greek and used by catechists to help students of the Gospel commit the events and discourses to memory. This Greek oral tradition had a certain fixed quality, so that each evangelist who translated the Aramaic sources had familiarity with the Greek catechesis.³⁴

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 113.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 208.

³² J. T. Marshall, "The Aramaic Gospel," *ExpT*, 4 (1892-93) 266.

³³ *Ibid.*, 267.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

Thus, Marshall's hypothesis lived up to his claim that he would have to resuscitate a previously proposed hypothesis, and could be said to contain the elements of at least two solutions to the SP. First, Marshall proposed two common documents behind the gospels, even invoking William Sanday on his behalf, and stated that his approach was "favourable to the Two-Source Hypothesis" as long as the two sources "both existed primarily in Aramaic."³⁵ His appeal to oral tradition could also be amenable to those who advocated the IH with a common oral source. The difference between his hypothesis and others that invoked oral tradition was that common Aramaic documents were translated into Greek under heavy influence from the Greek oral tradition. Marshall judged that his hypothesis improved the standard "oral tradition explanation" of gospel origins because it "pushes back a written copy of the Lord's words and deeds within perhaps twenty years of the Saviour's death, and thus renders far less probable – if not impossible – the incrustation of legend and myth."³⁶

Marshall's "Aramaic Gospel" hypothesis was certainly unique for his time, though it bore similarities to Alfred Resch's theory of a common Hebrew document for the synoptic authors.³⁷ A safe conclusion is that, though it might not have persuaded many scholars that there was an original Aramaic gospel, it certainly provoked an intense debate. Five prominent scholars of the time offered corrections or rebuttals to Marshall – William Sanday, Dean Ireland's Professor of Exegesis of Holy Scripture at Oxford;³⁸ E. Nestle, Professor in the Theological Seminary, Wurttemberg (and soon-to-be author of the famous Nestle Text);³⁹ W.C. Allen of

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Resch, *Agrapha: Aussercanonische Schriftfragmente* (Leipzig, 1889).

³⁸ William Sanday, "A Survey of the Synoptic Question," *Expositor*, 4th series, 3, 1891, 411-426.

³⁹ E. Nestle, "The Semitic and Greek Gospels," *ExpT* 8 (1896-7) 42-43 and 138-139.

Exeter College, Oxford;⁴⁰ S.R. Driver, Regius Professor of Hebrew, Cambridge;⁴¹ and Arthur Wright of Queen's College, Cambridge.⁴² Whether or not there was ever an original Aramaic gospel remains a matter of debate.⁴³

3. Joseph Palmer: An Australian Layman's Linguistic Hypothesis

One writer inspired by Marshall's work, also a Baptist, in Australia was Joseph Palmer. Palmer, though he had no university degrees in biblical studies, wrote frequently in popular and scholarly literature. He was born in England in 1841 but his family moved to Sydney when he was still a boy. Professionally, Palmer became a stockbroker who amassed great wealth and influence during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Australia.⁴⁴ Palmer was a deeply committed Baptist, and in addition to starting missionary societies and establishing churches in Australia, he served as chairman of the Baptist Union in the 1890s.⁴⁵ Palmer also wrote articles⁴⁶ and books⁴⁷ from a strong evangelical perspective.

Palmer had a keen interest in the SP, and when he first read Marshall's articles of 1891 in *The Expositor*, he was encouraged to adapt and expand the hypothesis and eventually publish *The Gospel Problems and Their Solution: Being an Inquiry into the Origin of the Four Gospels* (London, 1899). Palmer proposed to offer four keys (a master and three special keys) to unlock the problem of gospel origins. The master

⁴⁰ W.C. Allen, "The Aramaic Gospel," *Expositor*, 4th series, 7, 1893, 386-400 and 454-470.

⁴¹ S. R. Driver, "Professor Marshall's Aramaic Gospel," *Expositor*, 4th series, 8 (1893) 388-400.

⁴² Arthur Wright, "The Origin of the Gospels," *ExpT* 4 (1892-1893) 275.

⁴³ For a lengthy list of scholars who have considered or proposed an Aramaic documentary source for the synoptics, see Bruce M. Metzger, *Index to Periodical Literature on Christ and the Gospels* (Leiden: Brill, 1966) 118-121. Interestingly, Marshall's articles top the chronological list.

⁴⁴ Stephen Salsbury, 'Palmer, Joseph (1841 - 1930)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 11 (Melbourne University Press, 1988) 131-132.

⁴⁵ New South Wales Dept. of Land (no author specified) *New South Wales: Its History and Resources, Special Edition of the Year 1891* (Sydney, 1891) 87.

⁴⁶ For example, Joseph Palmer, "Cross-Bearing," *ExpT* 14 (1902-1903) 288.

⁴⁷ Joseph Palmer, *The Central Event of Universal History: A Study of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ From the Dead* (Sydney: Christian World Printing and Pub. House, 1918); *Contemporaneous Origin of the Gospels (The Synoptic Problem): A Lecture to the Students of the Missionary and Bible College Croydon, Sydney, New South Wales* (Sydney: Australian Baptist Publishing House, 1922); *Speaking with Tongues in the New Testament* (Sydney: Australian Baptist Publishing House, 1922).

key was that the narrative parts of the gospels were written as they took place or immediately thereafter.⁴⁸ Palmer argued that note-taking was not uncommon during the first century, evidenced by the fact that archaeologists had discovered all over the ancient Roman empire (including Palestine) thousands of records, some documenting what appear to be mundane events.⁴⁹ That Jesus' disciples would realize the special character of their teacher and record his speeches would be expected, opined Palmer.

Palmer moved on to explain his three *special* keys. The first key he provided was the fact that Christ was bilingual, with the result that his discourses were given in Aramaic or Greek, depending on the audience.⁵⁰ If the audience was Galilean, he used Aramaic. If, however, he was speaking in Judea, he used Greek. The great difference between the synoptic gospels and John was, Palmer explained, due to the fact that the first three evangelists recorded the Aramaic speeches, and John took down the things Jesus spoke in Greek. Palmer allowed that the inhabitants of Judea spoke Aramaic, but he claimed the Aramaic dialect of Galilee spoken by Jesus and most of the disciples would have been liable to misunderstanding in Judea, thus Jesus opted for Greek when outside of Galilee.⁵¹ As proof that the people of Judea were accustomed to hearing Jesus speak in Greek, Palmer cited the question of the Jewish rulers in John 7:35 – “Will he go into the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?” – to demonstrate that those in Jerusalem had heard him speak Greek and knew that he could preach to others in that language.⁵² Palmer presented further evidence that the Greek in the synoptic gospels reflected translation from Aramaic, while John's gospel was fluid and bore no trace of a prior language.⁵³

⁴⁸ Palmer, *Gospel Problems*, 27.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 34-37.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 124.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 132.

Palmer's second key was the idea that the accounts given in the gospels were the result of shorthand notes taken extemporaneously by the disciples, a process Palmer termed "tautochronistic reporting."⁵⁴ Palmer explained that it was common in the ancient world for trained writers to record important happenings, a process made practical by the introduction of papyrus for writing.⁵⁵ The practice could be seen in the expression in Psalm 45:1 – "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer" – in which the writer is a skilled note-taker called to record utterances.⁵⁶ Palmer explained that Matthew, Peter and James conferred with each other after Jesus' discourses in Aramaic, and together quickly in shorthand form made their own individual notes in Greek.⁵⁷ John, on the other hand, was the most skilled in Greek, thus the others trusted him to take notes alone.⁵⁸

Palmer's proposed third key was that Matthew's and Luke's notes had become disarranged in the years after they were taken down.⁵⁹ To Palmer, each gospel could be traced to the apostolic circle. Matthew wrote his gospel from his own notes, likewise John, while Mark used Peter's writings. Rather than appeal to Luke's association with Paul, Palmer supposed that Luke based his gospel on James' notes. Palmer supposed that James died before he could write a gospel, so Luke was left with the task, many years later, of taking the notes of someone else and trying to make sense of them, thus explaining why Luke's gospel displayed the least chronology. Palmer imagined Luke as "sitting at a table on which are spread out a great number of small slips of paper"⁶⁰ when writing his gospel.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 184-185.

Likewise Matthew, while generally able to keep the chronology, wrote his gospel from his notes years after the events, and, because his pages had been oft used by the church, they were in disarray.⁶¹ Mark, however, used Peter's notes, which were kept in order, with Peter perhaps even numbering the pages.⁶²

While his explanation was certainly unique,⁶³ Palmer's arguments were not terribly effective. His evangelical concern that the written documents be close to the time of the event they recorded caused him to postulate a situation where two gospels, Matthew and Luke, had chronologies that were the result of chance, or worse, forgetfulness.⁶⁴ Palmer's failure to delve into linguistic comparisons was unfortunate, especially since his idea was based so heavily on a linguistic argument. While *Gospel Problems* did not change the debate in any meaningful way, it did receive some attention. The *Westminster Review* described it as “original and entertaining,”⁶⁵ and it was recommended for further reading in a NT Introduction⁶⁶ and a reference work.⁶⁷ However, one reviewer criticized his “unfitting” description of the apostles as tautochronistic reporters⁶⁸ and another deemed it the work of an amateur.⁶⁹

As the final example of evangelical publication and argumentation about the SP using the original languages of Christ and the apostles, Palmer's work is important for two reasons. First, it reflects the gradual expansion of the discussion of the SP outside of Europe that took place during the nineteenth century. Second, it represents

⁶¹ This echoes the much more detailed explanation of R. Bultmann that an “ecclesiastical redactor” took jumbled notes of the apostle John and reworked them to form the gospel of John. See R. Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1941; English translation by G.R. Beasley-Murray, Oxford: Blackwell, 1971).

⁶² Palmer, *Gospel Problems*, 174.

⁶³ Palmer provided the interesting solution to explain the verbatim occurrence of the parenthetical “Let the reader understand” (Mt 24:15= Mk 13:4) as Jesus’ own words, presumably clueing his note-takers to advise their future readers. See *Gospel Problems*, 105.

⁶⁴ Palmer attributed Matthew’s jumbled chronology to the fact that Matthew’s “recollection was so far dimmed,” after thirty years. See *Gospel Problems*, 174.

⁶⁵ Vol. 152 (July-Dec 1899) 590

⁶⁶ Benjamin Wisner Bacon, *Introduction to the New Testament* (London, 1905) 194.

⁶⁷ D.C. Gilman, ed., *The New International Encyclopedia*, Vol. 13 (New York, 1906) 194.

⁶⁸ *The Puritan*, Vols. 1-2 (Feb-Dec 1899) 330.

⁶⁹ *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art*, Vol. 88 (1900) 177.

one of the first attempts by an evangelical layman to address the SP in print. The matter that had vexed the clergy and academics was by this time a puzzle to the layperson.

B. Textual Critic #3: Henry Alford (1810–1871)

Henry Alford was born in London into an evangelical family, and entered Trinity College, Cambridge in 1829, where he eventually received MA (1835), BD (1850), and DD (1859) degrees. In 1835, he became vicar of Wymeswold, Leicestershire, where he served for seventeen years before moving to London, serving first as a minister at Quebec Chapel, Marylebone and later Dean of Canterbury in 1857, a position he retained until his death.⁷⁰ Alford was a long-time member of the Evangelical Alliance and was frequently a featured speaker at the annual meetings.⁷¹ Though he never officially joined the evangelical party of the Church of England,⁷² he steadfastly kept fellowship with evangelicals inside and outside of the Church.⁷³

Alford was a prolific writer, publishing works on poetry, hymnology, and various areas of religion. He is perhaps best known for his *The Greek Testament, with a critically revised text* (vol 1: Gospels, 1849), which combined textual criticism and philological emphases with an accompanying commentary. Several editions followed, with Alford changing the critical text greatly between the first and seventh editions.⁷⁴

Alford first addressed the SP in the *Greek Testament*, and his views appear to have remained practically unchanged in the following decades, though he did note in the second edition that he had changed his opinion that Matthew was first written in

⁷⁰ W. H. Fremantle, 'Alford, Henry (1810–1871)', rev. Roger T. Stearn, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 ;online edn, May 2006 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/341>, accessed 21 July 2010].

⁷¹ Fanny Alford, ed., *Life, Journals and Letters of Henry Alford*, Third Edition (London, 1874) 277.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 235.

⁷³ Duncan Campbell, *Hymns and Hymn Makers* (London, 1898) 102.

⁷⁴ Philip Schaff, *A Companion to the Greek Testament and the English Version* (New York: Harper, 1883) 266.

Hebrew, opting for a Greek original instead.⁷⁵ Alford was particularly keen to bring the SP to the attention of the general public, a fact demonstrated by the inclusion of his ideas on the SP in *The New Testament for English Readers*,⁷⁶ his guide to bible study,⁷⁷ and even in his book of homilies written from the perspective of a father to his children.⁷⁸

Alford's *Prolegomena* from the *Greek Testament* offers an invaluable perspective into the evangelical concerns of his day when dealing with the SP and inspiration. Alford noted that "every possible permutation" of the order of the synoptics had been proposed, and listed the adherents to the various sequences:

1. That Matt, wrote first — that Mark used his Gospel — and then Luke both these. This is held by Grotius, Mill, Wetstein, Townson, Hug, and Greswell...
2. Matt., Luke, Mark — So Griesbach, Fritzsche, Meyer, De Wette, and others.
3. Mark, Matt, Luke — So Storr and others.
4. Mark, Luke, Matt — So Weisse, Wilke, Hitzig, etc.
5. Luke, Matt., Mark — So Busching and Evanson.
6. Luke, Mark, Matt — So Vögel.⁷⁹

Alford then noted four possible reasons why an evangelist, being aware of the work of his predecessors, might undertake to write a gospel. First, perhaps finding the others insufficient, the evangelist wanted to supply what was lacking. However, by this reasoning, the first two and last two permutations were ruled out because Matthew and Luke were longer and fuller than Mark.⁸⁰ The other two options, with Markan

⁷⁵ (London, 1854) 29.

⁷⁶ *The New Testament for English Readers, Vol 1: The Three First Gospels* (London, 1863).

⁷⁷ *How to Study the New Testament: The Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1866).

⁷⁸ *Fireside Homilies: Edited by His Widow* (London, 1875).

⁷⁹ Alford, *Greek Testament* (first edition, 1849; second edition, 1854), Proleg 3. Unless otherwise noted, quotes and page numbers are from the first edition.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

priority, were also disqualified because Mark, though shorter, often gave more detailed accounts than the others. Second, perhaps the evangelist felt his predecessors had written erroneously. Alford also dismissed this notion because it was obvious that “in no material point do their accounts differ,” and while there were variations in “arrangement and completeness,” none sought to be perfectly chronologically accurate.⁸¹ Third, the evangelists might have wanted to adapt the material of his predecessors to suit it to “a different class of readers.”⁸² However, even if the traditional explanations – Matthew wrote for Jewish Christians, Mark for those in Rome, and Luke for gentiles in general – were true, this situation could not explain the revisions and alterations present. Why would Matthew alone have the story of the Magi? Why would Luke include the account of the circumcision of Jesus and his visits to Jerusalem for the Passover? Alford concluded that the appeal to a different audience was inadequate. Fourth, perhaps an evangelist received the gospels before him as authentic and simply aimed to borrow “such parts as they purposed to narrate in common with them.” However, borrowing was an insufficient explanation because there were no lengthy verbatim agreements between the synoptics. Alford wondered how any author would move back and forth between sources “with recurrences of the same arbitrary and anomalous alterations, coincidences and transpositions.”⁸³

Ultimately, Alford concluded that, regardless of the order in which the gospels were assumed to be written, all of the “interdependence theories” had the unfortunate result of removing the confidence that the evangelists were able, trustworthy, and honest. The proper explanation was to assume the independence of each evangelist, a solution to which Alford devoted several pages discussion. Alford deduced that, to explain the similarities in the synoptics, one had to appeal to a common tradition,

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Proleg 3-4.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Proleg 4.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, Proleg 4-5.

either written or oral. He first considered the possibility that tradition was written. A single common document, in Aramaic or Greek, could never explain the great omissions that each evangelist would have made from that source, omissions that the others included. A better explanation would entail multiple documents, but even those would simply refer back to oral teaching. Alford allowed for the presence of documents such as this, and that Luke may have used them in his unique material, insisted the common elements of the gospels were based on oral tradition.⁸⁴

Alford's notion of the oral tradition behind the gospels depended on the proper understanding of the apostolic office. The apostles were, by virtue of their eyewitness experience and their office, qualified to give a narrative of the ministry of Jesus. Their narratives were nearly identical (though subject to varieties of arrangement, wording, addition and omission) and principally constructed for the instruction of converts at Jerusalem.⁸⁵ As the need for this information spread throughout the gentile world, a "common substratum of Apostolic teaching," sanctioned by the apostles, was given to the churches. It is difficult to deduce whether Alford believed that the apostolic oral narrative was originally in Aramiac and then translated into Greek for further oral instruction, or if he thought the apostles taught in Greek.⁸⁶ The appeal to oral tradition could explain the linguistic similarities in the synoptics, but the differences were another matter, so Alford turned to them in the following section.⁸⁷

Alford's motivation for offering his solution to the SP became evident in his discussion of the discrepancies, of which there were *real* and *apparent*. The vast majority was simply apparent, but he noted that adversaries had used them to impugn

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Proleg 5-6.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Proleg 7-8.

⁸⁶ See Proleg 8 in the first edition and Proleg 9 in the second.

⁸⁷ Alford, *Greek Testament*, Proleg 9.

the evangelists. Alford was particularly displeased not with the enemies of Christianity, but with the “Christian commentators” who, in their “zeal for the veracity of the evangelists” adopted weak theories and did “utmost violence to probability and fairness.”⁸⁸ He was most contemptuous of those who wrote gospel harmonies assuming that no real chronological discrepancies existed, separating incidents that were clearly describing the same event. The effect created was that Jesus had the same encounters, using the same words and producing the same result, but with different people.⁸⁹ Alford did not deny that Jesus delivered similar sermons in various places and different locations, but strove to avoid separating similar accounts simply to avoid admitting the discrepancy.

Alford devoted Section 6 of the *Prolegomena* entirely to the subject of the inspiration of the first three evangelists, where he demonstrated the relationship between notions of inspiration and the SP. The apostles were commissioned for the special purpose of “witnessing to the Gospel History,” and their memoirs were immediately and universally received by the early church.⁹⁰ But how did the Holy Spirit inspire the apostles? Alford rejected any description that diminished their human characteristics, citing the impetuousness of Peter, who still shrank “from the danger of human disapproval” (apparent in Gal 2:2). In one sense, Alford maintained, the Holy Spirit worked through the apostles in a gradual manner “analogous to His influence on every believer.”⁹¹ However, the apostolic office was “peculiar and unexampled,” and thus only they had received the promise that the Spirit would remind them of the things Jesus had said (John 14:26). Alford surmised that this promise also extended beyond Jesus’ sayings to their entire narratives. The apostles

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Proleg 10.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Proleg 11.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Proleg 14.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, Proleg 15.

were also enabled by the Spirit to detect lies, as Luke recounted in Acts 5, and the prominence of Jesus' mother in the early church would have prevented them from delivering untruth.⁹²

Alford looked to the internal nature of the synoptics to determine how much "divine superintendence" the apostles received. The only evangelist to speak of his task was Luke (Lk 1:1-4) and he did not lay claim to divine guidance, but instead pledged diligence, care, faithfulness and accuracy. Alford observed that none of the gospels' arrangements was divinely inspired, or else even the most scrupulous of harmonisers were wrong to "vary it even in the slightest degree." Freedom in arrangement for the evangelists must be admitted, or else the gospel narrative becomes "a heap of improbabilities."⁹³ While most of the *real* discrepancies in the synoptics were attributable simply to arrangement and chronology, there were other minor points where one evangelist was less precise, or in Alford's term "inaccurate" in comparison to the others.

Thus, Alford ended his discussion of the SP and moved on to the critical Greek text and commentary, where one can see Alford's differentiated handling of *apparent* versus *real* discrepancies. One classic discrepancy, Peter's denials and the rooster crowing, was to Alford an *apparent* discrepancy. Mark 14:72 has Jesus mentioning two crowings of the rooster, while the others mention only one crowing (Mt 26:34 = Lk 22:34). Alford explained that Peter's experience informed Mark's wording. Peter, having heard the rooster crow both at midnight and before sunrise, knew painfully well when his denials took place and was careful to indicate that the early-morning crowing was intended by Jesus, not the midnight one which was heard by few people. Thus Mark's narrative couches the denial between the midnight and

⁹² *Ibid.*, Proleg 15-16.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Proleg 17.

early morning crowings. But the other evangelists, using the more general “when the rooster crows,” refer to more general meaning of the early-morning crowing.⁹⁴

A *real* discrepancy offered by Alford is found in the account of Jairus’ daughter (Mk 5:23 = Mt 9:18 = Lk 8:42), where Matthew says that Jairus knew the girl was dead when he approached Jesus, but Mark and Luke have Jairus receiving notification of her death while Jesus was en route to heal her. Matthew’s account was more concise and general, according to Alford, because Matthew was not aware of the message brought to Jesus along the way.⁹⁵

Such discrepancies were to be expected of independent witnesses, even those who were inspired, and afforded more reliability to their accounts. Alford opined:

Variation in detail and arrangement is to my mind the most valuable proof that they were, not mere mouthpieces or organs of infallible truth, as some would suicidally make them, but holy men, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.⁹⁶

With a liberal confidence, Alford declared, “Christianity never has, and never can be the gainer, by any concealment, warping, or avoidance of the plain truth, wherever it is to be found.”⁹⁷ Apparently, Alford frequently discussed these discrepancies, even in family settings, as evidenced by another reference in his *Fireside Homilies* to the discrepancy in the account of Jairus’ daughter. In his address, written from the perspective of a father to his children, he mentioned his habit of emphasising the difference between the evangelists’ accounts:

Now some might ask, and I know mamma herself sometimes inquires,
why I bring forward these differences between the Evangelists —why I

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 361. The importance of this particular discrepancy for Alford is palpable in the fact that he referred to it in his *Fireside Homilies* in a very personal manner, as quoted below.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Proleg 11.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

do not rather conceal them, or, if I mention them at all, adopt some ingenious way of making out that they mean the same, though their words are different? Simply, my darlings, because I believe that I should be dealing unfaithfully by God and by Truth in doing so. If He has been pleased that the Evangelists should give us differing accounts of the same fact, it was for wise reasons that He did so, and that we might make wise use of the difference, not that we might cover it up and hide it out of sight.⁹⁸

This account of Jairus' daughter was especially important to Alford because of his personal experience as a father who had lost two young sons, and the scars of that time were evident in his writing.⁹⁹ Synoptic discrepancies were influential to Alford's view of the inspiration:

To my mind these differences (discrepancies, as they are called) are the strongest possible marks of the truth of the facts themselves. If the Evangelists were deceivers, intent upon making men believe that things happened which never did happen, they would have taken good care that no such differences should be found in their stories. But being, as they were, independent and honest narrators of facts which really happened, they were liable to what occurs to all human witnesses—they reported variously, and sometimes inconsistently one with another. And there used to be no difficulty in getting people to acknowledge this.¹⁰⁰

Alford hearkened back to his younger days, when he considered that sensible evangelicals had no trouble admitting the limitations of the biblical writers. He opined

⁹⁸ Alford, *Fireside Homilies*, 106.

⁹⁹ See *Fireside Homilies*, 108-109, for his raw and touching account.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 107.

that, in his lifetime, too many had become “slaves to the letter” who expected too high a degree of exactness from the biblical writers.¹⁰¹ Though Alford acknowledged that sceptics used discrepancies to harm the faith, he was more concerned that the faithful avoid the other extreme by denying they existed.

There were at least two weaknesses to Alford’s version of the IH. First, his entire notion of inspiration was dependent upon apostolicity, but he did little to prove that the apostles were directly associated with the gospels. Importantly, he failed to address how Luke’s sources were associated with the approved apostolic oral tradition that informed Matthew and Mark. Was the testimony of Luke’s eyewitness sources to be considered on par with apostolic teaching? Second, Alford did little to explain the evolution of the apostolic instruction from its base in Jerusalem to its extension to the churches throughout the gentile world. If it were in Hebrew, did the apostles oversee its translation into Greek? And would not that translation have been in written form? If it were in Greek, how could such instruction have been based in Jerusalem? Alford’s neglect of an explanation for this portion of the development of the oral tradition had the effect of weakening its supposed connection to the apostles.

Alford’s arguments for the independence of the evangelists received plenty of notice, but few adherents. One review criticized Alford’s implication that dependency theories imply a depreciation of the evangelists.¹⁰² Another reviewer took the other extreme and grouped Alford among the “modern critics who too much let go their hold upon divine inspiration.”¹⁰³

Regardless of the potential problems with his arguments concerning the SP, Alford’s *Greek Testament* was an important work. He spent 18 years preparing and

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 108.

¹⁰² L.M. & P.Q. “Review of Alford’s *Greek Testament*,” *Journal of Sacred Literature*, 3 (April 1852) 92.

¹⁰³ M.J. Jacobus, *Notes on the Gospels, Critical and Explanatory* (Edinburgh, 1863) 9.

revising the four-volume set. It was said that every minister in England had a copy of Alford's *Greek Testament*, and that in America no other English scholar was valued as highly.¹⁰⁴ In 1872, William Orme considered it the best available critical text of the NT with English notes.¹⁰⁵ C.H. Spurgeon described the *Greek Testament* as “invaluable” and highly recommended it.¹⁰⁶ Of course, the set also provoked critics who claimed he knew absolutely nothing of Greek textual criticism¹⁰⁷ and that he relied on inferior texts.¹⁰⁸ It is noteworthy that Alford is the third textual critic mentioned in this study who addressed the SP at length. Like Mill and Bengel before him, it appears that the frequent interaction with the many synoptic textual variants caused him to dwell upon issues of gospel origins, though he rejected a dependency hypothesis.

C. Alexander Balmain Bruce (1831-1899):

The Synoptic Problem and Charges of Heresy

The well-publicized case of Robert Gundry and his forced resignation from the Evangelical Theological Society¹⁰⁹ in the 1980s was prefigured in many ways almost a century earlier in Scotland. In 1890, Professor Alexander Balmain Bruce was tried for heresy by the Free Church of Scotland because of his published views on the SP and his description of the evangelists' licence in adapting their sources. The outcome for Bruce was different from the one Gundry experienced, however.

Bruce was born in Dupplin, Scotland in 1831, twelve years before the Great Disruption in the Church of Scotland, in which most of the evangelical party left the

¹⁰⁴ Fanny Alford, *Life*, 510.

¹⁰⁵ Criticus (William Orme), *Memoir of the Controversy Respecting the Three Heavenly Witnesses: 1 John 5:7* (Boston, 1872).

¹⁰⁶ C. H. Spurgeon, *Commenting and Commentaries* (London, 1893) 17.

¹⁰⁷ Shadwell Lancelot, *Introduction to a New Translation of the Greek Testament with Notes* (London, 1859) vii.

¹⁰⁸ Alfred Cave, *An Introduction to Theology: Its Principles, Its Branches, Its Results, and Its Literature* (Edinburgh, 1886) 273.

¹⁰⁹ See below, Chapter VIII, E.

Church of Scotland and formed the Free Church of Scotland. At that time, Bruce's parents, who were sympathetic to the Free Church's beliefs, moved the family to Edinburgh. In 1845, Bruce entered Edinburgh University but moved to the Divinity Hall of the Free Church in 1849. During his time at university, he experienced a crisis of faith that would later factor into his academic career and his defence at his heresy trial. After graduating, Bruce served as a minister to several Free Church congregations until he was appointed to the chair of Apologetics and New Testament Exegesis at Free Church Hall in Glasgow in 1875.¹¹⁰

Bruce's works on apologetics and church hymns had made him popular in the Free Church, though his comfort with German biblical criticism caused many to question his role as a professor. In 1881, he spoke before the General Assembly of the Free Church in defence of his friend, Professor William Robertson Smith of the Free Church College in Aberdeen, who was ultimately removed from that role. Bruce's speech, in which he stated his desire that in the future Free Church "shall appear orthodox yet not illiberal, evangelical yet not Pharisaical, believing yet not afraid in inquiry,"¹¹¹ gave insight into his ecclesiastical perspective. Little did Bruce know that nine years later his professorship would be jeopardized and that he would have to answer to the Assembly as Smith had done.

Controversy erupted after the publication of Bruce's *The Kingdom of God: Or Christ's Teaching According to the Synoptical Gospels* (Edinburgh, 1889) and the primary catalyst was the author's discussion of synoptic issues. In the "Critical Introduction," Bruce argued Matthew and Luke used at least two sources – "one a collection of sayings, the other a collection of narrations similar in contents to the

¹¹⁰ Michael Jinks, 'Bruce, Alexander Balmain (1831–1899)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004
[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3724>, accessed 17 July 2010]

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

second Gospel.”¹¹² He noted that Holtzmann¹¹³ argued for an *Ur-Markus* source for the synoptics, but made clear he opted for the *logia*-source-plus-Mark solution advocated by Bernard Weiss.¹¹⁴ While the contents of the *logia*, or sayings source, could not be fully known, a good reckoning of them could be deduced from the common material in Luke and Matthew. The two gospels were “strangely divergent on the whole,” but contained such similar content that they certainly often reported the same events.¹¹⁵ This led Bruce to the conclusion, “One of two inferences is inevitable. Either one of the reporters (or possibly both) has taken considerable liberties with the source, or the source existed in different recensions, arising in different circles, and under different influences.”¹¹⁶ While Bruce allowed that the latter was possible, he preferred the former, and immediately began to explain that Luke took the most liberty with the sayings source. However, Bruce was careful to explain that the evangelists wrote to edify:

... acting not in a spirit of licence, but with the freedom of men who believed that it was more important that their readers should get a true impression of Christ than that they should know the *Ipsissima Verba* of His sayings.¹¹⁷

Bruce considered that all of Luke’s variations to the *logia* source could be broken down into three categories: modifications, omissions and additions.

One example of a modification, from the Sermon on the Mount/Plain, was Luke’s changing μισθός (Mt 5:46) to χάρις (Lk 6:32) as the reward for loving others. It

¹¹² Bruce, *The Kingdom*, 3. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations and page numbers are from the first edition of 1889.

¹¹³ H. J. Holtzmann, *Die Synoptischen Evangelien* (Leipzig, 1863).

¹¹⁴ Bruce, *The Kingdom*, 4. B. Weiss, *Das Mattheus-Evangelium und seine Lukas-Parallelen* (Halls, 1876).

¹¹⁵ Bruce, *The Kingdom*, 5.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

was conceivable, said Bruce, that Luke inserted χάρις here and other places “as if he took pleasure in repeating this watchword of Pauline theology.”¹¹⁸ Likewise, Luke changed the τέλειοι as quoted in Matthew’s sermon (Mt 5:48) to οἰκτίζομενες (Lk 6:36), to “remove an element of apparent legalism” and to make the phrase comport more with “evangelic, or Pauline, habits.”¹¹⁹ Bruce posited that Luke made not only alterations to the *logia*, but also omissions to edify his readers. He may have left out the story of the Syrophenician woman to avoid “scandalizing Gentile readers” by reflecting a harsh manner toward “pagans.”¹²⁰ As an example of an addition by Luke, Bruce mentioned Luke’s unique “Mission of the Seventy,” suggesting the possibility that the number seventy may have been symbolical and the mission may have only involved the Twelve.¹²¹ Bruce maintained that one could form “a very vivid idea of Christ as [Luke] conceived Him,” by remembering that Luke primarily sought to avoid misrepresenting Jesus and more generally to provide edification for his readers.¹²² However, Bruce was also careful to emphasise that, while Luke may have “furnished unhistorical settings for”¹²³ and “modified some sayings, “there is not the slightest reason to believe that he invented *logia*.”¹²⁴ Bruce generally deemed Matthew’s accounts to be closer to the *logia* source than Luke’s. Evidence for this conclusion was offered in Luke’s less frequent use of “Father” (a term that was “truer to the style of the Master”)¹²⁵ as well as Luke’s oft-used terms “the Apostles” and “the Lord” in place of “the disciples” and “Jesus,” reflecting the terminology of the later first-century church.¹²⁶

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 32.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

A furore erupted at the university when the book was published and the College Committee of the Free Church was called upon to act on the matter. The Committee reviewed *The Kingdom* and then submitted a report to the General Assembly of the Free Church stating that Bruce's writing did not "afford ground for instituting a process against... [him] as teaching what is at variance with the standards of the Church."¹²⁷ On May 27-29, 1890, the General Assembly met in Edinburgh, and because of the trials of Bruce and another professor, Marcus Dods (whose views on inspiration had been challenged), attendance was the greatest it had been in recent memory, with extra benches having to be added to the 2,000 seat hall and attendees still standing in the door.¹²⁸

Three advocates spoke in Bruce's defence. First, Dr. Ross Taylor reminded the Assembly that Prof. Bruce did not invent the questions concerning gospel origins which he addressed, but that he had "valiantly striven" to answer them, while choosing to neither ignore them as some "panic-stricken alarmists" would have, nor to accept the empty philosophy of "German rationalism."¹²⁹ Next, Principal Robert Rainy defended Bruce's handling, which maintained a high view of inspiration, of the "vexed questions" of gospel sources and urged the Assembly to remember the importance of professors being allowed to carry on teaching and writing from their own convictions, and not those of others.¹³⁰ Last of all, Bruce spoke in his own defence, delivering a remarkable thirty-minute speech (discussed below).

His opponents accused Bruce of holding a view, akin to that of German critics, which was "dishonouring to our Divine Saviour."¹³¹ They submitted a motion branding Bruce's work "irreconcilable with the standards of the church and the

¹²⁷ *The Case Stated: Statement by Ministers and Other Office-Bearers of the Free Church in regard to the decisions of last General Assembly in the cases of Drs Dods and Bruce* (Glasgow, 1890) 36.

¹²⁸ W.W. Moore, "The Dods-Bruce Decision," *Presbyterian Quarterly*, Vol 4 (Jan-Oct 1890) 621.

¹²⁹ Henry F. Henderson, *The Religious Controversies of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1905) 264.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 263.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 260.

position and responsibilities of a professor of theology,” and recommending that his case be remitted to the Presbytery of Glasgow, but it failed to pass.¹³² Bruce’s supporters, led by R.G. Balfour, submitted a lengthy motion that can only be summarized here. First, it concurred with the finding of the College Committee there were no grounds against Dr. Bruce for teaching contrary to standards of the church. Second, it found that Bruce had not been careful enough “in his modes of statement, and by his manner of handling debated questions as to the motives and methods of the evangelists,” thus resulting in “misunderstandings” and “painful impressions.” Third, it reminded Bruce of his responsibilities to produce scholarship consistent with the faith and the church, and that this should be evident to the church and to the world. Fourth, it commended Bruce for using his “many good gifts” in service to the church provided by his theological publications and encouraged his future work.¹³³ This motion passed by a vote of 392 for and 237 against.¹³⁴

To a modern investigator in search of an evangelical apology from the nineteenth century for investigations into the SP and for the use of redaction criticism, Bruce’s trial produced two remarkable pieces to this end, both by Dr. Bruce. First, his speech in his defence before the General Assembly touches upon many evangelical concerns related to the SP. Second, the introduction which he added to the third and subsequent editions served as a near manifesto for evangelical consideration of issues surrounding the SP and how an evangelical scholar should handle them. Both are summarized and considered below.

¹³² Moore, “The Dods-Bruce Decision,” 623.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 624.

¹³⁴ *Appleton’s American Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1890* (New York, 1891) 747.

Prof. Bruce's Speech

Bruce began his defence by explaining to the Assembly that *The Kingdom* dealt with a relatively new field of criticism, but that his aim had always been to provide an apologetical and exegetical defence of the reliability of the synoptic gospels. Considering the scepticism of the gospels in “free-thought circles,” Bruce wanted to use lines of reasoning which they might deem valid. He wondered whether a candid reader who approached his book would not consider it done in a “loyal spirit” and “conservative on the whole.”¹³⁵ He expressed his regret that, though he intended “to do a service to the faith,” his work had created misunderstanding by “infelicity of expression.” He then clarified a matter some had apparently questioned concerning his view of the bible. Regardless of the great and historic works one might compare it to, the bible “is a book by itself, the marvellous literature of a very real revelation which God had made to mankind.” He admitted that while exact definitions of inspiration might differ, he and his opponents agreed on the main question.¹³⁶

Bruce then referred to his days at the university, during a time of church controversy, when he “made escape from the strife of the Churches to the teaching of Jesus.” He explained that he experienced a crisis of faith when reading the “Christian ideal” in the gospels and compared it with his “own character, the religious life of the community, on the course of ecclesiastical history.”¹³⁷ He acknowledged the Committee’s report and its compliment of his work, but he demurred from accepting it if that acclaim meant only personal success. He stated, “The question is, ‘Have I

¹³⁵ Henderson, 266.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 267.

seen Christ and helped others to see Him?”” He added the poignant statement, “I have been trying all my life to see Jesus and to show Him.”¹³⁸

Thus far in the speech, Bruce had only dealt with his intentions for the book, but he closed by mentioning evidence in his defence from a seemingly unlikely source. Bruce referenced the *Review of Reviews* February 1890 volume in which was given a list of “Best Hundred Books” for a minister’s library.¹³⁹ Among those selected was Bruce’s *The Kingdom*, and the selection was made by C.W. Hodge of Princeton Theological Seminary, renowned for its conservative positions on matters of inspiration and interpretation of the bible. Bruce puzzled over how “orthodox Hodge” could endorse a book by a “heterodox” professor in a list of best books for ministers.¹⁴⁰ As he finished on a conciliatory note, Bruce admitted the grief he had experienced because he had been “misunderstood by good men” but expressed love for his brethren.¹⁴¹

Dr. Bruce’s professorship survived his trial in 1890, and he continued to teach Apologetics and Exegesis in Glasgow. He went on to publish a work on apologetics,¹⁴² and he did not shy away from addressing his solution to the SP in later works. The tone of his language, though, was more guarded concerning the evangelists’ liberty with their sources. For example, in his *With Open Face: Or Jesus Mirrored in Matthew, Mark and Luke* (New York, 1896) Bruce described Luke’s gospel as bearing “traces of editorial discretion,” but refrained from insinuating Lukan inventions.¹⁴³ Bruce’s last publication was the entry on the “Synoptic Gospels” in

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 268.

¹³⁹ C.W. Hodge, “For a Minister’s Library” *Review of Reviews and World’s Work: An International Magazine*, Vol. 1 (Jan 1890) 130. Though Bruce did not mention it, Hodge also recommended A.B. Bruce, *The Parabolic Teaching of Christ: A Systematic and Critical Study of the Parables of Our Lord* (New York, 1883).

¹⁴⁰ Henderson, 268.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 269.

¹⁴² Bruce, *Apologetics, or, Christianity Defensively Stated* (New York, 1892).

¹⁴³ Bruce, *With Open Face*, 43.

Expositor's Greek Testament,¹⁴⁴ which was later cited favourably by Paul W. Felix in *The Jesus Crisis*,¹⁴⁵ a work highly critical of the use of redaction criticism by evangelical scholars in the late twentieth century.¹⁴⁶

Bruce's Addition to *The Kingdom of God*

The controversy surrounding his arguments in *The Kingdom* caused Bruce to reconsider his approach in future editions. Rather than rewrite the "Critical Introduction" that had caused much of the disquiet, he opted to include a "Preface" to the Third Edition, which he composed in June of 1890.¹⁴⁷ He explained that he added the Preface "to remove misapprehensions as to the views stated therein regarding the reports of our Lord's words in the Synoptical Gospels." He admitted that determining whether Luke or Matthew contained the more original form of a saying of Jesus was "a question of subordinate interest for the practical religious use of Scripture" but important for any work dealing with NT theology.¹⁴⁸ He clarified his position on the originality of sayings by stating that the Synoptics give the teachings of Jesus with "substantial accuracy, though with varying degrees of literal exactness."¹⁴⁹ He noted that he had always worked with the assumption that his opinions were "compatible with the inspiration of the evangelists." Realizing that this assumption had not been understood by some of his previous readers, Bruce included quotes from one of his earlier works to indicate his belief in inspiration.¹⁵⁰ He defended his conclusion that the evangelists may have modified the form of some teachings, but always "for good and worthy reasons" and with the "spiritual needs" of their audiences in mind.¹⁵¹ He

¹⁴⁴ Vol. 1, ed. W. R. Nicoll (London, 1897).

¹⁴⁵ Paul W. Felix, "Literary Dependence and Luke's Prologue," in Robert L. Thomas and F. David Farnell, eds., *The Jesus Crisis* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998) 271-288, at p.274.

¹⁴⁶ For a lengthy discussion of *The Jesus Crisis*, see Chapter VIII, G2 below.

¹⁴⁷ As indicated by his dating of at the conclusion of the Preface on page xii. Quotations of the preface are from the sixth edition (New York, 1896).

¹⁴⁸ "Preface," vii.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, ix.

¹⁵⁰ Bruce, *The Miraculous Elements in the Gospels* (London, 1888) 111-112.

¹⁵¹ "Preface," xi.

preferred this solution, where he attributed the modifications to “the responsible hands of the inspired evangelists,” to one in which the differences in the synoptics were accidental or dependent upon unknown sources.

The Implications of Bruce’s Apologies

It is difficult to question Bruce’s evangelical convictions given the body of his work devoted to the evangelical cause. His statements after the controversy created by *The Kingdom* reveal several conclusions he had reached regarding the appropriate manner for evangelical scholars to discuss the SP. First, the evangelical scholar must be careful in his or her descriptions of the evangelists’ use of sources.¹⁵² Second, even with the best of intentions, evangelical scholars can easily be misunderstood when addressing issues regarding the gospels because those documents are so integral to the evangelical faith. Third, it is important for the evangelical scholar, if he or she wants to avoid or at least minimise misunderstandings, to explicitly affirm a belief in the inspiration of scripture. If Bruce’s experience is typical, then this affirmation can include an explanation of the complicated nature of defining inspiration. Fourth, though the subject can be divisive, many, if not most, of an evangelical scholar’s literary audience can accept his or her critical conclusions given the appropriate reasons to trust the scholar. Bruce was respected as a defender of the faith with the highest regard for Jesus, and this reputation aided him both in his defence and the confidence with which his allies defended him.

D. James Stalker (1848-1927): The Case Against the Tübingen School

Another prominent scholar and minister of the Free Church of Scotland of the time was James Stalker. Stalker was a beloved preacher and author who trained under and worked with the renowned evangelist Dwight L. Moody, as well as serving as

¹⁵² See Grant Osborne, “The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology,” *JETS* 22/4 (Dec 1979) 305-322, for similar arguments made more recently.

professor at the University of Aberdeen.¹⁵³ He had been educated at Edinburgh, Berlin and Halle, and was able to integrate the critical biblical scholarship he encountered on the continent with the evangelical faith he preached.¹⁵⁴

In 1899, Stalker published *The Christology of Jesus: Being His Teaching Concerning Himself According to the Synoptic Gospels* (New York, 1899) in which he briefly addressed the SP. Stalker considered the SP to be the “most perplexing of literary riddles,” but observed that the order in which the gospels was written was of minor importance “unless we are to assume that in the Christian circles of the first century there was at work a strong mythopoetic propensity, which was engaged in adorning with legendary marvels the memory of Jesus.”¹⁵⁵ In other words, determining the earliest gospel was only necessary if one assumed that the Jesus described in the later gospels was greatly adapted. To Stalker, however, the distance between the three synoptic presentations of Jesus was “inconsiderable”¹⁵⁶ and he was not greatly concerned with determining priority. With these caveats, Stalker described his own solution to the SP. Mark’s gospel came first of the three, a notion which he considered “now generally conceded.”¹⁵⁷ Matthew the apostle provided the sayings source, or *logia*, perhaps from personal notes made during Jesus’ public ministry. Later, the authors of Matthew and Luke, and perhaps Mark as well, made use of the *logia*. Stalker mentioned the reconstructions of the *logia* provided by German scholars Wendt and Resch, and remarked that such an undertaking was “of profound interest” because “it would be gratifying to learn that any of our Lord’s words or acts could be traced back, in written records, so near to the confines of His

¹⁵³ John McDowell, *Dwight L. Moody: the Discoverer of Men and the Maker of Movements* (London: Revell, 1915) 61.

¹⁵⁴ David L. Larsen, *The Company of the Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998) 619.

¹⁵⁵ Stalker, 32.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

actual life.”¹⁵⁸ However, Stalker rejected the approach in “German scholarship” which described distinctions between “authenticity of the first rank” and those of a secondary and tertiary nature. By contrast, British scholarship was “more modest” in that it did not make such distinctions but allowed that evangelists had freedom in making minor modifications and omissions for “reasons of edification.”¹⁵⁹

Later in the volume, Stalker addressed the dangers and benefits of synoptic criticism that prevailed in Germany at the time. Using Wendt’s handling of the SP¹⁶⁰ as his example, Stalker bemoaned the fact that German criticism had caused doubt over the credibility of the miracle stories, and “whether a considerable proportion of the words put into His mouth ever came from His lips at all.”¹⁶¹ The peeling away of layers of tradition, looking to distinguish between primary and secondary accounts, was a process difficult to stop once begun, “for there is no end to the combinations which are possible once it is taken for granted that the representations of the Gospels are not the actual facts, but creations of the imagination which have grown out of them.”¹⁶² Wendt, and others of the Tübingen school who described a Christ divorced from the image presented in Matthew and Luke and a distorted view of the one in Mark, ultimately attributed the evangelists with “stupidity” for misinterpreting what Jesus actually said and did.¹⁶³ The German critics not only neglected any reverence “due to holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” they also made the gospel authors “talk downright nonsense.” Stalker countered the attempt to remove the divine and miraculous elements from the historical Jesus by appealing to the earlier witness of Paul, who described a Jesus as Judge and Saviour of humankind, a Jesus who was before all things and now ascended to the right hand of God, with a

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 36-37.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

¹⁶⁰ H. H. Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, Vol. 2 (1890) 440ff.

¹⁶¹ Stalker, 261.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 262.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 266.

name above all names at which all shall bow. This was the belief of the earliest Christians, and not an invention of a later date.¹⁶⁴ Thus Stalker, following the lead of Tholuck, used the 2SH to refute sceptical scholarship of his day, a process continued at Princeton in subsequent years (see next chapter).

The works of A.B. Bruce and Stalker, both of the evangelical Free Church of Scotland, serve as a fitting conclusion to this section on the second half of the nineteenth century. Though many evangelical arguments remained as they had since the beginning of the century, one major change is observable – that many evangelical scholars no longer assumed the order of the gospels to be the canonical one, nor did they feel compelled to defend departing from the older tradition.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 267.

VII. Evangelicals and the Synoptic Problem – 1900-1948

By the late nineteenth century, the United States was growing in importance in the world, especially the evangelical world, and English-speaking scholars came to dominate evangelical scholarship.¹ This chapter catalogues the scholarship vis-à-vis the SP offered by four important American evangelical scholars, as well as the contributions of a German theologian and a British minister.

A. The Princeton School and the SP: Using the 2SH to Fight Back

The American seminary of Princeton was known as a bastion of conservative Presbyterian theology during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Professors such as Charles Hodge, Archibald Alexander, B.B. Warfield, A. A. Hodge, C.W. Hodge, J. Gresham Machen and Geerhardus Vos “provided intellectual foundations for defending the [Reformed Presbyterian] faith” in their scholarship in what became known as the “Old Princeton School.”² While most of the faculty at Princeton appear not to have addressed the SP during that time, the approach of two Old Princetonians, B.B. Warfield and Geerhardus Vos, will be considered here.

1. B.B. Warfield (1851-1921): The ‘Lion of Princeton’ and the 2SH

B.B. Warfield was born in Kentucky into a wealthy family, which enabled him to attend university in Princeton, Edinburgh, Heidelberg, and Leipzig. When he returned to the United States for good in 1878, he accepted a position at Western Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. He remained at Western until 1886, when he returned to Princeton as professor, a position he held until his death, and served as one of most formative figures in early twentieth century evangelical thought.³ As

¹ The importance of British evangelical scholarship (especially in the WWII era and after) and its influence on American evangelical scholarship is discussed at the beginning of the next chapter.

² George M. Marsden, “Reformed and American,” in David F. Wells, ed. *Reformed Theology in America: A History of Its Modern Development* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985) 1-14, at p.8.

³ Kim Riddlebarger, “The Lion of Princeton: Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield on Apologetics, Theological Method and Polemics” (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1997).

American evangelicalism began to struggle with the modernist movement, Warfield was seen by many as the educationally pedigreed yet reliably conservative voice against (what were viewed by many evangelicals as) liberal attacks on the bible.⁴ He was best known for his publications on the inspiration of, and specifically the inerrancy of, the bible.⁵

B.B. Warfield never wrote a book, article or chapter specifically about the SP, though he did offer his opinions on the matter on several occasions. It is impossible to say with certainty what Warfield's exact solution to the SP was, but three of his publications indicate a tentative endorsement of the 2SH.⁶ In his chapter entitled, "The Primitive Jesus," in *The Lord of Glory*,⁷ Warfield sought to show that the picture of Jesus in the gospels was a consistent one from the very beginnings of the church. Though he certainly would not accept all of the findings of modern critical scholarship, Warfield was glad to claim that the "hypothetical sources which the several schools of criticism reconstruct for our Synoptics" each contain a clear portrait of a "supernatural Christ."⁸ He noted that the theory most "in vogue" was the 2SH, and without indicating his own opinion of it, worked from the presumption of that hypothesis in his arguments. The first source was Mark, or a primitive version that contained practically all of that gospel.⁹ If the synoptics were based on this primitive Mark, and even if it were assumed to contain only the triple tradition, it would still

⁴ For further discussion of Warfield's role in the modernist/fundamentalist controversy, see R. Olson, *Westminster Handbook*, 29-31.

⁵ See, for example, B. B. Warfield, "Inspiration," in James Orr, ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. III (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1915) 1473; B.B. Warfield, *Revelation and Inspiration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1927); B.B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Press, 1948); B. B. Warfield, "Inerrancy of the Original Autographs," in idem, *Selected Shorter Writings*, Vol. 2, edited by John E. Meeter (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Press, 1973) 584; A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield, "Inspiration," *Presbyterian Review* 2/6 (April 1881) 225-60.

⁶ Baird, 348, considers it clear that he adopted a "modified form" of the 2SH.

⁷ B.B. Warfield, "The Primitive Jesus," in *The Lord of Glory: A Study of the Designations of Our Lord in the New Testament with Special Reference to His Deity* (London, 1907) 133-158.

⁸ Warfield, "The Primitive Jesus," 135.

⁹ *Ibid.*

portray Jesus as supernatural.¹⁰ He would still be called the Christ (8:29 and 14:61-62), would still be implied to be a king (15:2, 32), Son of David (10:47-48), Lord (11:3; 12:35) and Son of God (1:11; 5:7; 9:7; 12:6-7). Moreover, there would still be details concerning his betrayal and suffering (14:20) as well as his mocking, scourging, and death (10:33). Finally, there would still be mention of his resurrection (10:34), ascension (14:62), and his return with power and glory (8:28; 13:26).¹¹

Warfield next moved to the other source of the 2SH, the hypothetical *logia* document, singling out Harnack's reconstruction in *Sprüche und Reden Jesu* (1907). Again, Warfield decided to work with its bare minimum contents, the double tradition, in which are found intimations of Jesus' messiahship (Mt 11:3 = Lk 7:19; Mt 8:8 = Lk 7:6), his control over the destinies of people (Mt 7:21 = Lk 6:46), as well as allusions to the titles "Son of God" (Mt 4:3,6 = Lk 4:3,9) and the "Son of Man" (Mt 11:19 = Lk 7:34; Mt 8:20 = Lk 9:58; Mt 11:27 = Lk 10:22; Mt 16:48 = Lk 12:47). As in primitive Mark, a minimal *logia* still mentions a Jesus who faces betrayal and death (Mt 16:28 = Lk 12:47) and ultimately resurrection (Mt 12:40 = Lk 11:30).¹² Warfield rejected critical assumptions that the evangelists created a biased image of Jesus.¹³ Especially absurd to Warfield was the attempt to sift through all the mythical and "high claims" of the evangelists, searching "as if for hid treasure," for the "real Jesus."¹⁴ Here, Warfield singled out Schmiedel's entry in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a work he would address at length in 1913 (see below). Ultimately, Warfield concluded that the evidence from the earliest written sources presented the same Jesus as the one found in the gospels, and attempts to draw stark distinctions had failed.¹⁵

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹² *Ibid.*, 140-141.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 146.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 157.

Three years later, in 1910, Warfield published the entry for “Jesus Christ” in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*,¹⁶ which later became a chapter in Warfield’s *Christology and Criticism*.¹⁷ Warfield offered many of the same arguments made in “The Primitive Jesus” with some minor adaptations. First, rather than mentioning the 2SH specifically, Warfield referred repeatedly to the one source used by all three synoptists and the other source Matthew and Luke had in common. Second, Warfield appeared intentionally to be vague regarding the nature of these sources by refusing to state whether they were written or oral, instead referring to their common “narratives” instead of common “documents.” Third, because this was an encyclopaedia entry, Warfield wrote in more general terms with fewer comparisons of synoptic data. Fourth, Warfield seemed to gently dismiss the IH with the following statement:

If the three Synoptic Gospels do not give three independent testimonies to the facts which they record, they give what is, perhaps, better, — three independent witnesses to the trustworthiness of the narrative, which they all incorporate into their own as resting on autoptic testimony and thoroughly deserving of credit.¹⁸

Instead of arguing, as many advocates of the IH had done, that the differences in the synoptic gospels proved their independence, Warfield argued that the differences demonstrated the synoptics were independently based on the same narrative. Using similar arguments as those in the 1907 article, Warfield posited a narrative source and a sayings source behind Matthew and Luke, and added that the trustworthiness of

¹⁶ Vol. 6 (New York, 1910) 150-176. Quotations are from this edition.

¹⁷ (Oxford, 1929) 149-177

¹⁸ Warfield, “Jesus Christ,” 152.

these sources was guaranteed by Luke's pledge to consult authentic eyewitness testimony (Lk 1:1-4).¹⁹

In 1913, Warfield continued an apologetic tone in his article, "Concerning Schmiedel's 'Pillar Passages,'" ²⁰ a work meant to answer the most extreme claims of Schmiedel in his 1901 entry in *Encyclopedia Biblica*.²¹ Warfield began by grouping Schmiedel with Reimarus and Wrede in "the quest for the Historical Jesus."²² Warfield criticized Schmiedel's desire for scholars to return to the "pre-Tübingen position of criticism" that did not appeal to source criticism. Interestingly, Warfield advocated the opposite approach, noting that F.C. Baur had "laid down the reasonable rule" that criticism of the sources must come before criticism of the gospels.²³ Warfield faulted Schmiedel for wanting to regress to the approach of Strauss with its "unreasoned scepticism."²⁴ Schmiedel sought to recover the Jesus obscured by legend and faith, and his method for doing so was particularly bothersome to Warfield. Schmiedel argued that he could find the authentic Jesus by comparing those places in the gospels where one evangelist changed details provided by others in order to enhance the view of Jesus. Schmiedel was able to find nine of these passages and termed them "pillars" because they were the foundation of the true reconstruction of the historical Jesus.²⁵ Warfield argued that Schmiedel erred in his admission, on the one hand, of a common source behind the synoptics, and on the other, his lack of acknowledgement that the common source, Mark, was composed at a time very close to the events described.²⁶ Likewise, Schmiedel failed to appreciate the even earlier

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ "Concerning Schmiedel's 'Pillar-Passages,'" *The Princeton Theological Review* 11 (1913) 195–269.

²¹ P. W. Schmiedel, "Gospels," in *Encyclopedia Biblica* (London, 1901) columns 1765-1896.

²² Warfield, "Concerning," 195.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 197.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 203-204.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 240.

construction of the *logia*. Warfield criticised Schmiedel for failing to look beyond Matthew and Luke to these sources:

If we are to break up the Gospels into their sources and appeal rather to these sources than to the Gospels... we do not lose but profit by the process. Instead of three witnesses of about the seventh decade of the century we have now in view quite a number of witnesses, all earlier than the seventh decade of the century, some of them perhaps very much earlier.²⁷

Thus, Warfield used the 2SH to counter the radical scepticism inherent in much of the search for the Jesus of history.

Finally, it is appropriate to consider one further article in which Warfield briefly mentioned the SP.²⁸ In 1914, a year after he urged biblical critics to look at the older sources behind the synoptics, in a footnote Warfield criticized Theodor Keim's²⁹ assumption of Matthean priority and added:

And in general no form of criticism is more uncertain than that now so diligently prosecuted which seeks to explain the several forms of narratives in the Synoptics as modifications one of another.³⁰

This single quote would later be used multiple times by Robert Thomas, evangelical opponent of redaction criticism to show Warfield's rejection of the method.³¹ While it is obvious that Warfield did not refrain from applying source critical methods to the

²⁷ *Ibid.* Later, Warfield suggested the sources predated Matthew and Luke by as much as twenty years. See page 242.

²⁸ Warfield, "Jesus' Alleged Confession of Sin," *The Princeton Theological Review*, 12 (April 1914) 177-228.

²⁹ *The History of Jesus of Nazara*, Vol. V (1876) 37.

³⁰ Warfield, "Jesus Alleged," 196 note 34.

³¹ Robert Thomas and David Farnell, eds, *The Jesus Crisis* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998). The Warfield quote appeared three times, all by Thomas, (14, 24, 358). Thomas also used the Warfield quote in several other publications: Robert L. Thomas, ed., *The Master's Perspective on Contemporary Issues* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998) 221; "Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View," *JETS* 43/1 (March 2000) 98; and *Evangelical Hermeneutics: The New Versus the Old* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002) 301. Thomas' views are considered below in Chapter VII, G2.

gospels, he appeared to be wary of source criticism that focused on the editorial activities of the evangelists. Warfield was followed by his Princeton colleague Geerhardus Vos in using the 2SH to defend the gospels against the ‘Quest for the Historical Jesus’ just a few years later.

2. Geerhardus Vos: Using the 2SH against Bousset

While not attaining the high profile that Warfield enjoyed at Princeton, Professor Geerhardus Vos was perhaps just as influential in Reformed Biblical Theology. Vos was born in the Netherlands to a German family, and he moved with the family to Grand Rapids, Michigan for his father to accept a position as pastor of a Reformed Church in 1881. Vos was fluent in Dutch, German, and English, allowing him to move freely between the Reformed institutions of America and Germany. He began his theological studies first at the Theological School of the Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, then moving to Princeton, and on to Germany where he studied at Berlin and Strassburg, ultimately receiving a PhD in Semitics in 1888. From Germany, he returned to the Theological School as professor for five years, finally returning to Princeton as the chair of biblical theology. He retired from Princeton in 1932 after 39 years and several publications.³² During his time at the Theological School he was a major influence on Louis Berkhof, who is considered later in this chapter.³³

It would appear that the only publication in which Vos addressed the SP was a lengthy article he composed for *The Princeton Theological Review* in 1915. Like Warfield a decade before, Vos used his pen to combat the influence of sceptical gospel criticism, but his target was the work of William Bousset, who had the year before published his puissant *Kyrios Christos*. As Bousset had used the 2SH to argue

³² James T. Dennison, “Geerhardus Vos: Life in Two Worlds,” *Kerux* 14/2 (Sep 1999) 18-31.

³³ David G. Wells, ed., *Reformed Theology in America: A History of Its Modern Development* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985) 156.

that the doctrine of Jesus' lordship was a late first-century development, Vos used the 2SH to argue exactly the opposite. At Strassburg, Vos had been a student of Holtzmann, who first exposed him to the 2SH,³⁴ but it was Harnack's reconstruction of Q³⁵ which Vos used to refute Bousset.

Vos' article, entitled "The Continuity of the *Kyrios* Title in the New Testament,"³⁶ was designed to show that the lordship of Jesus had been proclaimed from the earliest NT times. Bousset had observed that the objective title *Kyrios* was only applied to Jesus once in Mark and nowhere in the *logia*, and in the vocative form appeared once in each source. To Wrede, the paucity of the occurrences of the title "Lord" in the earliest gospel tradition compared to its frequent use in Matthean and Lukan non-*logia* contexts implied that the title applied to Jesus was the development of a later tradition.³⁷ Using evidence from the proposed *logia*, Vos attempted to disprove Bousset's conclusions. First, Vos disagreed with Bousset's definition of "titular" form of *Kyrios*, which Bousset did not find in the *logia*, because Bousset did missed several titular occurrences of the word. Vos' example was Mt 24:43-51 = Luke 12:39-46, where *Kyrios* was used in parabolic form, but clearly implied a "corresponding relationship between Jesus and the disciple."³⁸ He also cited Mt 10:24-25, where *Kyrios* was similarly used in a parable, and where Harnack had concluded that *Kyrios* was original to the *logia*.³⁹ Moving to the vocative form *Kyrie*, Vos argued that Bousset's claim, that the double *Kyrie*, *Kyrie* in Luke 6:46 was evidence of a later cultic use, was invalidated if the Lukan passage be admitted as

³⁴ James T. Dennison, *The Letters of Geerhardus Vos* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006) 24.

³⁵ Adolf Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus: The Second Source of St. Matthew and St. Luke*, J. Wilkinson, trans. (London, 1908).

³⁶ *Princeton Theological Review* 13 (April 1915) 161-189.

³⁷ Vos, 164-165.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 167.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 168-169.

coming from the *logia*.⁴⁰ Vos then further developed his argument by offering a discussion of the *logia*. Because the document consisted primarily of a list of sayings by Jesus, there would be little occasion within it to include appeals to Jesus as *Kyrie* or *Kyrios*. Given its nature, the more conclusive proof from the *logia* should come from the parabolic forms where Jesus indirectly taught about himself.⁴¹

Again, using the 2SH as a buttress for his arguments, Vos moved to the other source document, Mark. In Mk 2:28, the Son of Man is called *Kyrios* of the Sabbath, an instance where Bousset too easily dismissed the notion that any kind of sovereignty was meant.⁴² Bousset came to the same false conclusion with regard to Mk 12:35-37 by refusing to allow that the messiah could be both *Kyrios* and son of David, the very point that Jesus was trying to make.⁴³ The one occurrence of *Kyrios* in Mark which Bousset considered a proper title, Mk 11:3, he still incorrectly minimized because of his negative presuppositions concerning “the supernatural in the consciousness of Jesus.”⁴⁴ Vos also saw a fallacy in Bousset’s acknowledgement that the Syro-Phoenician woman (Mk 7:28) referred to Jesus as *Kyrie* but rejected the occurrence as evidence for the early use of the title in Palestine because the woman was a foreigner. In fact, Vos argued, Mark’s inclusion of the title was evidence of her great faith, offering her as an example to the Palestinians of the time.⁴⁵ From that point, Vos argued that if it be admitted that Bousset’s disqualification of the many occurrences of *Kyrios* and *Kyrie* was faulty, then Bousset’s argument was rendered unnecessary. Regardless of how many times Matthew and Luke used the title outside of the *logia* source, the fact that the title was in their sources proved that the

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 169-171. Also, considering Mt 8:8 = Lk 7:6, Vos argued, citing Harnack, that Bousset’s failure to include this occurrence of the vocative *Kyrie* in the *logia* was a mistake.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 174.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 176.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 180-181.

development of the title *Kyrios* as applied to Jesus was not strictly a later development.⁴⁶

Vos' article seemed to portend a change among evangelical advocates of the 2SH in arguments against its more radical proponents. Evangelical scholars came to be comfortable with the notion of *logia*, or Q, because they considered it to reflect a view of Jesus in line with their convictions. Thus, both Vos and Warfield, two leaders of the "Old Princeton School," with its commitment to the inerrancy of the bible, incorporated the 2SH for their evangelical purposes. This idea was taken even further a few years later by the evangelical scholar A.T. Robertson, who is considered later in this chapter.

B. Theodor Zahn (1838-1933):

Against the Scholarly Tide in Germany

Theodor Zahn was born in Rhineland, Prussia and attended universities in Basel, Erlangen and Berlin. After a brief time as a preacher and teacher, he lectured at Göttingen for twelve years (1865-1877). In 1878, he became professor at Erlangen, where he stayed until his retirement in 1909, except for a stint at Leipzig (1888-1892). The Erlangen school was known for its more conservative influence, as compared to Tübingen, and Zahn was renowned for his orthodox Lutheran faith and scholarship. Contra F.C. Bauer, Zahn argued for the traditional authorship of all of the Pauline epistles and, contra Harnack, he considered the gospels to be trustworthy sources for the life of Jesus.⁴⁷ Much of his work stood in opposition to the German biblical scholarship of his time, and for a generation of evangelicals Zahn was the source to turn to for conservative biblical criticism.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 185-189.

⁴⁷ See Donald K. McKim, *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters* (Downer's Grove, IL: IVP, 2007) 1073.

⁴⁸ McKim, 1072-1073. See also Baird, 367-368.

Zahn published widely in the areas of patristics, NT canon, and NT Introduction. It was in his *Einleitung in das neue Testament*⁴⁹ that he addressed the SP, and his unique solution deserves attention here. Zahn revised *Einleitung* several times, with his third edition being translated into English in 1909.⁵⁰ For this reason, and because the German volumes were not complete until 1900, Zahn's work on the SP is considered in the 1900-1949 chapter.

Before offering his solution, Zahn offered perhaps the most extensive "History of the Synoptic Problem"⁵¹ that had been printed by the early twentieth century. He traced the development of the problem back to the earliest efforts to create gospel harmonies, by Tatian in the second century, Ammonius in the third, and then Augustine around 400 CE. Zahn noted that Augustine was the first to propose that one evangelist was dependent on the work of another with his proposal that "Mark was consciously dependant upon Matthew" in the form of repetition and abbreviation.⁵² According to Zahn, Augustine's solution was neglected up through the Middle Ages and the first centuries of the Reformation, until the middle of the eighteenth century. Apparently unaware of the work of his Lutheran predecessor Chemnitz,⁵³ Zahn began his description of modern solutions to the SP with Lessing's notion of an *Ur-gospel*, an idea which Eichhorn adapted.⁵⁴ Zahn mentioned the contributions of Griesbach and the Markan priorists Storr, Herder, Wilke, Bauer and Volkmar.⁵⁵ Zahn next described Hug's expansion of the Augustinian Hypothesis, and after that the 'Oral Hypothesis' of Gieseler.⁵⁶ He concluded his overview of the

⁴⁹ *Einleitung in das neue Testament*, 2 vols (Leipzig, 1897-1900).

⁵⁰ Theodor Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament*, trans. John Moore Trout, et al. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909). All quotations from this edition.

⁵¹ Vol 2, 400-427.

⁵² Zahn, *Introduction*, vol 2, 402.

⁵³ See Chapter I, B above.

⁵⁴ Zahn, *Introduction*, vol 2, 403-405.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 405-408.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 408-410.

history of the SP by discussing various forms of the 2SH proposed by the likes of H. Weisse, Holtzmann and B. Weiss. Ultimately, Zahn reckoned that not one proposed hypothesis has been “generally accepted” and that “gaps” could be found in all. Moreover, Zahn doubted that any “new display of cleverness” would provide ultimate resolution to the problem. Zahn had a negative opinion of the practice using side-by-side comparisons of the synoptics, though he noted that Calvin himself began such a process, because it tended to “confuse and bewilder” students undertaking their first investigations.⁵⁷

Zahn’s negative view of the history of the SP did not mean, however, that he refrained from offering his own solution. Instead of arguing for his hypothesis point by point, he described it in his sections on Mark, Matthew and Luke, respectively. Zahn’s commitment to patristic tradition and his critical skills combined in his explanation of the origins of the gospels. As was traditionally believed, Mark received the content of his information from Peter’s preaching.⁵⁸ Though Mark was of Palestinian background, as seen in his familiarity with local details, his gospel contained many Latinisms, reflecting his association with Peter in Rome.⁵⁹ The apostle Matthew wrote his gospel first in Aramaic, and Mark used the Aramaic Matthew to aid in composing his Greek gospel.⁶⁰ Zahn refused to disregard the tradition of Matthean priority, but the verbatim agreements in the synoptics compelled him to believe that there was a literary relationship between Matthew and Mark. Oral tradition could not explain the frequent coincidences and the appeal to a lost document of unknown origin was “arbitrary” and “unscientific.”⁶¹ Zahn refused to

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 420.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 432.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 488-489.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 601-602.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 603-604.

equate the proposed document Q with the *logia* described by Papias,⁶² offering the insight that *logia* could hardly have meant an Aramaic document with a Greek title, especially one that was never mentioned in any other church writings.⁶³ Zahn argued that later, when an unknown translator sought to render Aramaic Matthew into Greek, he used Mark as a guide, thus explaining the strong verbal similarities.⁶⁴ Luke had Mark's gospel in hand when he wrote, also evidenced by the verbal agreements.⁶⁵ The major differences between Matthew and Luke reflect the fact that Luke did not copy Greek Matthew, and the similarities between the two are the product of oral tradition.⁶⁶

Zahn's solution to the SP did not sway many, but it is worth noting that later critics such as Jameson,⁶⁷ Torrey,⁶⁸ Chapman,⁶⁹ and Butler⁷⁰ followed a similar line of explanation, though with the simpler explanation that Greek Matthew, based on Aramaic Matthew, was the source for Mark and Luke. The fact that Zahn practically deemed the SP insoluble was noted by his dear American friend A.T. Robertson (see below),⁷¹ though Robertson was not nearly as pessimistic.⁷²

C. Louis Berkhof (1873–1957): Bridging European and American

Evangelicalism

Louis Berkhof was born in the Netherlands in 1873, but immigrated to the United States with his family when he was 8 years old. The Berkhofs were faithful

⁶² According to Linnemann, Zahn was the first to argue against equating Q with the *logia*. Eta Linnemann, "The Lost Gospel Of Q—Fact Or Fantasy?" *Trinity Journal* 17:1 (Spring 1996) 3–18, at p.6.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 509-510.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 573-580.

⁶⁵ Zahn, *Introduction*, vol 3, 103.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 106-112.

⁶⁷ H.G. Jameson, *The Origin of the Synoptic Gospels* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1922) 23-24.

⁶⁸ C.C. Torrey, *Our Translated Gospels* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936).

⁶⁹ John Chapman, *Matthew, Mark and Luke* (London: Longman's, 1937) 181-214.

⁷⁰ B. C. Butler, *The Originality of St Matthew* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1951) 147-156.

⁷¹ For the friendship between Zahn and Robertson, see Everett Gill, *A.T. Robertson: A Biography* (New York: Macmillan, 1943) 70, 208. As noted by Larsen, *Company*, 760.

⁷² A.T. Robertson, *Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew* (New York: Macmillan, 1911) 8, which could be seen as a disclaimer to Zahn's entire solution.

members of the Alpine Avenue Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where they settled. In 1893, Louis entered the Theological School of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) in Grand Rapids, and after completing his studies there, he briefly served as pastor for the First CRC in the Grand Rapids area. From there he went to Princeton from 1902-1904 and received a BD degree. He pastored the Oakdale Park CRC in Grand Rapids from 1904-1906 and then took a position as exegetical professor at Calvin College (formerly Theological School of the CRC), his *alma mater*. He remained at Calvin for the remainder of his career, retiring in 1944 after having filled several professorial roles and ultimately Seminary President.⁷³

Berkhof published widely on many subjects, but is best known for his works on Systematic Theology – *Reformed Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1932; revised 1938 with the title *Systematic Theology*); *Introductory Volume to Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1932); and *Manual of Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939). Unsurprisingly, Berkhof did not address the SP in any of these works.

It was only in an earlier work, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1915) that Berkhof expressed his views regarding the SP. In the preface, he stated that he composed *Introduction* for use in his classroom with the twin goals of recognizing both the divine and the human elements of the scriptures. Before dealing with the gospels individually, he included a section on the SP. He began by providing Andrews Norton's⁷⁴ comparative data from of the synoptics, which demonstrated the remarkable agreements in outline, content and wording.⁷⁵ Berkhof then described four different forms of hypotheses which had been proposed to explain the data. He labelled the first the "mutual dependence theory" and

⁷³ Henry Zwaansstra, "Louis Berkhof," in Wells, ed. *Reformed Theology*, 153-155.

⁷⁴ Norton, *Genuineness of the Gospels*, 373. For more on Norton, see above Chapter V, J.

⁷⁵ Berkhof, 16-17.

attributed solutions of this form to Augustine, Bengel, Bleek, and Storr (without citing their works) because they supposed that each evangelist knew and made use of the work of his predecessors. Berkhof mentioned that solutions of this type “contain an element of truth” but did not “meet with great favour at present,” because of their weaknesses in explaining divergences and changes from one gospel to the next.⁷⁶

The second theory proposed to solve the SP was the “Oral Tradition Hypothesis,” which Berkhof attributed to Gieseler, Westcott, and Wright. This hypothesis worked on the assumption of a “stereotyped tradition” which emanated from the teaching of the apostles, containing important events and often the very words of Jesus. He noted that, though the Oral Tradition Hypothesis had a few “ardent defenders” during his time, it had been abandoned by the majority of scholars because it failed to adequately explain how Jesus’ original Aramaic teaching resulted in so many verbal coincidences in the Greek text.⁷⁷

Berkhof called the third form the “One Primitive Gospel” hypothesis, citing Lessing and Eichhorn as advocates. Lessing had proposed an Aramaic document, containing a short account of Jesus’ life, for use by missionaries, and Eichhorn expanded on the idea by proposing that this primitive gospel had been translated into Greek and heavily redacted with many recensions. This solution was also unpopular “in scientific circles” of Berkhof’s time, he explained, because there was no trace of any such primitive gospel in history, nor could the arbitrary alteration of it into the canonical forms be explained. Berkhof voiced his own disapproval of this solution more than the previous two by calling it “too artificial and too complicated” to provide a “natural solution” to the SP.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

The fourth form Berkhof mentioned was the 2SH, with Weisse, Wilke, Holtzmann, and Wendt as advocates. The two common sources of Matthew and Luke were, of course, Mark and Q (perhaps the *logia* of Papias). Berkhof explained that, even with those two sources, Matthew and Luke would still have had to make use of other “inferior sources.” Though the 2SH reflected the majority opinion of scholars, Berkhof also had strong reservations with it. It assumed a large body of gospel literature in existence before the canonical gospels, which, according to Berkhof, caused its advocates to date the writing of the gospels too late. Moreover, the 2SH required that Mark was among the many attempted gospels mentioned in Luke’s preface, works which Luke intended to supersede.⁷⁹

Ultimately, Berkhof concluded that no hypothesis provided thus far was satisfactory. He estimated that, in the previous fifty years, no progress had been made toward reaching a final solution and that, to the fault of most scholars, few bothered to take into account “the supernatural factor”⁸⁰ involved in the composition of the gospels.⁸¹ Without offering in detail his own solution to the SP, Berkhof described what he reasoned to be a viable explanation of the similarities and differences in the synoptics. First, the primary cause of the similarities was the common oral tradition that informed the evangelists. From the outset, the apostolic message was prized by the early church, so a Petrine oral tradition became “common property” of the earliest preachers, who “aimed at inculcating the teachings of our Lord on their hearers in the exact form in which He gave it.”⁸² Second, because of the uncertainty accompanying oral transmission over a period of time, “brief gospel narratives,” which contained mostly discourses and sayings in Aramaic or Greek, were composed at an early time.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

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⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 20.

These two phenomena can explain most of the similarities, opined Berkhof, and those which they could not explain were attributed to the Holy Spirit, “who also led writers in their choice of words.” The slight variations in the words of Jesus reported by the evangelists were the result of Jesus having delivered similar discourses at different times, or because the Spirit gave a form “better adapted to their purpose than the original would have been.”⁸³ Thus Berkhof was an advocate of the IH, though he left open the possibility of a common document(s) among the synoptic evangelists.

Because *Introduction* was intended as a basic guide to the NT, Berkhof did not have the intention or space required to address the SP in fuller detail. From his many publications over his career, it does not appear that he dealt with the SP in writing again, though as a professor in NT he almost certainly would have addressed it with his students. While the influence of Louis Berkhof on evangelical thought, particularly Calvinist thought in America, should not be underestimated,⁸⁴ he had no discernible influence in shaping opinion concerning the SP.

D. A T. Robertson (1863-1934):

Evangelicalism’s Strongest Advocate for the 2SH

Archibald Thomas Robertson was born in Virginia and raised in North Carolina, where he later attended Wake Forest University, before moving to Louisville, Kentucky to attend the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS). After receiving the Th.M. in 1888, he remained at SBTS, working first as a teaching assistant, and then as a professor from 1892 until his death.⁸⁵ The volume of Robertson’s writing is phenomenal. He is perhaps best known for his Greek grammars – *A Short Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: George H. Doran,

⁸³ *Ibid.* This was apparently the “supernatural factor” which he felt should also be included in discussions of the SP.

⁸⁴ See Zwaanstra, 155.

⁸⁵ Baird, 412-414.

1908) and *Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919) – and his *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, 6 vols (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1930–33).

More than any evangelical scholar before 1950, Robertson was an optimistic and wholehearted advocate of the 2SH, confident in the ability of the hypothesis to solve the SP and provide a clearer picture of Jesus. It appears that somewhere between 1905 and 1909 he adopted the 2SH. In 1905, Robertson was one of four NT professors from various theological institutions interviewed by *The Biblical World* and asked questions relating to NT matters. One question was, “What is your theory of the relation of the synoptic gospels to one another?” Robertson replied, “The oral, documentary, and mutual dependence theories all have an element of truth in them, though neither by itself can explain all the phenomena.”⁸⁶ However, over the next four years his tone toward the several solutions changed.

Though he had hinted at his newfound confidence in the 2SH as early as 1909,⁸⁷ Robertson made his full endorsement of the 2SH known in 1911 with statements in his *Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew*.⁸⁸ He repeated his endorsement that same year in *John, the Loyal: Studies in the Ministry of the Baptist*.⁸⁹ In 1915, Robertson appealed to evidence from Q that the animosity between the Pharisees and Jesus was documented in the “earliest strata of the Gospel narratives.”⁹⁰ In his *Luke the Historian In Light of Research*,⁹¹ Robertson again advocated the 2SH, claiming that it had been “practically demonstrated” that Mark was used by Matthew and Luke, and that the “oral theory” was insufficient.⁹²

⁸⁶ “An Interview with New Testament Scholars: W. F. Adeney, D. A. Hayes, A. T. Robertson and Frank C. Porter,” *The Biblical World*, Vol 26, No 3 (Sep 1905), 195-201, at pp. 199-200.

⁸⁷ Robertson, *Epochs in the Life of Paul: Study of Development in Paul’s Career* (New York, 1909) 87.

⁸⁸ (New York: Macmillan, 1911) 11-22.

⁸⁹ (New York, 1911) 61.

⁹⁰ Robertson, *The Pharisees and Jesus: The Stone Lectures for 1915-16* (New York, 1920) 62.

⁹¹ (New York, 1920) 61-72.

⁹² Robertson, *Luke the Historian*, 66.

Likewise, he was confident that Matthew and Luke had used a common Q document because of the existence of collections of sayings of Jesus at the time, a fact confirmed by the scraps of *logia* found at Oxyrhynchus.⁹³ Robertson believed that Mark was written after Q, and perhaps the evangelist Mark had made use of the document.⁹⁴ In 1922, in *A Harmony of the Four Gospels* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1922), Robertson extolled the 2SH as a product of biblical criticism “that is likely to stand the test of time” and further, that the theory “seems to be proven.” He opined that it was “plain as a pikestaff” that Matthew and Luke used Mark’s contents and order, and recommended the works of Sanday, Hawkins and Harnack on Q.⁹⁵

It was in a work from 1924 that Robertson used the 2SH to argue for the trustworthiness of the gospels in *The Christ of the Logia* (New York, 1924). The book was a compilation of articles Robertson had contributed to various periodicals, with the title coming from the first essay. Robertson rejected the cleft supposed by critics between the portraits of Jesus in the Synoptics, John, and Paul’s writings. The problem with those who sought “the historical Jesus” was that they failed to face the facts demonstrated in the gospels. However, a critic’s “real attitude” toward Jesus was irrelevant, because the correct approach involved “rigid scientific research into facts.”⁹⁶ Robertson boldly stated that the 2SH was “one certain result of Synoptic criticism.”⁹⁷ Of the two sources used by Matthew and Luke, Q was earliest, perhaps composed in Jesus’ lifetime.⁹⁸ Therefore, if a scholar desired to find the earliest and simplest Jesus material, the correct place to look was Q.⁹⁹ The critic must remember that the full extent of Q can never be known, and the portion present in the synoptics

⁹³ For more on the Oxyrhynchus and Q, see similar comments by Scroggie in the next section.

⁹⁴ Robertson, *Luke the Historian*, 70.

⁹⁵ Robertson, *Harmony*, 255-256.

⁹⁶ Robertson, *The Christ*, 17.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

is merely “a torso.”¹⁰⁰ Robertson validated the deduction made by B.F. Streeter,¹⁰¹ who concluded that, since about two-thirds of Mark is common to Matthew and Luke, it may be assumed that Matthew and Luke reproduce about two-thirds of Q.¹⁰² Even with only a portion of Q’s contents available, Robertson was sure that the character of Jesus was not diminished in the remainder. Much like Vos had done, Robertson used Harnack’s delineation of Q as his basis to prove the supernatural portrait present in the earliest source.¹⁰³ However, instead of using Harnack to combat Bousset, Robertson used Harnack to refute Harnack.

Robertson considered it obvious, from Harnack’s section on the temptations, that Jesus was called “the Son of God” by Satan, an occurrence which Harnack himself felt referred back to the voice from heaven at Jesus’ baptism.¹⁰⁴ Harnack also admitted several other instances of the “Son of Man” terminology into his Q.¹⁰⁵ Robertson argued that if Jesus was called the Son of God and the Son of Man in Q, it was clear he was called Messiah as well. Harnack’s Q contained important indications of Jesus’ messiahship – the mention that in prison John heard of the “works of Christ,” messianic phraseology of Jesus as “the coming one,” Jesus’ power to give his disciples power to judge Israel, the appeal of “Lord, Lord” to Jesus (language used in the LXX for God) – though Harnack tried to remove the theological and supernatural elements from Jesus’ self-consciousness.¹⁰⁶ To Robertson, however, the data in Q would not allow a merely human Jesus. He argued, “The facts in Q are

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁰¹ B.H. Streeter, “The Original Extent of Q,” in William Sanday, ed. *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem* (Oxford, 1911) 185-208.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁰³ Adolf Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London, 1908).

¹⁰⁴ Robertson, *The Christ*, 29-30.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

open and simple and beyond reasonable dispute,”¹⁰⁷ and though the search for the historical Jesus was “laudable,” it had not “gotten rid of the theological Christ.”¹⁰⁸

Robertson moved next to the other common source of Matthew and Luke, Mark’s gospel, which offered a similar portrayal of Jesus as Q. Mark gave clear indications of Christ’s divine nature in two accounts which were picked up by Matthew and Luke. The first, in Mk 2:7-10, demonstrated the divine power to forgive sins. The second account, Mk 9:7, recounted the voice from heaven after the Transfiguration which called Jesus “son of God.”¹⁰⁹ Even in the more cryptic portions at the end of the gospel, Mark’s mention of the centurion who called Jesus “son of God,” as well as the empty tomb of Mark’s shorter ending (16:1-8), must have implied that Jesus displayed remarkable characteristics.¹¹⁰

After his brief chapter on Mark, Robertson appealed to the 2SH once more, in the beginning of his chapter on Matthew, where he detailed his understanding of the chronology of the synoptics. First, the apostle Matthew composed the *logia* in Aramaic, followed by Mark’s gospel which was written under the guidance of Peter. Robertson did not clarify whether he placed Luke or Matthew third. He admitted that the author of the Greek Matthew was unknown, but posited that it was reasonable to reckon the apostle Matthew took up his *logia* and Peter’s (Mark’s) gospel and “blended” them into the canonical gospel of Matthew.¹¹¹

While Robertson used argumentation similar to Stalker, Warfield and Vos (see above), his unqualified acceptance of the 2SH as “a certain result” of biblical criticism meant that the ultimate strength of his approach rested upon the validity of his assumption. Because he knew that most of the sceptical critics involved in the search

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 48-49.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 52-53.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 54-55.

for the Jesus of history accepted the 2SH, his confidence in the certainty of his solution to the SP was not a liability. However, Robertson's fulsome endorsement of the 2SH was a surprise to some evangelicals. In 1938, R.C. Foster, of Cincinnati Bible College, wondered how a "scholar with the conservative reputation of A.T. Robertson" could adopt the "radical Two-Source Theory."¹¹² Likewise, in 1958 Merrill C. Tenney remarked with surprise that "even such conservative writers as A.T. Robertson and W. Graham Scroggie in Britain have espoused the Two-document theory."¹¹³ Scroggie's work is considered below.

E. W. Graham Scroggie (1877-1958): The British Preacher for the 2SH

W. Graham Scroggie was born in Great Malvern into a devoted Baptist family. He attended C.H. Spurgeon's Pastor's College, and immediately began a career in ministry, first at various churches in England, and then at Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh for several years (1916-1933). In 1927, Scroggie received the DD from the University of Edinburgh, and in 1938 he became pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle (popularly called Spurgeon's Tabernacle) where he helped lead the church through WWII. He retired from the Tabernacle in 1944, but he continued to lecture at the Pastor's College in London, and to travel and preach throughout the world. Scroggie was a featured speaker on several occasions at the annual Keswick Convention, a large gathering of evangelical Christians in Cumbria.¹¹⁴ In addition to his busy preaching schedule, Scroggie was a prolific writer, authoring *Scripture Union*, a daily bible study guide, as well as educational material for *The Sunday School Times*. He published over 20 books, including commentaries on all four

¹¹² R.C. Foster, *Studies in the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1938) 59.

¹¹³ Merrill C. Tenney, "Reversals of New Testament Criticism," in Carl F.H. Henry, ed., *Revelation and the Bible: Contemporary Evangelical Thought* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958) 353-367, at p.355.

¹¹⁴ David. L. Larsen, *The Company of the Preachers*, Vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998) 710-711.

gospels and the massive 680-page *A Guide to the Gospels* (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1948).¹¹⁵ It was in *A Guide* that Scroggie offered his thorough consideration of the SP.

Scroggie did not propose to break new ground on the SP, but in *A Guide* he offered, from an evangelical perspective, a summary of what he considered to be the accepted opinion of most scholars. His statements on the SP came in four separate sections of book, first in the section entitled “The Synoptic Problem” and then in discussion of each synoptic gospel. Though his guide was written on the popular level, Scroggie was confident in stating, “[t]hat there is such a [synoptic] problem is a fact, and everyone who is interested in the Gospels should know something about it.”¹¹⁶ He encouraged his readers to avoid the two potential perils that accompany the SP, one being indifference to the gospels’ origins, and the other being allowing oneself to become overly occupied with it and losing appreciation for the gospels.¹¹⁷ As evidence that it was typical for the biblical authors to make use of earlier documents, he cited Paul’s inclusion of “snatches of song from an early Church hymn book” and summaries of written creedal statements (1 Cor 11:23-25; Eph 5:19, 14 (sic); Col 1:13-20; 1 Tim 3:16, 6:15-16).¹¹⁸ He quickly dismissed two alternatives to the hypothesis he intended to advocate. The “oral tradition hypothesis” was based on the idea of early “catechetical schools,” which Scroggie believed existed, but oral tradition could not completely solve the SP. He also described the “Mutual Use Hypothesis,” by which he meant a strict dependency hypothesis with no other written sources. He dismissed the six possible permutations of this hypothesis because it had few advocates.¹¹⁹ Scroggie then moved on to his preferred solution, the 2SH, and

¹¹⁵ Quotations are from the 1995 reprint (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1995).

¹¹⁶ Scroggie, *Guide*, 83.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

cautioned his readers that Q was “a theory and not a certainty.” He was more confident, however, in the priority of Mark.¹²⁰

While Scroggie was clearly acquainted with many works of critical scholarship on the SP, he mentioned that he had compared seven different authors on the contents of Q. These scholars were: Harnack, Holtzmann, Wellhausen, Wendt, Hawkins, Stanton, and Redlich.¹²¹ Curiously, Scroggie later listed the contents of Q according to Streeter,¹²² though he did not include Streeter in the initial seven scholars under consideration. Scroggie decided that, when four of the seven agreed on the verses found in Q, those verses could be considered part of the foundation for exploration into the contents of Q. From his comparison, Scroggie determined that four or more of the scholars agreed on a total of 237 verses in Luke. Scroggie compared a few of these Lukan pericopae with their Matthean counterparts to show the likelihood of a common source, invoking Papias’ mention of the *logia* as evidence of the existence of a Q-like document.¹²³ Scroggie offered further evidence that sayings documents were common in the early church by mentioning a fragment of papyrus from Oxyrhynchus with sayings very similar to those found in the Sermon on the Mount.¹²⁴ He was presumably referring to P.Oxy. 654 (which was still a relatively new discovery at the time), though those *logia* are now known to be quotations from the Gospel of Thomas.¹²⁵

Scroggie then provided a table with twenty-six parallel pericopae between Luke and Matthew, which he considered a “syllabus of Q.”¹²⁶ Although he had earlier cautioned his readers that Q was simply a theory, he did not refrain from confidently

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 87-89.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 89.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 92.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 92.

¹²⁵ Edwin Yamauchi, “Logia,” in Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia: K-P* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) 152-154, at p.153.

¹²⁶ Scroggie, *Guide*, 92-93.

endorsing it. After giving the syllabus, he encouraged his readers to write out the passages side by side and compare the results of these non-Markan parallels. He remarked that, though the texts were written by different men, at different times, at different places, and for different purposes, the conviction will not be escaped that these passages come from a common source, the lost document Q.¹²⁷

Aware of the sensitivities of his evangelical readership, Scroggie also dealt with the implications for inspiration such an explanation of gospel origins might have. He laid out what he considered to be an appropriate approach to framing a theory of inspiration. It was fatal, explained Scroggie, to form a theory of inspiration “and then attempt to explain the Scriptures in the light of it.”¹²⁸ The correct course would be to “let a doctrine of inspiration arise from the facts” drawn from the bible. He offered three “facts” that should inform one’s conception of inspiration: 1) The individuality (style, mode of expression, arrangement of material) of each evangelist is preserved; 2) The accounts reveal a “great variety of report,” with none necessarily giving “the exact words” throughout; 3) The evangelists did not receive supernatural information which they could obtain by their own investigations, as described in Luke’s preface.¹²⁹ However, it could be stated without equivocation, opined Scroggie, that the evangelists were guided by the Holy Spirit in the selection of material to fit their individual designs.¹³⁰

Concerning the order of the gospels, Mark was first because it was closest in form to the apostolic oral gospel.¹³¹ Q preceded Mark, and Mark may have made use of it, but his primary source of information was the apostle Peter in Rome.¹³²

Scroggie considered Luke’s gospel to have been written during Paul’s imprisonment

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 141.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 145.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 179.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 183.

in Caesarea (58-60 CE), thus Matthew's gospel, which came earlier, would receive a date in the middle fifties with a provenance of Jerusalem.¹³³ Matthew's sources were Q, "a Manual of Messianic Prophecy," Mark, oral tradition, various records now lost (Scroggie referenced Lk 1:1) and Matthew's own recollections.¹³⁴ Luke received his information from Q, Mark, Jesus' mother and "information derived from the court of Herod, Paul and his associates, and Philip of Caesarea."¹³⁵

Thus Scroggie outlined in brief his particular version of the 2SH, complete with extra sources beyond Q and Mark. Scroggie's contribution to the SP serves as a fitting end to this chapter on the first half of the twentieth century because it demonstrates the general confidence in the 2SH already shown by evangelicals, as well as the recognition that other evangelicals might disagree with such a theory. In the next chapter, the important contribution of British scholarship to the SP and its influence upon American scholars will be discussed.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 139.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 254.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 343.

VIII. EVANGELICALS AND THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM – 1950-PRESENT

As the Western world entered the second half of the twentieth century, English-speaking evangelicals on both sides of the Atlantic moved even more into the forefront of evangelical scholarship.¹ The flowering of evangelical scholarship in the UK was the result of movements begun earlier in the century. In the early 1900s, as the Student Christian Movement in Britain took a more liberal turn, separate specifically evangelical unions were formed at universities around the country, including Cambridge in 1910, Oxford in 1919, and Aberdeen, Belfast, Bristol, Cardiff, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Liverpool in the 1920s. The Oxford and Cambridge unions met in 1919 on the day of the annual Inter-Varsity rugby game, and continued to meet on that day annually. In 1928, as evangelical student unions from other universities also joined the annual meeting, the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions was formed, commonly called Inter-Varsity Fellowship (IVF).² The celebrated evangelical scholar F.F. Bruce later recounted how several leaders of IVF met in London in 1938 to form a plan of action to dispel the myth that “Evangelicals were afraid of scholarship.”³ With delays because of the war, this “Biblical Research Committee” (later Tyndale Fellowship) set about the process of promoting “sound Evangelical scholarship,” through summer schools, annual lectures, the annual Tyndale Lectures (begun in 1942), and the research centre at Tyndale House in Cambridge, which was founded in 1945. Among those responsible for the founding of Tyndale House were John Wenham, who is discussed below, and F.F.

¹ All was not lost for evangelicals on the continent, however. For example, in 1952, denominational leaders from several European countries met in Siegen, Germany and formed the *European Evangelical Alliance* to promote evangelical Christianity throughout Europe. See H. Krabbendam and D. Rubin, eds., *Religion in America: European and American Perspectives* (Amsterdam: Vereenigt Universiteit, 2004) 283.

² John G. Stackhouse, Jr., *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century: An Introduction to Its Character* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 91.

³ F.F. Bruce, “The Tyndale Fellowship For Biblical Research,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 19.1 (Jan 1947) 52-61, at pp. 42-43.

Bruce, who delivered the inaugural address of the Tyndale Lectures. Other important evangelical undertakings of the era in the UK were the Theological Students' Fellowship (1933), London Bible College (1943), and the *Tyndale House Bulletin* (1956; now *Tyndale Bulletin*). IVF began publishing in the mid-1940s under the name Inter-Varsity Press (IVP), using the name Tyndale Press for more academic titles in the beginning in the late 40s.⁴

British evangelicals were a few years ahead of Americans in their formation of associations and publishing houses aimed at strengthening non-denominational evangelical research, writing, and teaching. American evangelicalism saw tremendous growth in the WWII era and the period following. During the 1940s, the U.S. saw the creation of The National Association of Evangelicals in 1942, Youth for Christ in that same year, Fuller Theological Seminary (the first multi-denominational evangelical seminary in the country) in 1947, World Vision International in that same year, and the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) in 1949. The ETS was formed “to foster conservative Biblical scholarship by providing a medium for the oral exchange and written expression of thought and research in the general field of the theological disciplines as centred in the Scriptures.”⁵ The Constitution of the ETS specifically requires each member to annually sign in agreement with the Doctrinal Basis of the ETS, which states, “The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs. God is a Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each an uncreated person, one in essence, equal in power and glory.”⁶ Noll documents the strong British influence among American scholars,

⁴ See Noll, *Between*, 102.

⁵ *The Constitution of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS Constitution)*, Article II. [<http://www.etsjets.org/about/constitution>, accessed 13 March 2010].

⁶ *ETS Constitution*, Article III. This quotation is provided to detail the sole criteria members of the ETS must fulfill.

where, when the US spin-off InterVarsity Press of Chicago sought to publish its first major scholarly work in 1951, it commissioned F.F. Bruce for a commentary on Acts.⁷ Likewise, when the American publishing house Wm. B. Eerdmans (who also frequently partnered with British IVP)⁸ sought to publish a commentary series which represented the best in evangelical scholarship in their *New International Commentary of the New Testament*, they looked across the Atlantic for the majority of the volumes. Though they asked the American scholar Ned B. Stonehouse to serve as editor, Eerdmans secured six British authors to contribute to the series, with as many scholars from Holland (two) as America providing volumes.⁹ Further discussion of the British influence on American scholarship with regards to the SP is continued below in section F on I.H. Marshall.

Though the previous chapters in this thesis have attempted to document all (or very nearly all) of the early orthodox Protestant and evangelical discussions of the SP in print during their time periods, such an approach would be impossible for the years after 1950 because of the popularity of the subject in evangelical circles. Therefore, this chapter will attempt to thoroughly investigate some of the most important evangelical contributions to the subject from 1950 on. The scholars considered herein, each with considerable lists of publications and contributions to evangelical biblical scholarship, will be considered in the order of their birth years.

A. Ned Bernard Stonehouse (1902-1962): Pioneer Redaction Critic

Ned. B. Stonehouse was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan into a Dutch-immigrant family. Much like Vos and Berkhof, who also shared Dutch heritage,

⁷ F.F. Bruce, *Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary* (Chicago: InterVarsity Press, 1951).

⁸ Including buying 22,000 of the first 30,000 copies of *The New Bible Commentary* from British IVP in 1953 to sell in the US.

⁹ Noll, *Between*, 102.

Stonehouse was able to negotiate the linguistic and cultural differences between America and the Netherlands, as seen in his diverse (yet thoroughly Reformed) education: Calvin College (A.B., 1924), Princeton Theological Seminary (Th.B., Th.M, 1927), Free University of Amsterdam (Ph.D., 1929). Stonehouse served on the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary from its founding in 1929 until his death, filling the role of chair of New Testament after his mentor, J. Gresham Machen, died in 1932.¹⁰

Stonehouse had a long history of publishing on the synoptics, with his earliest work appearing in 1944 in *The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ* (WMMC).¹¹ In *WMMC*, Stonehouse offered two observations that would later influence his developing ideas concerning the SP. First, he considered that most conservative treatments of the gospels too easily blended the accounts of all without appreciating the unique testimony of each so that they produced “a blurred vision of the precise features of [the evangelists’] testimony.”¹² He set out in *WMMC* to avoid this approach. Second, Stonehouse acknowledged that the gospels were not “isolated documents,” but stated from the outset that he sought to avoid “occupation with literary relationships.” He went so far as to mention that he was not totally convinced about the priority of Mark,¹³ but in *WMMC* made it clear that Matthew was best understood when compared with Mark,¹⁴ while he dealt with Mark in a more isolated fashion at the beginning of the book.¹⁵

¹⁰ Noll, *Between*, 107.

¹¹ (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Guardian, 1944). Though this monograph was published before 1950, the bulk of Stonehouse’s contributions to the SP came in the second half of the twentieth century. Thus, he is considered in that time period.

¹² *WMMC*, Preface xiv.

¹³ *Ibid.*, xv.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, See esp. 122ff.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Preface, xv. Mark was considered first, without Matthew, because Stonehouse considered it to be the “briefest” and “simplest of the gospels.”

In 1951, when Stonehouse published *The Witness of Luke to Christ (WLC)*,¹⁶ he made more explicit his desire to avoid simplistic harmonization of the differing synoptic accounts, as he implied conservatives were wont to do:

In particular it has seemed to me that Christians who are assured as to the unity of the witness of the Gospels should take greater pains to do justice to the diversity of expression of that witness. It is a thrilling experience to observe this unity, to be overwhelmed at the contemplation of the one Christ proclaimed by the four evangelists. But that experience is far richer and more satisfying if one has been absorbed and captured by each portrait in turn and has conscientiously been concerned with the minutest differentiating details as well as with the total impact of the evangelical witness.¹⁷

In 1957, Stonehouse became president of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS), and in his presidential address given at the annual ETS meeting, he discussed the importance of evangelical belief in the infallibility of the bible.¹⁸ In it, Stonehouse articulated his concern that the use of church tradition alongside the bible should be done carefully, with Scripture assuming the pre-eminent role and tradition a secondary role. His chosen example of the care which should be demonstrated by evangelical scholars was the subject of the SP:

We are confronted today with two extremes in dealing with the Synoptic Problem. On the one hand there is present an uncritical acceptance of the two-document theory even on the part of some

¹⁶ (London: Tyndale, 1951).

¹⁷ *WLC*, 6. See the similar statement by Alford (*Fireside Homilies*, 106), who was also keen to emphasize the differences in the gospels in order to enhance the faith of his readers.

¹⁸ The text of his speech became the inaugural article in the *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*. Ned B. Stonehouse, "The Infallibility of Scripture and Evangelical Progress," *BETS* 1 (Winter, 1958) 9-13. For more on the ETS and the SP, see Appendix A.

conservatives. This is in spite of the fact that this theory commonly conceives of the evangelists as mere editors, and indeed often as editors who more or less consciously distort or manipulate the contents of the gospel. On the other hand, there appears to be a tendency, because of these fundamental objections to the two document theory, to reject it as simply the product of unbelief. This would preclude in advance the possibility of recognizing that there may be component features of the theory that are of a different character from the estimate of the editors to which I have just referred, features which may be quite acceptable and indeed preferable to certain traditional views.¹⁹

Stonehouse argued that the tradition for the order in which the gospels were written is not “unitary” (with the Anti-Marcionite Prologue giving the order Matthew-Mark-Luke, and Clement claiming that the gospels with the genealogies came before Mark), so a decision on the order should not be based primarily on tradition.²⁰ Likewise, he contended that, while the claim of apostolic authorship of the gospels rests on a long and solid tradition, internal evidence in the gospels must be given priority and that no specific belief in gospel authorship should be elevated “to the status of an article of the Christian faith.”²¹ These arguments would receive a greater treatment in Stonehouse’s last publication.

It was not until 1963 that Stonehouse’s boldest statements vis-à-vis the SP were published posthumously in *Origins of the Synoptic Gospels: Some Basic Questions*.²² *Origins* was a compendium of essays Stonehouse had presented at the

¹⁹ “Infallibility,” 10.

²⁰ This echoes the same arguments made by Owen, *Observations*, 8 almost two centuries earlier. Stonehouse failed to address the fact that Matthean priority is a “unitary” tradition of the early church but rejected by most 2SH advocates.

²¹ “Infallibility,” 11.

²² (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1963).

Payton Lectures of Fuller Theological Seminary in March of 1962. In *Origins*, Stonehouse explicitly voiced opposition to those (unnamed) scholars whose approach to the synoptics was too “conservative and simple.” These commentators had been too quick to harmonize divergent accounts, or simply to deem those accounts as reporting different events. This method Stonehouse considered to be “fundamentally objectionable in principle.”²³

Stonehouse also devoted an entire lecture, which later became chapter three in *Origins*, to the subject of “The Question of Order and Interdependence.”²⁴ Having acknowledged scholars who held to what would later be dubbed the Farrer Hypothesis (who agreed with him on Markan priority but without appealing to Q),²⁵ Stonehouse was more interested in refuting arguments for Matthean priority. He took a twofold approach to dismantle support for the priority of Matthew. First, he challenged his Protestant (and by extension evangelical Protestant) peers to “adopt a less slavish attitude toward positions that have the support only of tradition,” which even a growing numbers of (unnamed) Catholic scholars were willing to do.²⁶ Second, he questioned whether the earliest tradition supported Matthean priority at all. Without a lengthy consideration, Stonehouse acknowledged the majority early testimony provided by Irenaeus that the traditional order was also the chronological one, but noted Tertullian’s order of Matthew, John, Mark and Luke, which was to be attributed

²³ *Origins*, 109.

²⁴ *Origins*, 48-77.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 51. Stonehouse mentioned J.H. Ropes, *The Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934); Morton S. Enslin, *Christian Beginnings* (New York: Harper, 1938); and A.M. Farrer, *A Study in Mark* (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1951); *St. Matthew and St. Mark* (Westminster: Dacre, 1954); “On Dispensing with Q” in ed. D. E. Nineham, *Studies in the Gospels* (Oxford, 1955).

²⁶ Stonehouse, *Origins*, 53-54. Perhaps Stonehouse was thinking of the 2GH proponent H. Pasquier, *La solution du problème synoptique* (Tours: Maisson. Alfred Mame et Fils, 1911), or perhaps from Stonehouse’ own era, A. Wickenhauser, *New Testament Introduction*, trans. J. Cunningham (New York: Herder & Herder, 1958) and J. Levie, “L’evangile arameen de saint Matthieu est-il la source de l’evangile de saint Marc?” *NRT* 76 (1954) 689-715, 812-43. The latter two are cited in J.A. Fitzmyer, *To Advance the Gospel: New Testament Studies* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 31 as examples of scholars who proposed modified 2SH theories that did not directly contradict the Catholic Commission of 1912.

to Tertullian's "dogmatic and polemical considerations." However, that same sequence of gospels could be found in Codex Bezae, indicating "traditions concerning order were not so fixed and authoritative as to command uniformity of judgment."²⁷ Stonehouse also considered the arguments of Butler and Chapman for the AH, but was unconvinced.²⁸

Instead, Stonehouse preferred Markan priority and Matthew's use of Mark based on "the agreements and differences in contents, words, and order of arrangement."²⁹ Stonehouse recognized that, once a particular synoptic theory had been adopted, then "the deeper issue of harmony and discrepancy" must be addressed, and his test case was the account of the Rich Young Ruler.

The Rich Young Ruler

Chapter five of *Origins*, "The Rich Young Ruler,"³⁰ was devoted to the divergent accounts in the triple tradition (Mk 10:17-27= Mt 19:16-26 = Lk18:18-27), and particularly Matthew's unique wording. Here, Stonehouse's dependence upon Markan priority and contempt for simplistic harmonization are most clearly seen, as well as Stonehouse's *protoredactional*³¹ handling of the text. The well-known synoptic puzzle in mind offers similar accounts of a young man's discussion with Jesus, though Matthew's framing of Jesus' question³² differs substantially from Mark's.³³ Stonehouse resisted any harmonistic approach which minimized the

²⁷ *Ibid.* He also mentioned Clement of Alexandria's statement that the gospels with the genealogies came first to demonstrate the competing order of the gospels in antiquity.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 73-76.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 76. Stonehouse's conclusions were heavily reliant upon the arguments of Streeter. See esp. 56-64.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 93-112

³¹ Noll, *Between*, 108, uses the term *protoredactional* to describe Stonehouse's concern to pay attention to each evangelist's theological motive when adapting a synoptic source. Likewise, see Moisés Silva, "Ned B. Stonehouse and Redaction Criticism, Part I: The Witness of the Synoptic Evangelists to Christ," *Westminster Theological Journal* 40 (1977) 281-303.

³² "Why do you ask me about what is good?" (Mt 19:17).

³³ "Why do you call me good?" (Mk 10:18). Mt also has the adjective "good" applied to the young man's question instead of his description of Jesus, as in Mk and Lk.

differences, but also was careful to reject notions that Matthew changed Mark's wording "on doctrinal grounds," i.e. that Matthew saw Mark's wording objectionable because it displayed a lower christology.³⁴ Stonehouse disagreed with the notion that Mark's account implied some admission by Jesus of his lack of goodness, or the possession of a goodness inferior to God's. Matthew's vocative "Teacher," instead of Mark's "Good Teacher," could just as easily be explained by the author's succinctness (without appeals to christology), with Matthew considering the adjective "expendable."³⁵ Instead, Matthew was more interested in moving directly to the subject of discipleship in the form of keeping the commandments and following Jesus. Further, opined Stonehouse, Matthew does not say anything that is not implicit in the Markan parallel, because in a biblical context obedience to God's commands is considered doing good.³⁶ Matthew's changes were acceptable because the evangelist "exercised a measure of freedom in his literary composition of the narrative."³⁷ Stonehouse went on to generalize the concept of the evangelists' editorial freedom with the following explanation:

What is involved rather is that the Holy Spirit guided the human authors in such a way as to insure that their records gave an accurate and trustworthy impression of the Lord's teachings.³⁸

³⁴ *Origins*, 94. This was also the opinion of Peter Head, *Christology and the Synoptic Problem: An argument for Markan Priority* (SNTSMS 94; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 55-57. Contra J.D.G. Dunn, *The Evidence for Jesus*, 20. See below, Chapter VIII, I.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 106-107.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 101.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 108. Stonehouse was clear that he was positing more than Matthew's freedom of arrangement, but even his liberty in "the precise language," because the evangelists were not obliged, "at least not at all times, to report the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus." Noll, *Between*, 108, states that Stonehouse's approach "broke with a long evangelical tradition that had regarded the evangelists' sayings as simply reports of facts largely unrelated to the authors' theological intentions." While generally true, it is an overstatement to refer to this as "a long evangelical tradition" considering, for example, the work of A.B. Bruce (see above, Chapter VI, C) as well as Scroggie's (*Guide*, 263-267; see above Chapter VII, E) arguments that Matthew's use of Mark reveals christological motives.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 109-110.

As Silva observed, it is remarkable that Stonehouse's views did not receive more attention in the evangelical world during his lifetime.³⁹ Silva's two-article⁴⁰ coverage of Stonehouse documented the pioneering work done by Stonehouse in the area of evangelical redaction criticism, and was, on balance, a favourable evaluation of Stonehouse's scholarship. Likewise, in 1979, the President of the ETS, Alan Johnson, praised Stonehouse's publications for anticipating redaction criticism "under a disciplined framework that reinforced his goal of strengthening confidence in the historical reliability of the gospels."⁴¹ In fact, it was not until three decades later that evangelical writers began to take exception with Stonehouse's descriptions of the evangelists' freedom in the use of their sources. In 1998, Robert Thomas used Stonehouse's work in *Origins* to argue against evangelical use of historical criticism in the monograph that he co-authored, *The Jesus Crisis*.⁴²

B. John W. Wenham (1912-1996): An Assault on the Synoptic Problem

John W. Wenham was born in Surrey, England in 1912. He received the BD from the University of London and the MA from Cambridge before he served as Curate, first at St Paul's, Hadley Wood in Hertfordshire and then St. Nicholas Church in Durham. In 1953, he was appointed Vice-Principal of Tyndale Hall, Bristol. Wenham also served as lecturer in Greek at Bristol University before becoming Warden of Latimer House in Oxford.⁴³ Latimer House, which in its earliest stage was called the Oxford Evangelical Research Trust, was founded by Wenham, James

³⁹ Moisés Silva, "Ned B. Stonehouse and Redaction Criticism, Part I: The Witness of the Synoptic Evangelists to Christ," *Westminster Theological Journal* 40 (1978) 77-88, at p.77.

⁴⁰ The second was Moisés Silva, "Ned B. Stonehouse and Redaction Criticism, Part Two: The Historicity of the Synoptic Tradition," *Westminster Theological Journal* 40 (1978) 281-303.

⁴¹ Alan F. Johnson, "The Historical-Critical Method: Egyptian Gold or Pagan Precipice" *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 3-15, at p.12.

⁴² Robert Thomas and F. David Farnell (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998). For example, see Thomas' remarks in *TJC*, 24, 75 note 2, 358-360. Thomas is considered later in this chapter.

⁴³ Biographical notes taken from J.W. Wenham, "Christ's View of Scripture," in Norman L. Geisler, *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980) 1.

Packer, John Stott, and Richard Coates to serve Anglican evangelical scholarship.⁴⁴ Timothy Dudley-Smith, John Stott's biographer, considers Wenham one of the "seminal minds of evangelical Anglicanism in his day."⁴⁵ The popular evangelical Anglican N.T. Wright recounted Wenham's influence upon his own career as an undergraduate in 1970, when Wenham publicly challenged young evangelicals to pursue dual academic and ministry paths. Wright stated, "I had been heading for parish ministry; from that day on I knew God was calling me to an academic, though still very much church-related, vocation."⁴⁶ Wenham was perhaps best known for his *Elements of New Testament Greek*,⁴⁷ which served as a standard textbook in many introductory courses for several years. Though Wenham had addressed the SP many times in his career,⁴⁸ his most significant contribution to the field of synoptic studies came in 1991 in his *Redating the Synoptic Gospels*, the monograph which will serve to inform this thesis.

Although dating the synoptic gospels was an important aim, the book's subtitle, *A Fresh Assault on the Synoptic Problem*, provides an apt description of Wenham's Herculean undertaking. Wenham's solution to the SP, which could be said to fit more than one of the above-mentioned theories (namely the AH and IH), was rooted heavily in the testimony of the early church. In chapter one, he described the "Intractable Problem" of whether the synoptics were the result of an oral or literary relationship, a problem which he sought to solve.

⁴⁴ Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: A Global Ministry, A Biography, The Later Years*. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001) 50. Wenham's role in founding Tyndale House is noted at the outset of this chapter.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 462 note 12.

⁴⁶ "My Pilgrimage in Theology," *Themelios*, 18.2 (Jan 1993) 35.

⁴⁷ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965).

⁴⁸ See, for example, *Christ and the Bible* (London: Tyndale Press, 1972); "Synoptic Independence and the Origin of Luke's Travel Narrative," *New Testament Studies* 27 (1980/81) 507-515; *Easter Enigma: Are the Resurrection Accounts in Conflict?* (Exeter, Devon, UK: Paternoster Press, 1984).

Wenham began his assault on the SP in chapter two. It might seem odd that Wenham's initial approach was devoted to showing that Luke knew Mark's gospel, but this important point served to provide the first plank in his lengthy argument for early dates of the gospels. Of course, Wenham was in this chapter arguing against the ideas of 2GH proponents, who consider Mark to have been dependent upon Luke and Matthew. However, instead of devoting considerable energy to showing Luke's dependence upon Mark, Wenham spent the bulk of the chapter arguing that much of Luke's gospel showed familiarity with Mark's gospel but a lack of literary borrowing. Therefore, Wenham was keen to notice the many differences between the parallel accounts. Of those pericopae which were most closely related (category 1), Wenham emphasized the at-times wholesale substitution of words and phrases which would be required if one evangelist were dependent upon the other. He explained:

So many of the huge number of changes seem pointless. Of course not every one of the five thousand changes would have involved a separate editorial decision, as groups of words would be considered together. But even so Luke would have had to make decisions to alter his text many hundreds of times.⁴⁹

Wenham wondered if Luke would not simply have preferred to copy word for word or to make minor changes with "a little polishing."⁵⁰ Wenham suggested that, of the pericopae in Mark and Luke which were related but without *prima facie* evidence of literary borrowing, the differences are so stark that the use of separate traditions best

⁴⁹ J. Wenham, *Redating*, 20.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 23-24. Of his many examples where Luke gave the same idea but with "pointless" changes, the accounts of the "synoptic apocalypse" (Mark 13 = Luke 21) provided some of his best evidence that literary dependence in either direction is hard to explain. Though the accounts are "complimentary without being contradictory," there are several additions and omissions, with Mark containing at least 6 sayings not found in Luke, and Luke having at least 7 not found in Mark. Interestingly, Wenham's son, David Wenham, investigated these passages in much greater detail and found evidence of a pre-synoptic apocalypse known to all three synoptic writers. See below, Chapter VIII, H.

explains the data. He pointed to passages such as the institution of the Lord's Supper (Mk 14:17-28 = Lk 22:14-23) with their "remarkable differences of order and content."⁵¹ Such phenomena were best explained not by literary dependence nor by catechistic memorization, but by the authors' independent interaction with similar traditions. In fact, the accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper in Mark and Luke are no more alike than the one found in 1 Cor 11:23-26, with Luke's wording closer to the tradition "followed perhaps in the Pauline churches."⁵² But how was Luke dependent upon Mark? Wenham explained that Luke borrowed heavily from Mark's outline, but did not have a scroll of Mark when he wrote. The fact that Wenham argued against Luke's literary dependence on Mark while claiming that Luke knew Mark's gospel shows the nuanced explanation Wenham offered. But why, one might ask, does it matter if Luke came after Mark if he did not rely on his predecessor? The answer lies in Wenham's method of dating the synoptics. If Luke were the latest of the synoptics, and a *terminus ad quem* could be established for it, then dating the others becomes much easier.

Wenham next turned to his explanation of Luke's relation to Matthew. Wenham argued against Luke's dependence upon Q or Matthew. Here, he leaned heavily upon what he called "the plain man's test" (contra Goulder), i.e. the stronger the verbal similarities the more probable a literary relationship exists, to show that Luke could not have relied upon Matthew.⁵³ Though Goulder's 'lectionary' explanation of how Luke could have used Matthew was clever, it was faulty.⁵⁴

Likewise, appeals to Q as a common source for Luke and Matthew were to be

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 32-34.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 39. W. Farmer, *Gospel*, 56 makes much the same argument.

⁵³ J. Wenham, *Redating*, 40. This argument depends heavily upon one's mental image of the 'plain man.' If by 'plain' Wenham meant 'average,' it is most likely that the average man who has read the synoptics and noticed the similarities did so without assuming any borrowing went on, whether Luke or Mark from Matthew. The average biblical critic, however, might disagree.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 50.

rejected. Again, as in his comparison of Luke to Mark, Wenham emphasized the many differences between the parallel passages in Luke and Matthew. First, he dealt with pericopae that were alike in wording and sense (therefore describing the same events), and insisted that the context of Jesus' sayings should determine whether the same events were actually being described. Wenham provided 10 examples of such parallel passages and one by one dismissed any potential literary relationship between them.⁵⁵ For example, the supposed strongest case for literary dependence could be made about the Beelzebul controversy (Mt 12:22-45 = Lk 11:14-32) because of sustained agreement in Jesus' sayings and in order. Wenham considered that, unless one assumed literary dependence already proven, this passage would fall short of proof itself. Even with the similarities, some *logia* were out of order (Mt 12:43-45 = Lk 24-26; Mt 12:41 = Lk 11:32), and Matthew used a completely different event (the Pharisees seeking a sign in 12:38) to break up Jesus' teaching than Luke (a woman cries out in 11:27). Thus, a literary relationship "is by no means obvious," and the similarity could as likely be explained as coming from different accounts of a single occasion, or accounts of different occasions entirely.⁵⁶ For those similar pericopae with a different sense, of which Wenham provided 9,⁵⁷ he appealed once more to the many differences in wording and especially order, a trait that Luke did not display with his use of Mark.⁵⁸ Indeed the changes required by Luke to Q, or Matthew to Q, or both, do not fit with the less significant differences both evangelists have compared to Mark.⁵⁹ Thus, a common Q was also rejected.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 55-66.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 65.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 67-79.

⁵⁸ See pages 68, 71, and 75.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 86.

Wenham's attention in chapter 4 turned to the relationship of Matthew to Mark. Though he still used parallel comparisons of the synoptics in Greek, it was in this section that Wenham began to appeal to outside sources to a greater extent for his explanation of a relationship. First, he quickly stated that the argument from order indicated a likely literary relationship between Mark and Matthew.⁶⁰ Next, he demonstrated, following Butler, where Streeter's heads of evidence in favour of Markan priority were tendentious.⁶¹ By this time, Wenham had established sufficient argument to move to Matthean priority, but with less side-by-side comparison with Mark than he had made earlier. Instead, he invoked several judgments, which he admitted were merely impressions of plausibilities: Matthew looks original (as held from earliest patristic times);⁶² Matthew looks early and Palestinian;⁶³ Mark looks like Peter's oral teaching (in addition to the patristic evidence, Mark reads like oral discourse that could well be taken down from Peter); Mark seems to omit Matthean material at certain points;⁶⁴ and Matthew looks as though it may have been written in a Semitic language.⁶⁵ While generally briefer, Wenham's list of evidence for Matthean priority performs much the same role that Streeter's "Five Heads of Evidence," in proving an 'argument from weight.'⁶⁶ Streeter's arguments seem to

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 89-91.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 94.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 95-97. Though many modern interpreters preferred to see Jesus' conflict with the Pharisees as a polemic of church against synagogue, it reads more like a vivid account of Jesus' clash with the religious leaders.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 97-108. Here Wenham relied heavily on the arguments provided by J. Chapman, *Matthew, Mark and Luke: A Study in the Order and Interrelation of the Synoptic Gospels* (London: Longman's, 1937). Wenham suggested that Matthean priority provides the better rationale for the differences in order between Matthew and Mark. Wenham identified 3 major dislocations where Mark's order seemed to simplify Matthew's, and also pointed to instances where Mark's alteration of Matthew offered a better explanation of the differences. For example, Mark dropping Matthew's tendency to 'double' demoniacs, beggars, and donkeys instead of Matthew's addition of them and Mark's addition of the blindfold to explain Mt 26:67ff.

⁶⁵ J. Wenham, *Redating*, 108-113. Here Wenham offered potential Hebrew originals behind certain phrases in Greek Matthew, as well as positing that followers of Jesus, even Matthew himself, may have made notes of Jesus' sermons. See also Blomberg, *Historical*, 154-155.

⁶⁶ That is, no one particular head of evidence can definitely prove Matthean priority, but the combined weight of them all can be convincing to some.

appeal mostly to 2SH advocates, and most of them admit at least some of his evidence was weak. Wenham's list of plausibilities will perhaps be most persuasive to those already inclined to accept Matthean priority.

In sum, almost the first half of Wenham's book was devoted to advocating the Augustinian order of Mt-Mk-Lk. Thus far, though he had mentioned dates, his arguments for early dates for the gospels were yet to be made. In the latter half of the book, Wenham devoted considerable energy to parsing the many traditions concerning the origins of the synoptics, as well as the traditions regarding the times of their composition. The SP portion was over, but the argument for redating was just beginning.

Chapters 5-9 dealt with the ancient church testimony. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to recount each of Wenham's findings regarding the early church, but it suffices to note that, in *Redating*, he certainly put more research and consideration into the testimony of the early church than any modern evangelical scholar had done when considering the synoptic problem and/or dating the gospels, and perhaps more than any modern biblical scholar at all. Wenham's was not simply a survey of ancient opinion concerning the origins of the gospels, but a methodical construction of an argument that flows thusly: Ancient church tradition unanimously places Matthew first, and written in Hebrew (or perhaps Aramaic), with a date around 40 CE. Mark gathered the content of his gospel from Peter's preaching in Rome and wrote his gospel somewhere between 42-44 CE. Wenham did acknowledge the contradictory testimony of Clement of Alexandria that the gospels with the genealogies were first, but rejected it as not as strong as the traditional order. Luke, physician and companion of Paul, wrote his gospel around 54 CE.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ All of these were tied together in chapter 12, "When Were the Gospels Written," 223-244.

Having established the order and dates of the synoptics, Wenham devoted chapter 10 to an explanation, or more aptly a *re-creation*, of the formation of the gospels. He allowed that oral tradition was important in earliest Christianity, but rejected notions that catechising was the primary mode of communicating the message of Jesus in the first generation.⁶⁸ This explanation was well-fitted to his very early dating of the synoptics because catechising would not be required if written gospels were readily available so soon. In keeping with his attention to tradition, Wenham offered the portrait of Matthew, using his own notes (and possibly others') of Jesus' teachings. Having several papyri from which to choose, Matthew opted to follow a broadly chronological narrative, but moved some discourses forward, such as portions of the Sermon on the Mount. Wenham suggested that the Semitic Matthean gospel was possibly translated into Greek before Mark wrote, a translation which would have naturally been heavily influenced by the Greek oral tradition.⁶⁹

Wenham was unsure whether Mark had exposure to the Semitic Matthew, though he allowed that Peter may have know Matthew's Semitic gospel, and perhaps translated it, but doubted "that Peter would have been dependent on Matthew."⁷⁰ Mark did not approach his task as a modern writer would, with ready references and convenient writing aids (which argued against repeated use of multiple literary sources).⁷¹ Wenham then provided this interesting description of the evangelist's approach:

So it is unlikely that a gospel writer worked directly on the scroll or scrolls of his predecessors. It is more likely that he started by writing down the words and deeds of Jesus after a manner of his

⁶⁸ *Redating*, 199.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 201-202.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 202.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 204-206.

oral instruction and that he then used the written word of the

earlier evangelist to check and improve what he had written.⁷²

So Mark would have done, aiming to provide the church with another apostolic witness, that of Peter. After recording his own recollections of Peter's teachings in notebook or papyrus form, he used Matthew's gospel to establish an outline.

According to Wenham, Mark chose to omit portions of Matthew that were not part of Peter's teaching. After slight changes in order, plus additions of "extra little items," Mark proceeded to arrange his sheets to construct the content of his gospel. Mark gave Matthew's gospel a final perusal and then made slight changes in order to correct potential misunderstandings or to harmonise accounts. Finally he edited his revised draft and offered his gospel to the church.⁷³ As Wenham's detailed explanation of Mark's formation shows, he sought to incorporate the traditions of the church, the similarities and differences in the text (along with the scholarship that considered them), and the traditional order of the gospels into a realistic explanation of events that could be seen as independent, but at the same time with a literary relationship.

When he came to the formation of Luke, as described above, Wenham was keen to emphasise Luke's non-direct dependence upon Matthew, where, having been familiar with the gospel, Luke largely left out most of the uniquely Matthean material.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 207. Wenham's re-creation fits the description the formation of the gospels by George Kennedy, "Classical and Christian Source Criticism," in W. W. Walker, Jr., ed., *The Relationship among the Gospels: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1978) 152-153, where Kennedy suggested that the tradition was passed on first as oral teaching, then notes made from the oral teaching, and finally a structured literary work was produced. The interplay between teaching and written text as sources for an author is an element that is often overlooked by evangelicals and non-evangelicals alike, who would often have the evangelists' with incredible memorization skills or as scribes working solely with texts. Though Wenham did not offer a lengthy description, such a suggestion perhaps goes a great deal toward explaining the similarities and differences. If one imagines Mark hearing Matthew's gospel being read, making notes at the same time, but with Peter's oral teaching echoing in his memory, it is not hard to see how he could produce a text that bears such close resemblance to Matthew but has little direct copying. See J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011) 42, for a fuller discussion.

⁷³ J. Wenham, *Redating*, 207-208.

Luke would have used Mark in much the same way Mark had used Matthew, though he was anxious to include all of his own peculiar material in a concise enough form to fit onto one scroll.⁷⁴ Wenham explained that Luke's 'Great Omission' of Mark 6:45-8:26 was dropped because of lack of space.⁷⁵ As Mark had done with Matthew, Luke gently harmonized accounts, though (contra Ellis) Wenham doubted whether Luke even noticed that Mark's Jericho story took place "going out of Jericho" (Mk 10:46) instead of "in" (Lk 18:35).⁷⁶ Wenham further defended Luke's knowledge of Palestinian geography, as well as noting the apparent comfort Luke had in including material of "supposed disharmony" with Matthew, such as the differing genealogies, because Luke did not regard them as contradictory.⁷⁷

Now that Wenham had suggested such early dates for the gospels, he used chapter 11 to explain why those early written gospels were not referred to elsewhere in the NT. While this discussion is not strictly under the purview of the current thesis, it is appropriate to note two textual appeals made by Wenham indicating Paul's familiarity with the gospel of Luke.⁷⁸ In 1 Tim 5:18, Paul offers the pithy "scriptural" statement "The worker deserves his wages," which is identical to the one found in Lk

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 209.

⁷⁵ This explanation was first proposed ninety years before by John C. Hawkins in W. Sanday, ed., *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, 60-74. Wenham did not mention other explanations, such as that Luke had a mutilated copy of Mark or Luke's desire to keep Jesus away from gentiles outside of Galilee until he could develop the theme in Acts.

⁷⁶ Wenham's explanation that Luke failed to notice the setting in Mark appears to be the only one of its kind from an evangelical author. Common explanations have been that a) the man followed Jesus into and out of the city (See Matthew Poole, *Annotations upon the Holy Bible* (London, 1700) Notes on Mark X; b) that Luke simply left out Mark's account of Jesus' departure from Jericho (See Blomberg, *Historical Reliability*, 170; c) that both evangelists simply mean to describe the vicinity of Jericho (See Stanley E. Porter, "In the Vicinity of Jericho": Luke 18:35 in the Light of its Synoptic Parallels," *BBR* 2 (1992) 92-95; that of E. Earle Ellis, which Wenham specifically mentioned, that Luke purposefully changed the location because matters of geography and chronology were less important in this passage. See Ellis, *Luke* (The Century Bible, London: Nelson, 1966, rev. 1974) 219. Ellis is discussed later in this chapter.

⁷⁷ *Redating*, 212.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 217. He also suggested that Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 John and Revelation reveal knowledge of similar traditions, as well as strong correlations with Paul's writings elsewhere.

10:7. Likewise, Paul may refer to Luke and his gospel in 2 Cor 8:18, which speaks of a “brother whose praise is in the gospel.”⁷⁹

The final chapter of *Redating* was written to defend the early dates for the synoptics, with each gospel’s date hinging upon clues in the NT and church tradition. Luke was to be dated in the 50s because of Paul’s familiarity with it, and its necessary position prior to Acts. Thus, if Acts could be dated early, then Luke must have been written sooner. Wenham argued for a date of 62 CE for the composition of Acts, (relying heavily on the work of Hemer),⁸⁰ thus pushing the writing of Luke back into the 50s in Achaia (based on early traditions such as the Anti-Marcionite Prologue).⁸¹ As mentioned above, the dating of Mark hinged on the timing of his companionship with Peter in Rome. Instead of accepting a date in the late 60s for Peter’s visit to Rome, Wenham followed the Catholic tradition that Peter came to Rome in 42 CE and established the church there.⁸² Mark’s gospel was written somewhere in the mid-40s, perhaps occasioned by Herod’s death in 44 CE. Chapters 6 and 7 were devoted to this argument. Finally, to defend his dating of Matthew circa 40 CE, Wenham argued that Irenaeus’ statement⁸³ had been misinterpreted by modern scholars (including Zahn) to mean that Mark wrote after the death of Peter and Paul.⁸⁴

In the two decades since its publication, *Redating* has certainly received ample attention, though most scholars, evangelical or otherwise, seem unconvinced on the early dating of the gospels.⁸⁵ Interestingly, one reviewer, Robert Thomas, an

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 219.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 226-228. See C.J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1989).

⁸¹ *Redating*, 229-238.

⁸² This expounded arguments which Wenham had made decades earlier in “Did Peter Go to Rome in AD 42?” *TynB* 23 (1972) 97–102.

⁸³ *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1.

⁸⁴ *Redating*, 242.

⁸⁵ See, for example, the following recent authors who mention *Redating*, but remain unconvinced: James G. Crossley, *The Date of Mark’s Gospel: Insight from the Law in Earliest Christianity* (JSNTSup 266; London/New York: T. & T. Clark / Continuum, 2004) 12; Barbara Shellard, *New Light on Luke: Its Purpose, Sources and Literary Context* (London: T & T Clark, 2004) 60; Darrel L Bock,

evangelical IH advocate discussed later in this chapter, applauded Wenham for his serious treatment of church history and bravery in rejecting the accepted view of Markan priority, but criticised him for failure to take seriously the IH.⁸⁶ From an evangelical standpoint, Wenham's explanation of Luke's divergent wording from Mark might appear less than robust. He argued that, in places where Luke's account were truly parallel to Mark's, their "sense remains substantially the same." Here, Wenham recognized the subjective nature of such a categorization:

A pedant can argue some difference in sense for a large proportion of the differences in wording, but as a test of substantial identity it is better to ask the question: Would one evangelist (who is not professing to give the *ipsissima verba* of his characters) recognise the parallel story of the other evangelist as a fair account (as far as it goes) of the same event or discourse.⁸⁷

In this manner, Wenham's rejection of the evangelists' redaction of sources reflects more of his view of the process of gospel formation than any intrinsic characteristic. To wit, Wenham viewed the differences among the synoptics as minimal and mostly inconsequential, and instead of explaining them in light of inspiration, instead asked whether one evangelist might deem the account of another "fair." While this explanation is reasonable, it might be argued that it falls short of the kind of precision Luke seems to imply in his preface (Lk 1:1-4). Of course, that is not to say that Wenham held an inferior view of the gospels, or the bible – the evidence of his many publications proves otherwise – but to emphasise the potential pitfalls created when one only expects fair agreement among the synoptics.

Studying the Historical Jesus: A Guide to Sources and Methods (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic / Apollos, 2002) 173.

⁸⁶ Robert Thomas, *The Master's Seminary Journal* 3/2 (Fall 1992) 239-241.

⁸⁷ *Redating*, 21.

Considering the enormous undertaking Wenham took upon himself to refute the majority opinions of modern scholarship on both the dating and order of the synoptics, as well as to incorporate practically every conceivable related tradition from the early church, the ultimate strength of his work depends on the strength of each of his unconventional positions. While his arguments for the early dating of Acts have received some endorsements,⁸⁸ the argument is not strong enough to decisively prove his case. If Wenham dates Acts too early, then his *terminus ad quem* is gone and thus the door is opened for later dating of the synoptics. Likewise, his appeal to Peter's presence in Rome in the 40s is tendentious at best and only appears in later traditions with potential apologetic ramifications.⁸⁹ The argument for the priority of Matthew, admirable in showing its plausibility, is limited because of the scope of the book. Further, as Meg Davies argues, Wenham's explanation of why there are no obvious references to the synoptic gospels in the other books of the NT was serious but less than convincing. Davies also points out that, while rejecting direct literary dependence takes some of the responsibility for the differences away from the "creative activities of the evangelists," it merely pushes the origin of those differences back to an oral stage without completely explaining them.⁹⁰

However, considering its scope, *Redating* is a remarkable example of the exhaustive research and ingenuity of an evangelical scholar. By the 1990s, most evangelical scholars were comfortable only making passing references to early church traditions vis-à-vis the SP, but Wenham carefully inspected and explained those

⁸⁸ Notably, D.A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992) 299-300.

⁸⁹ Jerome, *de viris illustribus* 1, who took the notion from Eusebius' *Chronicle*, which was written in the early fourth century during a time of intense interest in proving the successive bishopric of Peter in important cities. See E. Earle Ellis, *The Making of the New Testament Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 1999) 367, for a fuller discussion.

⁹⁰ Meg Davies, "Review of Redating the Synoptic Problem by Wenham" *The Expository Times* 102.12 (Sep 1991) 377.

traditions in a manner not seen in evangelical scholarship at least since Zahn had done so 90 years earlier. Wenham's achievement in synoptic studies went beyond Zahn's, however, because it also included careful side-by-side comparisons of the parallel texts. As Zahn had done, Wenham was quick to note and interact with the opinions of non-evangelical scholars. *Redating* also stands as the most recent lengthy argument on behalf of the AH written by an evangelical scholar.

C. Edward Earle Ellis (1926-2010): Redaction and Midrash Pesher

Edward Earle Ellis was born and raised in Florida and, after a stint in the US army, he pursued post-secondary education at the University of Virginia, then at Faith Seminary (Delaware), and ultimately received MA and BD Degrees at Wheaton College in 1953. He received the PhD from the University of Edinburgh after only two years, and went on to do post-graduate studies at Tübingen, Göttingen, Marburg, and Basel.⁹¹ Ellis' strong ties with British scholarship, especially evangelical scholarship in the UK, is evidenced by the fact that he spent at least the last twenty summers of his life doing research in England.⁹² Ellis served as professor at several institutions, most notable among them the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky (where Ellis was ordained a Baptist minister) from 1958-60, Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1960-61, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary from 1985 until his death in 2010.⁹³ One of Ellis' greatest personal achievements was his instrumental role in the creation of the International Reference Library for Biblical Research in 2005 in Fort Worth, Texas to

⁹¹ Gerald F. Hawthorne, "E. Earle Ellis: A Biographical Sketch," in Son (Aaron), Sang-Won, ed., *History and Exegesis: New Testament Essays in Honor of Dr. E. Earle Ellis for His Eightieth Birthday* (New York: T&T Clark, 2006) 2-4.

⁹² S. Aaron Son, "Obituary: E. Earle Ellis," *Society of Biblical Literature Forum* 0.4(0) [<http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/article.aspx?ArticleId=858>, accessed 3 Oct 2011].

⁹³ Hawthorne, 3.

be an “American Tyndale House,” allowing evangelical scholars to live and research on site much like its predecessor in the UK.⁹⁴

Ellis exemplifies the maturation among evangelical scholars’ opinions regarding the SP which took place during the second half of the twentieth century. In his writing, Ellis took great care to survey the notable scholarly opinions of those with whom he agreed and those with whom he did not. Further, Ellis’ robust consideration of the complex development of the gospel sources and the various explanations of those sources among NT scholars over the centuries resulted in a nuanced description of the sources of the evangelists, and especially how words of Jesus were adapted after the resurrection. His first monograph to address the synoptic problem and related issues at length came in 1966 commentary under the title *The Gospel of Luke*.⁹⁵ Ellis expressed similar opinions of gospel origins at length in 1988 in an article entitled “Reading the Gospels as History,” as well as a fulsome consideration in a later monograph from 1999, *The Making of the New Testament Documents*.⁹⁶

Ellis’ Preferred Solution to the SP

If Ellis is to be counted among the available delineations set forth in this thesis (2GH, 2SH, FH, Independence), then he best fits among the 2SH, though with reservations.⁹⁷ He appeared to be comfortable with the notion that Matthew and Luke used Mark as a common source,⁹⁸ but was much more doubtful concerning Q. While he refused to side with those scholars, such as Austin Farrer, who argued that Q was completely unnecessary to explain the synoptic data,⁹⁹ Ellis was skeptical that much of its nature and form had been adequately explained:

⁹⁴ Gregory Tomlin, “Library, now completed, will serve as American ‘Tyndale House’,” *Baptist Press News* (Mar 15, 2005). [<http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=20357>> accessed 3 Oct 2011].

⁹⁵ (The Century Bible, London: Nelson, 1966, rev. 1974).

⁹⁶ (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

⁹⁷ See his equivocal explanation in *Luke*, 21-29. See also *Making*, 14-19.

⁹⁸ *Making*, 18.

⁹⁹ See *Luke*, 22. See also *Making*, 16-17.

Q is a single document, a composite document, several documents. It incorporates earlier sources; it is used in different redactions. Its original language is Greek; it is Aramaic; Q is used in different translations. It is the Matthean *logia*, it is not. It has shape and sequence; it is a collection of fragments. It is a Gospel; it is not. It consists wholly of sayings; it includes narrative. It is all preserved in Matthew and Luke; it is not. Matthew's order of Q is correct; Luke's is correct; neither is correct. It is used by Mark; it is not used by Mark¹⁰⁰

However, Ellis still used the siglum Q to refer to common traditions found within the double tradition, even indicating a potential Jerusalem provenance for at least part of Q,¹⁰¹ but he refrained from limiting Q to one common written source. Ellis' ultimately fell short of endorsing any particular solution to the SP wholeheartedly, and voiced agreement with M.E. Boismard that “both the two-source theory and the Griesbach theory are too simple to account for all the literary facts in the gospels.”¹⁰²

Ellis' groundbreaking approach to the synoptic sources appeared in his description of the creative activity done by the evangelists and the traditioners¹⁰³ who

¹⁰⁰ *Making*, 17-18. Also cited by Farmer, *The Gospel of Jesus*, 223. The failure to identify Q with exactness is a common theme, especially among evangelical scholars. Some examples are: Carson, *Introduction*, 99; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13* (Word Biblical Commentary 33A; Dallas: Word Books, 1993) xlviii; David Wenham and Steve Walton, *Exploring the New Testament: A Guide to the Gospels and Acts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001) 66-69; David A. deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods and Ministry Formation* (Downers Grove: IVP; Leicester: Apollos, 2004) 170. Head, *Christology*, 6 lists several non-evangelical scholars who emphasise the same.

¹⁰¹ *Making*, 295.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰³ Ellis preferred the term “traditioner” to communicate the presence of oral and written tradition passed down in earliest Christianity by prophetic teachers. He refrained from giving the term an exact definition, leaving open the number and type of traditions produced which were ultimately used by the gospel writers. In this sense, the evangelists themselves represented the final generation of traditioners to influence the gospels. For examples, see *Luke*, 242; *Reading*, 5; 11-14; *Making*, 2; 5; 21; 31; 35; 38; 42-43; 53; 154; and 395. In addition, Ellis argued for the presence of written Jesus traditions possibly in circulation among the disciples during Jesus' ministry. See E. E. Ellis, “New Directions in Form Criticism,” in idem, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* (WUNT 18; Tübingen: Mohr, 1978) 242-47. As noted by Bauckham, *Eyewitnesses*, 287.

passed on the earliest Jesus traditions.¹⁰⁴ First, Ellis emphasized the first century Jewish context in which Jesus and the early church found itself. Ellis used to term *midrash pesher*, which in early publications he had argued was also a practice of Paul in his OT quotations,¹⁰⁵ to describe some of the editorial activities of the evangelists and the traditioners who served as their sources. Ellis explained that *midrash pesher* involves more than making a simple interpretative change, but also includes the process in which “an author contemporizes the text, fitting it to its ‘fulfilment’ in the writer’s own time,”¹⁰⁶ a practice found outside the NT in the Dead Sea Scrolls, in the work of Philo and in rabbinical writings.¹⁰⁷ Thus, from time to time Luke made alterations to his sources (Mark, Q, unique traditions) to better fit a post-resurrection context. In addition, the traditioners upon whom Luke depended for his sources may also have made similar adaptations which were later included by the evangelist.

Second, according to Ellis, earliest Christianity, like Jesus, was a “self-consciously and intensely prophetic movement.”¹⁰⁸ Jesus’ promise to his disciples that the Holy Spirit would speak on their behalf when they were called into court (Mk 13:11) gave them the prophetic credentials necessary to write authoritatively. From the prophetic role of Jesus and the apostles, Ellis posited, “the traditioners and Evangelists regarded themselves as having such [prophetic] credentials.”¹⁰⁹ Luke and his earlier traditioners considered their alterations and additions to their sources a product of their prophetic mission. Thus, the practice of *midrash pesher* was an

¹⁰⁴ “An acceptable reconstruction of the formation of the Gospels must take into account both 1st-century Jewish attitudes toward the transmission of religious traditions and the charismatic, prophetic character of the ministry of Jesus and of the primitive church.” *Reading*, 12.

¹⁰⁵ Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957).

¹⁰⁶ *Luke*, 8.

¹⁰⁷ *Making*, 31.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* However, as David Forbes, “Christian Prophecy in Luke-Acts and the Letters of Paul,” in *idem, Prophecy and Inspired Speech In Early Christianity and its Hellenistic Environment* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997) 218-241, esp. 232-235, points out, Ellis’ case is weakened by the fact that Luke is reluctant to refer to people as prophets when expounding scripture, as Ellis admitted.

¹⁰⁹ *Reading*, 13. For a similar argument a century before, see Alford, *Greek Testament*, Proleg 15-16.

inspired process, ultimately as authoritative as the scriptures themselves. In this way, Ellis considered the apostles and traditioners to bear similarities to the “Teacher of Righteousness and the highly gifted, Spirit-oriented ‘wise teachers’ (*maskilim*)” of the Qumran documents.¹¹⁰

Examples of *Midrash Pesher*

To best understand Ellis’ bold suggestions it is helpful to see how he incorporated his understanding of the Spirit’s role and *midrash pesher* in his explanation of Luke’s alterations and additions.

Luke 9:23 – One example of Luke’s use of *pesher* is seen in an addition to his Markan source (Mk 8:34) about the necessity of bearing one’s cross in order to follow Jesus, which Ellis interpreted to be an invitation from Jesus to die along with him in Jerusalem. Luke makes the simple “interpretive addition”¹¹¹ of one word, *daily*, and thus universalises the saying – “In this way Luke brings Christ’s teaching into present situation of his hearers.”¹¹² However, because of the evangelist’s prophetic credentials, Ellis explained, it was really “the exalted Lord through his prophet” who made the addition. In fact, “such elaborations and contemporizations are no less an authentic word of Jesus than the words he spoke in his earthly ministry.”¹¹³ Ellis made similar observations of Luke’s additions in 3:16 (“holy spirit and fire”) and 12:11 (“authorities”).¹¹⁴ In this sense, Jesus not only spoke once before the cross, but also continued to speak after his resurrection and exaltation.

Luke 18:35 – The location of the healing of the blind man near Jericho (Mk 10:46 = Lk 18:35) provides a clear example of Ellis’ understanding of Luke’s editorial

¹¹⁰ *Making*, 29. Cf. Mt 13:52; 23:34; Lk. 11:49ff; 21:15.

¹¹¹ *Luke*, 140.

¹¹² *Reading*, 14.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Luke*, 8.

activity. Both Mark and Luke locate the healing as Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, though Mark records the location of the event as Jesus “went out of Jericho,” and Luke states that it took place as Jesus “drew near Jericho.” Rather than trying to harmonize these apparently contradictory statements,¹¹⁵ Ellis posited that Luke changed the locale so that he might afterwards provide his own Jericho story (about Zaccheus) without having to break into three consecutive Markan stories (cf. Luke 18:15-43). Ellis explained, “Luke knows Mark’s text, but he is more concerned with the thematic arrangement than with locale and chronology.”¹¹⁶

Alterations by Traditioners

Rather than attribute all of Luke’s divergences from his sources to the evangelist’s alterations, Ellis more often preferred to explain Luke’s differences by appealing to the traditioners who Luke used as sources. Two such examples can serve to inform Ellis’ consideration of *midrash pesher* and traditioners.

Luke 11:49-51 – The pericope in question, which occurs nears the end of one of Jesus’ prophecies, contains the formulaic introduction, “The Wisdom of God said,” a phrase which Ellis argued was virtually equivalent to “the Holy Spirit says” and “the Lord says” in early Christian usage.¹¹⁷ Though the saying occurs in the midst of a prophecy by Jesus about his followers, Ellis considered it to have been added after the resurrection “in a Christian context and probably is to be traced to a Christian prophet or group of prophets.”¹¹⁸ Again, this prophetic utterance was ultimately attributed to the resurrected Jesus through his prophet, an example of a prophet having “*pesher*-

¹¹⁵ The tendency to reject harmonizations, though many conservative commentators choose to do so, on the grounds that they were improbable is present in many of the evangelical scholars considered herein. For example, see Alford, *Greek Testament*, Proleg 10, Stonehouse, *Origins*, 109, and particularly R. Gundry’s commentary on Matthew, which is discussed in section F below.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 219. Though see footnotes on J. Wenham’s comments in *Redating*, 112, on this passage above.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 172.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

ed” (Ellis’ term) Jesus’ earlier statement about “this generation.”¹¹⁹ This prophecy was incorporated by a traditioner, who passed it on to Luke.

Luke 13:31-34 – The passage includes an incident only recorded by Luke, in which some Pharisees warn Jesus to flee Jerusalem to escape Herod. Luke includes Jesus’ lament concerning Jerusalem found also in Matthew 23:34-37, though unlike Matthew he does not locate it immediately before the crucifixion. Ellis considered that this Q-passage might be evidence of a “post-resurrection oracle through a Christian prophet.”¹²⁰

Limitations on the Use of Midrash Peshet

While Ellis was comfortable in suggesting that traditioners and evangelists made adaptations to the structure and elaboration of sayings, he was careful to express unease with the notion that they invented events. He opined, “There are few if any historical or literary grounds, however, to suppose that the Gospel traditioners created events in Jesus’ life,”¹²¹ though he gave no justification for such a limitation. Ellis’ concern that there be limits to what the traditioners and evangelists could supplement to their sources echoes the delicacy with which A.B. Bruce advocated similar alterations by the gospel writers in the late nineteenth century.¹²² Interestingly, not many years after Ellis applied his ideas of *midrash peshet* to his theories of gospel origins, Robert Gundry used a similar midrashic approach in his commentary on Matthew.¹²³ However, Ellis himself rejected Gundry’s approach.¹²⁴ It is noteworthy

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 173.

¹²⁰ *Luke*, 191. See also *Luke*, 244-245, for Ellis’ similar comments on Lk 21:20-24.

¹²¹ *Reading*, 14.

¹²² See Chapter VI, C, above, though Bruce maintained that, while the evangelists were free to add their own “colourings” to their narratives, they never invented sayings. See Bruce, *Kingdom*, 26.

¹²³ See below, Chapter VIII, F.

¹²⁴ See E. Earle Ellis, *Christ and the Future in New Testament History* (Boston, Leiden: Brill, 2001) 54. Ellis considered Gundry’s method a step too far because his midrash included “fictional or haggadic” midrash, which included fictional sayings. It would appear the difference between Ellis and Gundry vis-à-vis the evangelist’s midrash is a matter of degree and not of kind.

that, while in a few instances Ellis speculated about how the traditioners might have changed their sources to “contemporize” them, he explicitly stated in his preface to *Luke* that he had little interest in “sifting” the teaching and events from the life of the earthly Jesus and those of traditioners or the post-resurrection Christ.¹²⁵

Though Ellis was for decades a respected evangelical scholar, most of his writing was restricted to academic forums and thus less scrutinized by the popular evangelical world.¹²⁶ However, even though he allowed that he agreed with many modern critical scholars that the NT writers’ theological concerns were of greater import than strict historical accuracy, “he never sought to hide his convictions about the divine character of scripture.”¹²⁷ Ellis’ work has been generally well received among evangelical scholars as well as the greater scholarly world. Most of the criticism of his publications have been directed at his characterization of *midrash pesher* in the NT,¹²⁸ though many have endorsed and expounded upon Ellis’ ideas.¹²⁹ In particular, his characterization of the role of Christian prophets in early Christianity and the freedom with which they adapted tradition has been criticized by Aune, who flatly stated that “there is no evidence” to support Ellis’s claims because so little is known of the role of the early Christian prophets.¹³⁰ In some senses, Ellis’ notions of

¹²⁵ Ellis, *Luke*, x.

¹²⁶ Though see the glowing review of *Luke* in the *Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. 168 (1966) 503-504.

¹²⁷ Noll, *Between Faith*, 115.

¹²⁸ For example, see J. Barr, “Paul and the LXX: A Note on Some Recent Work,” *JTS* 45 (1994) 593-601; Matthew Black, “The Christological Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament,” *NTS* 18 (1971-1972) 1-14; Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975, 1999) 113; Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986) 11; Timothy H. Lim, “Midrash Pesher in the Pauline Letters,” in Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans, eds., *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 280-92.

¹²⁹ For example, see J.D.G. Dunn, “2 Cor III. 17- ‘The Lord is Spirit,’” *JTS* 21 (1970) 309-20; C. A. Evans, “Midrash,” in Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, I Howard. Marshall, eds., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1992) 546; Larry Helyer, *The Witness of Jesus, Paul and John: An Exploration in Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008) 48-49.

¹³⁰ David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983) 345. Similar arguments are made by F. David Farnell, “When Will the Gift of Prophecy Cease?” *BSac* 150 (April-June 1993) 171-202 at p.177, note 21.

the evangelists' adaptations of their sources set him apart, because on the one hand, he accepted conscious alterations were made according to authorial intent, but on the other that, because the evangelists were to be accepted as Christian prophets, their words were from ultimately from the same source, the post-resurrection Lord. Evangelical scholarship has yet to fully wrestle with such a description of what might be deemed "inspired redaction" on the part of the evangelists.

D. Robert L. Thomas (1928-Present): Defending the Independence Theory

Robert Thomas grew up in the southeastern state of Georgia in the US. He first received a bachelor's degree in engineering at Georgia Tech before serving in the military, eventually receiving the ThM (1956) and ThD (1959) from Dallas Theological Seminary. From 1959 to 1987, Thomas served as Professor of NT at Talbot Theological Seminary, after which time he became Professor of NT at the Master's Seminary in Sun Valley, California. From 1990 until present day, Thomas has served as Executive Editor of *The Master's Seminary Journal*. Dr. Thomas has a long and distinguished career in evangelical organizations and publications, among them being his participation in International Council on Biblical Inerrancy in the fall of 1978, his work in serving on the translation committee of the *New American Standard Bible* and publications such as *The NASB Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*¹³¹ and *The NIV Harmony of the Gospels*.¹³² He has been a member of the ETS from 1961 to the present, where he also served as president in 1990.¹³³ Thomas has provided several contributions to evangelical consideration of the SP. He was the first contributor to the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* to argue against

¹³¹ (Nashville: Holman, 1981).

¹³² (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988).

¹³³ Biographical information gleaned from Robert L. Thomas, Jr., "The Life of Dr. Robert L. Thomas," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 10/1 (Spring 1999) 3-7.

dependency hypotheses and for the IH.¹³⁴ He also figured prominently in debates which took place in the late 1990s at the ETS about the appropriate use of modern critical methods for evangelicals.¹³⁵

Thomas contributed to two monographs in which the SP featured prominently, *The Jesus Crisis* (TJC)¹³⁶ and *Three Views on the Origins of the Synoptic Gospels*,¹³⁷ which will serve to inform this thesis. In *TJC*, Thomas singled out commentaries by three prominent evangelicals, Robert Gundry,¹³⁸ William Lane,¹³⁹ and I.H. Marshall¹⁴⁰ for particular scrutiny in his chapter “Impact of Historical Criticism on Hermeneutics.”¹⁴¹ Lane was guilty of a “tendency toward suspicion,” as evidenced by his remark that Mark 2:10 displays a “commentary character,” which Thomas equated with calling the verse “a Markan invention.”¹⁴² Marshall’s work was also plagued with problems, according to Thomas, because he admitted that there were several places in Luke where certain discrepancies were “insoluble with the evidence currently at our disposal.” Thomas considered these kinds of statements to be tantamount to pronouncing events in Luke as “unhistorical.”¹⁴³ But Thomas reserved his most scathing attack for Gundry’s *Matthew*. He noted that Gundry rejected the fixation on historicism that plagued evangelical studies, and concluded, “taking Matthew’s intent to be solely historical is as much of a critical judgment (conscious or unconscious) as taking it to be a mixture of the historical and unhistorical.”¹⁴⁴

Thomas recalled the cool reception of Gundry’s commentary by many evangelicals

¹³⁴ Robert L. Thomas, “An Investigation of the Agreements Between Matthew and Luke Against Mark,” *JETS* 19/2 (Spring 1976) 103-112.

¹³⁵ All of this is catalogued in Appendix A.

¹³⁶ Robert Thomas and F. David Farnell (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998).

¹³⁷ Robert L. Thomas, ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002).

¹³⁸ Gundry, *Matthew*.

¹³⁹ William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

¹⁴⁰ I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (NIGTC; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978).

¹⁴¹ R. Thomas, *TJC*, 317-337.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 318.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 320.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 322.

because of his methodology, but surmised that the problem actually lay in historical criticism itself.¹⁴⁵ As might be expected, the publication of *TJC* was not ignored by the ETS. First, Norman Geisler, president of the ETS in 1998, used *TJC* as his sole source for his Presidential Address at the 1998 ETS Meeting to reject “historical critical thinking” which “undermines orthodox Christianity.”¹⁴⁶ These comments about the historical-critical method, both by Geisler and in *TJC*, compelled the editor of *JETS* at that time, Andreas Köstenberger, to offer Grant Osborne of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School an opportunity to respond “in the spirit of scholarly dialogue that has characterized our journal from its inception” in *JETS* in March of 1999.¹⁴⁷ Osborne’s response to *TJC*, a work in which he had been cited nine separate times,¹⁴⁸ prompted Thomas to offer again his views on the SP and redaction criticism in the pages of *JETS* the following year. The article proved to be a critical one because in it Thomas offered the longest explanation of the IH in *JETS* history, revealing his belief that the ETS had been “favourably inclined” to the IH from its founding.¹⁴⁹ In the same volume, Osborne followed Thomas’ with another article on the matter in which he again offered salutary comments toward Thomas’ arguments, but urged Thomas to soften the tone of the criticism.¹⁵⁰

Ultimately, the two scholars came together to publish *Three Views* in 2002, a work in which the 2SH, 2GH, and IH were debated. Osborne, along with Matthew C. Williams of Talbot School of Theology in California, wrote the chapters in *Three Views* from the 2SH perspective, and Thomas served as editor as well as providing a few remarks on behalf of the IH. *Three Views* stands as the first and only monograph

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* All of this is catalogued in Appendix A.

¹⁴⁶ See Geisler, “Beware,” *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 3-20.

¹⁴⁷ Köstenberger, “Editorial,” *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 1.

¹⁴⁸ See Thomas, *TJC*, 220, 227, 232, 334, 335, 343, 360, 375, and 376.

¹⁴⁹ Thomas, “Historical Criticism,” 99.

¹⁵⁰ Osborne, “Historical Criticism: A Brief Response.”

devoted to competing theories on the SP written entirely by evangelicals for evangelicals.¹⁵¹ The format of the book included arguments for each theory as advocated by its proponents, and rebuttals to each argument provided by those who espoused contrary hypotheses. Williams wrote his doctoral dissertation (discussed below) at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School on the SP under the guidance of Osborne and Scot McKnight. John H. Niemelä of Chafer Theological Seminary in California provided the arguments for the 2GH. William Farmer served on Niemelä's doctoral dissertation committee, which dealt with the 2GH, at Dallas Theological Seminary. The IH argument was provided by F. David Farnell of The Master's Seminary (where Thomas was also a professor). Farnell had previously co-edited *The Jesus Crisis* with Thomas, and there Farnell laid out many of his objections to the 2SH and modern critical methods. Finally, a summary of each argument was provided by Thomas as the concluding chapter. Thomas' interest in helping publish *Three Views* is explained in the "Introduction" by his assessment of changes he had observed during his career:

When Professor Thomas began his career in the late 1950s, evangelical scholars were of much the same mind regarding gospel origins. As Professor Thomas approaches the end of his career, however, that same collective body is sharply divided on the same question.¹⁵²

Thomas provided 25 questions with which he sought to "stir curiosity," with most of them relating to the potential damage done to views of inspiration if a scholar

¹⁵¹ While evangelical scholars contributed to *Rethinking the Synoptic Problem*, David A. Black, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001) its focus was limited to arguments for the 2SH and 2GH, and the 2GH contributor was William Farmer, certainly a pioneer in the field, but not evangelical in outlook.

¹⁵² R. Thomas, "Introduction," in *Three Views*, 8-17 at p.16.

assumed literary interdependence among the gospels or used modern critical methods such as form and redaction criticism.¹⁵³ Space constraints do not allow a complete consideration of every chapter, but a brief consideration of the arguments provided by each author, as well as the critiques of that argument provided by the others, is provided below.

Chapter one of *Three Views* was dedicated to arguments for and against the 2SH. Osborne and Williams began by offering a very brief and incomplete history of the SP which highlighted the popularity of Markan priority among modern evangelical scholars. They then launched into their argument for utilization by offering arguments based on similarity in content, wording, and order.¹⁵⁴ Osborne and Williams mentioned each of Streeter's "heads of evidence" of Markan priority, but concluded that only the fourth, that Matthew and Luke both improve Mark's primitive wording, was the only legitimate proof of Markan priority provided by Streeter. They considered that more vivid language (especially in Aramaic expressions), greater adherence to the wording of the LXX (which was also seen in Matthew's quotations of Mark, compared to Matthew's freer OT quotations in his non-Markan material) and lengthier accounts found in Mark also point to its priority.¹⁵⁵ Relying heavily on the work of C.M. Tuckett, Osborne and Williams also argued that Mark's Christology and consistent inclusion of the more difficult reading (as compared to the other synoptics) indicated its priority. They took a somewhat different approach in their argument for the 2SH than Stein by offering a text-critical approach to their solution. They did this not by looking at the actual ancient manuscripts, but by applying the tools of textual-criticism to the side-by-side comparison of Matthew and Mark, as

¹⁵³ Ibid., 13-16.

¹⁵⁴ Osborne and Williams, "The Case for the Markan Priority View of Gospel Origins," in *Three Views*, 19-96, see esp. 24-34. For similar arguments, see the discussion of Robert H. Stein in Chapter VIII, G.

¹⁵⁵ Osborne and Williams, 38.

Williams had done in his doctoral dissertation.¹⁵⁶ The seven criteria used for a text-critical analysis of Mt-Mk parallels were:

1. Source variant: That variant is more original that best explains the existence of all of the others and that cannot itself be explained by the others.
2. Generally, the more difficult reading is more original.
3. The variant that is most in conformity with the author's usage elsewhere is more original.
4. The less refined grammatical form or less elegant lexical expression is more original.
5. The text that is less smooth is more original.
6. The reading that is not a harmonization is more original.
7. The reading that is less orthodox is more original because of the influence of the Christian community upon the formulation and transmission of passages, as they generally produced more orthodox readings.¹⁵⁷ For example, Matthew's omission of the mention of "when Abiathar was high priest" (Mk 2:26) reveals an orthodox improvement to remove a potential historical error.¹⁵⁸

Disappointingly, Osborne and Williams provided only a handful of comparisons of Mt-Mk parallels, and instead simply summarized the findings of Williams' dissertation. They provided a list of references to examples where the criteria stated above indicated Matthew's scribal tendencies in his copying of Mark. Again, however, this lengthy list of categories and verses was lacking because it

¹⁵⁶ Matthew C. Williams, *Is Matthew A Scribe? An Examination of the Text-Critical. Argument for the Two-Source Hypothesis* (Unpublished PhD Dissertation submitted to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1992).

¹⁵⁷ Osborne and Williams, 51.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 55. The consideration of Matthew as a scribe is similar to the argument of Michael Goulder who posited that Matthew "made his living by teaching and copying scripture." See M.D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1974) 151, though Goulder, of course, considered Matthew to have taken greater liberties and argued against Q.

offered no details as to how the verses met the stated criteria, leaving the reader to have to simply trust Williams' judgment on the matter.¹⁵⁹ They did acknowledge some problems with the 2SH, particularly the minor agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark and the testimony of the early church for Matthean priority, but argued that the 2GH was unable to use these weaknesses of the 2SH to prove their own hypothesis.¹⁶⁰

Osborne and Williams next moved on to the argument for Q. Curiously, they spent almost as space refuting speculation (layers of Q and Q-communities) about Q made by its more liberal proponents as they did in arguing for its ancient existence. They provided only two side-by-side comparisons of parallel passages from the double tradition (Mt 11:21-23 = Lk 10:13-15; Mt 3:7-10 = Luke 3:7-9) to argue that such verbatim agreement most likely resulted from mutual reliance upon a common written, as opposed to oral, document. Indeed, their explanation that Luke could not have used Matthew because of the former's inexplicable omissions from, and rearrangement of, the latter was the primary argument for Q's existence!¹⁶¹

Niemelä's response¹⁶² to the 2SH case centred upon Osborne's and Williams' depiction of the evangelists. First, he suggested that their "psychological reflection" that Mark would not have omitted dear Matthean material such as the Sermon on the Mount was inappropriate because no gospel author claimed to give an exhaustive account. Likewise, it is anachronistic to treat Matthew as a "scribe-author" because

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁶⁰ The so-called 'minor agreements' are used by 2GH and FH advocates against the 2SH, and early church testimony primarily by IH advocates, as will be seen below.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 67-68. Otherwise, see Goodacre, *Case*, 80-104. To solve the puzzle of why Luke would have rearranged Matthean material to such a greater degree than he did that of Mark, Austin Farrer offered the explanation that Luke "made a Marcan, not a Matthaean, skeleton for his book. But as to the clothing of the skeleton, was not St. Luke going to do that according to his own wisdom, or where was the peculiar inspiration God had given him to operate? Is it surprising that he should lay his plan on Marcan foundations, and quarry St. Matthew for materials to build up his house?" in "On Dispensing with Q," in D. E. Nineham, ed., *Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1955) 55-88, at p.65.

¹⁶² John H. Niemelä, "Two Gospel Response," in *Three Views*, 97-110.

scribes recite and memorize brief sections for quick transcription, whereas the evangelists read their predecessor as “authors” and copied on a macroscopic scale (replicating order and content).¹⁶³ Thus, every minor difference between the gospels is less attributable to intentional change and more the result of the author avoiding “becoming bogged down in source material” by trying to slavishly copy. Niemelä made short references to his own PhD dissertation which took a statistical approach to the SP and favoured the 2GH, but left the evidence for his assigned chapter.¹⁶⁴

Farnell’s response¹⁶⁵ to the 2SH case from the IH perspective included challenges to the presuppositions, handling of church history, and the logic provided by Osborne and Williams. Because the 2SH was borne out of a sceptical rationalist movement, those who espouse it invariably must accept the presuppositions of its early proponents.¹⁶⁶ Similarly, the lack of appreciation for church history – “the clear, consistent and unanimous testimony of the early church was that Matthew was composed first and that no literary dependency existed”¹⁶⁷ – demonstrated the IH’s ties to historic Christianity. Farnell was especially disturbed that Osborne’s and Williams’ language (where they described “clumsy” wording and “odd placement”) was “a strange way for those with a high view of Scripture to speak of what the Holy Spirit has inspired.”¹⁶⁸ Instead of looking for redactional activity to disparage the

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 108. Niemelä considered the suggestion that Matthew acted as a scribe opens a “Pandora’s box,” with Matthew was reacting against his predecessors work by acting as a corrector instead of simply being led by the Spirit into a large-scale plan that incorporated Mark’s material. For further discussion of Matthew’s writing process, see footnote 72 earlier in this chapter.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 107-108.

¹⁶⁵ F. David Farnell, “Independence Response,” in *Three Views*, 111-125.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 111-112.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 113. Farnell’s second point is dubious, as seen in the long list of early Protestant scholars mentioned above who adhered to dependency hypotheses.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 117. Farnell’s description of the supposedly offensive nature of Osborne and Williams’ words offered is again dubious. For generations, evangelical biblical scholars have appealed to the differences in style and personality of the author to explain why each gospel has its unique portrait of Jesus, the disciples, etc. It appears to be inconsistent to allow the human-element to influence so much of a gospel’s message without allowing that an evangelist’s imperfect human faculty produced awkward juxtapositions and wordings. See, for example, the chapter by F.F. Bruce, “Why are there Four Gospels?” in Walter F. Kaiser, Peter H. Davids, et al, *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove,

bible, as he claimed they had done, Farnell argued that the IH held a high view of scripture in which all the evangelists were accurate but wrote from different perspectives and that Mark needed no improvement by Matthew or Luke.¹⁶⁹

Chapter 2 contained Niemelä's case¹⁷⁰ for the 2GH and responses to it. He attempted to blunt criticism from IH advocates that the mere suggestion of literary dependence disparages the evangelists by carefully examining Luke's preface. He argued that Luke's words need not imply that the author had a negative opinion of the "many" who had undertaken to give accounts, as some IH advocates had suggested, and therefore the verbiage does not preclude one evangelist making use of the work of another.¹⁷¹ Likewise, Niemelä sought to undermine IH claims that the patristic evidence concerning the SP was trustworthy, clear and unanimous. For comparison, Niemelä referenced Philo's more fanciful account of the creation of the LXX (that the translators of the LXX independently but produced identical translations of the entire OT) than the original source (The Letter of Aristeas) to point out that several, but not all, early church fathers echoed Philo's later additions. Those surely incorrect additions were repeated time and again in patristic sources, a fact that demonstrated the reality that the early fathers were not inspired and, thus, that the strength of their arguments depends upon the evidence they provide.¹⁷² Niemelä offered several reasons to cautiously approach most patristic explanations of gospel origins – from Papias' Hebrew proto-Matthew to Irenaeus' confusing chronology (where Paul was in Rome when Matthew wrote, seeming to indicate Matthew came after Luke) to

IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996) 82-85, at p. 85, who explained that the gospels were similar to four artists' renderings of the same sunset. None are wrong, but some are certainly more artistic!

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 118-120.

¹⁷⁰ John H. Niemelä, "The Case for the Two-Gospel View of Gospel Origins," in *Three Views*, 126-197.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 129-130.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 136-138. For a further discussion of the role of patristic writings in early orthodox Protestant and evangelical discussions of the SP, see below, Chapter IX, B and C.

Clement's assertion that the gospels with the genealogies came first, to Origen's order of Mt-Mk-Lk-Jn – in order to demonstrate that opinion was not universal in the first four centuries of the church.¹⁷³ Niemelä turned next to the two patristic sources where literary dependence among the evangelists was potentially addressed, Augustine and Chrysostom. He refuted earlier claims by Thomas and Farnell in *The Jesus Crisis* by showing that only a strained interpretation of Augustine's statement that, though each evangelist gave his own order of narration – "this certainly is not to be taken as if each individual writer chose to write in ignorance of what his predecessor had done"¹⁷⁴ – could imply anything but the latter gospel writers having read the work of the prior. Niemelä also provided a somewhat circuitous interpretation of Chrysostom's claim¹⁷⁵ that the evangelists did not collaborate or conspire. He argued that Chrysostom did not mean that they wrote independently, and then questioned whether Chrysostom was a reliable source at all.¹⁷⁶ Thus Niemelä distanced his argument for the 2GH from the IH by attempting to show how the assumption of a utilization hypothesis did not contradict a high view of scripture or the testimony of the early church. He was, however, happy to join with the IH proponents in their assault on evangelical attempts at redaction criticism.¹⁷⁷

Niemelä then critiqued the 2SH by dismissing the Lachmannian argument from order,¹⁷⁸ and further argued that arguments from agreements in content were

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 144.

¹⁷⁴ Augustine, *Harmony* 1.2.4 (NPNF, 6:78), as quoted by Niemelä, "Case," 146. It is striking to observe the same general approach taken by the first 2GH advocate, Henry Owen (see above, Chapter IV, B) and Niemelä over 200 years later. Both eagerly claimed the church tradition of Matthean priority but also emphasized the tenuous nature of many patristic statements about the origins of the gospels.

¹⁷⁵ See above, Introduction, E, for a full quotation.

¹⁷⁶ Niemelä, "Case," 152. He again cited Chrysostom's belief in Philo's account of the translation of the LXX.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, "Case," 154.

¹⁷⁸ A fact that could lead one to wonder whether Niemelä had read Osborne's and Williams' contribution to *Three Views* before he composed his own, because they concurred that Lachmann's arguments were reversible.

insufficient because they are reversible.¹⁷⁹ Niemelä posited that only a comparison of both content and order agreements could inform an investigation into of which gospel was dependent upon another. He then provided an Order-and-Content Model to list all of the options of concurrent content and order,¹⁸⁰ placing all 10 in a 3x3 grid (by combining C and E) so that he might do a statistical analysis of “fraternal twins”¹⁸¹ to see if Luke and Matthew used Mark independently. Niemelä chose to use the chi-square formula to determine if Matthew and Luke independently used Mark because this method “is the standard statistical formula for testing the independence of two categorical variables.”¹⁸² What follows next is a confusing of list of expected versus observed frequencies of those “twin departures.”¹⁸³ Niemelä concluded that, if Matthew and Luke were independent, one should expect there to be 23 (of the 662) of Mark’s verses to have been transposed by Matthew but omitted by Luke, but the observed result was only around 7 verses. Niemelä asserted that 2SH advocates need to explain why this is the case.¹⁸⁴ Ultimately, using the chi-square formula, Niemelä concluded that the chances that Luke and Matthew made independent use of Mark were less than three out of one hundred million (based on a chi-square sum of 41.01349022 and 4 degrees of freedom.)¹⁸⁵ On all of the occasions where Niemelä referred to the chi-square method, whether in which verses to categorize as similar,

¹⁷⁹ Niemelä, “Case,” 158-159.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 161. Those options were: A. All three have the same order; B. Luke's order differs from Matthew and Mark; C. Mark 's order differs from Matthew; D. Matthew's order differs from Luke and Mark; E. each of three has different order (*sic*); F. order of Matthew = order of Mark; Luke omits; H. order of Luke = order of Mark; Matthew omits; I. order of Matthew ≠ order of Mark; Luke omits; K. order of Luke ≠ order of Mark; Matthew omits; and M. only Mark includes.

¹⁸¹ i.e. categories C/E, I, K, and M.

¹⁸² Niemelä, “Case,” 171.

¹⁸³ The lack of clarity lies in Niemelä's neglect to explain where the expected results come from, and why the variation of the observed result from the expected one is significant.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 173-174.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 175. These results present problems for both the 2SH and IH, said Niemelä, because both should expect a much greater probability of the independence of Luke and Matthew. In addition, using the same approach, Niemelä, “Case,” 184-185, determined that the greatest probability is that Luke's Sermon on the Plain is not dependent on Matthew's Sermon on the Mount.

which results to expect and which were observed, etc., he provided a reference to his own PhD dissertation¹⁸⁶ but practically no explanation of the details which formed his argument.

It is not surprising that, when Osborne and Williams provided the 2SH response,¹⁸⁷ they focused on Niemelä's statistical argument. Williams observed that, even with his background in mathematics as a former engineer, he had a difficult time deciphering Niemelä's line of argument.¹⁸⁸ Could it possibly be that a statistical method could provide the solution to the centuries-old debate about the SP?¹⁸⁹ Further, because no one had ever used such a statistical analysis of the gospels based on common agreement in order and content, any meaningful comparison was lacking. Ultimately, the 2SH proponents wondered if Niemelä's results were themselves dependent on his own categorization of parallel verses, and if perhaps different results would be seen if Niemelä had done a statistical analysis of common pericope rather than a simply common verses. They were also disappointed that Niemelä failed to actually provide a textual argument, with synoptic comparisons, for the 2GH because the entire argument for the theory rested on the statistical analysis, the bulk of which is still unavailable in an unpublished dissertation.

Farnell¹⁹⁰ cautioned against the 2GH for its own presuppositional history, namely the Enlightenment views of Griesbach,¹⁹¹ and its tendency to dismiss the

¹⁸⁶ John H. Niemelä, "The Infrequency of Twin Departures: An End to Synoptic Reversibility?" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2000).

¹⁸⁷ G. Osborne and M. Williams, "Markan Priority Response," in *Three Views*, 198-209.

¹⁸⁸ As the author of this thesis, who holds two degrees in mathematics, can also attest.

¹⁸⁹ Ultimately, Osborne, "Response," 201-204, wondered if Niemelä's results were themselves dependent on his own categorization of parallel verses, and if perhaps different results would be seen if Niemelä had done a statistical analysis of common pericope rather than a simply common verses. Statistical approaches to the SP, and doubts about their usefulness, are discussed below in Chapter X, C, 3.

¹⁹⁰ F. David Farnell, "Independence Response," in *Three Views*, 210-225.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 213-216.

patristic testimony about the sources of the gospels.¹⁹² Likewise, Farnell considered the use of statistics to argue for literary dependence to be subjective in nature.¹⁹³

Chapter 3 offered with Farnell's case for the IH. He began by arguing against the use of historical, and particularly source, criticism by evangelicals by comparing them to a Trojan horse by which rationalism has been allowed to infiltrate and "neutralize" core biblical beliefs and values.¹⁹⁴ Farnell drew attention to the work of George Eldon Ladd, an evangelical scholar from the previous generation, whose work supposedly epitomized the failure of evangelical scholars to appeal to liberal critics and yet remain true to scripture.¹⁹⁵ Farnell maintained that no evangelical scholar could use source or redaction-critical approaches faithfully because those methods arose from a faulty premise that the gospels are not inspired.¹⁹⁶ Farnell then moved to his argument for the IH. His first premise was that the IH was the dominant view of Christians up until the Enlightenment and that no early church father claimed that one evangelist was dependent upon the work of another. Using Clement of Alexandria¹⁹⁷ as his exemplar, Farnell noted how Matthean priority, with no mention of literary dependence among the synoptics, was the norm in the first centuries of the church. He showed that apostolic authorship was assumed for Matthew and John, while Mark wrote using information from Peter. However, Farnell noted, by the twentieth

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 219-220.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 221-223.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 233. Much of Farnell's opinion reflected the position of Robert Thomas in his exchange with Grant Osborne at the ETS, in particular Thomas' articles, "The Hermeneutics of Evangelical Redaction Criticism," *JETS* 29/4 (Dec 1986) 447-459, and "Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View," *JETS* 43/1 (Mar 2000) 97-111. Osborne's articles were, "Redaction Criticism and the Great Commission: A Case Study Toward a Biblical Understanding of Inerrancy," *JETS* 19/2 (Spring 1976) 73-85; "The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology," *JETS* 22/4 (Dec 1979) 305-322; "Round Four: The Redaction Debate Continues," *JETS* 28/4 (1985) 399-410; "Historical Criticism And The Evangelical," *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 193-210; "Historical Criticism: A Brief Response to Robert Thomas' 'Other View,'" *JETS* 43/1 (March 2000) 113-117.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 226-232. See George E. Ladd, *The New Testament and Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967) 5-43.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 234.

¹⁹⁷ *Hypotyposeis*, 6.

century, apostolic authorship and Matthean priority were no longer assumed even by many evangelical scholars.¹⁹⁸ Farnell quoted Calvin on behalf of the IH, and then mentioned several more recent evangelical scholars who advocated the IH or a modified form of it – including Berkhof, Linnemann, and John Wenham who are mentioned in this thesis – but presented *The Jesus Crisis* “as a manifesto to return to the historic position of the Independence View.”¹⁹⁹

Farnell provided six axioms as the major arguments for the IH. The first axiom, built on the first half of his chapter, was that “The Synoptic Problem is a Historical-Critical Myth.” Because both the 2SH and 2GH were based upon this myth, they are both fatally flawed in their approach.²⁰⁰ The second axiom is that the historical-critical method shares roots with the “errancy position” in which the biblical writers were mere human authors and no mention is made of divine inspiration.²⁰¹ Here, Farnell showed that Griesbach’s believed only in the inspiration of the apostles and their writings, thus rejecting direct inspiration for non-apostolic works. Likewise, D.F. Strauss’ arguments for Markan priority swayed many scholars to accept that most of the gospels are mythical in nature and provide only a somewhat reliable history.²⁰² Farnell’s third axiom was that all four gospels were based on “independent eyewitness testimony.”²⁰³ Again, the presumed patristic view was mentioned – that Matthew and John wrote from eyewitness experience, while Mark got his information from Peter’s sermons and Luke carefully accumulated eyewitness

¹⁹⁸ Farnell, “Case,” 238-240.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 250. Linnemann, *Is There A Synoptic Problem*, was the only ardent IH advocate mentioned. As seen above in Chapter VIII, B, however, Wenham’s view were closer to the AH than the IH, and as seen in Chapter VII, C, Berkhof was open to dependency hypotheses.

²⁰⁰ Farnell, “Case,” 250.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 251.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 252-253.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 255. Farnell failed to explain how this axiom was unique to any theory.

testimony and other information from Paul.²⁰⁴ The fourth axiom Farnell offered was that the gospels are inerrant and the result of “plenary, verbal inspiration.”²⁰⁵ Farnell mentioned the ongoing debate among evangelicals on the necessity and nature of belief in biblical inerrancy, again invoking Ladd as an example of evangelical scholarship run amuck.²⁰⁶ Fifth, Farnell argued, “traditional harmonization of the text is essential.” He mentioned the comments of John Macarthur, who opined that the “sudden flowering” of gospel harmonies in the 16th century demonstrated that the early Protestants were convinced that the gospels could be blended together without contradiction.²⁰⁷ However, even though Farnell admitted that IH advocates are not fundamentally opposed to gospel synopses, he failed to appreciate the striking similarity of Calvin’s harmony with Griesbach’s synopsis, or the construction of a truly interwoven harmony by an advocate of the AH from the sixteenth century, namely Chemnitz.²⁰⁸ The traditional harmonistic approach which Farnell advocated was to be contrasted with a redaction-critical one because the former takes an optimistic approach to the historicity and factuality of the accounts, while the latter sets one evangelist against another looking for “authorial theological motivations.”²⁰⁹ The final axiom was that proper hermeneutics are those based in a grammatical-historical approach to the text, which finds its roots in the Reformation, not the Enlightenment-influenced historical-critical method. According to Farnell, the

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 257-258. Thus, no gospel is more “original” and none served as a source for others, and all were written within the lifetimes of the apostles.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 259. Again, Farnell failed to explain how this axiom was unique to any theory.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.* This section of Farnell’s argument is the most similar to the arguments of Gaussen (see above, Chapter V, G) over a century earlier in both content and tone.

²⁰⁷ Farnell, “Response,” 265. However, the construction of gospel harmonies was not a uniquely Protestant endeavour (see Chemnitz’s list of prior harmonies in *Harmony*, 13-14). Further, harmonies continued to be produced in later centuries by evangelicals who espoused dependency hypotheses. For example, in the 1820s J.D. Macbride produced the *Diatessaron* (see above, Chapter V, E) and also favoured the AH, and A.T. Robertson produced a gospel harmony, *A Harmony of the Gospels for Students of the Life of Christ* (San Francisco: Harper, 1922) in which he provided a short argument for the 2SH on pages 255-258.

²⁰⁸ See above, Chapter I, A and B.

²⁰⁹ Farnell, “Case,” 268-269.

advantage to this approach is that evangelical scholars do not have to reject the supernatural elements of the gospels, and it acknowledges the need for “Spirit-guided objectivity” in exegesis.²¹⁰

Osborne and Williams responded to Farnell’s arguments for the IH with two basic points. First of all, the use of inflammatory rhetoric to accuse fellow scholars of near heresy is unhelpful for making progress in debates concerning the SP.²¹¹ Second, instead of assuming that dependency hypotheses must have their roots in Enlightenment scepticism, one could easily look at the work of Henry Owen, founder of the 2GH, who demonstrated a high view of Scripture and concern for the church.²¹² Niemelä²¹³ offered the observation that Luke’s preface opens the possibility, if not the probability, that Luke knew other gospels, including Matthew.²¹⁴ He pointed to the statements by Augustine and Chrysostom to argue that there were important figures in the early church who seemed to suggest that some evangelists knew and used the work of their predecessors.²¹⁵

While *Three Views* has yet to receive wide recognition in the scholarly world, it does serve as an evangelical introduction to competing theories written by scholars with differing opinions regarding the SP. Unfortunately, the format offered little in-depth discussion of specific texts and more of a general overview of each hypothesis. Perhaps the authors would have been better served to take an approach, such as that of Peter Head,²¹⁶ where synoptic parallels were investigated from the standpoints of competing theories.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 269. Again, Farnell did little to explain why this was not true of other methods as well.

²¹¹ Osborne and Williams, “Markan Priority Response,” in *Three Views*, 310-314.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 315-322. Owen’s views of scripture were undoubtedly more orthodox than Griesbach’s. For more on Owen, see above, Chapter IV, B.

²¹³ John H. Niemelä, “Two Gospel Response,” in *Three Views*, 324-336.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 325-329.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 331-333. For more on these quotations, see above, Introduction, E.

²¹⁶ See below, Chapter VIII, I.

E. Robert H. Gundry (1932 – Present): A Furore over Midrash

Robert Horton Gundry was born in Hollywood, California in 1932. Some of his earliest years were spent in Nigeria, where his parents served as missionaries, but he grew up primarily in the US. He received the BD from Los Angeles Baptist College and Seminary, and did his PhD under F.F. Bruce at the University of Manchester in 1961.²¹⁷ Beginning in 1962, Gundry took a professorship at Westmont College in California, an institution where he has continued to teach until present day, though as Emeritus Professor since 2001. His first publication was his doctoral dissertation at Manchester, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope*.²¹⁸ Though Gundry has a lengthy list of publications to his name, it was his commentary Matthew that brought him the most significant attention in the evangelical world.

Gundry began working on a commentary on Matthew in the 1970s for the *Expositor's Bible Commentary (EBC)* series, but each time he made a submission to the editors, Merrill C. Tenney and James M. Boice (both members of the ETS), he was told to revise it.²¹⁹ As his views on Matthew's use of sources became known, Gundry was asked to present a paper on his upcoming commentary at the 1979 Annual Meeting of the ETS.²²⁰ In the paper, Gundry explained the reasons for his methodology in his soon-to-be-published commentary, which he presumably still thought would be part of the *EBC* series. Gundry tried to persuade his evangelical

²¹⁷ He also did a half year of research and seminars under Professors Karl Barth and Bo Reicke at the University of Basel, Switzerland, and four months of research at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. Dr. Gundry shared much of this information in personal correspondence with the author of this thesis.

²¹⁸ (Supplements to Novum Testamentum XVIII; Leiden: Brill Publishers, 1967).

²¹⁹ Keylock, "CT Classic." In 1984, D.A. Carson's commentary on Matthew for the Expositor's Bible Commentary series (Vol 8, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) replaced the rejected volume by Gundry. In it, Carson also used redaction criticism, but in a manner more amenable to the ETS' views on inerrancy.

²²⁰ According to Donald J. Hagner, "Interpreting the Gospels: The Landscape and the Quest," *JETS* 24/1 (March 1981) 23-37. Also recounted by Keylock, "CT Classic."

audience that “there is a certain theological advantage in combining apostolic authorship with midrashic and haggadic style,” and that the Christian faith could not be provided “a haven secure... from every threat of historical criticism.”²²¹ Someone sent a copy of Gundry’s paper to Harold Lindsell, a former editor of *Christianity Today* and author of *The Battle for the Bible*. In *Battle*, Lindsell had positioned himself as one of the most public and vocal evangelical leaders against the historical-critical method.²²² After reading the paper, Lindsell immediately set about the process of trying to have Gundry removed from the ETS. However, at the urging of Richard Longenecker, the ETS decided to wait until Gundry’s commentary was published to take any action.²²³ Thus, before the commentary was even published, Gundry already had a group of critics waiting for an opportunity to remove him from the ETS. It should be noted that, in March of 1981, also before Gundry published the commentary, Donald Hagner came to Gundry’s defence in the pages of *JETS*,²²⁴ demonstrating that there were also others waiting to come to Gundry’s aid when controversy erupted.

Gundry was finally able to publish the commentary in 1982, but not as part of the *EBC* series. In it, he offered a meticulous redaction-critical analysis of the Greek text of Matthew.²²⁵ Considering the breadth of Gundry’s commentary, it is possible only to offer a brief explanation of the main points regarding the SP. First, the commentary is written from a 2SH perspective. In fact, Gundry surprisingly posited

²²¹ Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982; reprint 1994) 636. The paper was published as a “Theological Postscript” in the commentary, pages 623-640.

²²² Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976) 82. Lindsell stated, “Orthodoxy and the historical-critical method are deadly enemies that are antithetical and cannot be reconciled without the destruction of one or the other.”

²²³ Keylock, “CT Classic.”

²²⁴ Hagner, “Interpreting the Gospels: The Landscape and the Quest,” *JETS* 24/1 (Mar 1981) 23-37. See a fuller discussion of this in Appendix C.

²²⁵ So meticulous, in fact, that Carson considered that it should be read “only in conjunction with a Greek synopsis.” See D.A. Carson, “Gundry on Matthew: A Critical Review,” *Trinity Journal* 13 (1982) 71-91 at p.72.

that Mark and Q were the only sources available to Matthew when composing his gospel.²²⁶ Second, the Q to which Gundry referred was an enlarged one, containing elements normally considered well outside its bounds, including a birth narrative.²²⁷ Third, because of his limited sources, Matthew's divergences from Mark and/or Q were explained by appealing to Matthew's redaction, which the evangelist used quite freely for theological reasons.²²⁸ Fourth, that redaction often came in the form of *haggadic midrash*, or unhistorical embellishment, inserted to compliment the historical narrative which formed the basis of the gospel.²²⁹ Though Matthew's midrash was not strictly historical, it was an honest literary device used by authors of the time which would have been accepted by his audience.²³⁰ Fifth, unlike the traditional understanding of the 2SH, Gundry also considered Luke to have seen Matthew's gospel, in addition to Q and Mark, when composing his own, but only lightly making use of it.²³¹ One can easily see that some of these ideas, especially the notion that the gospels have substantial unhistorical embellishments, could receive an

²²⁶ Gundry, *Matthew*, xiv-xvi. All quotations and page numbers are from the 1994 reprint.

²²⁷ Gundry rejected any appeals to unique traditions to which Matthew may have had access, and preferred to consider all traditions available to Matthew to be present in Q, which was not necessarily a single document, or Mark. See *Matthew*, xvi.

²²⁸ See Gundry, *Matthew*, 639, where he explained that "comparison with the other gospels, especially with Mark and Luke, and examination of Matthew's style and theology show that he materially altered and embellished historical traditions and that he did so deliberately and often." Most often, Gundry considered Matthew's redaction to be in the form of slight changes of wording and emphasis, but there were times when Matthew's additions were completely unhistorical. The best-known example of this is Gundry's suggestion that Matthew's birth narrative was a "theological tale." See his discussion on p.20.

²²⁹ For example, Gundry considered the account of Peter walking on the water in Mt 14:28-31 to be "haggadic midrash on discipleship" based on the previous storm in Mt 8:23-27 because of the prominent Mattheanisms (λέγει, Ὀλιγόπιστε, and ἐδίστασας). This midrash embodied confession, obedience, as well as the presence of little faith, crying out, and salvation, making it likely that Matthew inserted it apart from any tradition he knew. See *Matthew*, 299-300.

²³⁰ Gundry made a detailed argument on pages 634-635 in the "Theological Postscript" that Matthew's audience may well have been accustomed to receiving history mixed with sermonizing, and offered the example from the OT of the Chronicler's adaptation of the history of Samuel-Kings to reflect his more ideal notion of a messianic king. Gundry considered that both the Chronicler and Matthew relied on their readers' knowledge of previous accounts without trying to "pull the wool over anyone's eyes."

²³¹ Gundry, *Matthew*, 5, considered the presence of "Mattheanisms as foreign bodies" in Luke to be evidence that Luke used Matthew "as an overlay" on Mark and Q.

uneasy reception with an evangelical audience.²³² Was not the admission that Matthew created material *ex nihilo* to sermonize a denial of the inerrancy of the bible?²³³ Gundry did not think so, and in the “Theological Postscript” he went to great lengths to explain why. He warned against pushing modern notions of accuracy and reporting back into history, as well as the conservative tendency to attempt to harmonize biblical differences with unlikely explanations. He offered that the doctrine of inspiration should also consider the notion of canonization, that is what was chosen for the canon and why. When God closed the NT, with Matthew included, it was his inerrant word. Gundry opined,

The verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture implies the full authority of his editing, whatever liberties he took, just as the closing of the canon blocked authoritative editing subsequent to the NT. We are not to think, in other words, that materials attributable to Jesus himself possess more authority than materials attributable to Matthew. The Spirit of Christ directed the editing, so that its results, along with the historical data, constitute God’s word.²³⁴

When the commentary was published in 1982, it became the focus of the 1982 Annual Meeting of the ETS.²³⁵ In Gundry’s presence, a highly attended and heated discussion took place concerning his work. While most in attendance were uncomfortable with Gundry’s conclusions, “two camps” emerged with differing

²³² It is appropriate to acknowledge that the furore over the commentary described below was much more the result of Gundry’s acceptance of the unhistorical elements in the gospels than his solution to the SP.

²³³ As described at the beginning of this chapter. Gundry, along with all members of the ETS, was required to sign annually the ETS statement that the bible is “inerrant in the autographs.”

²³⁴ Gundry, *Matthew*, 640. This description echoes that of Ellis, *Reading*, 14, described above.

²³⁵ This meeting took place at Northeastern Bible College, Essex Falls, New Jersey on Dec 16-18, 1982.

opinions as to the proper way to handle such methodology. One camp sought to issue a statement to be attached to the ETS' doctrinal basis about "hermeneutical methodologies deemed to be inimical to Biblical inerrancy," and thus rule Gundry's beliefs outside the bounds of evangelicalism. The other felt that Gundry's methods, while exhibiting "bad hermeneutics," could still be consistent with his insistence that he held to inerrancy and his claim to be an evangelical. Ultimately, the executive committee affirmed the second approach to Gundry's commentary and Gundry himself.²³⁶ The following item was included in the "Minutes of the Annual Meeting" of that same volume:

Because of questions raised with respect to Robert Gundry on methodology in interpreting Scripture, the executive committee called attention to the brevity of the Society's doctrinal basis and deemed that this basis does not provide criteria for distinguishing which methodologies are incompatible with the Society's stance on inerrancy.²³⁷

The committee, under the leadership of outgoing president Alan F. Johnson, declined to take action on Gundry because they considered it sufficient that he had signed the ETS doctrinal statement on inerrancy. The committee also noted that the ETS lacked "criteria for distinguishing which methodologies are incompatible with the Society's stance on inerrancy."²³⁸ However, those opposed to Gundry would continue their fight.

²³⁶ John S. Feinberg, "Truth, Meaning and Inerrancy in Contemporary Evangelical Thought," *JETS* 26/1 (March 1983) 17-30, at p. 30.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 125.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

Before Gundry faced his critics at the ETS in a face-to-face forum, he debated with them his methodology in *Matthew* in the March 1983 volume in *JETS*.²³⁹ It is worth noting that Douglas J. Moo's critique²⁴⁰ of Gundry's commentary was respectful, but disapproving of the methodology on a technical level. Moo questioned the notion of an enlarged Q, Gundry's use of statistics, and his assumption that Luke tended to follow Q most closely. He was particularly dismissive of Gundry's broad use of the category *midrash*, not only because it was ill-defined, but because it called into question the historicity of the gospels (which evangelicals believed the early church prized).²⁴¹ The critique provided by Norman Geisler²⁴² was more of a philosophical one, namely that Gundry's methods contradicted his claim to believe in the inerrancy of the bible. He compared Gundry's *midrash* to allegory and determined both were unacceptable hermeneutical approaches for evangelicals. Geisler's articles demonstrated his strong desire that Gundry either reject his own work or leave the ETS, and not necessarily by choice. For his part, Gundry spent the better part of his four articles²⁴³ explaining and defending his approach and findings.

²³⁹ Eight papers on the subject, by Gundry, Moo and Geisler appeared in the March 1983 volume of *JETS* and are more fully described in Appendix A.

²⁴⁰ Douglas J. Moo, "Matthew and Midrash: An Evaluation of Robert H Gundry's Approach," *JETS* 26/1 (March 1983) 31-39; "Once Again, 'Matthew and Midrash': A Rejoinder to Robert H. Gundry," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 57-70.

²⁴¹ Two important evangelical responses aimed directly at Gundry's definition of Matthew's *midrash* appeared in the *Gospels Perspectives* series overseen by David Wenham (who is considered below). The first was R. T. France, "Scripture, Tradition and History in the Infancy Narratives of Matthew," in R. T. France and David Wenham, eds., *Gospel Perspectives, vol. 2: Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981) 239-66, who argued that, in the case of Matthew's use of the OT, it was much more likely that Matthew was inspired by actual events to include scriptural comment than the OT influencing Matthew to invent stories. The second was Philip Barton Payne, "Midrash and History in the Gospels with Special Reference to R. H. Gundry's Matthew," in R. T. France and David Wenham, eds., *Gospel Perspectives, vol. 3: Studies in Midrash and Historiography* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1983) 177-215, who placed a similar emphasis on Matthew's "interpreting an event in terms of the OT" (p. 201). Also note that the entire third volume of the *GP* series was devoted to the subject of *midrash* and historiography.

²⁴² Norman L. Geisler, "Methodological Unorthodoxy," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 87-94; "Is There Madness to the Method? A Rejoinder to Robert H. Gundry?" *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 101-108.

²⁴³ R. Gundry, "A Response to 'Matthew and Midrash,'" *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 41-56; "A Surrejoinder to Douglas J. Moo," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 71-86; "A Response to 'Methodological Unorthodoxy,'" *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 95-100; "A Surrejoinder to Norman L. Geisler," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 109-115.

He refused to accept that his methodology was inconsistent with his evangelical convictions.

Early in 1983, Geisler began circulating a letter calling for Gundry's dismissal from the ETS, a letter that eventually garnered 59 signatures of faculty members from various evangelical institutions. The new ETS president, Louis Goldberg of Moody Bible Institute, decided to form an *ad hoc* committee of six ETS members to present a recommendation for how the society should proceed at the upcoming 1983 ETS Annual Meeting in Dallas. At the business meeting that convened to vote, the committee presented the following three recommendations:

- (1) to appoint a special committee to consider an amendment to the ETS constitution specifying the relationship between biblical inerrancy and 'critical methodologies' such as redaction criticism, (2) to adopt in the interim the Chicago statements of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy as the official interpretation of the ETS doctrinal statement, and (3) to adopt rules for the trial of members.²⁴⁴

The suggestion that the ICBI Chicago Statement on Inerrancy become the official interpretation of the ETS was an interesting one. Of the over 300 evangelical scholars and leaders from around the world who had constructed the 3,871 word document at the request of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, several were prominent in the furore over Gundry's commentary. Prominent signatories²⁴⁵ included Geisler, Harold Lindsell, Roger Nicole, Robert Thomas, George Knight III, and William F. Luck, chairman of the *ad hoc* committee later appointed by ETS president Goldberg to help solve the Gundry dilemma. The first two motions were defeated by a vote,

²⁴⁴ Keylock, "CT Classic."

²⁴⁵ "List of Signers of the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy." Facsimile of the original available at the Dallas Theological Seminary Archives, provided at [http://library.dts.edu/Pages/TL/Special/ICBI_1_typed.pdf, accessed 17 May 2010].

and the third required a constitutional change to the ETS and therefore could only be read at the meeting and voted upon at the next year's meeting.²⁴⁶

That a vote on more than those three suggestions would take place would not be a surprise to many in the audience. Before the business meeting, Geisler had circulated a document with the title, "Why We Must Vote Now on Gundry's Membership, and Why We Must Vote No on Gundry's Membership."²⁴⁷ Two motions, dealing specifically with Gundry and his methods, were made. First, ETS member George Knight III offered the motion that "the ETS go on record as rejecting any position that states that Matthew or any other biblical writer materially altered and embellished historical tradition or departed from the actuality of events." A vote was taken and the motion passed by a margin of 119 to 36. Second, Roger Nicole offered the crucial motion that "the Evangelical Theological Society officially request Dr. Robert Gundry to submit his resignation from membership in this Society; unless he acknowledges that he has erred in his detraction from the historical trustworthiness of the gospel of Matthew in his recent commentary." The motion passed with a similar margin, 116 for and 41 against. At this, Gundry offered his resignation.²⁴⁸

After Gundry's resignation in 1983, the editor of *JETS*, Louis Goldberg, who had been president during the controversy, provided the following admonition to his colleagues at the ETS:

Our society should be spiritually and intellectually mature enough to
enable each of us to listen to one another in an atmosphere of respect,

²⁴⁶ Keylock, "CT Classic." Though it is beyond the scope of this study to further investigate, it is worth noting that in November of 2006 the ETS officially voted to make the ICBI Chicago Statement on Inerrancy the official definition of inerrancy for the ETS in response to a dispute over Open Theism. See Andreas Köstenberger, *Quo Vadis Evangelicalism? Perspectives on the Past, Direction for the Future: Nine Presidential Addresses from the First Fifty Years of the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007) 218.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

giving opposing viewpoints a fair hearing, and then make decisions that are honest before the Lord and intellectually compatible within the framework of evangelical scholarship. Strident propaganda on behalf of one position or another should never be the tactic to ascertain the truth that all of us seek.²⁴⁹

Goldberg made clear that such an “atmosphere of respect” was not present in the Gundry case.

Of course, Gundry’s resignation from the ETS did nothing to diminish his work as a scholar thereafter. He continued as professor at Westmont and published multiple books and articles over the next two decades, including monographs on Mark²⁵⁰ and John.²⁵¹ The work on John was especially revealing because it made clear, in no uncertain terms, that Gundry remained an evangelical scholar with a concern for evangelicalism.

F. Ian Howard Marshall (1934-Present): Influence at Home and Abroad

I. Howard Marshall was born in Scotland in 1934 into a conservative Methodist home.²⁵² While a student at the University of Aberdeen, where he eventually received the BD and MA in Classics and PhD in Theology, Marshall was involved with the Inter-Varsity Fellowship (later Universities’ and Colleges’ Christian Fellowship, UCCF) before undertaking a pastoral and academic career. Marshall has served as a Methodist preacher all of his adult life and in 1964 he took up a position at the University of Aberdeen, from which he retired in 1999. He is former chair of the

²⁴⁹ Louis Goldberg, “Guest Editorial,” *JETS* 27/1 (Mar 1984) 1-2, at p.2.

²⁵⁰ R. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

²⁵¹ R. Gundry, *Jesus the Word according to John the Sectarian: A Paleofundamentalist Manifesto for Evangelicalism, Especially Its Elites, in North America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

²⁵² Autobiographical remark by Marshall in “The Gospel Does Not Change but Our Perception of It May Need Revision,” in Alan F. Johnson, *How I Changed My Mind about Women in Leadership: Compelling Stories from Prominent Evangelicals* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010) 227-247, at p.227.

Tyndale Fellowship and the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians.²⁵³

Marshall's list of publications is lengthy, but perhaps he is best known for his works on Luke/Acts²⁵⁴ and on NT Theology.²⁵⁵ Marshall has been recognized for his original thoughts regarding biblical and theological matters, and the international acclaim Marshall has received over his career led one admirer to opine, "no one can question his academic or evangelical credentials."²⁵⁶

A thorough discussion of Marshall's opinions regarding the SP is not necessary here because one has already been done.²⁵⁷ However, it suffices to note the general characteristics of Marshall's publications on the SP, and his influence on both British and American evangelicalism. First, Marshall is a 2SH advocate, with the additional opinions that Luke's L source was already "merged" with Q before Luke got hold of it.²⁵⁸ Second, Luke's Markan vorlage was much the same as our Gospel of Mark, and though Luke followed it, he tended to opt for his merged QL source in parallel accounts with Mark.²⁵⁹ Third, Marshall was cautious about the use of redaction criticism and was critical of those who attributed large amounts of material simply to the concerns of the early church or an evangelist's imagination without

²⁵³ William Dembski and Thomas Schirrmacher, eds., *Tough Minded Christianity: Festschrift for John Warwick Montgomery* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2009) xxvi.

²⁵⁴ See, for example, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1970); "Luke" in Donald Guthrie & J. A. Motyer, eds., *New Bible Commentary*, revised (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970); *The Gospel of Luke* (NIGTC; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978); *Acts* (TNTC; Leicester: IVP, 1980); *New Testament Guides: Acts of the Apostles* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); I. H. Marshall and D. Peterson, eds. *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

²⁵⁵ See, for example, I. Howard Marshall, *Jesus the Saviour: Studies in New Testament Theology* (London: SPCK / Downers Grove: IVP, 1990); I. Howard Marshall, ed., *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004); *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004).

²⁵⁶ Stanley E. Porter, "Hermeneutics, Biblical Interpretation and Theology," in Marshall, ed., *Beyond*, 97-108, at p.101.

²⁵⁷ Jay M. Harrington, "Special Sources and the Special Material: I. Howard Marshall through Darrell L. Bock" in idem, *The Lukan Passion Narrative: The Markan Material in Luke 22:54-23:25. A Historical Survey: 1891-1997* (NTTS 30. Leiden: Brill, 2000) 497-565, esp. 497-504.

²⁵⁸ See, for example, Marshall, *Luke, Historian*, 64 and *Gospel of Luke*, 30.

²⁵⁹ See *Luke, Historian*, 64.

historical foundations.²⁶⁰ While evangelical in approach, at times Marshall provided redaction-critical commentary which could make some conservatives uncomfortable. For example, Marshall's admission that any scholar who practices historical criticism will occasionally determine that "the correction solution to a difficulty lies in the unhistorical nature of a particular narrative,"²⁶¹ later prompted Robert Thomas to attribute him with the view that the evangelists distorted history.²⁶²

The Sharing of Ideas and Influence Internationally

While the 'cross-pollination' of evangelical ideas among biblical scholars in the British Isles, on the Continent, and in America was taking place at least as early as the mid-19th century, Noll documents the growth of the particularly strong British influence among evangelical scholars in America during the post-war period, a time when "American evangelicals were regularly going across the Atlantic to pursue graduate work."²⁶³ I. H. Marshall is an excellent example of the kind of interdenominational British evangelical influence which has sprung up over the past 60 years. He served as *Doctorvater* for several prominent American evangelical scholars, many of whom went on to publish on the SP. Those mentioned in this thesis who received the PhD under Marshall's supervision at Aberdeen were Grant Osborne, Craig Blomberg, Darrell Bock, and Douglas McComiskey, all of whom are 2SH advocates like their doctoral supervisor. It is no accident then, that Osborne,

Blomberg and Bock all contributed to the argument for the 2SH in *Rethinking the*

²⁶⁰ Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 33. He commented, "Nevertheless, it is important to observe that in many cases the reasons often given for ascribing the origins of traditions to the early church rather than to Jesus himself are both speculative and unconvincing.... I am not persuaded that the nature of the tradition is such that sayings ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels should be regarded as sayings by other Jews or as creations by the early church unless evidence to the contrary is forthcoming." See also "Luke," *NBC*, 888.

²⁶¹ Marshall, "Historical Criticism," 136.

²⁶² See *TJC*, 27, as well as note 96 on page 34. In fact, as a perusal of the index indicates, Marshall is cited dozens of times in *TJC*.

²⁶³ Noll, *Scandal*, 217-218. See also Noll's detailed description of the general British influence among the American publishers Eerdmans and IVP, who published in America many of the materials produced by British evangelicals via the British IVP and Tyndale House, in *Between Faith*, 99-105.

Synoptic Problem, a work in which William Farmer provided the sole other argument on behalf of the 2GH.²⁶⁴ In a similar vein, it should also be noted that the distinguished British evangelical scholar F.F. Bruce supervised the doctoral theses of the Americans Robert Gundry and Donald Hagner, as well those of David Wenham and R.T. France of England, who are also mentioned herein.²⁶⁵ Though E. Earle Ellis, who is discussed earlier in this chapter,²⁶⁶ did not study under Bruce or Marshall, his close connection to British scholarship is demonstrated by the facts that he received the PhD from the University of Edinburgh, as well as his regular summer-stays in the UK for research and writing. Of those Americans who were directly influenced by their educational experiences in Britain, one observes a familiarity and comfort with modern historical-critical scholarship which can be less prominent in those solely educated at American evangelical institutions.²⁶⁷ Marshall's influence is palpable in this regard, especially in *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods*,²⁶⁸ which he edited, and to which he contributed the chapter "Historical Criticism" and provided an evangelical framework for the use of the historical-critical method while avoiding the most extreme liberal presuppositions.²⁶⁹

G. Robert H. Stein (1935-Present): Following in Robertson's Footsteps

²⁶⁴ David A. Black, ed. *Rethinking the Synoptic Problem* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001). Their chapters are Craig Blomberg, "The Synoptic Problem: Where We Stand at the Start of a New Century," 17-40; Darrell Bock, "Questions about Q," 41-64; Grant Osborne, "Response," 137-152.

²⁶⁵ William Lane, who is also mentioned in this thesis, had a close working relationship with Bruce. See Noll, *Between*, 118.

²⁶⁶ See above, Chapter VIII, C.

²⁶⁷ Perhaps that explains why Thomas and Farnell, *The Jesus Crisis*, have an inordinate number of citations of American evangelicals with British PhDs, including Bock, R. Gundry, Hagner, Ellis, and Osborne, as evidenced in the index of names.

²⁶⁸ I.H. Marshall, ed. (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1972; 2nd edn, 1979). The book provides chapters written by (primarily British) evangelical scholars on several modern critical subjects, including Marshall, F.F. Bruce, David Wenham, and Ellis, who are mentioned in this thesis.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 126-138. Marshall explained, "Belief in the 'truth' of the Bible cannot be a substitute for historical study. We may wish that this was the case, that God had given us a Bible that would be instantly and correctly understandable by any modern man. But he has not done so, just as he has not given us a Bible with a guaranteed text (instead of one that has to be determined by the techniques of textual criticism) or in a modern *lingua franca* (instead of having to be laboriously translated into many different human tongues). The Bible needs interpretation, and historical criticism is part of that process" (p.132)

Robert H. Stein was born and raised in New Jersey in the United States. He received a BS degree from Rutgers University before pursuing postgraduate work at Fuller Theological Seminary (BD), Andover New Theological Seminary (STM), and finally received the PhD from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1968. After graduating from Princeton, Stein served as Professor of NT at Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota for almost 30 years before joining the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) in Louisville, Kentucky in 1997 as Professor of NT Interpretation. He retired from SBTS in 2005.²⁷⁰ Though Stein has a lengthy list of publications to his name, he is perhaps best known as the evangelical ‘torchbearer’ for the 2SH, having written numerous articles and books in favour of the theory, as well as serving as an advocate for evangelical redaction criticism.²⁷¹

Stein’s *tour de force* in the field of synoptic studies was published in 1987 under the title *The Synoptic Problem*.²⁷² In 2001, a revised form was published, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels*,²⁷³ which included much the same material, along with some additional rebuttals to critics and more examples of the utility of redaction criticism. Both editions have served as textbooks in undergraduate and postgraduate courses, as the author of this thesis can attest.

The main strength of Stein’s *Studying*, and perhaps its greatest weakness, is its complete endorsement of the 2SH, including its arguments for literary dependency, Markan priority, and the existence of Q. Its strength lies in the fact that Stein

²⁷⁰ The biographical details were gleaned from James A. Smith, “Southern Faculty Additions Entail ‘Quantum Leap Forward,’” *Baptist Press News*, 22 Apr 1997, as well as Robert H. Stein, “The Benefits of an Author-Oriented Approach to Hermeneutics,” *JETS* 44/3 (September 2001) 451–66 at p. 451, and back matter from Robert H. Stein, *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible: Playing by the Rules* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994, 2011).

²⁷¹ See, for example, his defence of both in his article, “Luke 1:1-4 and Traditiongeschichte,” *JETS* 26/4 (Dec 1983) 421-430.

²⁷² Robert H. Stein, *The Synoptic Problem: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1987).

²⁷³ Stein, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels: Origin and Interpretation* (Baker Books, 2001). All references and quotations are from this edition.

systematically provided several the arguments for the 2SH from an evangelical point-of-view, but the weakness within is its failure to engage with other theories in a meaningful way. These issues are further discussed below.

In the first chapter, Stein acknowledged that many bible readers, especially those “who believe the Synoptic Gospels were written under divine guidance,” may prefer to attribute the similarities and differences simply to the Holy Spirit, but he showed that such an explanation is inadequate.²⁷⁴ Stein offered four arguments for literary dependence among the synoptics. First, he pointed to the large amount of verbal agreements between the synoptics, even providing a three-column comparison of three parallel pericopae (Mt 19:13-15 = Mk 10:13-16 = Lk 18:15-17; Mt 22:23-33 = Mk 12:18-27 = Lk 20:27-40; Mt 24:4-8 = Mk 13:5-8 = Lk 21:8-11) and encouraging his readers to underline and highlight various agreements to demonstrate the remarkable degree of verbal coincidence. Such common wording could only indicate a common source, either written or oral.²⁷⁵ Second, the high degree of agreement in order is evidence of literary dependence among the synoptics. Stein provided three tables that demonstrated the lengthy parallels in arrangement of material, along with the rearrangements of sayings and events (which show that the evangelists did not give strict chronological order).²⁷⁶ Third, Stein offered “one of the most persuasive arguments for literary interdependence,” namely the agreement of parenthetical material such as “let the reader understand” (Mt 24:15 = Mk 13:14), which could not merely reflect reliance on the same oral tradition.²⁷⁷ Fourth, Stein

²⁷⁴ Stein, *Studying*, 34.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 29-34.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 36-37.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 38. The first to make this argument seems to have been J.C. Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899; 2nd edn, 1909) 56. Stein noted arguments (for example, Gundry, *Matthew*, 481-482) that the phrase came from Jesus and was directed to readers of Daniel, but considered that the most obvious meaning referred to a reader of the gospel in hand, not Daniel, which pointed to its addition by the evangelists. Further, see the article by Ernest Best, “The Gospel of Mark: Who was the Reader?” *Irish Biblical Studies* 11.3 (1989) 124-132, which argued that the parenthetical

argued that Luke's description of the "many" of Lk 1:1 indicated the author's access to "written materials on the life and teachings of Jesus."²⁷⁸

Stein devoted chapter two to his case for Markan priority. Again, he systematically provided argument after argument that the textual evidence best fit his preferred hypothesis. First, Mark's brevity, as compared to Matthew and Luke, can better be explained by the addition of material by the latter two to their Markan source than by Mark's abridgement of them. In fact, though Mark's gospel is shorter, his accounts are often longer than his counterparts, which would not be expected of an abridger.²⁷⁹ Second, Stein argued that "Mark's poorer writing style"²⁸⁰ can easily be seen to have been improved by Matthew and Luke. One example, of several provided by Stein, is Mark's choice of "pallet" (*krabatton*) in 2:4 instead of the more proper "bed" (*kline* and its forms) preferred by Matthew and Luke (Mt 9:2,6; Lk 5:18, 19), which points to an adjustment by Matthew and Luke.²⁸¹ Mark's writing style is also evinced by his frequent Aramaisms,²⁸² which Matthew and Luke almost completely left out. Stein also provided another category to reflect Mark's poorer literary work, namely "redundancies," or places where Mark's wording was unnecessarily verbose and repetitious, but Stein's explanation of the nuance of such

remark was a gloss provided as a private note for the public reader of the gospel in worship.

²⁷⁸ Stein, *Studying*, 44. For further discussion of the repeated role Luke's prologue has played in synoptic arguments, see below, Chapter X, 3.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 52-55.

²⁸⁰ This is a favourite argument of 2SH proponents such as Bruce M. Metzger, *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, and Content* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1965) 81, who argued that "it would be contrary to all analogy that well-written documents should be so revised as to produce a crude one." Otherwise, see E.P. Sanders, *The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition* (SNTSMS 9; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) 255, who wrote, "It certainly suited Mark's redactional style to write vernacular Greek more than it did the style of Matthew and Luke, but we cannot thereby prove Mark to be the earliest of the gospels."

²⁸¹ *Studying*, 57. Though see note 11 for Stein's acknowledgement that not all have been persuaded by arguments for Mark's poor grammar.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 58-63. Stein offered 7 parallel passages with Markan Aramaisms – Mt 10:1-2 = Mk 3:14-17 = Lk 6:13-14; Mt 9:25 = Mk 5:40-41 = Lk 8:54; Mt 15:3-6 = Mk 7:9-13; Mt 15:30 – Mk 7:32-35; Mt 26:39 = Mk 14:35-36 = Lk 22:41-42; Mt 27:33-34 = Mk 15:22-23 = Lk 23:33 = Mt 27:46 = Mk 15:34.

an argument in favour of Markan priority was too concise to easily follow.²⁸³ Third, Stein referenced the many instances where Mark's account contains the "harder reading," where less flattering things were said of Jesus, of the three synoptics. In case after case, Stein showed how Matthew and Luke provided accounts which removed the difficult saying, a process much easier to explain than one by which Mark added them in after reading Matthew and Luke.²⁸⁴ Next, in his defence of Markan priority, Stein referred to a lack of agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark, first in wording and then in order. Stein acknowledged the criticism provided by the AH advocate B.C. Butler that the Lachmannian argument from order merely shows Mark to be a common element, but insisted that Lachmann's explanations of Matthean and Lukan divergence from Mark gave solid evidence that Lachmann was right.²⁸⁵ Disappointingly, though Stein considered the argument from order to be an almost "irrefutable" argument for Markan priority, he did not provide any textual evidence for it. He did, however, offer several pericopae to explain his next bit of evidence based on literary agreements. Stein provided synoptic comparisons of the healing of the paralytic (Mt 9:1-2 = Mk 2:1-5 = Lk 5:17-20) and the release of Barabbas (Mt 27:15-22 = Mk 15:6-13 = Lk 23:18-21) in order to offer clear evidence of, first Matthew, then Luke, omitting explanatory material provided by Mark.²⁸⁶ The final arguments provided by Stein in favour of Markan priority (before moving on to argue for Q) may perhaps offer the most difficulty for evangelical readers, though Stein showed little unease with their rationale. Stein

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 66.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 67-73.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 74. He cited the following phenomena which Markan priority best explains: (1) Why at times Matthew and Mark agree against Luke—Luke diverges from his Markan source whereas Matthew does not. (2) Why at times Mark and Luke agree against Matthew—Matthew diverges from his Markan source whereas Luke does not. (3) Why Matthew and Luke seldom agree against Mark—this would require a coincidental change on the part of Matthew and Luke of their Markan source in exactly the same manner.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 80.

considered his argument from the evangelists' redaction "probably the most weighty argument today in favor of Markan priority."²⁸⁷ Particularly, Stein preferred to focus on Matthew's presumed incorporation of and changes to Mark. Matthew's special emphases were seen in his frequent use of "son of David" without Markan and Lukan parallels, and in his "fulfilment motif" (where he used the phrase "and it was fulfilled") which are not found in Mark or Luke. Matthew repeatedly uses the Markan favourites "immediately" (*euthus*)²⁸⁸ and "for" (*gar*, as an explanatory) and incorporates many of Mark's usages of the historical present, a practice which Luke rarely followed. Though Stein offered these redaction-critical observations of Matthew's supposed use of Mark, he refrained from offering explanations as to why such editorial changes were acceptable. While he wrote as an evangelical, Stein was not overly concerned with offending evangelical sensitivities on the subject of redaction criticism.²⁸⁹ Lastly, Stein suggested that Mark's more primitive theology was evidence that it was prior. Stein based his argument entirely on titular form of "Lord" (*kyrios*), a noun which Matthew and especially Luke used to a much greater extent than Mark to describe Jesus.²⁹⁰ This suggested to Stein that the order Mk-Mt-Lk was well fitted to the explanation that the tendency of the tradition that proclaimed Jesus as *kyrios* grew over time. While Stein considered that none of the above arguments absolutely proved Markan priority, their "cumulative weight" strongly suggested it.²⁹¹

Stein's next chapter focused on the argument for and defence of Q. First he argued that Luke could not have known Matthew because: 1) Luke's Lack of

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 83.

²⁸⁸ Matthew never incorporates this Markan favourite outside of his Markan parallels.

²⁸⁹ Though he made sure to include a section on redaction criticism in his new edition of 2001. See discussion below.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 91-94. Head, *Christology*, 148-173, develops this argument much more fully.

²⁹¹ Stein, *Studying*, 96. See above, Chapter VIII, B, for a discussion on the effectiveness of 'cumulative weight' arguments by J. Wenham and Streeter.

Matthean Additions to the Triple Tradition; 2) Luke's Different Context for the Q Material; 3) Luke's More Primitive Context for the Q Material; 4) Matthew's and Luke's Lack of Agreement in Order; 5) Luke's Lack of M Material.²⁹² Stein also considered whether Q was a single written document, more than one written document, or not written at all. The fact that so much of the double tradition included verbatim agreements seem to favour a common written source, but the lack of a clear order for Q seen in Matthew and Luke may indicate several written sources and/or oral tradition. Because of the unclear nature of Q, Stein doubted whether rescensions of Q could be identified (so Dale Allison and J.S. Kloppenborg) because the nature of such an undertaking "requires the building of hypothesis upon hypothesis."²⁹³ Stein concluded this chapter on Q by echoing the ideas of John Wenham.²⁹⁴ Wenham had suggested that, if Mark's gospel were lost and scholars had to determine its contents only from Matthew and Luke, it would be highly unlikely that modern scholars could accurately identify Markan tendencies, Markan theology, or the Markan community. Similarly, an accurate reconstruction of the Q community from the double tradition is most improbable.²⁹⁵

Though Stein generally refrained from considering contrary evidence to the 2SH in an in-depth manner, he devoted chapter four to the agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark. Realising that such agreements tended to reinforce the claims of doubters of a Q document, Stein explained this phenomenon from a 2SH

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 112. Importantly, he emphasized the importance of admitting our lack of ability to know with precision what the evangelists thought-processes were: "It is, of course, impossible to know what was going through the mind of Luke when he wrote and why he might have omitted this or that account from his Gospel. Such mental acts are beyond the capacity of the exegete to reconstruct with any certainty."

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 122. Stein's reluctance to delineate and stratify Q is a common evangelical 2SH theme. See Leslie Keylock's review of Dale C. Allison, *The Compositional History of Q* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997), in *JETS* 43/2 (June 2000) 328–329, where Keylock remarked, "We still await an evangelical work on Q."

²⁹⁴ John Wenham "Synoptic Independence and the Origin of Luke's Travel Narrative," *NTS* 27 (1981) 507–515.

²⁹⁵ Stein, *Studying*, 123.

perspective. He discounted finding any importance in common omissions²⁹⁶ and instead chose to consider the verbal agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark. Most agreements were considered by Stein to be “irrelevant” to those who adhere to the 2SH because they can be explained in a relatively simple fashion.²⁹⁷ Stein’s explanations were that Mt-Lk agreements against Mk could be attributed to: a) Coincidental changes to Mark, as would be expected of any independent authors working with a common source; b) Mark-Q overlaps;²⁹⁸ c) textual corruption; and d) overlapping oral traditions which were “more extensive” than the written ones offered by the 2SH.²⁹⁹ Stein concluded this brief handling of the Mt-Lk agreements against Mk, all of which he regrettably labeled “minor,”³⁰⁰ by mentioning several occurrences where John’s language agreed with Matthew and Luke against Mark, but failed to offer any detailed comparison to demonstrate that John’s independent agreements were as substantial as those of Mt-Lk.³⁰¹

Chapter five of *Studying* merely summarized Stein’s thesis that the 2SH remains the best available solution to the SP. Chapter six dealt with the utility of source criticism, and in it Stein wholeheartedly advocated both source and redaction criticism for gaining “hermeneutical insights.”³⁰² One example of such insight can be

²⁹⁶ i.e. vocabulary, phrases, and pericopae in Mark not included by Matthew and Luke. So many of the “common omissions” are considered to be found in places of Mark-Q overlap that 2SH advocates can easily dismiss them. So John S. Kloppenborg, *Excavating Q* (Minneapolis: Fortress; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000) 34, and E. Earle Ellis, *Christ and the Future in New Testament History* (NovTSup 97, Leiden: Brill, 2000) 40, though Ellis concluded that the common omissions of material in Mk 2:1-12 and Mk 14:61-64 reveal the possibility of “pre-synoptic episodes” in circulation as congregational readings. Ellis’ explanation sounds less like Q and more like the pre-synoptic apocalypse described by D. Wenham above.

²⁹⁷ Stein, *Studying*, 125-126.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 137. He considered that these were too easily dismissed by Q sceptics, but without a thorough rationale for their existence. A careful discussion of the Mark-Q overlaps from a 2SH perspective can be found in C.M. Tuckett, *The Revival of the Griesbach Hypothesis: An Analysis and Appraisal* (SNTSMS 44; Cambridge and New York: CUP, 1983) chapters 7-8. Otherwise Goodacre, *Case*, 164, esp. n.39.

²⁹⁹ See *Studying*, 138. Stein relied almost entirely on Streeter’s (*The Four Gospels*, 306-325) argument that harmonization is the most common form of textual corruption.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 142. Otherwise, Goodacre, *Case*, 152-169.

³⁰¹ Stein, *Studying*, 140.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 163.

found, said Stein, in a comparison of the synoptic sayings on divorce (Mt 19:0 = Mk 10:11-12; Mt 5:31-32 = Lk 16:18), where Matthew's exception clause reveals Matthew's understanding of Jesus statement, which was originally closer to the stricter versions in Mark and Luke but meant as hyperbole.³⁰³

The first six chapters formed section one of *Studying* and filled the majority of the book's pages. In section two, Stein concerned himself with appreciation for form criticism and its value in recognizing the role oral tradition played in the formation of the gospels.³⁰⁴

The final section of *Studying* contained three chapters on redaction criticism (RC). It was in this section that Stein's acumen with the SP was most obvious. After briefly discussing the history of redaction criticism, he offered three questions which the method attempts to answer:

- 1).What unique theological emphases did the Evangelist place on the materials he used?
- 2).What theological purposes did the Evangelist have in writing?
- 3).What was the *Sitz im Leben* out of which the Evangelist wrote his Gospel?³⁰⁵

The process Stein used for determining Luke and Matthew's theological emphases was a straight-forward side- by comparison of the double and triple tradition to see where each evangelist adapted his Markan source.³⁰⁶ Stein offered the careful

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 164. See also Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009) 190 n.88, for a list of scholars, including Stein, who have appealed to Jesus' statements in Mark and Luke as rhetorical overstatement, which Matthew clearly understood.

³⁰⁴ Chapter seven was entirely devoted to summarizing the foundational premises of early form critics, while chapter eight was an apologetic essay on the generally reliable nature of the oral tradition behind the gospels. Chapter nine was devoted to "The Value of Form Criticism." Stein, *Studying*, 221, cautioned that, though the oral tradition was trustworthy, the evangelists were guided "into all the truth" by the Holy Spirit, and even their paraphrases of Jesus' sayings are to be viewed as interpretations, not inventions.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 241.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 243-251. Thus Luke's interest in healing (Mt 26:51-54 = Mk 14:47 = Lk 22:50-51), the Holy Spirit (Mt 4:1,12 = Mk 1:12, 14 = Lk 4:1-2, 14) and prayer (Mt 3:13, 16 = Mk 1:9-10 = Lk 3:21-22; Mt

observation, from comparing the audiences intended in the parallel passages Mt 18:12-14 and Lk 15:3-7, that Matthew adapted the Parable of the Lost Sheep (which was closer to Q in Luke's version) to emphasize restoration of kin instead of Jesus' confrontations with the Pharisees (as in Luke).³⁰⁷ This chapter provided one of Stein's few attempts at offering an apologetic to evangelical readers:

The church through the centuries has believed that the Evangelists possessed divine authority to do this. As a result, the church is doubly blessed, for now, along with the more authentic parable of Jesus found in Luke, we also have a divinely inspired commentary in Matthew on how this parable was applied to a different situation. This in turn gives us greater insight on how we should apply it to our situation today.³⁰⁸

Stein also offered some comments on Markan redaction criticism, where he mentioned that Markan seams (where Mark connected separate isolated materials; cf. 1:21-23; 4:1-2), repeated use of terms such as “for” (*gar*), summary statements (cf. 1:14-15; 3:7-12; 6:53-56; 9:30-32; 10:32-34) and Mark's variation from Q. Oddly, Stein admitted that without knowledge of Mark's available sources, we can never know what he omitted, but then Stein attempted to explain what Mark selected. Though in a chapter on redaction criticism, his conclusions regarding Markan redaction were simply part of a form-critical analysis of Mark.³⁰⁹

16:13 = Mk 8:27 = Lk 9:18; Mt 17:1-2 = Mk 9:2 = Lk 9:28-29) are seen in his additions to Mark's accounts not found in Matthew. Likewise, Matthew's emphasis upon “understanding” (Mt 13:10-19, 23 = Mk 4:10-15, 20 = Lk 8:9-12, 15) and the fulfilment of Scripture (Mt 8:16-17 = Mk 1:32-34 = Lk 4:40-41; Mt 12:15-21 = Mk 3:7-12 = Lk 6:17-19; Mt 13:34-35 = Mk 4:33-34) are seen in his variations from Mark.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 258-261

³⁰⁸ Stein, *Studying*, 261. Similar points were made above by Ellis, *Reading*, 14 and R. Gundry, *Matthew*, 640.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 262. Stein admitted as much when he said of Mark's redaction “we are primarily dependent upon form-critical analysis in order to understand the nature of the sources used.” He emphasized the role of discipleship and the cross found in Mk 8:31-10:45 and rightly noted their importance in Mark, but failed to show a distinction between Mark and his presumed sources to conclusively prove that these emphases were the result of Mark's own redactional activity. See *Studying*, pp. 268-272.

As mentioned above, Stein serves as perhaps the best-known evangelical 2SH advocate of modern times, and *Studying* can be seen as his *apologia* on the theory's behalf to university and post-graduate students in their initial studies of the SP. Given Stein's evangelical convictions, it is surprising that so little is said in defence of many aspects of historical criticism with which many evangelicals have been debating for decades. Instead, *Studying* offers analysis of pericopae and argument over long discussions of the appropriateness of one inspired writer adapting the work of another. Stein's concern that the oral and written traditions of the early church be considered reliable are obvious throughout *Studying* (see chapter 8), but the technical issues of priority and redaction are more heavily emphasized. One major weakness of *Studying* is its almost exclusive interaction with the 2GH and failure to consider other alternatives. A student who reads *Studying* could well assume that those two theories, the 2SH and 2GH, are the only viable options, with the 2SH being the only logical choice.³¹⁰

H. David Wenham (1945-present): Pre-Synoptic Traditions

If the scholarship of John Wenham exemplified the best of the first generation of modern British evangelical scholars, then the work of his sons, Gordon and David, represents some of the most important contributions made by the next generation. While Gordon's career has been focused on the OT, David has followed in his father's steps by working on primarily NT concerns, though with his own unique contributions to the field. Having grown up in Bristol, David first went to Cambridge, where he read theology, and ultimately received the PhD from Manchester University under the guidance of F.F. Bruce. After serving as Theological Students' Secretary with Inter-Varsity Fellowship (now UCCF), he taught in India until he returned to

³¹⁰ This is unfortunate because Stein himself is uncertain of the nature of Q but a staunch believer in Markan priority, two traits which would seem to cause him to interact more fully with the FH.

England in 1979 to Tyndale House, where he directed the Gospels Research Project. He edited or co-edited the entire six-volume *Gospel Perspectives* series, published between 1980 and 1986, with each volume reinforcing the historical reliability of the gospels in a scholarly manner.³¹¹ In 1983, he moved to Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, where he eventually served as Dean and Vice-Principal for many years. In 2008, he returned to Bristol to join Trinity College as Vice-Principal and Tutor in NT.³¹² In addition to a lifetime of association with these evangelical institutions, David has been dedicated to parish ministry wherever he has worked. David is perhaps best known for his works on Paul and Jesus,³¹³ which argue for the general agreement of both, but he has also published widely on the gospels. The works of primary interest for this thesis are Wenham's lengthy article, "The Synoptic Problem Revisited: Some New Suggestions about the Composition of Mark 4:1-34,"³¹⁴ and his monograph *The Rediscovery of Jesus' Eschatological Discourse*.³¹⁵ Throughout his scholarly career, one can detect Wenham's great interest in the SP, and in his nuanced handling of the related issues of source and redaction criticism.

In "Revisited," Wenham challenged his audience to resist the urge to rely on the fact that most 'experts' in NT criticism endorsed the 2SH because "it is all too easy to accept a generally accepted idea on inadequate grounds,"³¹⁶ and went on to show some of the weaknesses in many of the arguments for Markan priority.³¹⁷ In particular, he refuted the appeal to Matthew's borrowing of Mark's quotations of the

³¹¹ Blomberg, *Historical*, 9.

³¹² Biographical information found at Trinity College's staff website: [<http://www.trinity-bris.ac.uk/david-wenham>, accessed 22 Dec 2011].

³¹³ D. Wenham, *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); *Paul and Jesus: The True Story* (London: SPCK, 2002); *Did St Paul Get Jesus Right? The Gospel According to Paul* (Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2010).

³¹⁴ *Tyndale Bulletin* 23 (1972) 3-38.

³¹⁵ (*Gospel Perspectives* 4; Sheffield: JSOT, 1984).

³¹⁶ D. Wenham, "Revisited," 5.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 8-11.

LXX. The argument was based on Matthew's habit of providing conservative LXX quotations when following Mark but less exact LXX quotations in non-Markan pericopae. Wenham argued that, unless one assumed Markan priority, this characteristic of Matthew could just as easily be explained by the fact that Mark tended to quote the LXX on the lips of his characters as part of the narrative he took from Matthew, whereas Matthew's editorial quotations of the LXX could have been most easily be eliminated by Mark.³¹⁸ He also considered the statistical analysis of A.M. Honoré which argued that the 2GH was impossible, but Wenham pointed out Honoré's fundamentally flawed assumptions that Luke did not know Matthew's gospel and that an editor would not use all of his sources in an unbiased manner. Further, Wenham doubted whether any statistical analysis of the SP such as Honoré's could ever provide a conclusive answer because such an approach requires one to consider general numerical trends without dealing with "the possibility that an author may act in one way in one part of his writing and in another way in another part," i.e. it neglects "the all important human factor."³¹⁹ But, if the 2SH with its Markan-priority component was based on uncertain assumptions, which solution to the SP did Wenham advocate? He turned next to Mark 4 to provide clues.

In Mark 4, Wenham noted three places (4:10-13, 30-32, 33-34) where it could be argued that Mark's gospel contains evidence of its author's editorial activity. In the first passage, Wenham noted the awkwardness of Mark's version, where Jesus offers the parable of the Sower, the disciples then ask Jesus about parables (plural) in verse 10, but then Jesus questions them, "Do you not understand this parable...?"

This shift back to the singular had no obvious reason. Thus, verses 11-12 seemed an

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 12-13. See also D.A. Carson, "Matthew," vol. 8, p16 n. 39 in Frank E. Gaebelein, ed., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), where Carson, though a 2SH proponent, also noted weaknesses to the argument for Markan priority from LXX quotations.

³¹⁹ D. Wenham, "Revisited," 17.

odd fit. Wenham argued that Mark's switch to the imperfect in verse 11 – “καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς” – when he would normally would have used an aorist or historic present verb was “an indication that the editor recognized that he was interrupting the original sequence.”³²⁰ Likewise, the “double-barrelled” description of Jesus' hearers (“those about him with the twelve”) perhaps reflected the editorial decision to conflate expressions from different sources.³²¹ Wenham felt his most important argument for Mark having inserted verses 11-12 into an already established tradition was in the comparison of verses 10-13 with the next section, verses 14-18. The two sections flowed nicely without verses 11-12 in between, a strong indication that an editor added those verses later.

In the second passage, Wenham argued that the parable of the Mustard Seed in verse 30-32 also reflected Mark's editorial work in its awkward repetition of the phrases “when it is sown” and “on the earth.”³²² Wenham posited that Mark introduced the difficult wording in his attempt take a tradition similar to Luke's account (Lk 13:18-19), which includes no reference to the smallness of the seed or largeness of the vegetable, and add to it the size references. In the third passage, verses 33-34, Wenham considered that Mark's summary statement reflected the author's addition of 34b (“but privately to his own disciples he explained everything”)³²³ as a stand-alone to the original double statement of 33-34a. However, Wenham admitted that the evidence here was less decisive than in the previous cases.³²⁴

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

³²² *Ibid.*, 21.

³²³ Wenham even offered that perhaps Mark included 34b as an “after-thought.”

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

In these three sections of Mark 4, Wenham offered plausible arguments for evidence of earlier, pre-Markan forms. While this in itself did not contradict the 2SH, Wenham suggested that evidence of pre-Markan traditions opened the door for reconsidering solutions to the SP which did not assume Markan priority.³²⁵ He then offered a potential explanation of Mark's editorial procedure. Back to the first passage (verses 10-12), Wenham argued that the traditional 2SH arguments that Mark's version is most primitive and that Matthew and Luke sought to "alleviate the harshness" of Mark's wording were flawed.³²⁶ Rather than seeing Matthew's pericope as "a superbly edited amplification of the Marcan equivalent," Wenham opted for the primitive nature of the Matthean form. Mark's familiarity with something akin to the Matthean form allows that Mark reworded Matthew, used Pauline expressions, and conflated Matthew's allusion to Isaiah 6:10 with the LXX of Isaiah 6:9 and 10. Thus, Mark 4:10-13 could be seen as Mark fitting in a compressed form of a Matthean-like explanation of the purpose of parables with his primary tradition of the parable of the Sower and its explanation.³²⁷

Again, in the second section under consideration (the parable of the Mustard Seed), Matthew's use of Mark is hardly obvious given such a slight prevalence of Markan material. If the 2SH were assumed, Matthew would have opted almost solely for the form in Q instead of Mark.³²⁸ Indeed, Matthew's version shows much more in common with Luke,³²⁹ which is surprising if Matthew were working from Mark.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 26. He showed that the arguments of Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (1947: ET, London: SCM Press, 1963) for Targumic influence upon Mark's wording were "flimsy," and challenged the assumption that Matthean and Lukan versions were somehow less harsh than Mark's because all three agree that Jesus gave parables as a "privation and punishment."

³²⁷ D. Wenham, "Revisited," 31.

³²⁸ See John M. Rist, *On the Independence of Matthew and Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978) 54 for a similar argument that the parable is less Q and more M material, as well as the argument that Mark's dependence on Matthew for the parable is more likely than vice-versa.

³²⁹ D. Wenham, "Revisited," 32. Otherwise Robert H. Stein, *Mark* (Baker Exegetical Commentary; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008) 235.

Wenham acknowledged that Matthew's (13:32) μέν... δὲ sentence agrees with Mark in comparing the size of the seed and plant. Instead of seeing the size comparison as an example of Matthew following Mark, Wenham wondered if the explanation that Mark knew the Lukan tradition but sought to incorporate Matthew's size comparison might not better explain the data.³³⁰ Not only does this explanation fully incorporate the similarities and differences between Matthew and Mark, it also offers a possible reason for Mark's inelegant wording.³³¹

In the third section, Mk 4:33-34, Mark may have acknowledged his failure to incorporate all of the parables of Mt 13 with his reference to "many such parables" in Mk 4:13, as well as his tacking on of 4:34b in the place of Matthew's parable of the Tares.³³² Wenham alluded to the fact that a potentially stronger case for Matthew's priority could be made by comparing the three synoptic versions of the parable of the Sower, but space did not allow him to continue the investigation. He offered such a

³³⁰ D. Wenham, "Revisited," 33.

³³¹ Wenham's detailed explanation is as follows: "Mark was familiar with a version of the parable of the Mustard Seed very like Luke's and presumably going back to a common original. He turned the opening phrase round to read 'a mustard seed which when it is sown on the ground' instead of 'a mustard seed which a man sowed . . .'. His original text probably then continued like Luke's: 'it grows up and becomes a tree'; and his difficulties arose because he tried to conflate that version with the Matthean one adding in the references to size. Having begun the parable with a relative clause, 'which when it is sown on the ground', he could not transfer the neat μέν . . . δέ relative clause directly from Matthew, 'which is smaller than all seeds, but when it is grown is larger than all vegetables'. He could not say 'which when it is sown on the ground, which is smaller than all seeds . . .'; and so naturally enough he resorted to a participle, 'which when it is sown on the earth, being smaller than all seeds . . .'. This worked satisfactorily for the first half of Matthew's μέν... δὲ note; but he could hardly make the second half of the note, 'but when it is grown is larger than all vegetables', into a parallel participial clause. And this explains why he broke down in the middle and reverted to his original construction, 'when it is, sown, it grows up and becomes . . .'. Probably his original version read 'and becomes a tree' at this point; but as Mark had not yet incorporated the second half of Matthew's explanatory note, he put instead 'becomes larger than all vegetables'. This in turn meant that he could not proceed as intended with a description of the plant becoming a tree; so he paraphrased—'and makes larger branches'. Finally, having referred to the branches once, he doesn't refer to the birds as in the tree's branches, as do Matthew and Luke; but using a phrase from Ezekiel 17 he speaks of them lodging 'under its shade.'"

³³² D. Wenham, "Revisited," 36.

comparison in a later article³³³ with the result that Matthew's version of the parable was the most original.

Wenham made clear that he did not consider his evidence to be "proof" of Matthean priority, nor did it render Markan priority unthinkable.³³⁴ His stated goal was to awaken NT scholarship to the notion that "the Synoptic Problem needs a serious reconsideration and that unpopular solutions should not be dismissed too quickly."³³⁵

Wenham offered an even greater investigation into synoptic relationships in 1984 in *The Rediscovery of Jesus' Eschatological Discourse*. His *Rediscovery* was the only single author volume of the *Gospels Perspectives* series, and in it, Wenham argued for the prevalence of a pre-synoptic version of Jesus' eschatological discourse. Interestingly, in the introduction, Wenham made statements consistent with his "Revisited," but also expressed a different opinion regarding Markan priority. First, he made clear that Markan priority was not assumed in *Rediscovery*, nor was it assumed that Matthew or Luke did not offer early non-Markan traditions. However, Wenham admitted up-front that "the book will in fact end up concluding that Mark's gospel was used by the authors of Matthew and Luke." Thus Wenham approached *Rediscovery* with openness concerning synoptic issues, with the stated reasons that scholarly uncertainty demanded as much and that the author's own research into Paul's eschatological teaching showed that Paul was familiar with some of synoptic traditions, even those unique to Matthew and Luke.³³⁶ Wenham also refused to accept a false dichotomy between tradition and redaction when considering an evangelist's

³³³ D. Wenham, "The Interpretation of the Parable of the Sower," *New Testament Studies* 20 (1974) 299-319.

³³⁴ D. Wenham, "Revisited," 36.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 38.

³³⁶ D. Wenham, *Rediscovery*, 6.

use of his sources.³³⁷ Thus, when approaching questions of redaction and tradition, Wenham sought to offer “a delicate weighing of possibilities.”³³⁸ In particular, Wenham looked for parallels with “a series of agreements or a particularly unusual agreement” for signs of a common tradition or redactional activity.³³⁹ While space will not allow for a complete consideration of all of the detailed arguments put forth by Wenham, a consideration of the first chapter, in which the author laid the groundwork for the rest of the book, can offer an adequate understanding of the careful and in-depth manner in which Wenham handled synoptic issues.

Chapter 1 contained a study of the parable of the Watchman (Mk 13:34-36 = Lk 12:36-38), which comes near the end of the discourse. One may summarise Wenham’s findings in the following manner: 1) Luke offers the most conservative reworking of a pre-synoptic parable of the watchman, though he did make his own substantial changes; 2) Mark also worked with the same tradition, even offering the more original wording at times, but transferred the introduction from the parable of the Talents; 3) While Matthew does not include the parable, he demonstrates familiarity with the pre-synoptic version and offers some clues to its original wording. How can we know Luke offers the most conservative retelling of the parable? Wenham argued that Luke’s handling of the Q material in this section demonstrated a strong link with Matthew and that one would expect him to reproduce these verses, 12:35-38, in the same conservative fashion.³⁴⁰ However, Luke changed the single

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 7. He argued that, while arguments from vocabulary and prevalent themes can be useful, they do not necessarily prove an author’s redactional activity because of the small quantity we have of any evangelists’ writing. Likewise, even when an author is working with a reliable tradition, he might have “selected material from the tradition that interests him and/or that he has re-expressed a received tradition in his own words and idiom.”

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 12. He did not limit his consideration of parallels to the gospels, but also turned to Paul’s writings and Revelation, both of which contain a considerable amount of eschatological material.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

watchman of the pre-synoptic tradition to several watchful servants.³⁴¹ Evidence for this change lies in the fact that Mark contains one doorkeeper, though he had just mentioned servants (inexplicable if Mark already had a tradition of more than one servant watching), that it seems less plausible for the story to include a group of servants waiting up, and the fact that Luke's next parable (with the almost identical wording in 12:43-44) has a single steward.³⁴² Wenham did not offer a lengthy explanation for Luke's change to the plural, but posited that his use of the plural in "You (ὁμεῖς) be like a man" was better fitted with several servants and that the picture of a group of servants was more easily applicable to all Christians.³⁴³ While the beatitude of Lk 12:37 is most likely pre-Lukan (especially considering the "unLukanness" of the language) with its resultant promise of the master girding himself and serving, the beatitude of 12:38 appears to be a Lukan tag-on.³⁴⁴

Wenham spent a great deal of time attempting to demonstrate the manner and purpose of Mark's adapting the introduction to the parable of the talents to the parable of the watchman. He found several connections between Mt 25:13-15 and Mk 13:32-34, including the similar injunctions to keep awake, the occurrence of a man going away immediately after the a saying about not knowing the time of return, and the strong verbal parallels vis-à-vis the man going on a journey.³⁴⁵ If a link between the two passages were allowed, which one was more original? Wenham agreed with

³⁴¹ Wenham based his arguments on previous work done by Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 53-55, Jacques Dupont, 'La Parabole du maître qui Rentre dans la nuit,' in *Mélanges bibliques en hommage au R. P. Bédaride Rigaux* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1970) 89-116, and Alfons Weiser, *Die Knechtsgleichnisse Der Synoptischen Evangelien* (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1971) 123-177.

³⁴² D. Wenham, *Rediscovery*, 21-23.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 22.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 29-30. Indeed, this beatitude at the end of the sentence is unlike any other in the synoptics. However, given the length and complexity of the beatitude (the master girding, then reclining, then serving, coming in second or third watch, then finding) begun in 12:37 and extending to 12:38, it is not hard to imagine Jesus tagging it on to reinforce the initial point of blessedness.

³⁴⁵ Mt 25:14 has ἀνθρώπος ἀποδημῶν and Mk 14:34 has ἀνθρώπος ἀπόδημος ἀφείς, both without real parallels in their respective gospels.

Dupont and Weiser that Mark began with the introduction to the parable of the Talents, making his own adjustments, but then diverged into the parable of the Watchmen, which would explain the awkward fit of the servants with the doorkeeper in 14:34 and the long journey of 14:34 with the apparent overnight away of 14:35. One reason for such an abrupt change from the Talents to the Watchman could have been Mark's interest in addressing the theme of wakefulness (as seen in verses 33, 35, and 37), whereas the parable of the Talents has a decidedly different emphasis.

Though Matthew did not have the parable of the Watchman, Wenham considered one verse, Mt 24:42, helpful in reconstructing the original pre-synoptic form of the parable. Matthew had access to the Lukan form of the parable of the watching servants, which contained the same word for "watch" (φυλακῆ) that Matthew used in his parable of the thief. Wenham suggested that Matthew moved the φυλακῆ from parable of the Watchmen to the Thief, thus leaving some remnant of the former and indicating that Luke's φυλακῆ was original.³⁴⁶ Though Wenham found himself in general agreement with Jeremias, Dupont and Weiser that the original pre-synoptic parable included a single watchman, that Mark's introduction was possibly taken from the parable of the talents, and that Lk 12:38 was a secondary addition by Luke, he disagreed that Lk 12:37 was secondary.³⁴⁷ He also rejected Weiser's proposed short reconstruction of the original parable, but offered one of his own:

(It is) like a man waiting for his master, when he will return from a
(wedding) feast, so that when he comes and knocks he may

³⁴⁶ D. Wenham, *Rediscovery*, 38-39. The same point was also later made by Richard J. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995) 97. Perhaps more substantially, Wenham argued that Matthew's ποία of 24:42 was the only original word kept by Matthew but preserved by neither Mark nor Luke.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

immediately open to him. Blessed it that servant whom the master shall find watching, when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will gird himself and sit him (his servant) down and serve him.

So then keep awake. For you do not know in what watch the master of the house comes, whether in the first, or in the second or in the third, lest coming suddenly he finds you sleeping.³⁴⁸

In the remainder of *Rediscovery*, Wenham painstakingly considered other elements of the discourse, including: other eschatological parables (ch 2); Q material (ch 3); Luke 17:22-37 (ch 4); the ‘desolating sacrilege’ tradition (ch 5); the *parousia*, fig-tree, and sayings about the end (chapters 6-8). However, not all the material in this section of the synoptics was originally part of the eschatological discourse, so Wenham concluded that Mk 9:13-11 (sayings about appearing before authorities) and Mt 24:10-12 (dire sayings about betrayals, false prophets, lawlessness and love growing cold) were not original to the discourse.

Thus, Wenham provided a thorough foundation for the investigation into whether or not the synoptic writers each had independent access to a pre-synoptic tradition of Jesus’ eschatological discourse. Time and again, he found strong evidence from Paul, Revelation, and the synoptics that a traditional core of eschatological teachings was known to the biblical writers. Each argument was characterized by careful attention to the Greek, as well as guarded statements regarding probabilities and possibilities.³⁴⁹ Each synoptic author was found to offer

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

³⁴⁹ Wenham’s tendency to build one possibility upon another to form conclusions was criticized by J.D.G. Dunn, who wrote “the argument is a sequence of particular hypotheses which strictly speaking in probability terms can be regarded as cumulatively weakening the overall probability rather than strengthening it ($0.75^5 = 0.24$).” Review of D. Wenham, *Rediscovery*, *JTS* 38:1 (1987) 163-166 at p.165.

the most original forms at times, and each offered the least original at others, though Matthew stayed closest throughout the entire discourse, Mark tended to abbreviate it, and Luke worked most freely with it. Instead of the discourse containing a patchwork of unconnected sayings, Wenham made a strong case that “Jesus uttered one connected, coherent eschatological discourse from which the three Synoptists have chosen to produce different portions in different places.”³⁵⁰ Wenham mentioned that such “authoritative dominical teaching from a very early period”³⁵¹ shared by the synoptic evangelists was perhaps evidence for “something like the old ‘Ur Gospel’ hypothesis.”³⁵² Of course, such findings resist simplistic explanations based on one particular solution to the SP. Perhaps this is why Wenham’s work has been respected by scholars on the one hand,³⁵³ but his approach to the SP has had little replication in the scholarly world.³⁵⁴ As with his article of 1971, Wenham’s arguments in *Rediscovery* could not be seen as proof of a synoptic theory, but they demonstrate the importance of taking competing theories seriously and appreciating the complexity of determining underlying traditions in the synoptics.³⁵⁵

I. Peter M. Head (1961-present): Christology and the Synoptic Problem

³⁵⁰ Blomberg, *Historical*, 185. However, Wenham was not certain whether the tradition upon which the evangelists based their versions was oral or written. See *Rediscovery*, 367.

³⁵¹ *Rediscovery*, 372.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 369.

³⁵³ *Rediscovery* has been cited by many scholars in favour of the strong connection between the discourse and the actual teaching of Jesus. See, for example, Scot McKnight, *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2005) 142; R.T. Beckwith, *Calendar, Chronology and Worship: Studies in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (AJEC 61; Leiden: Brill 2005) 137; R. N. Longenecker. “Christological Materials in the Early Christian Communities,” in R. N. Longenecker. ed., *Contours of Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 47-78 at p.58; Blomberg, *Historical*, 183-185; W. D. Davies and E. P. Sanders, “Jesus from the Jewish point of view”, in *The Cambridge History of Judaism: Volume 3, The Early Roman Period*, W. Horbury, et al., eds (Cambridge: CUP, 1999) 634; C.A. Evans, “Mishnah and Messiah in Context,” in *Jesus in Context: Temple, Purity, and Restoration*, B. Chilton and C.A. Evans, eds. (New York: Brill, 1997) 109-144 at p. 140; Gregory C. Jenks, *The Origins and Early Development of the Antichrist Myth* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991) 200.

³⁵⁴ Because, as Wenham warned, scholars and commentators often too quickly move from source-critical considerations directly to form and redaction critical studies. See Wenham, “Revisited,” 4-5.

³⁵⁵ Indeed, it appears that one of Wenham’s aims was to show that the SP “is complex and has not been solved,” though he did not deny that it might eventually be solved. See *Rediscovery*, 369.

Peter Head was born in Melbourne, Australia in 1961. He received the BA in Theology from the Australian College of Theology in 1984, the MA in Biblical Hermeneutics from London School of Theology (formerly London Bible School) in 1986, and the PhD in NT Studies from St. Edmund's College, Cambridge in 1990 (most of which time he was the recipient of a Tyndale House research grant). He served as Lecturer in NT at Oak Hill College, London from 1990-1999, after which he took his current position as Sir Kirby Laing Research Fellow at Tyndale House and Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge. Among his many scholarly activities, he serves as editor of *Tyndale Bulletin* and co-organizer of the weblog *Evangelical Textual Criticism*.³⁵⁶ Head has a lengthy list of scholarly publications related to the NT, and the monograph of interest to this study is his *Christology and the Synoptic Problem: An argument for Markan Priority*,³⁵⁷ which was a revision of his PhD dissertation, done under the supervision of Morna Hooker.³⁵⁸

Head's *Christology* serves as an important contribution to the evangelical consideration of the SP because it demonstrates an honest scholarly attempt to approach synoptic differences from more than one point of view. Head examined both the 2SH and 2GH explanations of Matthean or Markan redaction of key texts, texts which are primarily used by 2SH advocates to argue that Matthew made changes to Mark which were christological in nature.³⁵⁹ To wit, Head considered whether arguments traditionally made by 2SH proponents that Matthew reflects a tendency to elevate Mark's christology were valid, as well as whether non-christological

³⁵⁶ This biographical information was gleaned from personal correspondence with Dr. Head and from Head's staff website at Tyndale House: [<http://www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk/index.php?page=peter-head>, accessed 13 Dec 2011].

³⁵⁷ (SNTSMS 94; Cambridge: CUP, 1997).

³⁵⁸ *Christology and the Synoptic Problem: An Assessment of one argument for Markan priority*.

³⁵⁹ Head, 18-20. Head documented the popularity of the Christological argument for Markan priority under the influence of German scholars such as Weisse, Ewald and Holtzmann, and its later growth among English-speaking scholars and ultimately its significant advocate in Streeter's *The Four Gospels* in 1924.

explanations might be just as logical.³⁶⁰ He also considered whether the 2GH assumption of Mark's redaction of Matthew offered an equally or more plausible explanation of the differences in those gospels. This redaction-critical approach was important because, according to Head, many of Streeter's arguments for the 2SH had been so weakened or rejected over the years that redaction criticism offered the best path to an objective solution to the SP.³⁶¹ In the first section (chapters 3-5), Head provided exegetical and redactional investigations into specific pericopae germane to the christological argument. In the second (chapters 6-7), he considered passages in which 2SH advocates argued that Matthew omitted Markan material because it reflects Jesus' ignorance or lack of ability. In the third section (chapters 8-12), Head compared the use of christological titles (Messiah, Son of David, Teacher, Lord, Son of Man, Son of God) and themes (the 'Messianic secret') in Matthew and Mark to see which synoptic theory best explained the data.

The three passages Head first considered were the rich young ruler (chapter 3) and Jesus' rejection at Nazareth (chapter 4); and Jesus' walking on water (chapter 5). The first, and perhaps the favourite of 2SH advocates, focused on the differences in Jesus' response to the young man. Matthew's proposed redaction of Mark's "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone" (Mk 10:18) is assumed by many 2SH proponents to indicate Matthew's care to avoid drawing a sharp contrast between Jesus and God.³⁶² The difficulty for advocates of Markan priority is that Matthew's changes to Mark's account involve more than the simple placement of the adjective "good," and are not nearly as explainable on christological grounds. Head showed that Matthew's changes in vocabulary reflect no clear christological motive, nor do

³⁶⁰ Head, 21. See Streeter's (*The Four Gospels*, 162) appeal to the evangelists' "reverential motive."

³⁶¹ Head, 23.

³⁶² See also arguments by Stein, *Studying*, 73, who agreed with Head that Matthew's version does little to correct potential misunderstandings of Mark's meaning.

his changes to the commandments required to be obeyed for eternal life.³⁶³ In fact, while Matthew's account seems to draw a weaker contrast between Jesus and God, it introduces an obscure question posed by Jesus, "Why do you ask me about what is good?" (Mt 19:17), in reply to a question that did not clearly seek such an answer – "What good thing must I do..." (19:16). Head argued that Matthew's account focuses more closely on the necessity of keeping the law and lessens the impossibility of obtaining eternal life, which could just as easily explain Matthew's changes as any christological concern.³⁶⁴ From a 2GH perspective, which envisions Mark having both Matthew and Luke before him, Mark's preference for Luke's placement of "good" and Jesus' response are explainable by the fact that Luke's account is clearer.³⁶⁵ Mark's requirement that following Jesus is essential to having eternal life does nothing to reflect a lower christology, but the evangelist's changes also reflect no obvious christological motive in general. Thus, Head found neither theory persuasive vis-à-vis this passage and christology. Head surmised that the standard 2SH christological explanations for Matthew's changes only came after the popularity of Markan priority and did not contribute to the formation of the 2SH.³⁶⁶

Chapter 4 dealt with Jesus' rejection at Nazareth (Mt 13:53-58 = Mk 6:1-6). From a 2SH viewpoint, Head considered most of Matthew's changes attributable to "stylistic and literary preferences."³⁶⁷ Head detected two major Matthean alterations. First, Matthew's description of Jesus as "son of" a carpenter (vs. Mark's "carpenter") and "his mother called Mary" (vs. Mark's "son of Mary") to have influenced redaction critics to posit several different potential motivations for Matthew's changes

³⁶³ Head, 52-53.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 55-57.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 60. This is demonstrated by Tatian's preference for the Markan-Lukan version of the question, as well as many NT manuscripts that have altered versions of Matthew's text to comport with the others.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 64-65.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 67.

to Mark, but none has proven convincing.³⁶⁸ The second significant change made by Matthew, from Head's perspective, was removing Mark's statement that Jesus could not do many miracles and replacing it with the more general statement that Jesus did not perform many miracles there. While 2SH proponents have tried to argue that this reflects a christologically-motivated change to avoid implying Jesus' inability to do something, Matthew does not make it clear that Jesus chose not perform many miracles. Indeed, according to Matthew, the dearth of miracles was attributable to the people's lack of belief, which could also imply Jesus' lack of ability for that reason.³⁶⁹ Again, Matthew's supposed changes to Mark were just as easily explained by non-christological arguments. Conversely, Head surmised that the standard 2GH argument that Mark's lack of mention of Jesus' father but inclusion of "son of Mary" served to emphasize the virgin birth is a dubious one, primarily because earlier in the gospel Mark chose not to include any mention of Matthean and Lukan accounts of that birth.³⁷⁰ Further, it is difficult to imagine Mark unlinking Jesus' inability to perform miracles with the people's unbelief on christological grounds.³⁷¹ Thus, Head found Matthean changes to Mark logical (though not necessarily based on christological concerns) but Markan changes to Matthew difficult to explain, which provided some force to arguments for the 2SH when considering this passage.

In chapter 5, Head included an examination of Jesus' walking on the water (Mt 14:22-36 = Mk 6:45-56) because it had major christological significance for the evangelists and it lacks a Lukan parallel. Using a 2SH approach, Head found that

Matthew made several adaptations to Mark's account which reveal Matthean

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 70-71. Head provided the following explanations: Matthew sought to emphasize the derogatory nature of the crowds' description to imply his illegitimacy; Matthew sought to disassociate Jesus from physical labour; Matthew had access to some independent tradition aside from Mark. Further, see Stein, *Mark*, 282.

³⁶⁹ Head, 72.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 81-82.

vocabulary and highlight christological issues – Jesus’ great distance from the shore (Mt 14:24); the extreme nature of the storm (Mt 14:24) (which echoed the “distress at sea” OT motif; Peter’s walking on the water (Mt 14:28-31); Peter’s vocative “Lord, save me! (Mt 14:30b); the similarity to Matthew’s account of Jesus’ stilling the storm (Mt 8:23-27); and the worship of Jesus offered by the disciples after the miracle (Mt 14:33).³⁷² Head found that, on the 2GH, while Markan changes to Matthew’s account can be described as consistent with Markan vocabulary and emphases, the theory is weak because of what Mark would have purposefully omitted, namely the worship of Jesus by the disciples and their confession of him as “Son of God.”³⁷³ Head concluded that the 2SH offers the best explanation of this pericope based on Matthew’s christological concerns and that the 2GH lacks, at the moment, a conclusive rebuttal.

Head’s chapters 6 and 7 tied together a variety of arguments made by 2SH advocates that Matthew’s redaction of Mark is explicable on christological grounds, namely; Matthew’s description of Jesus’ emotions; Jesus’ lack of ability; Jesus’ questions; language which describes other approaching and worshipping Jesus; and adaptations to the Passion narrative. When looking at Matthew’s mention of Jesus’ emotions, Matthew does seem to reflect less interest than Mark in the subject, but it is difficult to gauge the importance of this fact because most of Matthew’s failures to mention Jesus’ emotions occur in passages he greatly abbreviated (on the 2SH).³⁷⁴ Any significance to the argument that Matthew wished to portray a dispassionate Christ is also undermined by the several unique Matthean references to Jesus’ emotions, especially to Matthew’s repeated descriptions of Jesus’ compassion.³⁷⁵

³⁷² *Ibid.*, 88-90.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 96.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 100.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 108-111.

Similarly, Head found that Matthean reluctance to portray Jesus' inability (most clearly seen in the rejection at Nazareth) could be explained on non-christological grounds. Likewise, Matthew's omission of some of Jesus' questions found in Mark (which presumably infer Jesus' lack of knowledge) could be explained on other grounds, and most notably, none of the proposed Markan questions clearly implies Jesus' ignorance.³⁷⁶ Head was also unconvinced by arguments for Markan priority based on Matthew's additions of approaching and worshiping Jesus because explanations based on Matthean priority were equally plausible.³⁷⁷ Conclusive proof for Markan priority was not to be found in these arguments, according to Head.

Through the first seven chapters, Head found that few of the traditional christological arguments for Markan priority were valid, with one passage (Jesus' rejection at Nazareth) having some strength in favour of Markan priority, and another (Jesus' walking on the water) proving much easier to explain assuming Matthew's use of Mark instead of vice-versa. In the remaining chapters (8-11), Head sought to provide new lines of investigation into potential Matthean changes to Mark which reveal christological motivations. First, he examined the titles teacher and Lord (chapter 8), then the depiction of Jesus as Messiah (chapter nine), Son of God (chapter 10), and Son of Man (chapter 11). With the exception of one title – 'Teacher' – Matthew and Luke demonstrate a more frequent usage of these christologically-loaded descriptions of Jesus.³⁷⁸ Head noted Mark's keen interest in describing Jesus as teacher, and the sometimes unappreciated amount of Jesus' teaching found in Mark, but highlighted Mark's failure to make clear OT allusions to Jesus as teacher (as Matthew had done) to emphasise the messianic nature of Jesus teaching role.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 112-116..

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 126-147.

³⁷⁸ See Head's Table 8.1 on p.151.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 156-157.

This omission did not fit well with the 2GH, nor did the dramatic reduction of available (Matthean and Lukan) teaching material which Mark would have had to neglected. On the other hand, messianic allusions to Jesus as teacher and large blocs of teaching material added by Matthew, on the 2SH, could be seen as christologically motivated.³⁸⁰ Concerning the title ‘Lord,’ Head found (assuming Markan priority) that, while Matthew followed Mark’s non-vocative uses of κύριος,³⁸¹ he also added vocative usages (see esp. Mt 3:3 and 22:41-46) of κύριε to addresses made to Jesus by people with faith to echo OT language. He wondered,

Why would a Christian writer, who obviously accepts that Jesus is Lord, and values and even works with the idea, relatively systematically omit the vocative κύριε in favour of other titles, and yet not use a consistent alternative? There does not seem to be any plausible answer to this question.³⁸²

When comparing the competing theories with their supposed editorial activities in their uses of “Son of David” and “Christ,” Head concluded that Matthew’s frequent addition of the titles to Mark (on the 2SH) made much greater sense than Mark’s presumed omission of them from several Matthean accounts (on the 2GH).³⁸³

Likewise, Head considered Matthew’s more frequent usage of “Son of God” (especially the triadic form in Mt 28:19) to fit a growing christological concern which

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 158-160.

³⁸¹ Mark’s gospel does contain references to Jesus as teacher, including one by Jesus of himself (Mk 14:14), though Mark shows no special concern to communicate large amounts of Jesus’ teaching in the way Matthew does. To Head, it is difficult to explain why an evangelist who was so interested in depicting Jesus as teacher would not include more of the supposed teaching available in Matthew in Mark, assuming the 2GH. See Head, 157. However, even on the 2SH, it is practically certain that Mark had access to oral tradition, preaching, and perhaps other written sources, and chose not to include large blocs of teaching from them, so the argument could be seen as circular.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 171-172.

³⁸³ Head, 176-186. On the 2GH, Mark would have omitted six Matthean uses of “Son of David” and failed to tie that title to Jesus’ role as Messiah. Conversely, the Davidic Messiah is an evident theme of Matthew (1:1) explainable on christological grounds by the 2SH.

emphasised the divine sonship of Jesus, explicable by Matthew's additions to Mark.³⁸⁴ He admitted that Mark's lone unique inclusion of "Son of God" (Mk 15:39) on the lips of the centurion at the cross demonstrates Mark's concern that the divine sonship be evident in Jesus' death (more so than in Matthew and Luke), but still failed to see how the 2GH could explain Mark's lack of other unique uses of the title.³⁸⁵ Finally, Head compared the occurrences of the title "Son of Man," and again opted for the 2SH's explanation of the data. While Mark concentrates his "Son of Man" sayings in the "suffering" section of his gospel, he demonstrates no clear christological symbolism in the term other than to identify with the suffering Jesus,³⁸⁶ whereas Matthew expanded his usage of the title in the pre-suffering (earthly ministry) and post-suffering (exaltation) days of Jesus with clear allusions to OT language.³⁸⁷

The twelfth and final chapter of *Christology* dealt with the messianic secret and its potential bearing upon the subject, specifically if it offered solid evidence in favour of the 2GH. Regarding Jesus' commands of silence to demons, Mark's frequent, though not consistent (cf. Mk 5:16 and 9:20), mention of the practice is apparent, as is Matthew's failure to reproduce most of Mark's instances, though Head considered that this fit Matthew's pattern (on the 2SH) of abbreviating Mark's accounts and highlighting Jesus' authority.³⁸⁸ In addition, Mark's commands by Jesus to the disciples to keep quiet were linked with the evangelist's concern to convey people's tendency to misunderstand Jesus until after the crucifixion (cf. 15:39; 16:6), but neither silencing phenomena (demons or disciples) were clearly explicable by the

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 212-214.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 199-200. The tendency to add "Son of God" to the gospel traditions was, as Head showed, near universal in scribal traditions.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 226-227. Though see David B. Peabody, ed., *One Gospel from Two: Mark's Use of Matthew and Luke* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2002) 301 for the 2GH argument that Mark omitted post-suffering references to Jesus as the "son of Man" to emphasize that the truly powerful manifestation of the Son of Man will come at the parousia (Mk 13:24-27) and not before.

³⁸⁷ Head, 230-231. See esp. Mt 28:18 and its allusion to Daniel 7:13.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 245.

2GH.³⁸⁹ On the other hand, Matthew's lack of interest in the secrecy motif (at least compared with Mark), "coheres with tendencies observed elsewhere in Matthew... with vocabulary preferences and with the omission of material in order to highlight the christological features of the narrative."³⁹⁰

Head ultimately concluded that, the traditional christological arguments by 2SH proponents were "fatally flawed,"³⁹¹ but that the 2GH still lacked sufficient explanations for supposed Markan redaction vis-à-vis the titles applied to Jesus. While rejecting almost all of the traditional christological arguments, which emphasized Matthew's efforts to avoid including embarrassing Markan material, Head considered that attention to the "positive redactional interests of the evangelists provides powerful support for Markan priority."³⁹² In other words, Head turned the argument for Markan priority on christological grounds to emphasise Matthew's additions to Mark, not his omissions from that gospel.

Head's *Christology* was well-received in scholarly circles,³⁹³ though not without critique. C.M. Tuckett, the well-known 2SH advocate, felt some of Head's claims that the traditional arguments for Markan priority were "fatally flawed" were "exaggerated," preferring the milder admission that they lacked conclusive proof.³⁹⁴ C.F.D. Moule went further in his critique, though again in an approving manner, questioning whether Head's admission (p. 62) that the vocative κύριε could simply

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 247-248. Though see Allan J. McNicol, "The Messianic Secret in Mark," in Peabody, 349-353, who argued that Mark's secrecy motif coincides with his desire to "underscore the problematic nature of the disciples' faith" (p. 353), that is, though several people had faith in Mark's gospel, it was often incomplete or uninformed.

³⁹⁰ Head, 255.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 259. However, given the fact that several authors continue to use many of these arguments, including Stein in *Studying* and Osborne and Williams in *Three Views*, one may wonder if they mostly reject Head's findings even though he ultimately leaned toward the 2SH. See Tuckett's remark in note 393 below.

³⁹² Head, 261.

³⁹³ Mark Goodacre *Maze*, 170 described it as "one of the best books recently published on the Synoptic Problem."

³⁹⁴ C.M. Tuckett, *NovT* 41 (1999) 395-97.

be a polite address to a superior might undermine his arguments for Matthew's use of the term, and noting Head's lack of discussion over whether Mk 1:1 is Markan at all.³⁹⁵ Interestingly, Robert Stein quoted Head's *Christology* approvingly for its use of RC to show Markan priority, though Stein did not mention that Head had concluded the arguments made on Mark's harder readings were flawed.³⁹⁶

Head's *Christology* serves as a fitting stopping point in this investigation into early orthodox Protestant and evangelical handling of the SP. As many scholars in this chapter argued, though the 2SH has risen from obscurity within evangelicalism to become the most popular solution to the SP, many have their doubts about the confidence with which redaction upon Mark or the layers of Q can be detected. While Stein has brought the 2SH into the evangelical classroom in a convenient way, scholars such as both Wenham, Robert Thomas, and John Niemelä show the strength of competing theories that the 2SH has yet to remove from consideration. Further, scholars such as Ellis and Gundry have demonstrated the manner in which a scholar's evangelical convictions can combine with historical-critical scholarship to produce complex source and redaction-critical theories of gospel formation.

³⁹⁵ C.F.D. Moule, *JTS* 49(1998) 739-41

³⁹⁶ Stein, *Studying*, 95 note 53.

CHAPTER IX: Ecclesiological Concerns and the Synoptic Problem

A. Protestant and Evangelical Ecclesiology

In 1847, the Reverend A.B. Chapin offered the following comparison, from a ‘High-Church’ Anglican perspective, of the ecclesiology of the Protestants (Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican) of his day, who “received and bowed submissively to the testimony and tradition of the early Church,”¹ and that of Puritans (whom he considered *non-Protestant*):

We have already seen that Protestantism regards the Church as the body of CHRIST, as an institution founded by Him, proceeding out of His loins, anointed by His SPIRIT, the medium by which His life is conveyed to its members, the continuation of the earthly human life of the Redeemer... . But Puritanism... believes nothing of all this. It denies the existence of any such body, and can form no idea of any such means of communicating grace. It begins by dividing off the whole body of the truly pious, into a distinct and independent regiment, united to CHRIST, not by means of the Church which is His body, but by some invisible bond, directly to the head itself, conferring upon these individuals, all spiritual blessings and graces, thus leaving the invisible Church, poor, and wretched, and naked, so far as any spiritual office, blessing, or object is concerned!²

The issue for Chapin was the Puritan tendency to claim a greater allegiance to both the earliest Christians and the early Protestant Reformers than those later Protestants who filled Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican churches. Chapin thus argued for the

¹ *Puritanism Not Genuine Protestantism: Being a Review of the Puritans and Their Principles* (1847), 43.

² *Ibid.*, 44-45.

bond between the Protestantism of the nineteenth century with the *visible* (recognizable and clearly delineated) church and the early church. Chapin's critique of the weak Puritan vision of the church has been made by some modern commentators about modern evangelicalism.³ Further, the work which Chapin sought to refute, Edwin Hall's *The Puritans and Their Principles* (New York, 1847), offered an explanation for Puritanism's neglect of the post-biblical traditions which may sound similar to line of reasoning of many modern evangelicals:

All that the Lord intended to render obligatory, he doubtless caused to be put on the record, either in direct terms, or by some implication or allusion; otherwise we are thrown upon tradition, or Church authority. The Bible, in that case, is not our guide or rule; and we know not where we may be tossed or driven. No testimony of the Fathers, therefore, no possible arguments can render that binding, in the very principles and fundamentals of Church organization and government, of which no trace is written on the pages of the Sacred Word.⁴

Thus, a simplistic explanation may be offered that, on the one hand, there is a portion of traditional Protestantism that attempts to align true Christianity with the *visible* church throughout the ages (biblical and post-biblical), and on the other, there is also an evangelical wing which pledges allegiance to an *invisible* church made up of the faithful, who only look to the bible, and which is spread across denominational lines, with little concern for anything written after the New Testament. However, these generalizations should not be seen to adequately describe all of evangelicalism's

³ See the preface to J. Michael Utzinger, *Yet Saints Their Watch Are Keeping: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and the Development of Evangelical Ecclesiology, 1887-1937* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2006) for a discussion of the various opinions regarding evangelical ecclesiology or the lack thereof.

⁴ Hall, *Puritans*, 288. See the discussion of Hindmarsh below, who considers Puritan (as well as Pietist, Moravian, and early Methodist) ecclesiology to have greatly influenced modern evangelicalism ecclesiology.

thinking about the nature of the church past and present. In reality, the subject of early Protestant and later evangelical ecclesiology is a complex one. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to fully explore the role of ecclesiology in early Protestantism and evangelicalism, this chapter will seek to answer three basic questions vis-à-vis those movements and the SP. First, how have attitudes toward the testimony of the early church fathers been demonstrated when attempting to solve the SP? Second, are there any palpable correlations between a scholar's Protestant tradition, the ecclesiology prominent in that tradition, and his or her solution to the SP? Third, how have early Protestant and evangelical scholars considered the potential harm or benefit to orthodox faith⁵ in relation to the SP, including competing theories to their own.⁶

B. Attitudes toward Patristic tradition

Throughout this thesis, in the survey of over five centuries of early orthodox Protestant and evangelical opinion concerning the relationships among the synoptics, it is clear that the opinions of the church fathers have consistently been a factor. It is appropriate to acknowledge the divide between the *Sola Scriptura* stance of much of Protestant and especially evangelical Christianity which subordinates, and often contradicts, church traditions from the first centuries. However, it would be misleading to characterize early Protestantism as ignorant of or inimical to all early church tradition. In fact, many of the early reformers expressed solidarity with the early church fathers and respect for traditions, but in a way fundamentally different from prior Catholic generations. Perhaps the best example of the early Protestant concern for attachment to the opinions of the church fathers is found in Martin

⁵ That is, in the sense of being amenable to the historic Christian faith *as those scholars considered see it*.

⁶ In other words, the third question seeks to discover whether one's solution to the SP should be considered a matter of faith which may have an impact on the greater church.

Chemnitz's *Examination of the Council of Trent*.⁷ Chemnitz identified eight kinds of tradition handed down by the early church, seven of which he and his Lutheran brethren could accept. In fact, Chemnitz proclaimed, “We also hold that no dogma that is new in the churches and in conflict with all of antiquity should be accepted.”⁸ To Chemnitz and his contemporary reformers, novelty was the enemy. The eighth kind of tradition which Chemnitz identified, “traditions which pertain both to faith and morals and which cannot be proved with any testimony of Scripture” (which the Council of Trent deemed were to be “received and venerated with the same devotion as the Holy Scripture itself”) were rejected by Chemnitz on the grounds that the father’s statements often contain contradictory and legendary information, as well as practices which post-date the apostles.⁹ He went into great detail, quoting Tertullian, Irenaeus, Athanasius, and Eusebius to show that the fathers were often suspicious of their predecessors, and that many, particularly Papias, Clement of Alexandria, and Epiphanius believed apocryphal superstitions. Thus, Chemnitz and his fellow early reformers demonstrated a critical respect for early traditions, but only as a secondary and subordinate witness to the bible. As A.N.S. Lane, in his study of the historical treatment of church tradition, explains,

[The Protestant reformers] viewed tradition not as a normative interpretation of Scripture nor as a necessary supplement to it but rather as a tool to be used to help the church to understand it. Tradition had in a sense been desacralized. This meant that the Protestant was theoretically immune to arguments from tradition and at times this immunity needed to

⁷ Fred Kramer, trans. 4 vols (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971-86). Originally published in 1565-73 as *Examen Concilii Tridentini*.

⁸ Chemnitz, *Examination*, vol 1, 258.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 272. He specifically mentioned certain fast days.

be claimed. But in practice he was very concerned about tradition. His greatest need was to establish his pedigree.¹⁰

However, since those early days of the Reformation, Protestant attitudes toward the traditions of the early church have varied between extreme interest and complete neglect, so that today one finds no uniquely Protestant or evangelical approach to the church traditions. Among the many reasons for this, two of most important are the lack of an agreed-upon definition of the “early church”¹¹ and the development of the historical-critical method in the use of the bible. The second of these factors most specifically into the discussion below on the use of patristic tradition and the SP.

C. The Use of Patristic Tradition and the SP

Though it is practically impossible to group all evangelical adherents to particular synoptic hypotheses according to their views on the importance of church

¹⁰ A.N.S. Lane, “Scripture, Tradition and Church: An Historical Survey,” *Vox Evangelica* 9 (1975) 37-55, at p.43. This was especially true of Calvin, for whom Scripture was “to be read in light of the interpretations of the early Church, especially St. Augustine and St. Bernard.” Madeleine Gray, *The Protestant Reformation: Belief, Practice, and Tradition* (Portland, Oregon: Sussex Academic Press, 2003) 67 See esp. pp.60-69 for a thorough discussion of Calvin's approach to *Sola Scriptura*.

¹¹ That is, the lack of agreement as to exactly what time in history the early church departed from the apostolic path set down in the first century. Was the golden age of the church to be extended until the 6th century, as was advocated by the 16th century Anglicans John Jewel and Thomas Cooper (see John C. English “The Duration of the Primitive Church: An Issue for Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Anglicans,” *Anglican and Episcopal History* 73 (1) 2004, 35-52) or was it the only to be found the first three centuries as advocated by John Wesley in “An Address to the Clergy” (*Selections from the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley*, in Herbert Welch, ed. (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1901, 267)? Was the reliable tradition to be pushed back even further, as advocated by the Anglican Conyers Middleton, to only the first and second centuries, because the “chief corruptions of Popery” were introduced in the third century and beyond (*A Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers, which are Supposed to Have Subsisted in the Christian Church* (London: 1749) li)? Or, is it the case that no reliable tradition after the first century is to be found because, as the Irish Presbyterian historian W.D. Killen argued, by the second century the early church was already losing its way and that, by the third and fourth it had entered a “slumber disturbed only, now and then, by a dream of superstition.” (*The Ancient Church: Its History, Doctrine, Worship, and Constitution Traced* (London, 1849) 471). The widespread disagreement and confusion among Protestants as to when and how to appeal to the church fathers prompted J.J. Blunt, the evangelical apologist mentioned in Chapter V above, to lecture upon and eventually publish a guide entitled, *On the Right Use of the Early Fathers: Two Series of Lectures Delivered in the University of Cambridge* (London, 1858). Blunt considered the fathers of the first three centuries to be much more reliable than those of later times. With such wildly varying opinions among Protestants and evangelicals concerning the validity of the testimony of the church of centuries past, there should be little wonder that biblical scholars have had difficulty agreeing upon how much weight ancient testimony should be given when approaching modern critical issues such as the SP.

tradition, and considering the fact that the views of most the scholars considered in this thesis concerning the importance of the early church are unknown, general tendencies can still be observed by those who have advocated particular solutions to the SP:

The Independence Hypothesis – With the exception of certain AH proponents, perhaps no other advocates of a particular solutions to the SP have appealed to patristic sources as much as IH proponents. As discussed in the introduction, many IH proponents have considered the virtual silence on the subject of a potential dependency hypothesis before Augustine to be the best evidence against any such theory. For example, in 1757, Nathaniel Lardner noted that, “It does not appear that any of the learned ancient Christian writers had a suspicion, that any of the first three evangelists had seen the other histories before they wrote.”¹² However, by the nineteenth century, while demonstrating knowledge of the early church fathers, evangelical scholars such as Moses Stuart¹³ and Henry Alford¹⁴ made their arguments for the IH based on comparisons of the textual data, with no appeals to patristic sources to solve the SP. Interestingly, in recent decades the argument from the silence of the early church concerning literary dependence among the evangelists has been revived by IH advocates. For example, Robert Thomas claimed that the independence of the gospel writers was “the perspective in the Church for 1800 years,” while his colleague David Farnell unknowingly followed Lardner over 200 years later when he used this argument from silence as his first among many in favour of the IH in *Three Views*.¹⁵

¹² Lardner, *Supplement*, 179.

¹³ See Chapter V, F, above. In fact, rather than appealing to any ancient tradition, Stuart simply encouraged his readers to “take up a Greek Harmony” and compare the synoptics to see that the IH best fits the evidence. Stuart, *Introduction*, 718.

¹⁴ See Chapter VI, B, above.

¹⁵ Farnell, “The Case,” 240ff. See also Eta Linnemann, *Is There A Synoptic Problem?*, 187-195.

However, not all evangelical IH advocates had a high opinion of the traditions of the early church regarding the formation of the gospels. The notable exception is Alexander Roberts, who repeatedly discounted and rejected the statements of early church fathers.¹⁶ Roberts advocated, “sifting and trying all the declarations of the fathers by historical criticism,”¹⁷ because “they have no special claim to infallibility,” and further, he refused to “shut [his] eyes to the evidence of other undoubted facts” presented by the internal examination of the gospels. Of course, Roberts’ lack of respect for many patristic traditions can best be explained by the fact that many of those traditions contradicted one of Roberts’ major scholarly goals, that of convincing the world that Matthew was indeed originally written in Greek.

The Augustinian Hypothesis – Although AH advocates share basic assumptions with IH proponents concerning the order in which the synoptics were written, they have considered Augustine's statement that Mark made use of Matthew to have merit (though most acknowledge Mark’s use of Matthew is hardly a simple form of abbreviation.) From the outset of the Protestant Reformation, Martin Chemnitz, working from his understanding of Augustine and Epiphanius, saw evidence of Mark borrowing from and adapting Matthew. Chemnitz also argued that the gospels were written by inspiration, and not conspiracy, ideas which he borrowed from Chrysostom.¹⁸ Likewise, the Puritan scholar Francis Roberts, also an AH advocate, saw in Tertullian’s writings evidence that Luke was an orderly digesting of Matthew and Mark.¹⁹ The scholar covered in this thesis who paid closest attention to early, and sometimes even later, church tradition concerning gospel origins was undoubtedly

¹⁶ For example, see A. Roberts, *Discussions*, 23, 372-373, 383-384, and 390.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 372.

¹⁸ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 5.

¹⁹ Roberts, *Clavis*, “Epistle Dedicatory.”

John Wenham. Wenham carefully blended historical external considerations with internal data into a solution to the SP that can be described as a primarily Augustinian hypothesis, with a strong measure of independence. Wenham included analysis of many of the traditional texts used in SP debates, but offered a more robust consideration of traditions regarding the provenance and dating of the gospels, with a remarkable ability to interweave later traditions into his solution to the SP.²⁰

Compared to Wenham, the only scholar in this thesis with anywhere near as thorough a consideration of early church tradition is Theodor Zahn, who was also an AH proponent. Zahn's solution to the SP was an ingenious combination of Aramaic Matthean priority and Greek Markan priority (Mark was the first Greek gospel but based on Aramaic Matthew), revealing the scholar's appreciation for early tradition and modern critical results. Zahn also criticized contemporary biblical scholars of all kinds for their handling of the church fathers when approaching the SP because they were often guilty of "selecting arbitrarily what suited their own purposes" and ignoring the rest.²¹ In fact, Zahn relied so much upon patristic sources in formulating his theory that he was criticized by some evangelicals for his "dependence upon early tradition," a tradition that was often the product of writers who lived more than a century after the gospels were written, and for not giving enough attention to "the critical method."²²

The Two-Gospel Hypothesis – The originator of the 2SH, Henry Owen, also paid attention to patristic traditions regarding the order and sources of the gospels, but with a highly critical approach. He judged that "traditions of every sort, true or false, passed on from hand to hand without examination, until it was almost too late to

²⁰ See, for example, his chapter devoted to defending the 25-year episcopate of Peter in Rome advocated by Jerome but rejected by most Protestant scholars, in *Redating*, 146-172.

²¹ Zahn, *Introduction*, Vol 3, 419.

²² *Methodist Review*, May (1899) 485.

examine them to any purpose,²³” making the patristic testimony mixed and often unreliable. Instead of appealing to early church traditions, or “external proofs,” to argue for his hypothesis, Owen sought to examine the synoptic data in parallel-columnar form and deduce, from “internal construction,” the correct theory.²⁴ His source-critical approach represents a significant change in the history of early orthodox Protestant scholarship in that critical methodology was deemed to be the best tool for discovering the true solution to the SP and not appeals to early tradition. The modern evangelical scholar considered in this thesis, John Niemelä, also an advocate of the 2GH, clearly explained what many evangelical scholars appear to assume when attempting to formulate a solution to the SP:

Neither Papias nor any church father carries any more weight *than the strength of his evidence*. The question is not whether to differ with the Fathers but how much to differ. No one follows them 100 percent because they are merely a second tier of evidence, not inspired truth. At times, everyone has to admit that the fathers erred.²⁵

It is important to note that it was Niemelä who offered the argument that, though several early church fathers claimed to follow Aristeas’ account of the construction of the LXX, many apparently recounted the much more fanciful account of Philo, an account which most evangelical scholars would almost certainly reject.²⁶ Like Owen, Niemelä considered the early tradition of the priority of Matthew to be legitimate, but that the general (though not universal) tradition that Mark was second and Luke third was wrong based on Niemelä’s own comparison of the internal data, a complex statistical analysis of the synoptics.

²³ Owen, *Observations*, 8.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁵ Niemelä, 139. Italics mine.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 136-137.

The Two-Source Hypothesis – Advocates of the 2SH, evangelical and otherwise, have tended to appeal to arguments from a synoptic comparison of the gospels, with a marginal interest in early church testimony. Though J.G. Herder’s writings preceded the 2SH, his arguments for Markan priority (based on Mark’s primitive nature) in the late eighteenth century fit much more closely with modern critical observations than with any patristic tradition.²⁷ This does not mean that appeals to antiquity have been entirely avoided by 2SH advocates, but that they have been generally less concerned with tracing all the patristic evidence. Even so, over the centuries many 2SH have been attracted to the idea of treating Papias’ *logia* as Q. Robertson²⁸ and Scroggie²⁹ continued to equate the two terms, even after Zahn had argued against such an association decades before.³⁰ Perhaps it is not surprising that 2SH advocates tend to make fewer appeals to the writings of the church fathers to support their views considering the cleft between the testimony of the majority of ancient church writers, who universally supported Matthean priority, and the opinions of the majority of modern NT scholars who support Markan priority. Though, in many ways, Owen introduced the use of the historical-critical method in dealing with the SP, and Griesbach popularized it, 2SH advocates have tended to base their arguments more exclusively on it than those who endorse the IH, AH, and even the 2SH. Ned. B. Stonehouse, himself a 2SH proponent, indicated as much:

It is not possible at the present time to give further consideration to this question of the order of the Gospels, and in particular to the question whether Matthew is earlier than Mark or Mark earlier than

²⁷ Herder, *APR*, 197.

²⁸ Robertson, *Luke*, 69.

²⁹ Scroggie, *Guide*, 92.

³⁰ Zahn, *Introduction*, vol 2, 603-604. Though Stein does not equate the two, he seems to leave open the possibility that Q and the *logia* are one in the same. See *Studying*, 144.

Matthew. What I am concerned to stress, however, is that such decisions should not be largely influenced by tradition, and that the testimony of the Gospels themselves, as that is disclosed by an intensive study of their individual characteristics, must be given the decisive weight.³¹

Of course, Stonehouse's appeal to the internal data meant more than simply reading the gospels to look for clues regarding their order, but comparing them in a synoptic fashion for source-critical purposes. This was the method followed three decades earlier by A.T. Robertson, who eschewed appeals to external sources when trying to find a synoptic solution, instead opting for "rigid, scientific research into the facts."³²

Thus, in a sense, the long debate between ancient tradition and modern criticism among evangelicals is evident in discussions of the SP.³³ Some are so wary of modern biblical criticism that they reject it outright (IH; though not without using it when it supports their arguments) where others try to blend the ancient and modern into a coherent solution to the SP (AH and 2GH), and others still lean heavily on modern approaches with little concern for ancient testimony (2SH). When viewed through such a lens, the IH can be said to be pre-critical (that is based on appeals which predate modern biblical criticism) in many ways, the AH and 2GH a combination of pre- and post-critical notions, and the 2SH (as well as the FGH) entirely post-critical, an ordering that chronologically fits the dates the solutions were originally proposed.³⁴

³¹ Stonehouse, *Infallibility*, 11.

³² *The Christ of the Logia*, 17.

³³ For an excellent discussion of over 100 years of this debate, see Mark A. Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991). See also, Alan F. Johnson, "The Historical-Critical Method: Egyptian Gold or Pagan Precipice?" *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 15.

³⁴ See Introduction, A, above for the origins of each hypothesis.

E. Evangelical Ecclesiologies and The Synoptic Problem

Bruce Hindmarsh, evangelical historian at Regent College in Canada, has attempted to show how evangelical ecclesiology has been influenced to a greater degree by those on the edges of the Lutheran, Reformed and Anglican traditions than by the mainstream leaders of those Protestant movements.³⁵ He concludes that most modern evangelicals would more closely identify with the church philosophies of the 18th century Pietists and Moravians in continental Europe and the Puritans and early Methodists in England and America than they would with the traditional Protestant denominations. Hindmarsh further argues that evangelical ecclesiology borrows from the Pietists, Moravians, Puritans and Methodists a belief in the *invisible* church, which is “not constituted by stated ecclesial authority but by an elective affinity of a spiritual sort.”³⁶ Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that evangelicalism has for generations included a conglomeration of various trans-denominational associations, for example the Evangelical Alliance, the Evangelical Theological Society, and the UCCF, each of whom have multiple members represented in this thesis. However, Hindmarsh could be faulted for over-generalizing the current state of evangelical ecclesiology. Roger E. Olson, professor at Baylor University in the United States, describes at least four basic ecclesiologies which have developed within evangelicalism. The first, the traditional free-church model, focuses on the voluntary association of church members and the priesthood of all believers, and is consistent “with the postmodern emphasis of individual identity forged in community.”

Promoters of this *baptist* (with a small *b*) ecclesiology seek the apostolic gospel as described in the NT with little concern for “a historical episcopacy or formal, visible

³⁵ Bruce Hindmarsh, “Is ‘Evangelical Ecclesiology’ an Oxymoron?: A Historical Perspective,” in John G. Stackhouse, Jr., ed., *Evangelical Ecclesiology: Reality or Illusion?* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003) 15-37.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

ties with the ancient, ecumenical church.”³⁷ He offers examples of evangelical scholars such as Stanley Grenz, of Carey Theological College in Canada, and the late James McClendon, of Fuller Seminary, who represent this perspective. Second, Olson mentions the traditional Reformed model of church, which emphasizes the importance of doctrinal allegiance to the ancient creeds and Reformation confessions. When these are combined with the appropriate sacraments, adherents constitute the true church. Examples of evangelical scholars from this perspective are Michael Horton, of Westminster Seminary in California, and David Wells, of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Third, there is the Episcopal model, which supports the historical episcopate of apostolic succession of bishops and emphasizes the catholicity of the church throughout the ages. The late renowned evangelical theologian Robert Webber falls into this category. Fourth, Olson describes the radical, entrepreneurial independent model which has little interest in historical or traditional ties to particular movements. Such an ecclesiology fits a business approach to the church, in which individuals or small groups can start a congregation or community as their own enterprise. Olson is quick to deny endorsement of the fourth by any prominent evangelical theologians, though he admits that such a model is growing via various church-growth, megachurch, and charismatic movements.³⁸ It should also be noted that none of the scholars considered in this thesis appear to endorse this independent form of ecclesiology.

Considering the varying types of ecclesiology found among evangelicals, with some showing great interest in the early church traditions and others showing very little, it is not surprising that there is a lack of an agreed upon approach to solving the SP. Some begin with the writings of the church fathers and attempt to fit their

³⁷ Olson, 160.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 160-161.

statements into the textual evidence, whereas others consider the internal data the most (if not only) important factor. Even then, identifying a definite pattern based on a given scholar’s background is elusive. For example, one might expect the Anglican scholars considered herein to have a greater concern for church tradition vis-à-vis the SP than those with a baptist outlook, but considering Henry Owen’s (Anglican) criticism of the church fathers and the arguments by Robert Thomas (Independent Fundamental Churches of America) that scholars should heed the patristic traditions, such an expectation is confounded. Though several Baptists, who would presumably consider the opinions of the church fathers less important, espoused the 2SH, so did Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Methodists, who might have been assumed to have a greater concern to argue from ancient tradition.

F. Denominational Affiliation and the SP

One looks in vain for a pattern of denominational loyalty or even a general Protestant tradition (Lutheran, Calvinist, and Anglican) that has historically preferred a particular solution to the SP. While the exact Protestant tradition of some of the scholars considered herein is difficult to determine, a comparison of those clearly known reflects the lack of a Reformed, Lutheran (including Pietists), or Anglican (Church of England or Methodist)³⁹ solution to the SP.

Calvinist	Affiliation	Preferred Solution to the SP
John Calvin	Reformed (Calvinist)	IH
Sidrach Simpson	Puritan (Congregationalist)	AH

³⁹ These traditions are defined rather broadly, so that those movements, such as Methodism, which largely split from their original tradition, are still considered offshoots from a common branch of Protestantism. Defining the original tradition of some denominations, particularly those with the title Baptist, can be particularly difficult because of the competing explanations of their origins, whether Anglican or Reformed, or neither. See William H. Brackney, *A Genetic History of Baptist Thought* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004) 532, who considers that the Baptists find their identity in “modified Reformed thought,” while James Edward McGoldrick, *Baptist Successionism: A Crucial Question in Baptist History*. (Metuchen, NJ: The American Theological Library Association, 1994), 86-89, describes their Anabaptist origins. For a robust discussion of the competing theories of the origins of the Baptist faith, see James Leo Garrett, Jr., “The Roots of Baptist Beliefs,” in David S. Dockery, ed., *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2009) 139-158.

Benjamin Needler	Puritan (Presbyterian)	IH
Francis Roberts	Puritan (Presbyterian)	AH
Moses Stuart	Congregationalist	IH
Louis Gaussen	Swiss Reformed, Independent	IH
Alexander Roberts	Free Church of Scotland, Presbyterian	IH
J.T Marshall	Particular Baptist	2SH
A.B. Bruce	Free Church of Scotland	2SH
James Stalker	Free Church of Scotland	2SH
B.B. Warfield	Presbyterian	2SH
Geerhardus Vos	Christian Reformed	2SH
Louis Berkhof	Christian Reformed	IH
W. Graham Scroggie	Reformed Baptist	2SH
Lutheran	Affiliation	Preferred Solution to the SP
Martin Chemnitz	Lutheran	AH
J.A. Bengel	Pietist	AH
J.G. Herder	Lutheran	IH, Markan
Priority		
August Tholuck	Pietist	2SH
Theodor Zahn	Lutheran	AH
Anglican	Affiliation	Preferred Solution to the SP
John Mill	Church of England	AH
Henry Owen	Church of England	2GH
T.H. Horne	Church of England	IH
Adam Clarke	Methodist	AH
Henry Alford	Church of England	IH
John Wenham	Church of England	AH
I.H. Marshall	Methodist	2SH
David Wenham	Church of England	Matthean Priority, Markan priority ⁴⁰

G. The Synoptic Problem and Evangelical Orthodoxy

Considering the many debates concerning the SP among evangelicals throughout the centuries, it is legitimate to consider whether any solutions to the SP might be considered outside of the bounds of evangelical faith. One can trace blistering comments directed toward adherents to opposing synoptic theories throughout the centuries. In the 1700s, Lardner faulted those who espoused dependency theories as critics who “indulge themselves” and fail to “consider the consequences” of their theories, by which he meant damage to the doctrine of

⁴⁰ As noted in Chapter VIII, H, above, David Wenham changed from arguing for Matthean priority to Markan, with a consistent concern that the evangelists’ knowledge of earlier traditions be considered, so that any of the synoptic evangelists might offer the most original form.

inspiration.⁴¹ In the early nineteenth century, Stuart echoed Lardner's defence of the IH by criticizing his contemporaries for leaving "out of sight any consideration of the inspiration of the authors."⁴² However, it is likely that no evangelical before or since has matched the vitriol with which Gaussen attacked both those who proposed dependency hypotheses as well as those who simply considered the SP of worthwhile discussion at all. Gaussen's concerns highlight an issue central to many evangelicals in this context, that being whether the attempt to uncover an evangelist's sources in any way denies the work of the Holy Spirit in inspiration. Gaussen, whose notion of inspiration was very close to mechanical dictation, equated all solutions to the SP with rendering moot the Spirit's role, and those scholars who dared offer theories as "astrologers of theology!"⁴³ While using more subdued language than Gaussen, one detects comparable discomfort with dependency views from several modern evangelical authors. For example, David Farnell opined, "Historical criticism, no matter who practices it, has an ideological bias against the inspiration of Scripture, because it is impossible to assume literary dependence without denigrating the accuracy of the Synoptic Gospels."⁴⁴ It is noteworthy that one scholar, Eta Linnemann, a colleague of Rudolph Bultmann at Marburg and successful liberal biblical critic in her early career, later renounced her earlier work which had been based on the historical-critical method and became an evangelical as well as IH proponent. Linnemann argued that scholars who use historical-critical methods in gospel research "have diverged from simple faith in God's word or... stand in danger of doing this."⁴⁵

⁴¹ Lardner, *Supplement*, 180. See above, Chapter IV, A.

⁴² Stuart, 721. See above, Chapter V, F.

⁴³ Gaussen, 268. See above, Chapter V, G.

⁴⁴ Farnell, "Independence Response," 124.

⁴⁵ Linnemann, *Biblical Criticism*, 12.

Among advocates of dependency hypotheses, concern over the orthodoxy of one solution to the SP over the other has been less pronounced, though not completely absent. Though several evangelical scholars have been comfortable with dependency hypotheses for centuries, one detects an appreciation for the fact that many churchgoers might be uneasy with such theories. When Henry Owen introduced his groundbreaking theory of gospel relationships to the world in the late 18th century, he sensed the potential unease some readers might have with his utilization hypothesis and its re-ordering of the chronology of the gospels, but he argued that the church was in great need of such a theory, *though it may not want it*.⁴⁶ Even considering the potential problems his ideas might create for the church, Owen considered his “new field of criticism,” which offered a “comparative view” of the gospels, to be essential to fit his stated goal of the acquisition of truth. Again, in the early nineteenth century, J.D. Macbride, an AH proponent, worried that most Christians who had not given the subject of the SP much thought might assume that proposing a literary relationship between the gospels in some way disparaged the ancient authors. He argued that scholars who sought truth should resist urges to reject arguments solely because of the potential consequences which they feared might result.⁴⁷ Over a century later, Graham Scroggie, a British Baptist preacher, demonstrated a pastoral concern for his readers when introducing the SP. He suggested that an inquiry into the similarities and differences in the synoptics “is neither irrelevant nor irreverent.”⁴⁸ Because he appreciated the reluctance some might have with a utilization hypothesis, he prefaced his description of the 2SH with an apology for approaching the gospels in a source-critical manner. One should not be surprised, said Scroggie, that the gospel authors

⁴⁶ Owen, *Observations*, vi. See above, Chapter IV, B.

⁴⁷ Macbride, 17. See above, Chapter V, E.

⁴⁸ Scroggie, *Guide*, 84. See above, Chapter VII, E.

would have drawn on outside written sources for their accounts, because there are several OT references to lost books (Books of Wars of the Lord, Book of Nathan the Prophet, etc.) which were used by biblical authors. In addition, the NT includes Paul's quotation of a "heathen poet" in Acts 27:28 and the apostle's quotations of Greek literature in 1 Cor 15:33 and Titus 1:12. Scroggie also advised his readers to investigate but avoid being overly consumed with the SP. One sees the same kind of caution from the respected evangelical scholar F.F. Bruce, who wrote in 1943:

One danger must be guarded against. The quest for Gospel sources may prove so fascinating and their hypothetical reconstruction so engrossing that the student is apt to forget that the actual four Gospels as they have come down to us are much more important than any putative sources... . It is these four Gospels, and not any hypothetical sources, that have come down to us from early days with the general consensus of Christians as the divinely inspired fourfold record of God's culminating self-revelation to men, when 'the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.' While this paper deals with the production of the Gospels on the human side, it is written in full acceptance of the Christian doctrine of Holy Scripture, which acknowledges God as its *auctor primarius*.⁴⁹

When Daniel Wallace, noted textual critic at Dallas Seminary, published his views online regarding the SP in the early twenty-first century, including an argument for the 2SH, he was attacked via an internet publication for his views and felt the need to answer those influenced by his attacker with an open letter.⁵⁰ In the letter, Wallace

⁴⁹ F. F. Bruce, "The Sources of the Gospels," *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* 75 (1943) 1-19, at. p.1.

⁵⁰ Daniel B. Wallace, "The Synoptic Problem and Inspiration: A Response," [http://bible.org/article/synoptic-problem-and-inspiration-response, accessed 15 Jan 2012]. Wallace

made a brief reference to the remarkable verbal similarities among the synoptics which led him to believe that borrowing had taken place, but spent the bulk of the letter explaining his intense respect for the bible and firm belief in the doctrine of inspiration.⁵¹ This was in many ways presaged more than a century before by A.B. Bruce's additions to the Kingdom of God where he defended in no uncertain terms his commitment to a high view of inspiration.⁵²

A consistent theme found among many of the evangelical scholars considered herein has been the admission that one's preferred solution is not the only solution that comports with evangelical convictions. When the ETS was embattled with arguments for and against Robert Gundry's methodology in his commentary on Matthew, the president of the society at the time, Andreas Köstenberger felt the need to insist that there was freedom in the matter of the SP:

For clarification purposes, it should be noted that ETS has no policy on the orthodoxy of certain positions on Gospel criticism or theories of Synoptic interrelationships and that members in good standing hold to a variety of views.⁵³

On a more popular level, some scholars have encouraged evangelical churchgoers to study the SP and form an opinion regarding the most likely solution. For example, in 1991, Conrad Gempf, now of the London School of Theology, wrote an article entitled, "Who Copied Whom? And Who Cares?" dealing with the SP for the Christian magazine *ThirdWay* in which he admitted, "Certainly holding the 'correct'

described it as a "particularly vicious and ill-informed attack on my views written by another man who posted his views on his website and circulated it to thousands of people electronically." A pastor then wrote to the seminary questioning Wallace's endorsement of the 2 SH, which prompted Wallace's letter.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* Wallace noted that his master's thesis was devoted to strengthening the biblical case for inspiration.

⁵² See Chapter VI, C above.

⁵³ Andreas Köstenberger, "Editorial," *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 1-2.

position on the Synoptic problem is not the grounds for anyone's salvation."⁵⁴ Gempf suggested that it was important, however, for Christians to have knowledge of the SP for two reasons, one apologetic and the other intellectual. Evangelicals need to be ready to answer any questions regarding the differences in the gospels, and they do not need to shy away from some of the more complex issues of the origins of the gospels because they are to serve God as much with their minds as with their bodies. These dual concerns have been evident in the work of many of the evangelical scholars covered in this thesis. In many ways, societies such as the UCCP and the ETS were formed with those apologetic and intellectual aims in mind, and discussions of the SP have helped to offer intellectually viable defences of evangelical belief in the reliability of the gospels.⁵⁵

However, it should be noted that there have been concerns expressed by some 2GH proponents that the 2SH is the product of unorthodox and potentially harmful liberal biblical criticism. This idea was baldly expressed by James Breckenridge, a 2GH proponent, in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*: "The fact is that no evangelical solution to the synoptic problem is going to be found through Markan priority."⁵⁶ While using more guarded language, Niemelä has also argued that the 2SH owes so much of its beginnings to Enlightenment era rationalistic scepticism that it is not amenable to evangelical thought.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ *ThirdWay* 14:9 (Nov 1991) 19-21, at p.21.

⁵⁵ Again, note the publication of the *Gospel Perspectives* series by the Gospels Research Project in Cambridge for the purpose of defending "the historical reliability of the gospels at the technical, scholarly level." Blomberg, *Historical Reliability*, 9.

⁵⁶ Breckenridge, 19.

⁵⁷ Niemelä, "Two Gospel Response," 110. He even suggests that the minority 2GH advocates are akin to the "seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal," in contrast with the 2SH proponents whose commitment to a high view of scripture is questionable. See also the concerns of William Farmer, *Gospel of Jesus*, who, though not an evangelical, expressed deep concern for the potential negative implications he considered the 2SH to have on orthodox faith.

The use of redaction criticism has been and continues to be a divisive issue among evangelical scholars. While Martin Chemnitz's use of nascent redaction criticism in the late sixteenth century has been documented above,⁵⁸ as well as B.B. Warfield's rejection of the method in the early twentieth century,⁵⁹ the debate between evangelicals over the use of RC has primarily developed in the last forty years. A few evangelical scholars have argued against the method outright, but others have given cautious endorsement of RC but without presuppositions espoused by many liberal critics. While some evangelicals have defended Robert Gundry's right to use RC, none have publicly agreed with his conclusions that Matthew created such major unhistorical embellishments in the form of *midrashim*. It is possible that, had Gundry taken the approach of A.B. Bruce in his own defense and more aggressively affirmed his belief in inspiration and his commitment to seeing Jesus glorified in his writing, he might have avoided expulsion from the ETS, as Bruce kept his professorship with the Free Church of Scotland.⁶⁰ In fact, two important lessons regarding evangelical use of RC have emerged from the scholars covered in this thesis. First, evangelical scholars who use redaction criticism would be well served to state in a forthright manner their commitment to inspiration and to Christ if they wish to avoid questions regarding their own evangelical convictions.⁶¹ Second, sharp distinctions between the evangelists' redaction and the traditions which they based their work upon should be avoided.⁶²

⁵⁸ See above, Chapter I, B.

⁵⁹ See above, Chapter VII, A, 1.

⁶⁰ See the preface which Bruce added to the third and subsequent editions of *The Kingdom*.

⁶¹ See, for example, F.F. Bruce, "The Sources," 1.

⁶² See, for example, Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 33, and Osborne, "Round Four," 405ff.

X. Summary of Evangelical Arguments for Various Solutions

A. The Three Catalysts to Evangelical Concern for the SP

Though any biblical scholar, evangelical or non-evangelical, may have a variety of reasons for studying and offering an opinion regarding the sources of the evangelists, at least three distinct phenomena appear to have served as catalysts for early orthodox Protestant and evangelical investigation into the synoptic problem: the creation of gospel harmonies, the creation of critical texts, and a response to quests for the historical Jesus.

As documented above, the creation of gospel harmonies, a practice of Christians at least since the time of Tatian in the second century,¹ has continued up until modern-day. By the time of the Protestant Reformation, at least two different kinds of harmonies were being formed. Many, such as the one offered by Martin Chemnitz in the sixteenth century, sought to create a single, harmonized narrative from the canonical gospels.² Others, such as John Calvin's harmony, left the gospels in parallel columns without attempting to weave similar accounts into one narrative.³ Both types of harmony appear to have provoked their creators' interest in the evangelists' sources. Thus, for reasons he did not explain, Calvin decided to provide a three-column comparison of the synoptic gospels and omit the gospel of John. The comparison of the synoptics and the differences among them led Calvin to conclude that an evangelist could not have read the work of his predecessor, and at the same time, to recognize the general harmony provided in the synoptics provided by the Holy Spirit.⁴ The attempt to create a single harmonious text, based on the important assumption that no evangelist followed a strict chronology, inspired Martin Chemnitz

¹ See Martin Chemnitz's list of gospel harmonies through the centuries in Chapter II, B.

² *Ibid.*

³ For examples of Calvin's parallel-column harmony and Chemnitz's interwoven harmony see Figures 2a and 2b in Chapter II.

⁴ Calvin, *Commentary*, Vol. 1, 17. *Commentarii*, from the *Argumentum*.

to consider whether the frequent similarities in order and wording among the synoptists was the result of one evangelist making use of another's work. Chemnitz was the first Protestant scholar to advocate a dependency hypothesis, preferring the only option he considered to be available, the Augustinian Hypothesis.⁵ Over two centuries later, when the evangelical scholar John David Macbride was creating his own harmony, which he called the *Diatessaron*, he remarked,

The consideration of harmonies leads us to notice, the remarkable coincidence of words as well as of facts, in the first three Gospels.

Why two or even three evangelists should use the same expressions for several verses together, then vary, and then agree again, is a circumstance which, perhaps, scarcely admits of a satisfactory explanation.⁶

In the twentieth century, the prominent American evangelical scholar A.T. Robertson, a vociferous advocate for the 2SH, wrote in his harmony that Luke apparently followed Mark “as any one can see for himself by comparing the two gospels in this Harmony.”⁷

The second impetus for early orthodox Protestant and evangelical investigation into the SP was the creation of a critical text of the NT. Three prominent textual critics of yesteryear also offered their opinions regarding the SP. First, John Mill, who created the first truly extensive critical apparatus to be attached to the Textus Receptus, considered it to be “as clear as light” that Luke followed Matthew and Mark because Luke reproduced “many phrases and expressions, and even whole sections, verbatim.”⁸ In the mid-eighteenth century, the evangelical

⁵ See Chapter II, B above.

⁶ Macbride, *Lectures*, 41.

⁷ Robertson, *A Harmony of the Gospels*, 1.

⁸ Mill, *Prolegomena*, 14, 116.

scholar Henry Alford argued at length for the IH in his *Greek Testament*. Perhaps the influence of the dual practices of producing gospel harmonies and performing textual criticism upon a scholar's willingness to consider the SP is most evident in the Lutheran scholar J.A. Bengel in the early nineteenth century. In what could be described as a modified form of the AH, Bengel considered Luke to have Mark's gospel at hand when he wrote, as well as a basic knowledge of Matthew.⁹ Interestingly, Bengel was the first Protestant scholar to produce a critical text of the NT¹⁰ and a gospel harmony.¹¹ In many ways, Bengel's work foreshadowed the admittedly greater contribution to synoptic studies made by the Lutheran scholar Griesbach, who also produced a critical text and a harmony-like *Synopsis* of the gospels. The modern evangelical scholar Gordon Fee summarized the natural overlap between the work of textual criticism and the SP:

If we allow, as the majority of scholars on both sides [2SH and 2GH] do, that there is a direct literary relationship among any two of the Synoptists, then the kinds of questions textual criticism brings to such literary relationships are a pertinent part of the analytical task.¹²

The third impetus into the consideration of the SP among evangelicals was a response to the rise of the 'Quest for the Historical Jesus.' In response to the work of D.F. Strauss, the pious Lutheran scholar August Tholuck, a 2SH proponent, ridiculed the 2GH (on which Strauss had based much of his *Life of Jesus*) because of the ridiculous way it portrayed the work of the evangelist Mark.¹³ In the early twentieth century, the Princetonian scholars B.B. Warfield and Geerhardus Vos used a

⁹ Bengel, *Gnomon*, 44-45, 375.

¹⁰ Bengel, *H KAINH ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ. Novum Testamentum Graecum* (Tübingen, 1734).

¹¹ *Richtige Harmonie der vier Evangelisten*, 8vo. (Tübingen, 1736, 1747, 1766).

¹² Eldon J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee, *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) 182. Also noted in *Three Views*, 47.

¹³ See Stoldt, 229-230.

centrepiece of the sceptical aspects of the Quest, the hypothetical *logia* document, to argue that the Christ found in the *logia* was the same as the Jesus of the synoptics and Paul's writings. As the old 'Quest for the Historical Jesus' evolved into the new 'Quest' and third 'Quest,' some evangelical scholars reacted to by rejecting the 2SH upon which much of it was built.¹⁴ For example, Robert Thomas and David Farnell argued in *The Jesus Crisis*¹⁵ that evangelical scholars' acceptance of the 2SH meant the endorsement of the "presuppositional construct" of the non-evangelical Jesus Seminar, thus rendering "themselves powerless to respond to the radical conclusions of that Seminar."¹⁶

B. Consistent Arguments

1. Concern for the Doctrine of Inspiration

Because early orthodox Protestants and evangelicals have always had a great concern to adequately express the notion of biblical inspiration, many writers on the SP have addressed over the past four centuries. In the late sixteenth century, the Lutheran scholar Martin Chemnitz, an advocate of the AH, considered the similarities and differences in the synoptics as evidence that they were "not written by mutual conspiracy" but "by divine inspiration."¹⁷ In the late 1800s, the Strict Baptist scholar of Manchester, J.T. Marshall, depicted the minor differences in the synoptic accounts as mere "editorial preferences... which each evangelist was divinely inspired to portray."¹⁸ In the 1890s, after the Scottish evangelical Alexander Bruce faced heresy charges for his descriptions of the evangelists' editorial activities, he added clarifications to later editions of *The Kingdom of God* indicating to his readers that he

¹⁴ See Dale C. Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters* (New York: T & T Clark, 2005) 2, for a discussion of the similarities and differences between the new and third 'Quests,' and whether the Jesus Seminar belongs to the former or the latter.

¹⁵ See Chapter VIII 2 above.

¹⁶ Thomas, *TJC*, 16. See also Breckenridge, 117-121.

¹⁷ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 5. *Harmoniae* 1.1.1.

¹⁸ Marshall, 267.

always considered his theories to be “compatible with the inspiration of the evangelists.”¹⁹ In the first half of the twentieth century, the British Baptist scholar and preacher Graham Scroggie, an advocate of the 2SH, argued that a predetermined doctrine of inspiration should not be forced upon the gospels to limit their potential origins, but that Christians should “let a doctrine of inspiration arise from the facts” demonstrated by the freedom and individuality of the accounts given by the evangelists.²⁰ More recently, the American evangelical Grant Osborne, another proponent of the 2SH, has argued “the key to an evangelical use of the two-source theory is that the Holy Spirit guided the use of Mark and other sources by Matthew and Luke.”²¹ Even those evangelical redaction critics who allowed the evangelists the greatest liberty in modifying and adding to Jesus’ actual words, namely E. Earle Ellis and Robert Gundry, argued for the inspiration of the evangelists’ words, and thus the same divine authority as those of Jesus.²²

However, several advocates of the IH over the past two centuries have expressed dismay at the way in which inspiration was considered, or not considered, by biblical critics when addressing the SP. The early American evangelical Moses Stuart bemoaned the fact that so many scholars “who have made out theories about the origin of the three first Gospels seem to have left out of sight any consideration of the inspiration of the authors.”²³ The Swiss evangelical Louis Gaussen, a proponent of the IH in the early nineteenth century, criticized all writers who speculated about the sources of the evangelists because they “sap by degrees the doctrine of

¹⁹ Bruce, *Kingdom*, 3rd ed. (1892) vii.

²⁰ Scroggie, 141.

²¹ “Historical Criticism: A Brief Response to Robert Thomas’s ‘Other View’,” JETS 43/1 (Mar 2000) 115.

²² See Ellis, *Reading*, 14, and R. Gundry, *Matthew*, 640. See also, Stein, *Studying*, 261.

²³ Stuart, *Introduction*, 721.

inspiration”²⁴ Likewise, in the late nineteenth century Alexander Roberts claimed that advocates of any documentary hypothesis, or “copying theory,” were necessarily led to “reject the doctrine of inspiration altogether.”²⁵ In recent years, in contrast to the Grant Osborne’s claim that the evangelists made “inspired interpretations”²⁶ of their sources under the 2SH, Robert Thomas, an advocate of the IH, described the sources of the evangelists as “eyewitnesses whose sharp memories in many cases reproduced the exact wording of dialogues and sermons. Their memories received additional stimulation through the Holy Spirit’s inspiration of their writings in accord with Jesus’ promise (John 14:26).”²⁷ Even those scholars, such as Gundry and Ellis, who allow that the evangelists could add unhistorical elements to Jesus traditions, considered these additions to be Spirit-led and just as inspired as the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus.²⁸

2. Emphasising Similarities / Differences

Early orthodox Protestants and evangelical advocates for dependency hypotheses over the centuries have emphasized the frequent coincidence of wording in the synoptics to argue for the dependence of one evangelist upon the work of another. In 1707, John Mill wrote that he was compelled to conclude that Luke was dependent upon Matthew and Mark because he reproduced their content “in many things exactly and even verbally.”²⁹ In the early twentieth century, the evangelical Lutheran scholar Theodor Zahn argued that the translator of Aramaic Matthew used Mark’s gospel as a guide in producing the Greek Matthew, “thus explaining the strong

²⁴ Gaussen, 270

²⁵ Roberts, 552.

²⁶ Osborne, “RC and the Great Commission,” 84.

²⁷ Thomas, “Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View,” *JETS* 43/1 (March 2000) 97.

²⁸ See, for example, Gundry, *Matthew*, 234, and Ellis, *Reading*, 14.

²⁹ *Prolegomena*, 13, 109.

verbal similarities.”³⁰ Even Herder, who proposed the “oral gospel” behind the synoptics (but not the total independence of the evangelists), reckoned that a common gospel was evident “in any genuine synopsis”³¹ in the late eighteenth century. The renowned Baptist scholar of the early twentieth century, A.T. Robertson, challenged his readers to test Luke’s “literary method” for themselves by using a gospel harmony to compare parallels. Robertson considered the verbal similarity in parenthetical material in the triple tradition (Mt 9:6 = Mk 2:10 = Lk 5:24) to demonstrate a literary relationship.³² These arguments have continued to be used by modern evangelical adherents to dependency hypotheses.³³

While they have acknowledged the striking agreements in the synoptics,³⁴ early orthodox Protestant and evangelical advocates of the IH have tended to point to the differences to argue for the independence of their composition. For example, in the mid-seventeenth century the Puritan minister Benjamin Needler concluded that the evangelists did not conspire or copy from one another because they were “agreeing in the main and yet differing in things of lesser consideration.”³⁵ This sentiment was echoed a century later when Lardner, a proponent of the IH, observed that it is unlikely any synoptic evangelist had seen the work of his counterparts, “otherwise there could not have been in them so many seeming contradictions.”³⁶ In the early 1800s, Moses Stuart encouraged his readers to “take up a Greek Harmony” of the gospels to see if the differences in the synoptics did not lead one to conclude “are not after all independent writers.”³⁷ Likewise, the English evangelical Henry Alford

³⁰ Zahn, *Introduction*, 573-580.

³¹ Herder, *APR*, 195

³² Robertson, *Luke the Historian in the Light of Research* (New York, 1929) 66.

³³ For example, see Stein, *Studying*, 29-38, and Osborne, “The Case,” 29.

³⁴ IH proponents have typically explained similar wording by explaining that Jesus repeated similar teaching at different times. See, for example, Thiessen, 106.

³⁵ Needler, *Expository Notes*, 268.

³⁶ Lardner, *Supplement*, 172-174.

³⁷ Stuart, *Introduction*, 719. Robertson made the exact opposite point (see above paragraph).

wrote later that same century that the “recurrences of the same arbitrary and anomalous alterations, coincidences and transpositions” could not be the work of one synoptic author dependent upon another.³⁸ In modern times, Robert Thomas and David Farnell have argued for the IH on the grounds that “a random combination of agreements and disagreements that are explainable only through an independent use by each writer of tradition based on personal memories of eyewitnesses.”³⁹

3. Luke’s Preface and the Synoptic Problem

Early orthodox Protestant and evangelical proponents of dependency hypotheses have long considered the first four verses of Luke to confirm the evangelist’s use of other canonical gospels. In the late sixteenth century, Martin Chemnitz deemed Luke to have confessed to using Matthew and Mark in his prologue,⁴⁰ and 150 years later J.A. Bengel excluded Matthew from Luke’s sources but included Mark based on Luke 1:1.⁴¹ Modern evangelical advocates for dependency hypotheses have come to similar conclusions, including Darrell Bock (2SH),⁴² John Niemelä (2GH)⁴³ and Robert Stein (2SH).⁴⁴

Proponents of the IH have typically seen in Luke’s preface a reference to “many” non-canonical works, but not Matthew or Mark. In the mid-eighteenth century, Lardner took Luke’s preface to mean that he “knew not any authentic history of Jesus Christ, that had yet been written.”⁴⁵ In the early nineteenth century, the American evangelical and IH proponent Moses Stuart concluded that Luke’s preface

³⁸ Alford, *Greek Testament*, Proleg 5.

³⁹ Thomas, *TJC*, 245. Also noted in Thomas, *Three Views*, 30. Likewise, the arguments of J. Wenham *Redating*, 20ff., that the differences between Luke and Mark indicate that Luke was not literarily dependent on Mark.

⁴⁰ Chemnitz, *Harmoniae*, 1.1.2.

⁴¹ Bengel, *Gnomon*, 375.

⁴² Darrell Bock, *Luke* (IVP New Testament Commentary Series, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994) 31.

⁴³ “The Case for the Two-Gospel View of Gospel Origins,” in *Three Views*, 126-131 at 126.

⁴⁴ Stein, *Luke* (New American Commentary, Vol. 24, Nashville: Broadman, 1992) 27. Also see his article “Luke 1:1-4 and *Traditiongeschichte*,” *JETS* 26/4 (December 1983) 421-430.

⁴⁵ Lardner, *Supplement*, 156.

ruled out reference to canonical gospels and implied that the evangelist had found deficiencies in non-canonical narratives of Jesus' life.⁴⁶ In 1998, Thomas and Farnell made much the same assessment in *The Jesus Crisis*.⁴⁷

4. The Creativity of the Evangelists

a. Dependency Advocates and *Ipsissima Vox*

Most early orthodox Protestant and evangelical advocates of dependency hypotheses have acknowledged the evangelists' editorial activities with their sources, but have typically refrained from attributing a good deal of licence to them. For example, Martin Chemnitz explained that Luke (Lk 3:8) added ἄρξησησθε to strengthen Matthew's account (Mt 3:9) of John the Baptist' preaching so that the readers would know not to "begin" to look for a way to avoid repentance.⁴⁸ In the mid-seventeenth century, the Puritan minister Sidrach Simpson, an apparent proponent of the AH, when comparing Mt 15:19 and Mk 7:22, concluded, "Mark came to add [covetousness] unto that which Matthew wrote (which was the manner of the Evangelists to add unto others)."⁴⁹ A little more than a century later, Henry Owen described the work of the evangelists (under the 2GH) was to "expand, contract, or enlarge as they judged expedient" from the previous gospels, giving each evangelist's work "their own colourings."⁵⁰ In the early twentieth century, A.T. Robertson used much the same reasoning when explaining Luke's use of his sources (among them Mark and Q) by explaining that Luke was not a "slavish copyist" but that he put a "stamp of his own personality" on his gospel.⁵¹ His British evangelical contemporary, W. Graham Scroggie, opined that the synoptics "give the exact words"

⁴⁶ Stuart, *Introduction*, 717.

⁴⁷ Thomas and Farnell, *TJC*, 66, wrote that Lk 1:1-4 "precludes his use of another canonical gospel." Also noted by Niemelä in *Three Views*, 128.

⁴⁸ Chemnitz, *Harmoniae* 1.16.167.

⁴⁹ S. Simpson, *Two Books*, 228.

⁵⁰ Owen, *Observations*, 14.

⁵¹ Robertson, *Luke The Historian*, 62.

throughout.⁵² In the mid-twentieth century, the former president of the ETS and 2SH advocate, Ned B. Stonehouse, was comfortable acknowledging that the evangelists did not give the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus' sayings, but merely "an accurate and trustworthy impression" of them, guided by the Holy Spirit.⁵³ By the late 1970s, several evangelicals had published works advocating the 2SH but using guarded language to avoid claiming that the evangelists fabricated sayings or events.⁵⁴ Perhaps the best-known modern evangelical scholar to write on the SP, Robert Stein, has consistently, in his arguments for the 2SH, refrained from attributing too much liberty to the evangelists, but described their "freedom to paraphrase, modify certain terms and add comments" to help their readers understand the life and message of Jesus.⁵⁵ Like Stonehouse decades before, Stein considers the freedom evidenced in the evangelists' handling of their sources reveals "little concern for preserving the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus."⁵⁶

A few evangelical scholars, however, over the past 120 years, seemed to refer to the evangelists' freedom with their synoptic sources in a much bolder way, and both faced harsh criticism and judgment from their peers because of their publications on the SP. A.B. Bruce, the renowned professor of the Scottish Free Church, published *The Kingdom of God* in 1889, and offered explanations of how the evangelists did not feel compelled to offer Jesus' *ipsissima verba*, but "exercised their discretion in the use of their sources" by making modifications, omissions and

⁵² Scroggie, *Guide*, 141.

⁵³ Stonehouse, *Origins*, 110.

⁵⁴ Osborne, "The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology," *JETS* 22/4 (December 1979) 305-322, who noted Peter Stuhlmacher, *Historical Criticism and Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (tr. R. A. Harrisville; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977; German ed., 1975) 66-71; John Piper, "A Reply to Gerhard Maier: A Review Article," *JETS* 22/1 (1979) 79-85; Paul D. Feinberg, "The Meaning of Inerrancy," paper presented at the International Congress on Biblical Inerrancy, October, 1978; Kenneth S. Kantzer, "Evangelicals and the Doctrine of Inerrancy," in J. M. Bolee, ed., *The Foundation of Biblical Authority* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978) 153-154.

⁵⁵ Stein, *Studying the Synoptic Problem*, 20. See also his *Luke*, 58.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 221. See also Darrell Bock, "The Words of Jesus: Live, Jive, or Memorex," in M.J. Wilkins & J.P. Morgan, eds., *Jesus Under Fire* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995) 73-99.

additions.⁵⁷ However, the redaction Bruce described was often quite bold. For example, he concluded that Luke “furnished unhistorical settings” for some events, as well as changing Jesus’ meaning at times, for example in Mt 5:48 – “Be perfect” – to “Be merciful” (Lk 6:36) to remove the hint of legalism and better align Jesus’ message with Pauline thought.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Bruce insisted that Luke never “invented *logia*.”⁵⁹ In 1982, Robert Gundry, a member of the Evangelical Theological Society, went even farther than Bruce in Gundry’s commentary on Matthew, which ultimately resulted in his forced resignation from the ETS. In the commentary, Gundry frequently referred to Matthew’s “unhistorical embellishments” to his Q source (for example, the visit of the Magi) that carried “their own kind of truth alongside historical truth.”⁶⁰ Though Gundry’s confession was evangelical, many at the time wondered if his methods were heterodox.⁶¹ Interestingly, E. Earle Ellis considered that Luke (or the traditioners before him) were imbued with a prophetic spirit and authority which allowed them to adapt events and *logia*.⁶² However, Ellis never faced the same scrutiny from his evangelical counterparts for his suggestions.

b. Independence Advocates and *Ipsissima Verba*

Evangelical IH proponents have tended to take issue with any description of the evangelists adapting other synoptics in their composition. On the one hand, over 170 years ago Moses Stuart complained that dependency hypotheses amounted to

⁵⁷ Bruce, *Kingdom*, 7.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁰ Gundry, *Matthew*, 631.

⁶¹ See above, Chapter VIII, E. Likewise, in a manner similar to the experiences of Bruce and Gundry, the evangelical scholar J. Ramsey Michaels was forced to resign from the faculty of Gordon Theological Seminary for his opinions on the creativity of the evangelists in his monograph *Servant and Son* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981). See Mark A. Noll, *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 1986) 171-172.

⁶² See above, Chapter VIII, C. The changes Ellis suggested which were made by the traditioners tended to be less dramatic than Gundry’s.

accusing the evangelists of plagiarism,⁶³ while on the other hand, the mid-twentieth century Swiss evangelical Gaussen flatly declared that the evangelists' words were dictated by God himself, so that it did not matter if one had seen the work of another.⁶⁴ However, over the years some independence advocates have argued that the evangelists had little or no choice in their renderings of Jesus' words because they repeated the *ipsissima verba*. In 1888, Alexander Roberts argued for the IH by positing that Jesus' preached in Greek and that the gospels contain his "very words."⁶⁵ More recently, Robert Thomas has used a similar argument (that Jesus predominantly spoke Greek) to argue for the IH and *ipsissima verba*.⁶⁶

5. For and Against Documentary Hypotheses

Several evangelical scholars have dismissed appeals to a common documentary source for synoptics over the centuries. In the late 1700s, when the appeal to an *Urevangelium* behind the synoptics began to gain in popularity, the evangelical German intellectual Herder classified an appeal to a non-extant common document as "a presumptuous race without a goal."⁶⁷ In 1818, T.H. Horne argued that descriptions in the early church fathers "do not so much as intimate the existence of any other document,"⁶⁸ a fact still persuasive to many evangelicals who reject a documentary hypothesis today.⁶⁹ Perhaps the most strident critic of the Q hypothesis among recent evangelical IH advocates is Eta Linnemann, who has not only appealed

⁶³ Stuart, *Introduction*, 718.

⁶⁴ Gaussen, 214.

⁶⁵ Roberts, *Greek The Language*, 484.

⁶⁶ Thomas and Farnell, *TJC*, 367-368. See also Robert Thomas, "Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View," *JETS* 43/1 (Mar 2000) 97-111.

⁶⁷ Herder, *APR*, 195.

⁶⁸ Horne, 451

⁶⁹ From the IH perspective, see Thomas Edgar, "Source Criticism: The Two-Source Theory," in Thomas, *TJC*, 132-159, at pp.147-148. From the 2GH perspective, see Niemelä, "The Case for the Two-Gospel View of Gospel Origins," in Thomas, ed., *Three Views*, 126-197, at p.139.

to the lack of ancient references to such a document, but also to the potential dangers that appeals to Q entail.⁷⁰

However, several evangelicals have seen in Papias' statement about Matthew's *logia* a reference to a potential documentary source behind the synoptics. In 1890, the evangelical Scottish scholar A.B. Bruce based his *The Kingdom of God* on the 2SH and the assumption that the common sayings in the synoptics could be attributed to *logia* provided by Matthew.⁷¹ A year later, the Strict Baptist scholar J.T. Marshall argued that the *logia* were discourses of Jesus, written in Aramaic, which the synoptists independently translated into Greek, thus explaining their similarities and differences.⁷² Marshall also argued that the benefit of a common *logia* source for the synoptics "pushes back a written copy of the Lord's words and deeds within perhaps twenty years of the Saviour's death, and thus renders far less probable – if not impossible – the incrustation of legend and myth."⁷³ In the early twentieth-century, the Princetonians Warfield and Vos argued from the contents of the *logia* (in the double tradition) that the synoptics were reliable histories of Jesus' life.⁷⁴ Though Zahn had pointed out the difficulty in equating Papias' *logia* document with Q,⁷⁵ the influential scholars A.T. Robertson and G.W. Scroggie continued to do so well into the middle of the twentieth century. Robertson and Scroggie also apparently made the same mistake considering the fragments found at Oxyrhynchus (presumably P.Oxy. 654, a new discovery at their time) to be remnants of the lost Q document, instead of the Gospel of Thomas.⁷⁶ Conversely, in recent years, Grant Osborne and Matthew

⁷⁰ Eta Linnemann, *Biblical Criticism on Trial: How Scientific is 'Scientific Theology,'* trans. Robert Yarbrough (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001) 20-28.

⁷¹ Bruce, *Kingdom*, 3.

⁷² J.T. Marshall, "The Aramaic Gospel," *Expositor*, 4th ser., 3 (1891) 1-17.

⁷³ J.T. Marshall, "The Aramaic Gospel," *ExpT*, 4 (1892-93) 267.

⁷⁴ See Chapter VII, A 1 and 2 above.

⁷⁵ Zahn, *Introduction*, 509-510.

⁷⁶ See Robertson, *The Christ of the Logia*, 69, and Scroggie, 92.

Williams, proponents of the 2SH, have appealed to the Gospel of Thomas as a “similar document” to Q because of its nature as a sayings compilation.⁷⁷ However, in a 2006 *JETS* article, Nicholas Perrin chided the Jesus Seminar for its preference for Q and the Gospel of Thomas over the synoptics for reliable information on the historical Jesus.⁷⁸

Though they have accepted the idea of a Q document, many evangelical 2SH advocates have been reluctant to strictly define it. In the 1920s, Robertson reminded his readers that what is known of Q from the double tradition is simply “a torso,” with the remainder to always be unknown.⁷⁹ In three book reviews in the 1990s in *JETS*, Samuel Lamerson applauded one author’s “hesitance to accept much of the postulation that has been done in the area of ‘Q’”⁸⁰ and disapproved of the others’ willingness to rigidly define Q.⁸¹ The evangelical scholar Brent Kinman opined that he was sceptical that Q existed as “an independent, unitary and documentary source of material for Matthew and Luke.”⁸² The major exception to the rule of evangelical unwillingness to define Q is Robert Gundry, who in his commentary on Matthew greatly expanded the traditional contents of Q.⁸³ Aside from Gundry’s enlarged Q,

⁷⁷ Osborne, “The Case for the Markan Priority View,” 66 in *Three Views*.

⁷⁸ Perrin, “Thomas: The Fifth Gospel?” *JETS* 49/1 (Mar 2006) 67-80. The FH proponent Mark Goodacre has offered a plausible explanation of Q’s appeal to evangelicals and skeptics – “For those at one end of the theological spectrum, Q can give us a document of Jesus material from before 70, written within a generation of the death of Jesus. For those at the other end of the spectrum, Q aligns itself with the Gospel of Thomas to form a ‘trajectory’ in early Christianity that contrasted radically with emerging orthodoxy, and which only ‘canonical bias’ can now obscure from our view.” See Goodacre, *The Case Against Q*, 16-17.

⁷⁹ Robertson, *The Christ of the Logia*, 23.

⁸⁰ *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 143-144 at 143.

⁸¹ *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 341-342 and 358-359.

⁸² Brent Kinman “Debtor’s Prison and the Future of Israel (Luke 12:57-59),” *JETS* 42/3 (Sep 1999) 411-425, at p.423.

⁸³ See Gundry’s explanation of his reasoning in “A Response to ‘Matthew and Midrash,’” *JETS* 26/1 (March 1983) 41-56.

the evangelical reluctance to define Q perhaps explains why “[w]e still await an evangelical work on Q.”⁸⁴

6. The Role of Oral Tradition

In their explanations of their preferred solutions to the SP over the centuries, proponents of dependency hypotheses have shown a mixed opinion of the role of oral tradition in the sources of the evangelists. Advocates of the AH, pre-Enlightenment (such as Martin Chemnitz)⁸⁵ and modern (such as John Wenham)⁸⁶ have considered the oral nature of the gospel tradition to be directly from the mouth of the apostles to Mark (via Peter) and Luke (via Paul), with Matthew’s own eyewitness experience as an apostle informing his gospel. While early orthodox Protestant and evangelical scholars have assumed the traditional authorship of the gospels, not all have limited the oral tradition behind the gospels to direct information from the apostles. For example, the oral gospel that formed the basis of the gospels (but did not preclude a dependency solution) was described in the late 1700s by Herder as the “common gospel” (*evangelium commune*), which was handed down and ultimately committed to writing a generation later, first in the Gospel of the Hebrews (GOH), then Mark, then Luke, and lastly Matthew based on the GOH.⁸⁷ Though Herder’s ideas preceded the formation of the 2SH, later evangelical proponents of the 2SH have generally been comfortable positing sources of a less-defined provenance, including oral tradition (though ultimately traceable to the apostles) as is clearly seen in Warfield,⁸⁸ Robertson,⁸⁹ and Stein.⁹⁰ On the other hand, Herder’s contemporary, Henry Owen,

⁸⁴ Book review by Leslie Keylock, *JETS* 43/2 (June 2000) 329. In addition, see comments by Stein, *Studying*, 123.

⁸⁵ Chemnitz, *Harmony*, 51-59.

⁸⁶ J. Wenham, *Redating*, xxvii.

⁸⁷ Herder, *APR*, 195-199.

⁸⁸ Warfield, *Christology and Criticism*, 155.

⁸⁹ Robertson, *Luke the Historian*, 48.

⁹⁰ Stein, *Studying*, 195-221.

disparaged the “many inconveniences which inevitably attend oral Tradition,” and instead preferred a strict literary dependency solution, where Matthew the apostle’s gospel provided the basis for the other synoptics, with Mark using Matthew and Luke.⁹¹ Interestingly, some modern 2GH proponents, non-evangelical⁹² and evangelical,⁹³ have followed Owen’s lead in appealing almost entirely to literary dependency without seriously considering oral tradition.

For centuries, early orthodox Protestant and evangelical proponents of the IH have considered the information in the gospels to be given directly by the apostles and/or the Holy Spirit, without intermediaries or generations between them.⁹⁴ There is little wonder, then, that many evangelicals of the nineteenth century used the arguments of Bishop George Gleig, who explained that the oral tradition common to the gospels was given directly from Jesus to the evangelists.⁹⁵ More recently, another evangelical IH advocate, Eta Linnemann, has declared, “There was no period of oral tradition that preceded the formation of the Gospels.”⁹⁶ However, Robert Thomas has broadened the scope of the eyewitness tradition, oral or written, behind the gospels in his explanation of the IH – “a diversified, non-homogeneous body of tradition without definable limits from which the writers were able to draw.”⁹⁷

⁹¹ Owen, *Observations*, 12-13.

⁹² See William Farmer’s lack of interest in non-literary explanations in Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem*, 208-209. However, some non-evangelical proponents of the 2GH allow for a mixture of oral and written sources, such as Allan J. McNicol, David L. Dungan and David B. Peabody, eds., *Beyond the Q Impasse: Luke’s Use of Matthew: A Demonstration by the Research Team of the International Institute for Gospel Studies* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996) 26.

⁹³ Though Niemelä’s (“The Case for the 2GH,” in *Three Views*, 135) explanation of Luke’s prologue allows for the presence of oral or written sources, Niemelä’s description of the 2GH does not rely on oral tradition. The reason for this presumably lies in the fact that practically all of Mark is contained in Matthew and Luke, and thus Mark would have needed no other sources to compose his gospel.

⁹⁴ See Calvin, *Commentary*, Vol. 1, 17.

⁹⁵ See Horne, 459; Gausson, 271; See also Matthew Henry and Thomas Scott, *A Commentary upon the Holy Bible*, vol. 5 (London: Religious Tract Society, 1835) iv.

⁹⁶ Eta Linnemann, *Gibt es ein synoptisches Problem?* (Neuhausen, 1992) = *Is There a Synoptic Problem?* trans. by Robert W. Yarbrough (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1992) 181.

⁹⁷ “Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View,” *JETS* 43/1 (MARCH 2000) 97-98. Thomas’ description is practically the same as Henry Thiessen, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943) 110-118.

C. Changes Throughout the Centuries

It is striking to observe how little many of the arguments for the various hypotheses have changed since their adoption, though there have been some noticeable changes in evangelical arguments in recent decades.

1. The Decline of the Augustinian Hypothesis

Perhaps the most obvious and surprising difference between proto- and evangelical arguments for particular solutions to SP is the near disappearance of proponents of the AH. Though in the first decades of Protestantism the AH was the only dependency hypothesis to have been espoused,⁹⁸ and even in the early nineteenth century it was a common solution among evangelicals,⁹⁹ by the twentieth century advocacy for the AH had practically disappeared.¹⁰⁰ The only evangelical scholar to publish a monograph in defence of the AH within the past fifty years was John Wenham.¹⁰¹

2. Independence Advocates and Augustine

As seen above, practically all early orthodox Protestant and evangelical IH proponents of yesteryear interpreted Augustine's description of Mark as Matthew's abbreviator (*breviator*)¹⁰² to mean that Mark was literarily dependent upon Matthew,¹⁰³ but rejected the church father's opinion. More recently, however, some evangelical IH advocates have begun interpreting Augustine's statement differently and denying any admission of literary dependence in it.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ See above, Chapter II, B.

⁹⁹ See entries for Cornwallis, Clarke, and Macbride in Chapter VA, D, and E above.

¹⁰⁰ Though it was still being advocated in Catholic scholarship. See John Chapman, *Matthew, Mark and Luke: A Study in the Order and Interrelation of the Synoptic Gospels* (London, 1937); and B. C. Butler, *The Originality of St. Matthew: A Critique of the Two-Document Hypothesis* (Cambridge: CUP, 1951).

¹⁰¹ See above, Chapter VIII, B.

¹⁰² *De consensu*, 1.2.4, 4. See above, *Introduction: The Stance of the Early Church*.

¹⁰³ See, for example, Calvin, *Commentary*, Vol. 1, 17; Lardner, *Supplement*, 175; Stuart, 712; Roberts, *Discussions*, 550; and Berkhof, 36.

¹⁰⁴ See Thomas and Farnell, *TJC*, 55-56; and Farnell, "The Case," 209-216.

3. The Use of Statistics

Until the second-half of the twentieth century, evangelical scholars demonstrated little interest in statistical evidence for particular solutions to the SP. While arguments from numerical data derived by comparing the synoptics are not an article of faith, evangelical or otherwise, it is interesting to note that evangelical advocates for the IH,¹⁰⁵ 2SH,¹⁰⁶ and more recently the 2GH,¹⁰⁷ have all attempted to use statistical analysis to strengthen their arguments in recent decades. However, some scholars, such as David Wenham, have doubted whether a statistical analysis of the synoptics could ever offer a conclusive solution to the SP because of the necessary underlying assumptions required for such an undertaking.¹⁰⁸ For documentary hypothesis proponents, statistics are frequently used in relation to arguments from order.

4. Arguments from Order

As documented above, early orthodox Protestants and evangelicals have referred to the verbal similarities in the synoptics as proof of literary dependence for generations, but it was not until the second half of the twentieth century that evangelical 2SH advocates began to use more complex arguments from the order of agreements of the synoptics.¹⁰⁹ Foremost among these has been Robert Stein, who, though he qualifies his statement that the double tradition fails to agree in order against Mark, still considers this Lachmannian¹¹⁰ argument from order “a strong

¹⁰⁵ See Linnemann, *Is There a Synoptic Problem?*, 119-129 and also Linnemann's *Biblical Criticism*, 26-28.

¹⁰⁶ See Stein, *Studying*, 50-55, 89-91, 97-98, 114-117, 270.

¹⁰⁷ Niemelä, “The Case,” 168-177.

¹⁰⁸ D. Wenham, “Revisited,” 17.

¹⁰⁹ It appears the first evangelical scholar to use an argument from order in favor of the 2SH was George E. Ladd in “More Light on the Synoptics,” 12-16, though his arguments were simply based on B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (London: Macmillan, 1924).

¹¹⁰ This “argument from order” was first proposed by Karl Lachmann, “De ordine narrationum in evangeliis synopticis” in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* (1835) 570ff. See Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem*, 16-17 & 65-66, for an explanation of Lachmann and reaction to his arguments.

argument against [Matthew and Luke] having known each other's work."¹¹¹ In *Three Views*, John Niemelä uses a complex statistical approach to an argument from order in favour of the 2GH.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Stein, *Studying*, 76, see also 114-117. See also Bock, *Luke*, 915; and Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (2nd edn., Nashville: B&H, 2009) 100.

¹¹² Niemelä, "The Case," 168-177. Niemelä followed the precedent of Farmer, who used the argument from order to argue that Mark was just as likely dependent upon Mt and Lk. See William Farmer, "Modern Developments of Griesbach's Hypothesis," *NTS* 23 (1976-77) 275-295.

XI. CONCLUSION

This study began by asking five questions. The answer to the first¹ is from the pre-Enlightenment time of Martin Chemnitz in 1593, early orthodox Protestants and later evangelicals appealed to written sources and dependency hypotheses to explain the SP. Over forty years before that, John Calvin rejected Augustine's suggestion of dependency and advocated the IH.² The answer to the second³ is that early orthodox Protestant and evangelical advocates of dependency hypotheses have explained one evangelist's use of the work of another evangelist as a way of confirming the earlier gospel, while contributing his own material, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Conversely, many IH advocates have questioned their counterparts', who espoused dependency, handling of the doctrine of inspiration when discussing the SP.⁴ The answer to the third question⁵ is that, before the nineteenth century, proto-evangelicals and evangelicals were often at the forefront of developing new fields of criticism and, in the process, addressing the SP, while in the past 200 years evangelicals have tended to thoughtfully interact with new ideas and methods offered by non-evangelicals when dealing with the SP, often accepting them at least partially and at times rejecting them completely.⁶ The answer to the fourth⁷ is that proponents of IH have tended to consider dependency hypotheses dangerous for over 250 years, while describing their view as a continuation of the position of the early church.⁸ Advocates of (non-Augustinian) dependency hypotheses have, for over 200 years, indicated that the

¹ For how long have those with evangelical convictions sought to explain the similarities and differences between the synoptic gospels by appealing to the sources of the evangelists?

² See Chapter I for a thorough discussion of Calvin and Chemnitz.

³ How were the individual views of inspiration affected and explained?

⁴ See above, Chapter X, B.

⁵ How have evangelical solutions to the SP evolved as biblical criticism has changed over the centuries?

⁶ See above, Chapter X, A.

⁷ How have evangelicals advocated their preferred solutions to the SP and characterized those solutions different from their own?

⁸ See Lardner, *Supplement*, 175-180.

testimony of the early church regarding gospel order and origins is mixed⁹ and have typically allowed that one's solution to the SP is not an article of faith.¹⁰ The answer to the fifth¹¹ is that ecclesiology, while important to many evangelicals, has not appeared to play a direct role in the way early orthodox Protestant and evangelical scholars have approached the SP. In other words, competing solutions, evolving methodologies and varied opinions regarding the importance of the SP have been evident in evangelicalism for hundreds of years, and will most likely continue to compete, evolve, and vary for years to come. As evangelical scholars have been exposed to and made use of standard historical-critical methods for at least two generations,¹² it is hoped that, in the future,¹³ more progress can be made toward finding a solution to the SP, one amenable to all those interested in the bible, evangelical or otherwise.

⁹ See Owen, *Observations*, 6-7 and Niemelä, 136-155.

¹⁰ See Andreas Köstenberger, "Editorial," *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 1-2. Also, see above, Chapter IX, G.

¹¹ How has ecclesiology factored into evangelical discussions of the SP

¹² See the beginning of Chapter VIII, and the scholars considered in that chapter, for a description of the rise of modern biblical criticism among evangelicals, first in the UK, the worldwide.

¹³ Also see the online addendum to this thesis which includes the results of a brief survey of instructors at evangelical institutions and their teaching on the SP. It is hoped that this brief survey can provide at least one gauge of current opinion on the SP and potential ramifications for the future. See markgoodacre.com/Strickland.

APPENDIX: The ETS and The Synoptic Problem¹

A. The Founding of the Evangelical Theological Society

North America saw the growth of evangelical influence and cooperation to a much greater extent than post-WWII Europe, and well before the evangelical expansion in South America, Asia, and Africa in later decades. During the 1940s, the U.S. saw the creation of The National Association of Evangelicals in 1942, Youth for Christ in that same year, Fuller Theological Seminary (the first multi-denominational evangelical seminary in the country) in 1947, World Vision International in that same year, and the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) in 1949. The ETS was formed “to foster conservative Biblical scholarship by providing a medium for the oral exchange and written expression of thought and research in the general field of the theological disciplines as centred in the Scriptures.”² The Constitution specifically requires each member to sign annually in agreement with the Doctrinal Basis of the ETS, which states, “The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs. God is a Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each an uncreated person, one in essence, equal in power and glory.”³ To become full members with voting privileges, one must have completed a Master of Theology degree or its equivalent.

¹ The purpose of this appendix is to provide an overview of how the SP was discussed among the scholars of the Evangelical Theological Society from its inception until modern-day. When this investigation was begun, it was hoped by the author of this thesis that the 50+ years of material might provide insight into trends and changes in the approaches of evangelical scholars with regards to the SP. With that in mind, every discussion of the SP in an ETS publication, whether great or small, up until 2008 has been catalogued and summarised. In the attempt to provide a broad consideration of a large number of evangelical scholars at the ETS, this approach was limited because it failed to uncover many in-depth considerations in the SP. Thus, while this appendix is the result of work that was far from unfruitful, it is nonetheless less helpful for gauging evangelical opinion vis-à-vis the SP than the approach taken in Chapter VIII above. It can be very useful, however, for future research into the ETS and/or North American considerations of the synoptic problem.

² *The Constitution of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS Constitution)*, Article II. [<http://www.etsjets.org/about/constitution>, accessed 13 March 2010].

³ *ETS Constitution*, Article III. This quotation is provided to detail the sole criteria members of the ETS must fulfill.

Though the ETS is based in North America, with seven regions covering the United States and Canada, it includes members from all over the world. In 1975, the last year in which the ETS published its membership directory, members were listed from Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and South America.⁴ While the ETS was formed in 1949, it did not begin publishing a journal until 1958. When the ETS conducted its first meeting in December of 1949, the decision was made to pursue the publication of “a journal or volume of papers” which had been presented at the annual meetings.⁵ From 1958, the journal was entitled *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society (BETS)*, and in 1969 the title was changed to its current name, *The Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society (JETS)*.

The publication of *BETS/JETS* provides an opportunity for a more direct approach in discovering evangelical opinions and approaches vis-à-vis the Synoptic Problem (SP). Because the ETS requires that its full members hold Th.M. degrees or equivalents, a certain level of scholarship is necessary to be a contributor to *BETS/JETS*. The purpose of this chapter is to survey the volumes of *BETS/JETS* for the years 1958-2008 to track the discussion of the SP by evangelical scholars over that time period. Each quadrannual volume of those years (Spring/March, Summer/June, Fall/September, and Winter/December) is surveyed below. NB: If any mention was made relating to the SP, whether in article or book review form, a summary of the content is given as well as its location in the publication. Special attention is given to ascertain whether the contributor included a preferred solution to the SP, and if so, which solution – the IH, 2SH, 2GH, AH, FH, or a unique solution – was adopted.

B. 1958-1969: A Variety of Opinions

⁴ “Membership Directory,” *JETS* 18/2 (June 1975) 115-130.

⁵ John Wiseman, “Preface to the Index Issue,” *JETS* 28/5 (Index Issue 1985) 3-4, at p. 3.

The first mention of the SP in an ETS publication⁶ appeared in the first article of the inaugural volume of *BETS*. The article, which was the text of ETS presidential address of Ned B. Stonehouse given at the annual ETS meeting in 1957, discussed the importance of evangelical belief in the infallibility of the bible. In it, Stonehouse articulated his concern that the use of church tradition alongside the bible should be done carefully, with Scripture assuming the pre-eminent role and tradition a secondary role. His chosen example of the care which should be demonstrated by evangelical scholars was the subject of the SP:

We are confronted today with two extremes in dealing with the Synoptic Problem. On the one hand there is present an uncritical acceptance of the two-document theory even on the part of some conservatives. This is in spite of the fact that this theory commonly conceives of the evangelists as mere editors, and indeed often as editors who more or less consciously distort or manipulate the contents of the gospel. On the other hand, there appears to be a tendency, because of these fundamental objections to the two document theory, to reject it as simply the product of unbelief. This would preclude in advance the possibility of recognizing that there may be component features of the theory that are of a different character from the estimate of the editors to which I have just referred, features which may be quite acceptable and indeed preferable to certain traditional views.⁷

Stonehouse argued that the tradition for the order in which the gospels were written is not “unitary” (with the Anti-Marcionite Prologue giving the order Matthew-Mark-

⁶ While the papers presented at ETS meetings prior to 1958 were not published, a list of titles and authors is provided in Wiseman’s index for the years 1953-56, none of which address the SP. See John Wiseman, “1953-56 Printed Papers of ETS Annual Meetings,” *JETS* 28/5 (Index Issue 1985) 25-28.

⁷ Ned B. Stonehouse, “The Infallibility of Scripture and Evangelical Progress,” *BETS* 1 (Winter, 1958) 9-13, at p.10.

Luke, and Clement claiming that the gospels with the genealogies came before Mark), so a decision on the order should not be based primarily on tradition. Likewise, he contended that, while the claim of apostolic authorship of the gospels rests on a long and solid tradition, internal evidence in the gospels must be given priority and that no specific belief in gospel authorship should be elevated “to the status of an article of the Christian faith.”⁸ Stonehouse and his views continued to be a factor in the debate between those who argued for literary dependence of the synoptics and those opposed (see below). In this initial article of *BETS*, Stonehouse refrained from endorsing a particular solution to the SP.

The second article to address the SP in *BETS* did not appear until 1964. In “The ‘Q’ Myth in Synoptic Studies,”⁹ Lewis A. Foster documented arguments against Q, quoting Q sceptics J. H. Ropes and Morton Enslin as “liberals” who deny the existence of the hypothetical document (and incorrectly cited Farrer’s denial of Q and Markan priority).¹⁰ He offered four arguments against the existence of Q: 1) The silence of the early church about Q; 2) Proponents cannot agree on the extent of Q; 3) The form of Q is unclear, 4) Neither Matthew nor Luke appear to follow Q’s order faithfully. However, Foster noted he was “aware there are conservatives who disagree with this argument,” namely George Ladd and Ned Stonehouse.¹¹ While arguing against Q, Foster did not make clear which solution to the SP he endorsed. His rejection of Markan priority is apparent, but whether he held to the 2GH, IH, or another theory was not stated.

Two years later, in 1966, the third article to address the subject of the SP in the pages of *BETS*, however briefly, was contributed by A. Berkeley Mickelsen, entitled

⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁹ *BETS* 4 (Summer 1964) 111-119.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 118 footnote 22.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 23.

“Frontier issues in Contemporary Theology in Evangelical Perspective: The New Testament.”¹² Mickelsen offered a survey of various subjects gaining attention in the scholarly world, the first of which was the SP. Though he acknowledged that a definitive solution was lacking, he specifically mentioned William Farmer’s recently published *The Synoptic Problem: A Critical Review of the Problem of the Literary Relationships Between Matthew, Mark and Luke* (New York: MacMillan, 1964) and B. de Solages’ *A Greek Synopsis of the Gospels* (Leiden: Brill, 1959). Farmer specifically advocated the 2GH, while Solages concluded that the 2SH best explained the synoptic relationships. Though showing respect for Farmer’s and Solages’ work, Mickelsen refrained from endorsing the 2GH, the 2SH or any particular solution to the SP.

The fourth mention of the SP in *BETS* came in 1968 by William L. Lane in an article entitled “Redaktionsgeschichte and the De-historicizing of the New Testament Gospel.”¹³ Lane commended the utility of redaction criticism (RC) while disagreeing with some of the conclusions of the author under consideration in the article, Will Marxsen.¹⁴ The benefits of RC, according to Lane, were a greater appreciation of “the role of the evangelists in their capacity as redactors and theologians,” as well as the caution with which harmonization is used in RC. To Lane, differences in the gospels revealed tendencies and intentions of the author and were not simply rough places to be made smooth. Thirdly, RC had benefits because it forced practitioners to consider “the Gospel as a total work” instead of a collection “of small, independent units.”¹⁵ According to Lane, Marxsen’s mistake was to assume that the gospels were primary sources for the *Sitz im Leben* of the early church but mere secondary sources

¹² *BETS* 9/2 (Spring 1966) 69-73.

¹³ *BETS* 11/1 (Winter 1968) 27-33.

¹⁴ Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Evangeliums* (Göttingen, 1956).

¹⁵ Lane, “Redaktionsgeschichte,” 32.

for the historical details described in them. Marxsen had tremendous confidence in his own ability to deduce the situation to which the gospel writers wrote by using RC, but little confidence in the history which the evangelists composed. However, while critical of Marxsen's presuppositions, Lane nonetheless heartily endorsed the validity of RC for "understanding the text of the gospels and the intention of the evangelists" in the last line of his article. Lane also revealed his preference, for Markan priority, which he shared with Marxsen, in the article, but Lane stopped short of advocating the 2SH.¹⁶

Thus in the first twelve years of *BETS*, mention was made of the SP only four times. Of those four, one reflected the author's discomfort with the 2SH without endorsing a particular solution and another commended works by Farmer (2GH) and Solage (2SH). The two others argued for freedom to pursue the methods used in research of the SP. Stonehouse's fears that some would evangelicals would go to extremes in accepting or in rejecting the 2SH had not been realized as of yet (at least at the ETS), and William Lane's confidence in redaction criticism encouraged other evangelical scholars to use it as well. It is fair to say that there was no singular view concerning the SP at the ETS in the 1950s and 1960s, though judging from the paucity of articles among the pages of the *BETS* in its first 11 years, the issue was not of primary importance in the scholarly evangelical world. The following two decades would see a much greater emphasis of the SP and disagreement in the pages of *BETS/JETS*.

C. 1970-1979: Controversy Begins to Brew

1970

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

Beginning in the 1970s, the subject of the SP was discussed more frequently than in the previous decades, so a year-by-year approach is taken for the remainder of this appendix for those years in which the SP was discussed. Also in the 1970s, reviews of books began to appear more frequently in *JETS*¹⁷ and when the SP was discussed from the 1970s on, it was often in the “Reviews” section. For instance, in 1970 Cyril J. Barber, Librarian at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, offered a review which mentioned the SP when he reviewed Robert Gundry’s *Survey of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970).¹⁸ Barber offered a favourable review of the book, and mentioned Gundry’s brief argument for the 2SH and RC. As in most of the reviews that later appeared in *JETS*, whether positive or negative in nature, the reviewer did not critique the solution to the SP described in the reviewed work, making it impossible to know the reviewer’s personal solution. In these situations, the reviewer’s opinion vis-à-vis a solution to the SP will thus be considered unknown.

1973

Almost three years passed before another review mentioned the SP, a review of I. Howard Marshall’s *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971) by Gilbert Bilezikian, in the spring issue of 1973. Bilezikian’s review offered wholehearted acceptance of Marshall’s argument for the utility of redaction criticism. Echoing the *JETS* article by Lane in 1968, Bilezikian argued that the use of RC within certain boundaries by evangelicals was appropriate for two reasons. First, it prevented the “ruthless fragmentation” which results from many critical methods (i.e. form criticism) that could cause the gospels to be “wrenched from their framework”

¹⁷ Note the change of the journal title from *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* to *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* in 1969.

¹⁸ *JETS* 13/3 (Fall 1970) 255-256.

to be analysed.¹⁹ Second, RC could be done “without minimizing the relevance of the historical events” that are detailed in the gospels. Like Lane, Bilezikian argued that admitting the evangelists redacted their sources does not detract from their *historical* value, but instead adds appreciation for their *theological* value. He went even further than Lane, adding his hope that RC might provide “for the vindication of the integrity of the basic documents of the Christian faith.”²⁰ Instead of viewing RC as an attack on the Christian faith, Bilezikian saw in RC a weapon to counterattack the de-historicizing of the gospels by many scholars – “This battle is neither remote nor futile.” While the reviewer advocated RC, he did not divulge the SP solution he personally preferred.

1975

Two years later, in the Winter 1975 edition of *JETS*, Simon Kistemaker sounded a much more negative note in his article, “Current Problems and Projects in New Testament Research,”²¹ when he addressed subject of RC. He considered RC to be based on the same “rationalistic antisupernaturalism” prevalent in form criticism.²² However, having voiced his concern with RC, Kistemaker went on to argue that serious research into the SP needed to be done because the origins of the gospels were “more than a topic for debate,” but at the core of evangelical thought. Kistemaker called for a “united effort to set forth a scholarly analysis and solution to the problem,” presumably by a team of evangelical scholars, as opposed to the individual studies which had been done up to that point.²³ Thus, while he doubted the usefulness of RC for evangelical scholars, Kistemaker promoted research into the SP without advocating a specific solution.

¹⁹ *JETS* 16/2 (Spring 1973) 104-106, at p.104.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 105.

²¹ *JETS* 18/1 (Winter 1975) 17-28.

²² *Ibid.*, 21.

²³ *Ibid.*, 25.

A year later, in the winter volume of 1976, Donald A. Hagner offered, in his review of the *Tyndale New Testament Commentary* series,²⁴ comments on one particular volume that addressed the SP. Hagner highly recommended Leon Morris' volume in the series,²⁵ noting that Morris alone of the commentators addressed the SP at length. Hagner mentioned that Morris opted for Marcan priority and a plurality of sources instead of a single Q document. However, Hagner's language remained neutral with regard to Morris' solution to the SP.

1976

The following volume of 1976 (Spring) saw a flurry of articles which addressed the SP either directly or indirectly. Some of the same authors who first appeared in the Spring 1976 issue would carry on their discussions about the SP a quarter-century later (see below). First, Grant Osborne, echoing arguments made by Lane and Bilezikian in previous years in *JETS*, recommended RC as a legitimate tool for use by evangelical scholars in his article "Redaction Criticism and the Great Commission: A Case Study Toward a Biblical Understanding of Inerrancy."²⁶ To show this, Osborne offered a redaction-critical approach to the Great Commission in Matthew with the goal of providing a "better understanding of the evangelist's theology and a deeper insight into the meaning of the passage."²⁷ By looking at Matthew's unique wording, Osborne tried to show Matthew's themes of messianic lordship Christology, discipleship ecclesiology and inaugurated eschatology were summed up in Matthew's account of the Great Commission. Matthew's editorial

²⁴ Donald A. Hagner, "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: A Review Article," *JETS* 19/1 (Winter 1976) 45-52. NB: Hagner's contribution is titled a "review article," meaning that it is a lengthy book review in article form. For the purposes of this study, "review articles" will be classified as book reviews because they simply offer reviews of others' works and little original material.

²⁵ Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

²⁶ *JETS* 19/2 (Spring 1976) 73-85.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 85.

activity, according to Osborne, took an actual tradition of Jesus' words "perhaps from Mark" that "contained a claim of authority, a command to evangelize, and a promise of help."²⁸ Osborne claimed that the greater insight proffered by RC into the pericope was evidence that RC, once removed of the "presuppositions of radical critics," can be "a positive tool for understanding the early Church and its theology."²⁹

Osborne then digressed from the issue he had introduced – RC and Matthew's Great Commission – and briefly addressing the concept of biblical inerrancy and the implications that an evangelical scholar's use of RC might have upon inerrancy. Though Osborne devoted a scant two-and-a-half pages to the subject, he summarized the battles that were beginning to take place among evangelicals over the doctrine of the inspiration of the bible, an argument which would make up the greater part of the disagreement between Osborne, Robert Thomas, and other members of the ETS in future volumes of *JETS* (see below). First, Osborne noted the ongoing debate over the relationship between inspiration and inerrancy, citing Daniel Fuller³⁰ and Richard J. Coleman³¹ as examples of members of the ETS who advocated separating the doctrines of inspiration and inerrancy and applying the notion of inspiration to the entire bible but claiming inerrancy for only particular passages. Authors arguing for the necessary link between the two and complete inerrancy of the bible and its inspiration were Geisler,³² Pinnock,³³ Payne,³⁴ and Poythress,³⁵ with whom Osborne

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 83.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

³⁰ *Ibid.* Osborne cited D. Fuller, "Warfield's View of Faith and History: A Critique in Light of the New Testament," *BETS* 11/2 (Spring 1968) 75-83 and also "The Nature of Biblical Inerrancy," *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, 24 (June 1972), 47-50.

³¹ Osborne cited Richard J. Coleman, "Reconsidering Limited Inerrancy," *JETS* 17/4 (Fall 1974) 207-214.

³² Osborne cited N. L. Geisler, "Theological Method and Inerrancy: A Reply to Professor Holmes," *BETS* 11/3 (Summer 1968) 139-146.

³³ Osborne cited C. Pinnock, "Limited Inerrancy: A Critical Appraisal and Constructive Alternative," in *God's Inerrant Word*, ed. J.W. Montgomery (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1974).

³⁴ Osborne cited B. Payne, "Partial Omniscience: Observations on Limited Inerrancy," *JETS* 18/1 (Winter 1975) 37-40.

appeared to concur. Osborne explained that, in gospel studies, inerrancy is most often an evangelical point of contention when dealing with the *Logia Jesu*, specifically whether one gospel writer's quoting of Jesus in a different way than another implies that the authors used the *ipsissima verba* or *ipsissima vox* of Jesus. Osborne argued for the latter by claiming that Jesus' words in the gospels are translations of the original Aramaic, paraphrased to reveal "the true meaning of them to their readers." Matthew's adaptations of tradition were merely "inspired interpretations of Jesus' actual message."³⁶ Osborne would revisit these arguments in later *JETS* articles. In this article from 1976, he emerged as a bold advocate of RC in the journal, and in the process of defending RC, endorsed the 2SH.

In that same volume, Robert Thomas demonstrated a stark contrast to the approach of Osborne by offering the first argument for the IH in the journal's 19-year history, in his article, "An Investigation of the Agreements Between Matthew and Luke Against Mark."³⁷ By looking at several minor agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark, Thomas concluded that the possibility that Matthew and Luke did not have access to Mark must be considered. Instead of seeing the minor agreements as an argument for "the phantom-like Q,"³⁸ with its nebulous nature (oral or written), Thomas argued that, given the minor agreements of any two synoptics against the other (Matthew and Mark against Luke, Matthew and Luke against Mark, and Mark and Luke against Matthew) combined with the well-known Mark-Q overlaps, the arguments normally used by 2SH advocates could just as easily be used to claim that Mark also used Q as a source. But, if this were held to be true, there would be no need for Matthean and Lukan dependence upon Mark. Thomas posited that the

³⁵ Osborne cited V. S. Poythress, "Problems for Limited Inerrancy," *JETS* 18/2 (Spring 1975) 93-104.

³⁶ Osborne, "RC and the Great Commission," 84.

³⁷ *JETS* 19/2 (Spring 1976) 103-112.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 108.

designation ‘Q’ is insufficient because it represents a “layer of tradition composed of a miscellaneous assortment of [oral and written] data.” Thomas had little room for the methods followed on the “blind alley of source criticism,”³⁹ and he controverted the prevailing assumption of direct literary dependence among the gospel writers, opting instead for a mixture of “personal recollections, oral traditions, and numbers of brief written sources” to explain the agreements among the synoptics. Thomas suggested that solutions based on direct literary dependence might be more of a “blindfold” than a help in the study of gospel origins. He concluded with a plea for scholars to entertain the option “that the three synoptists worked in relative independence of one another in producing the gospels,” indicating his preference for the IH.⁴⁰ These would be far from Osborne’s or Thomas’s last words on the subject at the ETS.

In addition to the Osborne and Thomas articles in the Spring 1976 volume of *JETS*, Charles Wanamaker offered a review of *The Matthean Redaction of a Primitive Apostolic Commissioning* (Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1974) by Benjamin J. Hubbard, in which the reviewer mentioned Hubbard’s adherence to the 2SH but offered no judgment as to its validity.⁴¹

1978

In 1978, Osborne’s apologetic concerns for modern critical methods appeared again in *JETS*, in an article entitled “The Evangelical and Traditionsgeschichte,”⁴² where he defended the use of tradition criticism (TC) and RC. He revisited the argument that TC and RC could be used as long as the “negative dangers”, i.e. presuppositions of liberal critics, were avoided. Evangelicals should view the

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁴¹ *JETS* 19/2 (Spring 1976) 132-134.

⁴² *JETS* 21/2 (June 1978) 117-130.

evangelists, not as “playwrights who construct scenes to fit a later theological emphasis,” but as writers of *Historie* and *Geschichte* concurrently.⁴³ Again, Osborne not only defended the methods but also argued that they lead toward magnifying the word of God and aid discovery of “ultimate truth for our time.”⁴⁴ Though advocating RC and TC, Osborne did not reveal his preferred solution to the SP under which to use it.

1979

June 1979

The next article to make mention of the SP in *JETS*, appearing in June of 1979, was Robert Stein’s “Is It Lawful for a Man to Divorce His Wife?”⁴⁵ Stein argued that Jesus’ teaching on divorce found in Mk 10:2-12 and Mt 19:3-12 were not independent, but that Matthew used Mark as a source.⁴⁶ Though Stein later became a well-known advocate of the 2SH (see below), he refrained from endorsing a solution to the SP in this article.

In that same issue, Richard J. Reynolds reviewed *The Parables of the Triple Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) by Charles E. Carlston.⁴⁷ In his review, Reynolds held no objections to Carlston’s adoption of the 2SH but did not express his own preferred hypothesis. The reviewer was critical of Carlston’s treatment of the gospel writers “as somewhat cavalier editors rather than as bona fide historians and theologians,”⁴⁸ displaying the same unease other evangelical scholars such as Osborne and Bilezikian had voiced with the assumption that the Synoptic writers invented or substantially changed their telling of documented events.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 129-130.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *JETS* 22/2 (June 1979) 115-121.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁴⁷ *JETS* 22/2 (June 1979) 173-174.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 174.

December 1979

**Osborne's Third Article: A Hermeneutical Methodology for the Use of
Redaction Criticism**

Osborne's work appeared again in December of 1979, once more arguing for the use of RC, but this time beginning his more lengthy article, "The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology,"⁴⁹ on the defensive. His previous two articles in *JETS* had provoked a strong rebuttal from John W. Montgomery in two separate writings, one being a chapter in his evangelical apologetic book⁵⁰ and the other a paper presented at the ETS Annual Conference in December of 1978.⁵¹ Osborne recounted that Montgomery claimed Osborne's his use of higher-critical methods as an evangelical served to "cast a pall of doubt over the reliability of the portrait of Jesus in the New Testament."⁵² Montgomery's criticism revealed a shift in the debate among evangelicals; a shift from arguing over whether an evangelical biblical scholar could use RC at all, to the singling out of individual evangelical scholars like Osborne and pointing to the inadequacy of their conclusions using RC. The critics of RC began attacking individuals' use of RC instead of RC itself. Osborne answered this criticism in a threefold fashion. First, he documented many evangelical scholars who held a more positive attitude toward RC and whose scholarly work revealed attention to detail in describing the evangelists' editing without ascribing to them fabrication of words or events.⁵³ Second, Osborne provided

⁴⁹ *JETS* 22/4 (Dec 1979) 305-322.

⁵⁰ John Warwick Montgomery, "The Fuzzification of Biblical Inerrancy," in Montgomery, *Faith Founded on Fact* (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1978) 220-221.

⁵¹ John Warwick Montgomery, "Why Has God Incarnate Suddenly Become Mythical?" which later became a chapter of the same title in K. S. Kantzer and S. N. Gundry, eds., *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979) 57-65. Montgomery was well-known as a Christian apologist, but not a NT specialist.

⁵² As quoted by Osborne, "The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology," 306.

⁵³ Those Osborne mentioned were Peter Stuhlmacher, John Piper, Paul Feinberg and Kenneth S. Kantzner—Peter Stuhlmacher, *Historical Criticism and Theological Interpretation of Scripture*, trans. R. A. Harrisville (German ed., 1975; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977) 66-71; John Piper, "A Reply to

a long list of synoptic passages, which, in his opinion, were better explained using RC than a more traditional harmonization approach.⁵⁴ He again mentioned the inadequacy of the notion of *ipsissima verba* in this context, arguing that the obvious *ipsissima vox* of Jesus recorded in the gospels was explained better using the redaction critic's allowance for "a dynamic freedom to apply the meaning of Jesus' statements to the needs of [the gospel authors'] day."⁵⁵ Third, he briefly considered whether evangelicals might do better to use a different term than "redaction" in describing their own critical methods because of the "negative" presuppositions of many of its practitioners. The term was too important to change, argued Osborne, because even scholars holding those "negative presuppositions," such as G. Bornkamm, G. Barth, and H.J. Held in their *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963) often produced important theological and technical results that evangelicals needed to appreciate.⁵⁶

Instead of offering a new descriptive term, Osborne laid out the "hermeneutical methodology" that evangelicals should employ when using RC. First, he argued that the assumption of Markan priority (by which he appeared to mean the 2SH) by most redaction critics of his day should no longer be considered "a given" because of the weaknesses which had been pointed out by Rist, Leon-Dufour, and

Gerhard Maier: A Review Article," *JETS* 22/1 (1979) 79-85; Paul D. Feinberg, "The Meaning of Inerrancy," paper presented at the International Congress on Biblical Inerrancy, October, 1978; Kenneth S. Kantzer, "Evangelicals and the Doctrine of Inerrancy," in *The Foundation of Biblical Authority* (ed. J. M. Bolee; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978) 153-154.

⁵⁴ Osborne, "The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology," 310. Osborne listed: (1) Mark 15:34 ("Eloi, Eloi") and Matthew 27:47 ("Eli, Eli"); (2) In the parable of the wicked tenants, Mark 12:9-10 and Luke 20:15-16 place the question ("What will the owner of the vineyard do?") and the answer ("He will come and destroy . . .") on the lips of Jesus, while Matthew 21:60-61 places the answer on the lips of his opponents; (3) In the question of the Pharisees and Herodians concerning the payment of taxes, Mark 12:14 phrases the "flattering" introduction in chiasmic order while Matthew 22:16 removes the chiasm and transposes the last element to second; (4) The words of institution at the Eucharist are a famous debate, with Luke and John adding "which is for you; this do in remembrance of me" to Mark's and Matthew's "this is my body"; they also change the latter's "blood of the covenant" to "new covenant in my blood" and Matthew adds "for the remission of sins."

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 313.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 315.

Sanders.⁵⁷ At this point, Osborne stated that he still affirmed Markan priority (again meaning the 2SH) but in but with the caveat that included a more “complex theory of overlapping traditions” to explain the SP. Second, Osborne argued, redaction critics should also avoid drawing a sharp distinction between redaction and tradition. Gospel authors had their own theological reasons for using particular traditions, thus making redaction and tradition inseparable. Third, evangelical scholars must use external criteria – seams, summary statements, explanatory asides, and alterations⁵⁸ – to identify sources behind the gospels and internal criteria – genre of pericopae, thematic incongruities, arrangement of material⁵⁹ – to identify the author’s themes. Osborne concluded on a personal note by informing readers that he had employed redaction-critical methods in his own preaching and they served as a powerful tool to elucidate the biblical text. For him, RC could serve not only the scholarly world, but also the church as well.

Also appearing in the December 1979 issue was an article by Robert E. Morosco which reinforced some of the same arguments made by Osborne. Morosco wrote, “Redaction Criticism and the Evangelical: Matthew 10 a Test Case,”⁶⁰ to demonstrate how RC could offer better explanations of synoptic gospel difficulties than traditional harmonizational approaches, particularly with Matthew’s Commissioning Story (Mt 9:35-11:1). Morosco identified some potential difficulties with the section and then used redaction-critical methods to resolve them. Though it was unclear how RC offered a better solution than previous evangelical attempts to

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* Those Osborne cited were John M Rist, *On The Independence Of Matthew And Mark* (SNTSMS 32; Cambridge: University Press, 1978); X. Leon-Dufour, “Redaktionsgeschichte of Matthew and Literary Criticism,” *Perspective* 11 (1970) 9-35; and E. P. Sanders, *The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition* (SNTSMS 9; Cambridge: University Press, 1969) 276-279

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 317-318.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 319-320.

⁶⁰ *JETS* 22/4 (Dec 1979) 323-331.

handle these differences,⁶¹ Morosco demonstrated his confidence in RC, but not a particular solution to the SP.

D. 1980-1989: Disagreements Over Methodology

1980

In 1980, the only mention of the SP occurred in a review of Joachim Jeremias' *Die Sprache des Lukasevangeliums* (Göttingen, 1980) in which the reviewer, John Nolland, took a positive view of Jeremias' use of RC and TC, but offered no indication of his own preferred solution to the SP.⁶²

1981

The March 1981 volume included an article by Donald Hagner on evangelical interpretation of the gospels, entitled "Interpreting the Gospels: The Landscape and the Quest."⁶³ Hagner had first shared the contents of the article in the form of a paper at the previous year's ETS Annual Meeting. His stated purpose was to respond to a paper presented by R.H. Gundry on Matthew at the 1979 Annual Meeting of the ETS entitled "Inspiration, Imprecision, Literary Genre and Matthew."⁶⁴ Hagner, much as Osborne and the other advocates of RC had done, offered arguments for evangelical scholarship's usage of critical tools in biblical research. He noted that the gospels are the product of three time frames: the period of Jesus' teaching and ministry, the oral period which spanned from the resurrection to the writing of the gospels, and the written period when the gospels were written down. However, the gospels themselves cannot simply be confined to the third period, since they are a product of the first two

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 331.

⁶² *JETS* 23/4 (Dec 1980) 359-360.

⁶³ *JETS* 24/1 (Mar 1981) 23-37.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 37. Gundry's paper later appeared as a "Theological Postscript" in his commentary on Matthew, a work which produced a firestorm of controversy at the ETS as will be seen below.

and “the stages cannot be kept distinct.”⁶⁵ While the evangelists demonstrate creativity in their reports, Hagner argued that they recount “authentic historical tradition” and that their creative work “preserved [the tradition] as it ought to be—intact and yet enhanced by the insight of a mature perspective.”⁶⁶ Here, Hagner appeared to be anticipating the potential controversy among evangelicals which Gundry’s commentary might produce. In the process of defending the description the synoptic authors as redactors, Hagner referenced “Matthew’s and Luke’s use of Mark and Q,” which clearly revealed his preference for the 2SH.⁶⁷

The only other mention of the SP in 1981 came in the December volume of *JETS* in a review by Douglas J. Moo of *History and Criticism of the Marcan Hypothesis* by Hans-Herbert Stoldt.⁶⁸ In the review, Moo argued that, while Stoldt had shown many of the weaknesses of Markan priority and the 2SH (which Moo conflated throughout the review), he still was unable disprove it. Moo’s was the first book review in *JETS* in which the reviewer indicated his or her preferred solution to the SP.⁶⁹

1982

March 1982

In March of 1982, Simon J. Kistemaker published another article dealing with the SP (following his 1975 article which called for more exploration into the SP)⁷⁰ in which he discussed his preferred solution to the SP.⁷¹ While examining the structure of the gospel of Luke, Kistemaker claimed that the “question of source material used

⁶⁵ Hagner, “Interpreting,” 29.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁶⁸ Donald L. Niewyk, ed. and transl. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1980).

⁶⁹ *JETS* 24/4 (Dec 1981) 359-360.

⁷⁰ *JETS* 18/1 (Winter 1975) 17-28.

⁷¹ “The Structure of Luke’s Gospel,” *JETS* 25/1 (Mar 1982) 33-39.

by Luke... defies an answer.”⁷² However, he surmised that a shared written source, i.e. Q, could not explain the material common to Matthew and Luke, but that Luke almost certainly knew of Mark’s gospel based on his reference to “many” in Lk 1:1. Kistemaker posited that Luke’s sources were not written, but came from direct contact with Mark, based on Paul’s mention of them as co-workers in the gospel (see Col 4:10, 14; 2 Tim 4:11; Phlm 24). He suggested that Mark, Luke “and perhaps Matthew” shared information for the writing of their gospels.⁷³ Thus, Kistemaker’s solution to the SP does not fit with either 2SH or the IH, but stands alone in *JETS* for its rejection of common written sources for the synoptic authors but not the independence of their work.

June 1982

D.A. Carson contributed an article of interest to this study in June of 1982 with the title “The Jewish Leaders in Matthew’s Gospel: A Reappraisal.”⁷⁴ Carson’s aim was to controvert contemporary biblical scholarship that portrayed Matthew as ignorant of the nature of Jewish leadership in first-century Palestine, an ignorance supposedly displayed in the repeated grouping of “the Pharisees and Sadducees” by the evangelist. In considering several occurrences of the phrase, Carson used redaction-critical methods based on the assumption of Markan priority. When Carson came to Mt 12:14, he noted that Matthew did not retain Mark’s “the Herodians,” an omission that presumably showed Matthew’s post-70 A.D. perspective, in which the Herodians were on the wane. Carson resisted this assertion by noting that Matthew retained Mark’s references to the Herodians in other places and argued, “Matthew commonly abbreviates Mark when he follows him.”⁷⁵ Later, in a discussion of the

⁷² *Ibid.*, 35.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁷⁴ *JETS* 25/2 (June 1982) 161-174.

⁷⁵ Carson, “The Jewish Leaders,” 170.

parable in Mt 21:33-46, Carson refrained from “postulating both a Markan and a Q recension” to account for the different synoptic accounts.⁷⁶ Thus, the author demonstrated evangelical use of RC and endorsement of Markan priority.

September 1982

The subject of the SP came up briefly in an article by Robert W. Herron, Jr. in September of the same year in his article, “Mark’s Jesus on Divorce: Mark 10:1-12 Reconsidered.”⁷⁷ Herron noted that appeals are often made to Markan priority to explain the differences between Mark’s and Matthew’s version of Jesus’ sayings on divorce, but that he refused to try to prove or assume Markan priority. However, he also rejected Farmer’s claim that Mark 10:1-12 could only be explained “with great difficulty... by a redactional process in which Mark is placed first.”⁷⁸ Herron revealed disinclination toward the 2GH and apparently agreed with Markan priority, but fell short of conclusively endorsing it.

1983

Robert Gundry’s Commentary on Matthew

A critical article addressing synoptic issues, namely the use of RC and other historical-critical methods by evangelicals, appeared in March of 1983 and was entitled, “The Historical-Critical Method: Egyptian Gold or Pagan Precipice.”⁷⁹ Using Augustine’s argument that certain pagan philosophies, while ungodly, could be “converted” for the use of teaching the gospel, ETS President Alan F. Johnson suggested that evangelical scholars could make use of higher-critical methods, or at least refrain from condemning those who do.⁸⁰ As Osborne had done a few years

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁷⁷ *JETS* 25/3 (Sep 1982) 273-281.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 274.

⁷⁹ *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 3-15. The article offers the text of the presidential address at the 1982 ETS Annual Meeting.

⁸⁰ Johnson, “The Historical Critical Method,” 3.

earlier, Johnson mentioned Harold Lindsell and J.W. Montgomery as evangelicals who vociferously opposed historical-critical methods, though Johnson himself did not. To refute the claims of opponents of those methods, Johnson traced the development of the historical-critical method to two different sources, the Reformation and the Renaissance.⁸¹ Johnson argued that the reformers search for the literal sense of scripture, arising from the desire to counter the errors of the (Catholic) Church, brought a sense of freedom into the inquiry of the bible. Coupled with the greater scepticism and trust in science that developed in later centuries, the free inquiry of scripture eventually led to radical criticism. Before making his case that higher-critical methods could be used by evangelicals, he listed five problems inherent in radical criticism that evangelicals must reject: 1) Historical scepticism (the assumption that the biblical text is errant until proven otherwise); 2) Antisupernaturalism; 3) Separation of history and theology (denying divine revelation into history); 4) Denial of the Unity of Scripture; and 5) Noncognitivism of divine revelation.⁸² Johnson quoted Osborne's justification for his use of RC and TC by rejecting the "negative presuppositions" of many non-evangelical scholars.⁸³ Johnson concluded by commending the example of two evangelical scholars who had made use of historical critical methods: former ETS president Ned B. Stonehouse⁸⁴ and Carl F. Henry,⁸⁵ editor of the popular evangelical magazine *Christianity Today*. Johnson claimed Stonehouse's work on the synoptic gospels anticipated redaction criticism,

⁸¹ Johnson relied on the work of Edgar Krentz in his *Historical Critical Method* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

⁸² Johnson, "The Historical," 10, defined noncognitivism of divine revelation as - "an unwarranted rejection of cognitive divine truth content in Scripture as the essential basis of Biblical religion."

⁸³ Johnson, "The Historical," 11. See Osborne, "The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology," *JETS* 22/4 (December 1979) 305-322, at p.15.

⁸⁴ Johnson, "The Historical," 12, recommended N. B. Stonehouse, *The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Guardian, 1944); *The Witness of Luke to Christ* (London: Tyndale, 1951); *Origins of the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962)

⁸⁵ Johnson, "The Historical Critical Method," 12, cited Carl F. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority* (Waco, TX: Word, 1979).

but was done with “a goal of strengthening confidence in the historical reliability of the gospels.”⁸⁶ Interestingly, though the mention of Stonehouse was apparently based on the assumption of evangelical respect for his work, Stonehouse would later be used as an example of a scholar who was led astray by “radical criticism” by Robert Thomas (see below). Johnson’s article echoed the sentiments of Osborne, Lane, and Bilezikian that RC had a place in evangelical scholarship, but the article failed to mention a particular preferred solution to the SP to be used in RC.

Johnson’s article came in the midst of a building controversy at the ETS, which went beyond the question of whether or not evangelical scholars were right to use certain critical methods, and centred on a particular case of those methods in use, the commentary on *Matthew* by Robert H. Gundry.⁸⁷ Eight more articles appeared in the March 1983 volume on the subject of Gundry’s work, four by Gundry in his own defence. The first article to consider Gundry’s commentary, by John S. Feinberg, was concerned with various evangelical groups and their approach to scriptural interpretation.⁸⁸ In the midst of this discussion, Feinberg mentioned the “current stir in evangelical circles” caused by Gundry’s use of redaction criticism in his commentary. Feinberg opined, “for many years the prevailing line among evangelicals has been that one must stay away from such methods entirely,” but asserted that evangelicals were beginning “to modify their stance.”⁸⁹ Gundry was such a scholar who used redaction criticism throughout his commentary and who argued against the historicity of certain items in Matthew’s gospel, like radical critics,

⁸⁶ Johnson, “The Historical,” 12.

⁸⁷ Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982). Gundry and his commentary are considered above, in Chapter VIII, E.

⁸⁸ John S. Feinberg, “Truth, Meaning and Inerrancy in Contemporary Evangelical Thought,” *JETS* 26/1 (March 1983) 17-30.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

but who also held to a belief in biblical inerrancy,⁹⁰ unlike the radical critics.

Feinberg detailed Gundry's comfort with the redaction-critical notion that Matthew embellished accounts in other gospels. For example, Gundry attributed the star in the east and the visit of the magi in Matthew's birth narrative to Matthew's adaptations of Q, which told of Jewish shepherds visiting. Gundry explained that Matthew embellished the account to suit his theme of Jesus' mission to the Gentiles, a midrashic technique that Gundry was confident Matthew's readers would have recognized and of which they would have approved. Gundry described this "unhistorical embellishment as carrying its own kind of truth alongside historical truth."⁹¹

Also in the March 1983 volume, Douglas J. Moo evaluated Gundry's interpretation that Matthew's embellishments could be explained as *midrashim*.⁹² Moo disapproved of Gundry's four basic positions: 1) Matthew used essentially the same Mark document we have now; 2) Matthew used a much expanded Q; 3) Luke is conservative in his preservation of Q; and 4) Matthew had little access to any traditions outside Q and Mark. One by one, Moo critiqued these positions. First, Moo was disappointed that Gundry accepted Markan priority with little argumentation on its behalf, though Moo himself was a Markan priorist.⁹³ Second, Gundry's Q document, which was said to contain a birth narrative, was much larger than any other scholars had suggested, yet Gundry offered little evidence to demonstrate why.⁹⁴ Third, and similarly, Gundry's assumption that Luke's gospel was closer to the expanded Q meant that Luke was to be considered more original in almost every

⁹⁰ Gundry was a member of the ETS, and thus had annually signed the ETS doctrinal basis (quoted at the beginning of the Appendix A) which states that the bible is "inerrant in the autographs."

⁹¹ Gundry, *Matthew*, 631. As quoted in Feinberg, 29.

⁹² Moo, "Matthew and Midrash: An Evaluation of Robert H Gundry's Approach," *JETS* 26/1 (March 1983) 31-39.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

instance. Moo argued that scholars tended to agree that Luke preserved Q's order more, but not necessarily its content.⁹⁵ Lastly, Gundry's assumption that almost all non-Markan and non-Q material in Matthew was the product of the evangelist's imagination was unsettling to Moo. Moo was critical of Gundry's refusal to attempt to harmonize texts that could easily be done so, especially in cases of Matthew's purported creative activity. Gundry reckoned that Matthew felt free to create embellishments because of the accepted Jewish practice of midrash, which allowed authors to sermonize, or add unhistorical elements to, historical accounts. However, Moo pointed out that Gundry's lack of a clear definition of midrash and his broad categorizing meant that, as a genre, it was useless to determine authorial intent.⁹⁶ Moo concluded by questioning whether an early Christian author would construct a book that would so closely resemble Jewish midrashic work in the very area that distinguished Christianity from its mainline Jewish rival of the time—"the significance of space-and-time facticity of historical events."⁹⁷ Thus Moo summarized a foundational evangelical tenet, belief in the basic historicity of the gospel accounts, a principle that often caused friction when combined with the historical-critical method. In the article, Moo revealed his endorsement of the 2SH and RC, but with a much different approach than Gundry.

Gundry responded to Moo's critique point by point in the very next article, which he appropriately titled, "A Response to 'Matthew and Midrash.'"⁹⁸ Gundry argued that the evidence in the scriptures themselves calls for the use of RC and other historical-critical methods. First, concerning Moo's claim that he had made only a slight attempt to prove Markan priority, Gundry revealed that it had been his original

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁹⁸ *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 41-56.

intention to “disprove Mark’s priority” but that the “details of the text” caused him to become more firmly convinced of it.⁹⁹ He brushed aside the criticism that he had made Q too large by arguing that he never envisioned Q as a single written document, but he used the term ‘Q’ simply to describe any non-Markan traditions that Matthew and Luke had in common. Those traditions need not have come from the same source. His assertion that Matthew embellished the birth narrative tradition to incorporate Gentile magi instead of Jewish shepherds arose from the conclusion that Matthew had also freely reworked stories from Mark and Q. Those changes were: 1) Matthew had Herod, not Herodias, serve as the instigator in John the Baptist’s death instead of serving as a kind of protector; 2) Having the Jewish leaders “self-condemn themselves” with words which Mark put on the lips of Jesus; 3) rearranging the Judas betrayal story so that Judas receives the money, returns it, resulting in the Sanhedrin purchasing a field with the money before Judas’ death; 4) Having the Sanhedrin seek false testimony instead of true; 5) Changing Pilate’s role from “vacillating pagan” into a defender of Jesus who twice confesses Christ and mirrors the prescribed ceremony for proving innocence in Deuteronomy 21. When seen in that kind of editorial light, Gundry considered the possible alterations made by Matthew in the birth narrative to be quite plausible. Again, Gundry made the argument that scriptural content prompted his exploration of Matthew’s editorial activity, but Moo was pleading for “the Church’s traditional view” of Matthew’s differences, a view which was, of course, formulated long before the historical-critical method appeared.¹⁰⁰ Continuing his defence in the article, Gundry cited many examples, biblical and extracanonical, to bolster his claim that for centuries it had been a Jewish tradition to embellish the basic

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 42-43.

history of events. He also mentioned the fact that Josephus claimed to refrain from embellishing his accounts, but later seemed to admit to such a practice.¹⁰¹

Moo followed Gundry's response with a rejoinder¹⁰² expressing disenchantment with Gundry's source critical methods more clearly in this article. According to Moo, Gundry's speculation about the various changes Matthew made to Mark and Q were not the issue, but Gundry's lack of argument for said speculation and a neglect of other solutions to the SP, especially those which do not assume Markan priority. Moo cited Gundry's commentary on the parable of the sower (Mt 13:18-23) as a typical example of this oversight by noting that Gundry repeatedly referred to Matthew's redactions of Mark, emphasizing Matthew's concern to insert the contrast with 'understanding' vs. 'not understanding'. Moo wondered if a commentator did not assume Markan priority (as Gundry had), and instead followed the argument of David Wenham that the three synoptic versions of the parable rest on pre-canonical tradition, might not many of Gundry's conclusions fall apart?¹⁰³ Moo then demonstrated one of the major flaws in Gundry's definition of Q in such an expanded form – that Luke's supposed conservation of the Q material, even in the birth narrative, necessitated Matthew's adaptation of that same Q source instead of an independent tradition. Moo asked if a more plausible explanation of Matthew's magi, slaughter of the innocents, and presentation at the temple was found in his adaptation of Luke's conserved Q, or in an independent tradition, or in the fact that Matthew made the entire story up. Moo contended that the latter two solutions offered better explanations, with the evangelical conviction that Matthew must have used an independent source. Moo pointed out that Gundry's assumption that Matthew made

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 48-56.

¹⁰² Douglas J. Moo, "Once Again, 'Matthew and Midrash': A Rejoinder to Robert H. Gundry," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 57-70.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 58.

such drastic changes to the expanded Q was not carried over to Matthew's use of traditional Q, where Matthew made more minor adaptations.¹⁰⁴ Moo summarized his critique of Gundry's methods with three claims. First, Gundry took his methods too far because he "overtheologized" every Matthean redaction when oftentimes a non-theological explanation worked better.¹⁰⁵ Second, Gundry seemed to arbitrarily cling to historicity in some accounts, namely Matthew's story of the guards at Jesus' tomb. Gundry saw genuine tradition behind the account because it lacked parallels in the other synoptics. But, as Moo asked, could not Matthew's version be explained as a midrash on Luke's story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus? While not advocating this position, Moo showed that such a change by Matthew would be no more significant than Gundry's supposed Matthean embellishment of Q's birth narrative.¹⁰⁶ It appeared that the creativity could most easily be seen coming from the pen of Gundry than Matthew. Third, Moo defended the practice of harmonising conflicting synoptic accounts in the face of Gundry's complete dissatisfaction with the practice. Moo took issue with Gundry's somewhat cavalier claim that every difference amounted to an intentional theological change on Matthew's part.¹⁰⁷

Moo's critique exposed the evangelical struggle over whether, and how much, to use redaction criticism and the necessary questions that follow – How much can an evangelical scholar allow for an evangelists' creativity? Must every detail of the gospels be 'historical'? How much should attempts at traditional harmonization be made? – questions that would continue to be debated in *JETS*.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 59-61.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 63-64.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 64-67.

Gundry again responded to Moo's criticisms (many of which were a repeat of the previous article) in "A Surrejoinder to Douglas J. Moo."¹⁰⁸ Gundry cited the limited space he had to offer competing solutions to the SP and his encouragement to his readers to "make critical comparisons on their own."¹⁰⁹ In defending his assumption of the 2SH and the use of RC, Gundry offered perhaps his boldest claim about the commentary, that he was "confident that on the whole the world of scholarship will see my Commentary as contributing to greater certainty about Mark's priority and Matthew's and Luke's use of Q."¹¹⁰ Gundry then sought to correct Moo's assertion that he (Gundry) assumed Luke to be more conservative in his (Luke's) use of Q than Matthew by pointing out occasions in his commentary where he considered Matthew to be more original or where neither were considered more original.¹¹¹ Gundry also defended his statistical comparison of the synoptics, and while conceding that Moo was correct in his assessment that such use of statistical methods was unprecedented in NT scholarship, Gundry noted that "accepted methods will come into being only through scholars' proposing and using methods" which can then be evaluated by others.¹¹² Because Moo was critical of his deeming certain words 'Mattheanisms,' Gundry defended various arguments he made for Matthew's wording, but also noted that his unique solution to the SP allowed for Luke's use of Matthew as well as Q, so that one might find Mattheanisms in Luke.¹¹³ The remainder of the article was dedicated to Gundry's attempts to again justify his qualification of Matthew as midrash by comparing ancient Jewish historiography with the evangelist's use of his sources.

¹⁰⁸ *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 71-86.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 73-75.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 75.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 80.

As documented above, the ETS Annual Meeting in 1982 included a debate and ultimately a vote by the ETS executive committee on Gundry's methods, which concluded with a statement by the ETS that Gundry's work was acceptable because the ETS doctrinal statement lacked "criteria for distinguishing which methodologies are incompatible with the Society's stance on inerrancy."¹¹⁴ The next article in the March 1983 volume, again dedicated to the Gundry controversy, served as a direct attempt to determine whether Gundry's methodology was acceptable to the ETS. In the article, "Methodological Unorthodoxy,"¹¹⁵ ETS president Norman L. Geisler called for a distinction to be made between a biblical scholar's confession of faith and that scholar's methods, and asked whether one's faith could be orthodox while his or her methods were unorthodox. By unorthodox, Geisler meant more than "unconventional," but one whose belief or work stood in contradiction to the ETS statement of faith, a statement that each member of the ETS had to (and still must) sign yearly to maintain membership. Geisler compared Gundry to Origen, who confessed belief in the inspiration of scripture but also admitted that there were contradictions in scripture that could only be explained allegorically.¹¹⁶ Geisler labelled Gundry's midrashic approach "allegorical"¹¹⁷ and argued that Gundry's admission that Matthew embellished historical events was in direct disagreement with the ETS *Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics*.¹¹⁸ Geisler quoted a portion of Article XIV of the statement, which denies "that any event, discourse or saying reported in Scripture was invented by the biblical writers or by the traditions they incorporated."¹¹⁹ Gundry's allegorical method amounted to *de facto* denial of the

¹¹⁴ "Thirty Fourth Annual Meeting Report," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 125.

¹¹⁵ Norman L. Geisler, "Methodological Unorthodoxy," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 87-94.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹¹⁸ Printed in the December 1982 volume – *JETS* 25/4 (Dec 1982) 397-401.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 399-400.

inerrancy of scripture. To Geisler, this issue was of utmost importance because the doctrine of inerrancy “is the only explicitly stated doctrine by which one is tested for membership” in the ETS.¹²⁰ Gundry’s allowance that some of Matthew’s record (Geisler’s example came from the resurrection of the saints in Matthew 27) was “allegory” based on a literal event (Jesus’ resurrection) called both the allegory and the literal event into question. Geisler proposed a guideline for determining potential inclusion or exclusion from ETS membership:

Any hermeneutical or theological method the logically necessary consequences of which are contrary to or undermine confidence in the complete truthfulness of all of Scripture is unorthodox. The method can do this either *de jure* or *de facto*.¹²¹

As will be seen below, this began Geisler’s formal attempt to have Gundry excluded from the ETS.

Gundry’s response¹²² to Geisler was relatively brief and offered three particular objections to Geisler’s article. First, while critical of Gundry’s approach, Geisler did not offer an alternative method of interpretation that could be evaluated.¹²³ Second, Geisler routinely confused Gundry’s method with his judgment. Gundry explained that his method was not allegorical or midrashic, but grammatical-historical. To label a passage or verse as midrashic is “a judgment, not a method,” which should be based on dealing with the biblical data. Third, Gundry disagreed with Geisler’s assumption that an author’s use of midrash implied deception because “[midrash] is no more deceitful than a metaphor, a hyperbole, or any one of a number

¹²⁰ Geisler, “Methodological Unorthodoxy,” 91. The ETS doctrinal statement reads, as quoted by Geisler on page 87, “The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in its autographs.”

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 93-94.

¹²² “A Response to ‘Methodological Unorthodoxy,’” *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 95-100.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 96.

of Biblical figures – right up to a parable.”¹²⁴ Gundry even suggested that he could agree with Geisler’s guideline (see preceding paragraph) because it no more ruled out midrashic interpretation than any other theories espoused by evangelicals which could be described as deceitful, namely the day-age theory (that each day of creation in Genesis represented a lengthy age of geologic time) advocated by Gleason Archer and the theory of six denials by Peter described by Harold Lindsell. Lindsell had been one of Gundry’s harshest critics.¹²⁵

As in the exchange between Moo and Gundry, Geisler and Gundry continued their debate in two more articles. Geisler offered a rejoinder – “Is There Madness to the Method? A Rejoinder to Robert H. Gundry?”¹²⁶ – in which he claimed Gundry bypassed most of his arguments and failed to refute any.¹²⁷ Geisler posited that Gundry ‘manufactured’ the charge that he (Geisler) assumed midrash was “deceitful,” preferring instead to simply call it “false.”¹²⁸ Geisler sought clarification from Gundry in his use of “authorial intention.” According to Geisler, evangelicals should seek to discover what the author intended to communicate in the written text, not to suggest the author’s underlying purposes for writing, as Gundry had done when he posited that Matthew would have expected his readers to recognize his midrash.¹²⁹ Similarly, Geisler separated the practices of Gleason Archer and Harold Lindsell, both of whom were mentioned by Gundry (see preceding paragraph), from those of Gundry. Archer merely raised “legitimate exegetical questions” regarding the length of the time periods in Genesis, and Lindsell only raised “the appropriate

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 99.

¹²⁵ Leslie R. Keylock, “Evangelical Scholars Remove Robert Gundry for His Views on Matthew,” *Christianity Today* Original (Feb 3, 1984). Online reprint available as “CT Classic: Evangelical Scholars Remove Robert Gundry for His Views on Matthew,” [http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/novemberweb-only/11-17-42.0.html, accessed 24 June 2010].

¹²⁶ *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 101-108.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 104-105.

harmonizational question of how many denials there were.” Neither of these compared to labelling a gospel account allegorical or midrashic.¹³⁰ Geisler questioned Gundry’s allegiance to evangelicalism, asking whether Gundry would be willing to sign all of the articles in the “Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics” as issued by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy.¹³¹ The final paragraph by Geisler was a plea for Gundry to “change [his] view to conform with [his] evangelical brethren” or to resign from the ETS to avoid “difficult choices that will otherwise be necessary.” This seemed to be a veiled threat that, unless Gundry renounced his methods, he would ultimately face judgment from the ETS membership.¹³²

Gundry did not accept Geisler’s call to change his views or to resign. In his final article in the March 1983 volume of *JETS*, Gundry took up each objection by Geisler and briefly offered a response.¹³³ For the purposes of this study, Gundry’s response offered four observations on exactly where he and Geisler differed. First, Gundry argued again for the validity of midrashic interpretation for an evangelical scholar, noting that it did not equate with “creating myths” as Geisler had stated.¹³⁴ Second, Gundry denied that he searched for authorial intent in any meaningfully different manner than Geisler, who also appealed to the author’s purpose in writing on occasion.¹³⁵ Third, he rejected Geisler’s claim that Archer and Lindsell used fundamentally different methods than his own because he, like they, appealed to an interpretation other than the literal, i.e. normal, meaning of the text.¹³⁶ Fourth, Gundry refused to say definitively whether he would sign the “Chicago Statement on

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 107.

¹³¹ A lengthy list of articles signed by the ICBI in November of 1982 presented as “affirmations and denials... to clarify hermeneutical issues and principles.” The entire Chicago statement was reprinted in *JETS* 25/4 (Dec 1982) 397-401.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 108.

¹³³ “A Surrejoinder to Norman L. Geisler,” *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 109-115.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 111.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 113.

Biblical Hermeneutics” because the ICBI did not govern the ETS. Instead of offering to change his views or resign, Gundry questioned how many members of the ETS actually sought his resignation, and instead cited the personal appeal of the “Christian fellowship and scholarly debate” found at the ETS as his reason for remaining a member.¹³⁷

The March 1983 issue offered another first when it featured an article by James Breckenridge, entitled “Evangelical Implications of Matthean Priority,”¹³⁸ in which the author advocated a particular solution to the SP, the 2GH, on the grounds that this hypothesis was most conducive to evangelical convictions. Breckenridge recognized the puissant role Farmer played in defending the Griesbach hypothesis on a scholarly level, using form and redaction critical methods. Though he admitted that renewal of interest in the Griesbach hypothesis did not arise out of “a conservative movement,”¹³⁹ Breckenridge argued that the 2GH was uniquely suited to fit evangelical standards. First, he claimed “an obvious theological benefit to Matthean priority” because elements of Matthew not found in Mark – genealogies, vivid eschatology, miracles, the Great Commission and the importance of the Church” – would belong to the earliest written gospel and offer “foundational integrity.”¹⁴⁰ Second, the 2GH offered an appreciation of the patristic testimony of fathers such as Clement, Augustine, Origen and Papias. Though Breckenridge quoted Augustine’s order of Mt-Mk-Lk-Jn, he did not acknowledge that this order was different than that of the 2GH. Third, Breckenridge argued that the 2GH gives proper place to the role of form criticism, instead of allowing its damaging influence by those who held to Markan priority. Breckenridge cited Robert Thomas’ plea for more consideration of

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹³⁸ *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 117-121.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

the independence of the gospel writers,¹⁴¹ but did not explain how Thomas' views were not just as opposed to the 2GH as to the 2SH. Again, the problem of RC and evangelical scholarship, according to Breckenridge, was most clearly seen in Gundry's commentary.¹⁴² While Breckenridge was less critical of Gundry's use of RC, he attributed Gundry's inability to produce a truly evangelical commentary to the assumption of Markan priority. In his final paragraph, Breckenridge boldly pronounced, "The fact is that no evangelical solution to the synoptic problem is going to be found through Markan priority."¹⁴³ Though Breckenridge failed to adequately consider the patristic evidence against his arguments, and gave little attention to the different methodologies of evangelical 2SH proponents,¹⁴⁴ his article represented the first argument for the 2GH in *JETS*.

December 1983

After the March 1983 volume was dedicated solely to RC and the SP, the subject was only addressed on two other occasions that year. In the December issue, Paul Frederick Feiler wrote an article¹⁴⁵ considering Gunther Bornkamm's handling of "The Stilling of the Storm"¹⁴⁶ pericopae in the synoptics (Mt 8:23-27; Mk 4:35-41; Lk 8:22-25). Following Bornkamm, Feiler used redaction criticism from a 2SH perspective to evaluate Matthew's unique record of the event. Of interest to this study is Feiler's lack of concern for the intense debate earlier among ETS members concerning RC, and his verbiage in describing Matthew's use of sources. Feiler concluded that Matthew did not use Q at all for his story, and "either Matthew used an

¹⁴¹ See above, Thomas, "An Investigation."

¹⁴² Breckenridge, 120.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁴⁴ Though he mentioned Osborne (p. 112), Breckenridge did not distinguish between Osborne's interpretations and the more controversial opinions of Gundry.

¹⁴⁵ "The Stilling of the Storm in Matthew: A Response to Günther Bornkamm," *JETS* 26/4 (Dec 1983) 399-406.

¹⁴⁶ Günther Bornkamm, "The Stilling of the Storm in Matthew" in G. Bornkamm, G. Barth and H.J. Held, eds., *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (London: SCM, 1963) 52-57.

independent tradition or else he significantly changed Mark to suit his own purposes,” thus revealing his preference for the 2SH.¹⁴⁷

Also in the December 1983 volume, Robert H. Stein offered a careful linguistic analysis of Luke’s prologue (Lk 1:1-4) from a tradition-critical perspective in his article “Luke 1:1-4 and Traditiongeschichte.”¹⁴⁸ After considering the potential meanings of the various keywords, Stein offered three conclusions. First, it must be noted that Luke reveals three *Sitz im Leben* involved in the formation of his gospel – the historical situation where the events took place, the carrying on of the traditions by the eyewitnesses in oral and written form, and the written “gospel” record of those eyewitness accounts (including Luke’s work and the “many” of Lk1:1).¹⁴⁹ In an apparent rebuff to Breckenridge,¹⁵⁰ Stein claimed, “Clearly such theories of literary dependence on the part of the evangelists can be neither ignored nor condemned by evangelical scholarship, for Luke, if our exegesis is correct, acknowledges such a dependence.”¹⁵¹ Second, Stein advised that scholars must pay more attention to the interaction between the oral and written traditions present at the time of Luke’s writing. Though Stein continued to be an advocate of the 2SH, he admitted that Matthew and Luke might have used a common oral tradition instead of a written Q. Thirdly, and most pointedly, Stein argued along hermeneutical grounds that redaction-critical methods must be used by evangelicals because the Luke’s stated (divinely inspired) aims in his prologue necessitate an investigation.¹⁵² Stein concluded with these remarks but failed to explain further why RC was incumbent upon NT scholars.

1984

¹⁴⁷ Feiler, 404.

¹⁴⁸ *JETS* 26/4 (Dec 1983) 421-430.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 428.

¹⁵⁰ See Breckenridge’s *JETS* article from March 1983 above.

¹⁵¹ Stein, “Luke 1:1-4,” 428-429.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 430. Stein deemed such an approach a “divine mandate for evangelical scholarship... to seek the verbal meaning of the divinely inspired author as it is revealed in the text.”

In March of 1984, Osborne wrote another article for *JETS*, “Preaching the Gospels: Methodology and Contextualization,”¹⁵³ which included some discussion of the SP. While the purpose of the article was to demonstrate the utility of critical methodology (particularly narrative criticism), Osborne mentioned his own problems with RC, though he continued to use the practice and advocate its use by preachers. In his summary of evangelical problems with RC, Osborne complained that redaction critics too easily and unquestioningly use Streeter’s hypothesis to argue for Markan priority. He noted that Matthean prioritists and independence advocates, though they had “not yet won the day,”¹⁵⁴ deserved consideration. Gundry’s use of RC drew special ire from Osborne. Contra Gundry, Osborne argued that evangelical scholars should “speak of ‘differences’ rather than ‘changes’ or ‘alterations.’”¹⁵⁵

Also, and somewhat ironically, appearing in the same issue was Drew Trotter’s review¹⁵⁶ of Gundry’s *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982). While little of note for this study was covered, Trotter did indicate a general displeasure with Gundry’s conclusions, but at the same time, an acceptance of the need for RC. Trotter voiced his hope that Gundry’s Commentary would not cause “evangelical scholarship” to ignore “redaction criticism in its interpretation of Matthew.”¹⁵⁷

In addition to Osborne’s article and Trotter’s review, an important development was chronicled in the March 1984 volume of *JETS*. As usual in the first volume of a new year, *JETS* included the minutes of the previous year’s ETS Annual Meeting. The March 1984 volume recorded the minutes from the Thirty-Fifth Annual

¹⁵³ *JETS* 27/1 (Mar 1984) 27-42.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *JETS* 27/1 (Mar 1984) 95-99.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 99.

Meeting of the ETS,¹⁵⁸ which took place 15-17 December 1983, mere months after the furore over Gundry's. Of interest to this study, two particular motions were voted upon and passed by the members of the ETS at the meeting. The first was suggested by George Knight who moved that "the ETS go on record as rejecting any position that states that Matthew or any other biblical writer materially altered and embellished historical tradition or departed from the actuality of events,"¹⁵⁹ an obvious reference to Gundry's Commentary. The second motion of note was offered by Roger Nicole, who introduced the motion that "the Evangelical Theological Society officially request Dr. Robert Gundry to submit his resignation from membership in this Society, unless he acknowledges that he has erred in his detraction from the historical worthiness of the gospel of Matthew in his recent commentary."¹⁶⁰ Though not recorded here, Gundry complied and offered his resignation at the meeting.¹⁶¹ The recording of the minutes concluded with the reflections of Simon J. Kistemaker, who bemoaned the many debates at the ETS over "critical methodologies" in recent years, and the sometimes resultant "severance and sadness" from those debates.¹⁶²

1985

The two review articles that mentioned the SP in 1985 occurred in the March and June volumes. In his review¹⁶³ of *The New Testament: An Introduction, Proclamation and Parénesis, Myth and History* by Norman Perrin and Dennis C. Duling (Harcourt College Publishers, 1974), Douglas J. Moo expressed disappointment that the authors developed a theology of Q without acknowledging the

¹⁵⁸ "Reports Relating to the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the Society," *JETS* 27/1 (Mar 1984) 121-126.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 125.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ The details of his resignation will be covered more fully below in the section on Gundry's Commentary at the end of this chapter.

¹⁶² "Reports," 126.

¹⁶³ *JETS* 28/1 (Mar 1985) 102-103.

debate over whether or not such a document existed.¹⁶⁴ Moo did not indicate where his opinion fell concerning Q's existence.

When Royce Gordon Gruenler reviewed¹⁶⁵ Volume 8 of the *Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), he expressed satisfaction that the authors used the 2SH but sparingly and with reservations because the situation was more undoubtedly more complex. Gruenler was especially pleased with D.A. Carson's handling of Matthew using the 2SH but with results that varied wildly from Gundry's in his commentary on Matthew (which the reviewer mentioned specifically). In both of these reviews, the reviewers refrained from offering their own preferred solutions to the SP.

Osborne continued the theme of evangelical use of RC in December of 1985, composing the sole article which addressed the SP in that year (aside from two book reviews) entitled "Round Four: Then Redaction Debate Continues."¹⁶⁶ The intense interest in the debate over RC was obvious in Osborne's detail that the subject had been "a major focus of debate within the Society" for four consecutive years at its annual meetings.¹⁶⁷ Osborne offered four penetrating observations concerning the debate over the use of RC. First, the source critical assumptions, whether from Markan or Matthean priority or independence of the gospel authors, need not cause alarm when they are based on the assumption that tradition and redaction in the gospels are "ultimately based on the original event."¹⁶⁸ To be sure, Osborne argued, disagreements will arise, but disagreement over synoptic issues does not imply chaos any more than interpreters who differ on their adoption of the North or South Galatian theory when exegeting Galatians. Second, evangelical scholars admit that the

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁶⁵ *JETS* 28/2 (Jun 1985) 246-248

¹⁶⁶ *JETS* 28/4 (1985) 399-410.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 399.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 405.

evangelists selectively arranged their material, but the degree to which they adapted their arrangements in the gospels is debated. Osborne used the miracle section of Matthew 8-9 to argue that Matthew topically arranged material, at times juxtaposing words and deeds from separate incidents in Jesus' ministry. Third, Osborne mentioned the wide range of opinions concerning modifications of sources. From the different order of the temptations in Matthew and Luke, to the variation found in Jesus' instructions in the mission discourse recorded in Mt 10:10 and Mk 6:8-9, to the disparate wordings of Jesus' response to the rich young ruler (Mk 10:18; cf. Mt 19:17 and Lk 18:19), the freedom of gospel authors to modify their sources must be allowed to some extent. Fourth, Osborne concluded that the interpreter's task was to "recognize such freedom and to elucidate a theory of modification that fits the facts but does not demand the addition of nonhistorical material."¹⁶⁹

1986

The interest in the debate over evangelical use of RC began to wane by 1986, as demonstrated by the decline in articles and reviews which addressed the issue during the remainder of the decade. Though not specifically mentioning any solutions to the SP, Robert L. Thomas¹⁷⁰ attacked the use of RC by William Lane, I.H Marshall and Robert Gundry in their respective commentaries.¹⁷¹ At the time of their writing, each of the three scholars were members of the ETS and therefore, according to Thomas, legitimate examples of scholarly excess in the use of RC. Thomas began the article polemically by questioning whether the phrase "evangelical redaction criticism" could be used as a legitimate expression. Throughout the article he cited instances where Lane, Marshall, and Gundry failed to respect the inerrancy of

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 407.

¹⁷⁰ "The Hermeneutics of Evangelical Redaction Criticism," *JETS* 29/4 (Dec 1986) 447-459.

¹⁷¹ Thomas cited William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (New International Commentary on the NT, rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978); and Gundry, *Matthew*.

scripture in their redaction-critical handling of synoptic material. Thomas challenged evangelical defenders of RC to provide examples of authors whose work used RC and was evangelical in approach.¹⁷²

1987

In June of 1987, Robert H. Stein wrote an article¹⁷³ on the earliest forms of the gospel traditions, positing the existence of early Greek translations of Jesus' traditions. Arguing predominantly against form critics' devaluation of the originality of gospel material, Stein traced evidence for the early memorization of Jesus' words and the composition of "notes and written materials,"¹⁷⁴ both of which took place during the "pre-Easter period." Using Luke's prologue, Stein concluded that the "the Twelve" oversaw the process of translation of the Aramaic traditions into Greek for the Greek speaking Jewish-Christians. That there were Jewish Christians with limited knowledge of Aramaic mentioned in the gospels – "in the Decapolis and as far away as the cities of Tyre and Sidon (Mark 7:24-37) as well as Gentile followers in Galilee (Luke 7:1-10)" – necessitated that translation take place "within months or weeks" of the resurrection.¹⁷⁵ Luke's "eyewitnesses and ministers of the word" were primarily members of the Jerusalem church with firsthand knowledge of the events. In this way, a "standardized and apostolic Greek version of the both the sayings of Jesus and the story-like materials" served as "an early recension of the material which would have served as an authoritative pattern from that time on" that would ultimately help form Q and the canonical gospels.¹⁷⁶ Yet again, Stein's advocacy for the 2SH was evident.

1988

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 459.

¹⁷³ "An Early Recension of the Gospel Traditions?" *JETS* 30/2 (June 1987) 167-183.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 178.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 181-182.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 183.

The final appearance of the synoptic problem in *JETS* in the 1980s came in 1988 in two book reviews. In September of 1988, William J. Larkin reviewed¹⁷⁷ *Passion Narratives and Gospel Theologies* (New York: Paulist, 1986) by Frank J. Matera. Larkin voiced agreement with Matera's assumptions regarding gospel origins, applauding the author's care to "avoid the extremes of a gospel writer who creates events in writing his theological history and one who is a conservative editor hesitating to alter his sources." To Larkin, Matera was right in assuming that the synoptic writers "shaped" but did not "fabricate" their sources, with Matthew acting as his own source in addition to Mark, and Luke editing Mark and several other sources.¹⁷⁸ Larkin thus revealed his preference for the 2SH in his review.

In December of 1988, Mark R. Fairchild reviewed¹⁷⁹ R.T. France's *The Evidence for Jesus* (Downer's Grove, Illinois: IVP, 1986). In his review, Fairchild criticized France's more conservative views on the formation of the gospels. In particular, France's questioning of the existence of a Q source demonstrated a ignorance of "recent German and American studies on the Q-source" (though Fairchild mentioned none). France's assumption that Matthew and Luke's overlap merely demonstrated a "collection of [common] miscellaneous texts" was unacceptable, according to Fairchild, because of the "large degree of consistency in the Q-material." Fairchild also derided France's conclusion that the gospels were written within 30 years of the events described, likening them to J. A. T. Robinson's views "which have as yet to gain a large following."¹⁸⁰ Thus Fairchild rejected France's reluctance to accept Q and instead advocated for the 2SH in his review.

¹⁷⁷ *JETS* 31/3 (Sep 1988) 345-346.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 345.

¹⁷⁹ *JETS* 31/4 (Dec 1988) 473-474.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 474.

Interestingly, the decade of the 1980s, which saw the first large-scale coverage of the issue of the synoptic problem among the pages of *JETS*, concluded with no mention of the subject in 1989 and a mere two review articles in 1988. In addition, the fact that the years 1983-85 saw such a contentious debate concerning scholarly views and the SP (namely Gundry's), though they resulted in the expulsion of Gundry from the ETS, did not alter the general tone of the articles and reviews included in *JETS* after the fact. Most of those who expressed an opinion endorsed the 2SH and RC before the controversy, and most did after as well.

E. 1990-1999: A Decade of Relative Calm, Almost

1990

By 1990, seven years after the Gundry furore, most of the authors and reviewers in *JETS* continued to recommend evangelical use of historical-critical methods. The first year, 1990, saw two reviews that commended thoughtful evangelical interaction with the SP. In the June volume, Robert W. Herron offered a review¹⁸¹ of Robert H. Stein's *The Synoptic Problem: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1987), an introductory text on the subject written from an evangelical perspective. Herron was quite complimentary of Stein's approach, both because Stein did "not shy away from consideration of the results of radical form and redaction critics" and because he pointed out "the errors in logic and judgment that have plagued the historical-critical method." Instead of offering an overconfident approach, Herron described *The Synoptic Problem* as a book in which the author "places [his] presuppositions out in front where they belong and invites dissenters to be as honest."¹⁸² Herron did not indicate which solution to the SP he espoused.

¹⁸¹ *JETS* 33/2 (June 1990) 240-241.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 240.

In the December volume, Joseph B. Modica wrote a strong recommendation¹⁸³ for Scot McKnight's *Interpreting the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988). Modica found McKnight's approach to the SP to be "well-balanced" because, instead of blindly condemning critical methods for their 'liberal bias,'" McKnight argued the methods could "enhance one's understanding of a Biblical passage."¹⁸⁴ Like Stein, McKnight argued for the 2SH, and though Modica stopped short of overtly endorsing the 2SH, his opinion of *Interpreting the Synoptic Gospels* could scarcely have been higher.

1991

In the following year, 1991, *JETS* included only one lengthy review of interest to this study, in which Mark R. Fairchild cleverly and sardonically reviewed¹⁸⁵ Kloppenborg's *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987). Fairchild was clearly dubious concerning Kloppenborg's certainty on the existence, length and layers of the Q document. The reviewer quipped that the Kloppenborg had finally "netted the ichthyosaur" which had for so long eluded biblical scholars by publishing the "Q monster" for all to see. Fairchild was clearly unsettled by Kloppenborg's claim to have uncovered different layers of Q. Without commending the work, Fairchild acknowledged Kloppenborg's scholarship as foremost among 2SH advocates, and he seemed to lament that it "will likely carry the tide of scholarly opinion for years to come."¹⁸⁶ Fairchild failed to reveal his own solution to the SP, however.

1992

¹⁸³ *JETS* 33/4 (Dec 1990) 530-531

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 531.

¹⁸⁵ *JETS* 34/1 (Mar 1991) 123-124.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 124.

In March of 1992, the first full article to mention the SP in the 1990s, “The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus” by G. R. Beasley-Murray,¹⁸⁷ appeared in *JETS*. In the article, Beasley-Murray interpreted various synoptic passages through the lens of the 2SH. Of note is the fact that not once did the author question or qualify his assumption of Q or Markan priority, but instead repeatedly referred to Matthew’s and Luke’s redaction of Mark and the evangelists editorial activity with Q. Obviously, Beasley-Murray’s assumptions reveal his inclination toward the 2SH.

The next mention of the SP occurred in Scot McKnight’s September 1992 review¹⁸⁸ of *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* by R. T. France (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989). McKnight applauded France’s approach, which held to Markan priority with a reluctance to accept the 2SH wholeheartedly, as “healthy” because it was less concerned with Matthew’s editorial activity and more with “Matthew’s overall composition.”¹⁸⁹ The reviewer did not reveal his own preferred solution to the SP.

In December of that year, Stanley E. Porter reviewed¹⁹⁰ *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861-1986* by Stephen Neill and N.T. Wright (2d ed. Oxford and New York: Oxford University, 1988) where he mentioned, tongue-in-cheek, Neill’s statement that “Markan priority is ‘one of the assured results’ of NT Study,” adding, “[which] simply shows that the great man was not infallible.”¹⁹¹ Of course, Porter’s comment need not necessarily mean that he was opposed to Markan priority, just to the assertion that Mark’s priority was an “assured result.”

1993

¹⁸⁷ *JETS* 35/1 (Mar 1992) 19-30.

¹⁸⁸ *JETS* 35/3 (Sep 1992) 424-426.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 424.

¹⁹⁰ *JETS* 35/44 (Dec 1992) 546-547.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 547.

Larry R. Helyer contributed an article¹⁹² to the September 1993 volume which barely addressed the SP, making mention of “Lucan additions” to Matthew and Mark, and that Luke 20:9-19 followed Mark in the Parable of the Wicked Tenants.¹⁹³ Though the 2SH or FH could be accommodated in his language, Helyer did not indicate a preference for a solution to the SP

In December 1993, Richard J. Erickson wrote an article in *JETS* entitled “The Jailing of John and the Baptism of Jesus: Luke 3:19-21”¹⁹⁴ based on the assumption of Luke’s use of Mark (and not Matthew).¹⁹⁵ In a footnote he acknowledged the presence alternative theories, namely those by Farmer and Goulder,¹⁹⁶ but stated that he was not using the 2GH or FH. In fact, by his use of Markan priority and “Q tradition” in the article, it is obvious that Erickson assumed the 2SH.¹⁹⁷

1994

In June of 1994, James R. Edwards contributed an article to *JETS* on “The Authority of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark.”¹⁹⁸ In it, Edwards contrasted Mark’s use of early Jesus traditions with those found in Q, namely Mark’s interest “in Jesus as a teacher” compared to Q’s inclusion of what Jesus taught. Edwards did not posit too great a divide between Mark’s portrayal of Jesus and that of Q (noting that Jesus’ awareness of divine sonship appears in both),¹⁹⁹ but approached Mark from the viewpoint of the 2SH.

September of that year saw another book review²⁰⁰ by Mark R. Fairchild which made mention of the SP, his third to do so. Without endorsing or rejecting

¹⁹² “Luke and the Restoration of Israel,” *JETS* 36/3 (Sept 1993) 317-329.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 322.

¹⁹⁴ *JETS* 36/4 (Dec 1993) 455-466.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 455.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 455 note 1.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 461.

¹⁹⁸ *JETS* 37/2 (June 1994) 217-233.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 229.

²⁰⁰ *JETS* 37/3 (Sep 1994) 431-432.

John Nolland's approach to the SP in his *Luke 1-9:20* (Word Biblical Commentary, Dallas: Word 1989), Fairchild noted that Nolland assumed Markan priority but was doubtful of Q.

1996

Over a year passed before another mention of the SP appeared in *JETS*. In 1996, Stephen W. Carlson glowingly reviewed²⁰¹ *Luke* (Nashville: Broadman, 1992) by Robert Stein. Carlson considered Stein's handling of synoptic issues to be "quite helpful to the reader" because, though Stein assumed the 2SH, he took the "the entire gospel of Luke under consideration, not Q, M, or even L."²⁰² The reviewer did not, however, indicate his own preferred solution to the SP.

1997

An important review was published in the March 1997 volume of *JETS* by James A. Brooks which made connections between solutions to the SP and evangelical convictions. Under review was William Farmer's *The Gospel of Jesus: The Pastoral Relevance of the Synoptic Problem* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994) in which Farmer argued that assumptions regarding the evangelists' sources and the order of the gospels had a major influence on faith.²⁰³ Brooks was unconvinced by Farmer's evidence, and maintained that an evangelical scholar's solution to the SP does not "greatly [affect] his or her exegesis, theology and practical application." Brooks' rationale for rejecting Farmer's view was based on his assessment of the "many people who are well-trained in Biblical studies and who think critically but who hold the Two-Source Hypothesis, who reject the radical claims Farmer opposes, and whose theology is as conservative or even more so than

²⁰¹ *JETS* 39/2 (June 1996) 293-294.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 294.

²⁰³ For more on Farmer's monograph, see below Chapter IX, D.

that of Farmer.”²⁰⁴ Brooks thus defended evangelical advocacy of the 2SH from a 2GH attack.

1998

There were two review articles in the March 1998 volume which mentioned the synoptic problem, the first in detail and the second only briefly. First, Richard E. Menninger offered an overall favourable review²⁰⁵ of *Luke: Interpreter of Paul, Critic of Matthew* by Eric Franklin (JSNTSup 92, Sheffield: JSOT, 1994). Arguing from the FH, Franklin posited that Luke used Mark as a congenial main source, but that Luke wrote as a reaction against Matthew to the same (Matthean) community. Menninger did not voice agreement with Franklin’s particular choice of the FH, but still commended Franklin’s view that “Luke is not a slave to his sources, but rather exercises creative freedom in writing.”²⁰⁶ Interestingly, Menninger proffered the usefulness of *Luke: Interpreter of Paul* because Franklin appreciated “Luke’s redactional skills” and forced Menninger “to at least reconsider some of my positions regarding the synoptic problem.”²⁰⁷ Of note to this study, Menninger’s review marked the first time any author or reviewer mentioned reconsidering any of his or her positions on the SP because of another author’s work. However, Menninger did not reveal whether or not he was persuaded to adopt the FH. The second review in March of 1998, offered by Bill Cook, made brief mention that David Wenham, in his *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), focused on the synoptics “without assuming a particular solution to the

²⁰⁴ *JETS* 39/3 (Sep 1996) 484-485, at p.484.

²⁰⁵ *JETS* 41/1 (Mar 1998) 134-136.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 135.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 136.

synoptic problem,”²⁰⁸ but offered no opinion on the appropriateness of such an approach.

Later that year, two more reviews mentioned the SP in the September volume. First, Graham Stanton’s *What Really Happened to Jesus: A Historical Approach to the Resurrection* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1995) was reviewed by Jim Oxford,²⁰⁹ an appropriate name considering his mention of Stanton’s chapter on the significance of Q (though Oxford did not reveal his own solution to the SP). Next, Craig Blomberg favourably reviewed the first volume of Darrell L. Bock’s *Luke* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the NT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994) and almost in passing mentioned that Bock only “tentatively” accepted the 2SH and often appealed to Luke’s “special sources.”²¹⁰ Blomberg offered no opinion on Bock’s use of the 2SH.

1999, Another Important Year

March 1999

Along with 1984, 1999 served among the most informative years in *JETS* for deducing popular opinion among evangelicals regarding the SP. The first article of the March issue began with an editorial²¹¹ which mentioned the 1998 Presidential Address at the ETS annual meeting. The ETS president, Norman Geisler, made several critical assessments of particular trends in evangelical scholarship. Geisler’s address (considered below) was the lead article in the March volume, but the editor, Andreas J. Köstenberger mentioned it in the opening pages to make a clarification:

For clarification purposes, it should be noted that ETS has no policy on the orthodoxy of certain positions on Gospel criticism or theories of Synoptic

²⁰⁸ *JETS* 41/1 (Mar 1998) 150-151, at p.151.

²⁰⁹ *JETS* 41/3 (Sep 1998) 483-484

²¹⁰ *JETS* 41/3 (Sep 1998) 487-489, at p.487.

²¹¹ Andreas Köstenberger, “Editorial,” *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 1-2.

interrelationships and that members in good standing hold to a variety of views.²¹²

Considering the presidential address, one can see the subtle rebuke of Geisler's tone when Köstenberger asked for "civility of scholarly discourse."²¹³ Apparently, the same kind of controversy that had taken place in 1983-84 (and ultimately resulted in the expulsion of Gundry from the ETS) was brewing again. Köstenberger ended his editorial with the mention that Grant Osborne would include an essay on Geisler's address in the June 1999 volume.

The presidential address from the 1998 ETS Annual Meeting was the first article (following Köstenberger's brief editorial) in the March 1999 volume. Marking the society's fiftieth year of existence, President Norman S. Geisler²¹⁴ offered a stinging rebuke of modern philosophies, including Spinoza's, Hume's, Bultmann's, as well as agnosticism, etc., which had found their way into biblical scholarship. Among his attacks, Geisler was particularly displeased with the evangelical practice of redaction criticism in synoptic studies. Citing only one work, *The Jesus Crisis*, by Robert Thomas and David Farnell, Geisler indirectly attacked George Ladd, Scot McKnight, Robert Stein and David R. Catchpole by mentioning their names among those who utilized redaction-critical approaches (which Geisler lumped together with form criticism). He opined that such a methodology "that undermines what the Gospels teach us about the words and deeds of Jesus thereby undermines orthodox Christianity."²¹⁵ Geisler quoted Eta Linnemann's review from the cover of *The Jesus Crisis* where she lauded the authors' ability to "detect historical critical thinking wherever it sprouts, even where nobody would expect it - in the midst of evangelical

²¹² *Ibid.*, 2.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ Geisler, "Beware of Philosophy: A Warning to Biblical Scholars," *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 3-20.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

theology by writers supposedly faithful to the Bible.” Of the four evangelical scholars Geisler cited in a negative light, all held to the 2SH. Of the three he mentioned in a positive manner (Thomas, Farnell, and Linnemann), all held to the IH. Of course, by labelling any use of redaction criticism as a practice that “undermines orthodox Christianity” Geisler seemed to be allowing for the possibility that evangelical scholars who used RC might not be welcome in the ETS. Geisler’s tone revealed the importance of Köstenberger’s which explicitly stated there would be no “litmus test” for members of the ETS concerning their use of biblical criticism or their views on the interdependence of the gospel material. (See above paragraph).

Four reviews in the March 1999 volume also made mention of the SP. The first two, David G. Clark’s review²¹⁶ of *Customs and Controversies: Intertestamental Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995) by J. Julius Scott, Jr., and David Turner’s review²¹⁷ of volume 8 of *The New Interpreter’s Bible*,²¹⁸ made mention of the author’s assumptions about the SP (2SH and Markan priority, respectively) without offering opinions. In the third review²¹⁹ from that volume, however, the reviewer, Samuel Lamerson, commented that in, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), N.T. Wright’s “hesitance to accept much of the postulation that has been done in the area of ‘Q’ is refreshing.”²²⁰ Lamerson’s comment revealed a reluctance to accept at least some elements of the Q portion of the 2SH, but did not reveal Lamerson’s own preferred solution to the SP.

²¹⁶ *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 131-133.

²¹⁷ *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 138-140.

²¹⁸ Leander E. Keck, et al., eds., *General Articles on the New Testament; The Gospel of Matthew; The Gospel of Mark* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995).

²¹⁹ *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 143-144.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 143.

The fourth review included a more in-depth consideration of an author's handling of synoptic issues than the three previous. Craig S. Keener reviewed²²¹ Ivor H. Jones's *The Matthean Parables: A Literary and Historical Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), a book written from the perspective of the 2SH. Keener approvingly described Jones' "evenhanded... approach to redaction criticism" because Jones' argued for the "tendency of Matthew and Luke to respect tradition rather than restate it in their own style." Keener asserted that "even conservative scholars" consider Matthew's freedom of wording "a matter of degree; paraphrase was standard rhetorical practice." Jones was to be applauded because his use of redaction criticism respected the belief that traditions served to "constrain [Matthew's] creative abilities."²²² Keener did not include his preferred solution to the SP in this article, but his newly published book, which would be reviewed in *JETS* later in 1999, revealed his strong preference for the 2SH. Of course, because he failed to indicate a preference in this review, the review will be considered neutral.

June 1999

The subsequent volume in June of 1999 contained a fresh attempt by Grant Osborne, in "Historical Criticism And The Evangelical,"²²³ to defend the use of higher-critical methods, in the midst of which Osborne offered his arguments for the 2SH. Osborne considered several of the points made in Geisler's 1998 Presidential Address and noted that Geisler's sole source was Farnell and Thomas' *The Jesus Crisis*. Before launching into his defence of RC, Osborne recalled the years 1975-1985 at the ETS, years full of controversy and debate over the SP and related issues. Ultimately, according to Osborne, at a final forum chaired by Osborne and Thomas in 1985, the ETS decided "to agree to disagree" and "to explore further the possibility of

²²¹ *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 146-148.

²²² *Ibid.*, 147.

²²³ *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 193-210.

a nuanced use of critical methodology.”²²⁴ According to Osborne, synoptic gospel issues received little attention within the ETS until the publication of *The Jesus Crisis*, which renewed the debate at the society. However, Osborne judged that *The Jesus Crisis* too closely related evangelicals use redaction-critical methods with the practices of The Jesus Seminar. It was important to remember, opined Osborne, that there were several fundamental assumptions evangelical scholars did not share with the Seminar, among them being the Seminar’s doubtfulness of the authenticity of Jesus’ sayings in the canonical gospels, the reluctance to harmonise disparate texts, the rejection of supernatural explanations of events, and radical scepticism at every level of the gospels.²²⁵

Osborne then moved to a consideration of the SP, where he (incorrectly) acknowledged that literary relationships between the gospels were almost unknown in the first 1700 years of Christianity, a time when writers were more interested in the order of the gospels and their historical reliability.²²⁶ He mentioned “three primary theories” which had developed in the intervening centuries to explain the relationship between the gospels, “one centering on Markan priority, one on Matthean priority, and one on the independence of the Gospels from one another.”²²⁷ While deeming the IH “viable,”²²⁸ Osborne ultimately rejected it in favour of Markan priority, by which he meant the 2SH. Osborne failed to consider or mention the FH. In arguing for Markan priority, Osborne alternated between explaining the 2SH’s strengths and questioning the assumptions of the IH. For example, the 2SH was preferred because:

- 1) It best explains verbal similarities;²²⁹
- 2) Matthew and Luke tend to follow Mark but

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 194.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 196.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 197.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 198.

²²⁹ Osborne referenced Mk 2:10-11 = Mt 9:6 = Lk 5:24.

seldom each other; and 3) Mark's language is more primitive.²³⁰ By contrast, the IH was weaker because: 1) It is difficult to explain why Mark would make the other synoptic writers wording more difficult; and 2) The IH fails to explain similarity in "side comments."²³¹ Crucial to Osborne's rejection of the IH was his conclusion that the IH required implausible explanations for its harmonisations, while RC allowed for a better explanation of how texts might be harmonised. His chosen example was Mk 10:17-18 = Mt 19:16-17, where a man approaches Jesus with a question about obtaining eternal life. Mark has the descriptor "good" modifying "Teacher" (Jesus), while Matthew has "good" modifying "works." To Osborne, the IH required Kelly Osborne (no relation) in *The Jesus Crisis* to posit an unlikely conflation of the two questions: "Teacher, good teacher, by doing what will I inherit eternal life? I mean, what should I do in order to inherit eternal life?"²³² Osborne preferred the explanation that Matthew saw a double meaning behind Mark's "Τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν," (Mk 10:18) which would allow for both translations.²³³ While brief, Osborne's arguments in the essay represent the most complete case for the 2SH in *JETS* to date.

The June 1999 issue also contained several book reviews of interest to this study. Seven of these reviews simply identified the authors' solution to the SP (2SH for all seven) without identifying the reviewers' preference.²³⁴

²³⁰ As evidenced by Matthew's and Luke's inclination to "smooth... out" Mark's wording. *Ibid.*, 199.

²³¹ Parenthetical remarks not attributed to Jesus but added by the author. Osborne referenced Mk 13:14 = Mt 24:15 – "Let the reader understand," and Mk 5:8 = Lk 8:29 – "For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man."

²³² *Ibid.*, 201. Kelly Osborne, "Impact of Historical Criticism on Gospel Interpretation: A Test Case," in *The Jesus Crisis*, 297.

²³³ Grant Osborne, "Historical Criticism and the Evangelical," 201-202.

²³⁴ 1) Benjamin M. H. Kim's review of *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) edited by Richard N. Longenecker, *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 336-338; 2) Robert W. Yarbrough's review of Robert W. Funk, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), in *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 338-341; 3) Samuel Lamerson's review of *Pure Kingdom: Jesus' Vision of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) by Bruce Chilton, *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 341-342; 4) Paul Pollard's review of *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., et al., eds., Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1996), *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 346-348; 5) Richard E. Menninger's review of *Matthew: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996) by Warren

Among the list of seven above, three of the reviews revealed a reluctance to accept the authors' handling of Q without offering an alternative methodology. In his review of Chilton, Lamerson lamented that the author's use of historical criticism on the gospels did not extend to Q, presumably because Q is no longer extant and, according to Chilton, had many versions.²³⁵ In his other review in the same volume, Lamerson was also critical of Aichele's assumptions that Q contained only "hints" at Jesus' death and no resurrection material.²³⁶ Hagner likewise showed reluctance to accept Betz's "tactic" of "isolat[ing] the sermon on the mount from the rest of the gospel of Matthew," which Betz presumed Matthew took without alteration from Q.²³⁷

In addition to the above-mentioned reviews from June 1999, David G. Clark's review of *Jesus' Directions for the Future*²³⁸ by A. J. McNicol at least partially revealed the reviewer's favoured solution to the SP, and more specifically a solution he rejected. Clark acknowledged that McNicol's approach, which assumed the 2GH, could be informative, but "so will a careful study that assumes the priority of Luke." The real issue, according to Clark, was "which approach best accounts for the synoptic gospels as we now have them." Clark posited that Markan priority had the 'strongest support,' and claimed that McNicol's study would "not change this consensus."²³⁹ Clark did not reveal whether he preferred Markan priority with Q (2SH) or without Q (FH).

Carter, *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999); 6) Donald A. Hagner's review of *The Sermon on the Mount* (Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) by Hans Dieter Betz, *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 353-356; 7) Samuel Lamerson's review of *Jesus Framed* (New York: Routledge, 1996) by George Aichele, *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 358-359.

²³⁵ *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 342.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 359.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 356.

²³⁸ The full title is *Jesus' Directions for the Future: A Source and Redaction-history Study of the Use of the Eschatological Traditions in Paul and in the Synoptic Accounts of Jesus' Last Eschatological Discourse* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996).

²³⁹ *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 348-349, at p.349.

By far, the review²⁴⁰ which most clearly revealed the reviewer's stance on SP issues was provided by Leslie R. Keylock, who reviewed C.M. Tuckett's *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies on Q* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996). Aside from allowing that he and Tuckett held different views concerning the "deep cleft" between the historical Jesus and the synoptic Jesus, Keylock highly recommended the book for its "magisterial analysis of all the major themes of Q's thought" and suggested that "no one in the field of Q studies can afford to neglect his contributions." Keylock mentioned Tuckett's complaint that Q studies were on the decline in the UK. For the purposes of this study, Keylock's solution to the SP is of interest. He echoed the author's conviction that "despite attempts to discredit the Two-Source Hypothesis of synoptic gospel origins, Tuckett remains convinced (as do I) that Q actually existed at one time."²⁴¹

September 1999

Unlike the previous volume, the September 1999 volume of *JETS* contained only one passing reference to Q, this time in an article by Brent Kinman. The article, entitled "Debtor's Prison and the Future of Israel (Luke 12:57-59),"²⁴² contained a revealing footnote. Kinman allowed that the designation "Q material" was useful for describing material common to Mt and Lk but not Mk, but he was sceptical that Q existed as "an independent, unitary and documentary source of material for Matthew and Luke." He also concluded that a single documentary source did not underlie his Lucan text, Luke 12:57-59.²⁴³ Though qualified in its definition, Kinman's article revealed a tepid endorsement of the 2SH.

December 1999

²⁴⁰ *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 349-350.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 350.

²⁴² *JETS* 42/3 (Sep 1999) 411-425.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 423. Esp. note 20.

The final volume of the 1990s, December 1999, contained two book reviews²⁴⁴ which briefly addressed the authors' solutions to the SP. In both reviews, the reviewers noted that the author assumed the 2SH (Keener) and Markan priority (Dobe) without offering judgment on this assumption.

F. 2000-2008: The Controversy Rekindled

March 2000

The inaugural volume of *JETS* for the new millennium appeared in March of 2000, and contained several discussions of synoptic gospel issues. The first article to mention the SP was written by Robert Thomas, an evangelical scholar who had not written about the SP in *JETS* since the controversy over Robert Gundry's commentary on Matthew in the 1980s.²⁴⁵ As in 1986, Thomas wrote expressing opinions contrary to the views of Grant Osborne, with Thomas again doubting the validity of redaction criticism as practiced by evangelical scholars. The title of Thomas' article, "Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View,"²⁴⁶ showed his disagreement with Osborne's article from the previous year, "Historical Criticism and the Evangelical."²⁴⁷ Thomas began by briefly and simply summarizing the view of the early church, that "no author copied from the work of another Gospel author, nor did any two of the Synoptic Gospels depend on a common written source."²⁴⁸ Further, Thomas cited evangelical scholars "from the recent past" who advocated the IH – Louis Berkhof, Henry Clarence Thiessen and Merrill C. Tenney – and then succinctly described the IH:

²⁴⁴ John D. Harvey's review of *The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts: Divine Purity and Power* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997) by Craig S. Keener, *JETS* 42/4 (Dec 1999) 741-742, and Peter K. Nelson's review of *The Paradox of Salvation: Luke's Theology of the Cross* (SNTSMS 87; Cambridge: CUP, 1996) by Peter Dobe, *JETS* 42/4 (Dec 1999) 747-748.

²⁴⁵ Though his *The Jesus Crisis*, co-edited with David Farnell, was discussed by Geisler and Osborne. See discussion of March and June 1999 volumes.

²⁴⁶ *JETS* 43/1 (Mar 2000) 97-111.

²⁴⁷ Osborne, "Historical Criticism And The Evangelical," *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 193-210.

²⁴⁸ Thomas, "Historical Criticism," 97.

The independence viewpoint explains the similarities among the Synoptic Gospels by recalling that the sources of the accounts were eyewitnesses whose sharp memories in many cases reproduced the exact wording of dialogues and sermons. Their memories received additional stimulation through the Holy Spirit's inspiration of their writings in accord with Jesus' promise (John 14:26). Literary independence theory accounts for the differences between the Gospels by allowing that different eyewitnesses reported the same events in different but not contradictory ways: This created a diversified, non-homogeneous body of tradition without definable limits from which the writers were able to draw. Coupled with this were the opportunities that the writers had to exchange information on an interpersonal basis. The Gospels simply recorded the versions of the events drawn from these sources that suited the writers' individual purposes.²⁴⁹

Thomas's explanation of the IH was an important piece because it offered the first explanation of the IH in *JETS*. His description of "a diversified, non-homogeneous body of tradition" presumably referred to the various oral traditions available to the evangelists and served to dispute the need for a single Q document. The description of the gospel authors' "sharp memories" that "in many cases reproduced the exact wording of dialogues and sermons" allowed adherents to the *ipsissima vox* position of Jesus' words to see merit in the IH. Later in the article Thomas made clear his preference for *ipsissima verba*, but allowed that independence advocates differ in their opinions on the subject.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 106.

Thomas contradicted Osborne's recollection of the events in the ETS in the years from 1975-1985, specifically denying that the society decided "to explore further the possibility of a nuanced use of critical methodology."²⁵¹ Thomas described the tension among the ETS membership created by Gundry's commentary on Matthew, noting that, at the 1983 Annual meeting, the ETS voted on two separate motions. The first motion suggested the "ETS go on record as rejecting any position that states that either Matthew or any other Scripture writer materially altered and embellished tradition or departed from the actual events." This motion carried. The second was directed specifically at Gundry: "The Evangelical Theological Society officially requests Dr. Robert Gundry to submit his resignation from membership in this Society; unless he acknowledges that he has erred in his detraction from the historical trustworthiness of the gospel of Matthew in his recent commentary." Thomas claimed that the motion carried by an "approximately three-to-one margin."²⁵² After his mention of Gundry, Thomas made the statement that "since its founding in 1948 the Evangelical Theological Society has been favourably inclined toward the independence position regarding the Synoptic Gospels," though he offered no evidence to support his assertion.²⁵³ The remainder of Thomas' article served to dispute Osborne's arguments for evangelical use of historical critical methodology, with the overall theme demonstrating Thomas' discomfort with any evangelical scholars who had allowed for any creative adaptations of the events by the evangelists. To Thomas, a scholar's appeal to redaction by the evangelists "sacrificed historical accuracy at one point or another."²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ See Osborne, "Historical Criticism And The Evangelical," 194.

²⁵² Thomas, "Historical Criticism," 99.

²⁵³ For a further discussion of Thomas' assertion, see below, Chapter IX, H, 4.

²⁵⁴ Thomas, "Historical Criticism," 108.

Osborne responded in the very next article entitled “Historical Criticism: A Brief Response to Robert Thomas’ ‘Other View.’”²⁵⁵ Osborne again allowed that the IH had been predominant for 1700 years and praised the portions of the article in which Thomas set forth his arguments for the IH. Osborne was dismayed, however, at the overall tone of the article, which seemed to offer “exaggerated claims and charges of heterodoxy”²⁵⁶ aimed at those who espouse dependency hypotheses. Osborne rejected Thomas’ charges that evangelical scholars who used RC refused to use harmonisation of texts and pointed out that he himself used traditional harmonisational methods at times, as well as “redactional harmonization.”²⁵⁷ Osborne offered a thoroughly evangelical argument for the 2SH (and, by extension, other dependency hypotheses) by stating, “the key to an evangelical use of the two-source theory is that the Holy Spirit guided the use of Mark and other sources by Matthew and Luke.”²⁵⁸ Osborne also offered a rebuttal to Thomas’s recollection of the events of the 1980s at the ETS, where Osborne maintained that after 1985 the mood of the ETS moved away from criticizing evangelical scholars’ use of “critical tools” so that “there were no attacks on the orthodoxy of evangelical redaction critics” for over fourteen years (until the publication of *The Jesus Crisis*).²⁵⁹

The March 2000 volume also included a review by Samuel Lamerson of *Matthew XIX-XXVIII*²⁶⁰ by W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison. In the review, Lamerson mentioned the authors’ acceptance of Markan priority and their allowance for other views, but did not mention his preferred solution to the SP.²⁶¹

²⁵⁵ *JETS* 43/1 (March 2000) 113–117.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 114–115.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 113.

²⁶⁰ The full title is *Matthew XIX-XXVIII: Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Gospel According to Saint Matthew. Vol. III* (International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997).

²⁶¹ *JETS* 43/1 (March 2000) 137–138.

June 2000

The *JETS* volume of June 2000 contained only one review²⁶² which mentioned the SP. In it, Leslie Keylock praised the author, Dale C. Allison, for his opening chapter in *The Compositional History of Q* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997) for its inclusion of British, German, Polish and Japanese scholarship on Q, as opposed to the American view, which rejected eschatological and apocalyptic sayings by Jesus and placed him “primarily in the wisdom tradition.” Keylock admitted that evangelicals might be uncomfortable with Allison’s attribution of so much of Q being created by the early church. On balance, it appears the Keylock endorsed the 2SH with Q here, but without some of the more radical assumptions he attributed to Kloppenborg and the Jesus Seminar. Interestingly and accurately, Keylock ended his review with the remark, “We still await an evangelical work on Q.”²⁶³

September 2000

In September of that year, *JETS* included two book reviews which addressed the authors’ approach to the SP. First, Larry R. Helyer seemed a little dismayed that Walter A. Elwell and Robert W. Yarbrough²⁶⁴ failed to base their study “upon a particular theory of Gospel relationships” (with Helyer mentioning Markan priority and the 2SH as theories they did not choose) and kept their own stance “unclear.” Helyer mentioned that perhaps the authors held to the “precritical view of Augustine,” but did not reveal his own opinion on the matter.²⁶⁵

A few pages later, Leslie Keylock offered a critical review²⁶⁶ of David L. Dungan’s *A History of the Synoptic Problem*.²⁶⁷ Keylock took exception to Dungan’s

²⁶² *JETS* 43/2 (June 2000) 328–329.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 329.

²⁶⁴ *Encountering the New Testament: A Historical and Theological Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998).

²⁶⁵ *JETS* 43/3 (Sep 2000) 540–543, at p.540.

²⁶⁶ *JETS* 43/3 (Sep 2000) 546–547.

explanation of the growth of the popularity of the 2SH in Germany, which made mention of (if not indirect attribution) to anti-Catholicism, anti-Semitism, and even Hitler himself! Interestingly, Keylock's review failed to mention Dungan's own preferred solution to the SP, the 2GH, but also did not reveal Keylock's solution.

December 2000

The final volume of the year 2000 contained one article written by Kyu Sam Han, "Theology of Prayer in the Gospel of Luke,"²⁶⁸ in which Han assumed the 2SH. In the article, Han made repeated appeals to Q without defending his choice of the 2SH or mentioning other options.²⁶⁹

September 2001

No mention of the SP was made in *JETS* again until September of 2001 when two reviews addressed the topic. First, Ted Dorman, in his review of Scot McKnight's *A New Vision for Israel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), indicated his displeasure with the author's use of redaction criticism, which sought to assess the authenticity of traditions from "hypothetical sources such as Q, M, and L."²⁷⁰ However, while apparently uneasy with the 2SH, Dorman did not reveal another acceptable approach to the SP. The second review by David Turner of Craig Keener's *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) mentioned Keener's assumption of Markan priority but offered no judgment on its validity.²⁷¹

December 2001

²⁶⁷ The full title is *A History of the Synoptic Problem: The Canon, the Text, the Composition, and the Interpretation of the Gospels* (New York: Doubleday, 1999).

²⁶⁸ *JETS* 43/4 (Dec 2000) 675-693.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 675, note 6, and also p. 679.

²⁷⁰ *JETS* 44/3 (Sep 2001) 528-529, at p.529.

²⁷¹ *JETS* 44/3 (Sep 2001) 531-533.

A relevant article appeared in the December 2001 volume of *JETS* by Randall K.J. Tan, entitled “Recent Developments In Redaction Criticism: From Investigation of Textual Prehistory Back to Historical-Grammatical Exegesis.”²⁷² Tan’s observations seemed to serve as a middle way between Thomas’ outright rejection of RC and Osborne’s continued defence of the practice within proper confines. Tan argued that, considering the lack of consensus considering the results of RC on the gospels, as well as the development of newer literary methods of biblical criticism and the disagreements among evangelicals over the use of RC, evangelicals should endorse Composition Criticism (CC) as an evangelical-friendly yet scholarly practice.²⁷³ Tan explained that, while CC encourages the side-by-side comparison of the gospels as in RC, no distinction is made between tradition and redaction, nor is any attempt made to determine authenticity or inauthenticity.²⁷⁴ Instead, CC involves the search for patterns and emphases of the evangelists. Unfortunately, Tan did not offer any examples of CC at work, making it difficult for the reader to determine its validity in practice. While not explicitly endorsing the 2SH, all of Tan’s language assumed it. First, he referred to Matthew’s redaction of Mark and Luke’s redaction of Mark, never Mark redaction of another gospel, and never Luke’s use of Matthew. Second, he almost exclusively interacted with the works of evangelical scholars who assumed the 2SH in their works.²⁷⁵ It appears Tan’s major objective in the article was

²⁷² *JETS* 44/4 (Dec 2001) 599-614.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 601-605.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 613.

²⁷⁵ D. A. Carson, “Redaction Criticism: On the Legitimacy and Illegitimacy of a Literary Tool,” in D. A. Carson and J. D. Woodbridge, eds., *Scripture and Truth* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983) 119; Grant Osborne, “Redaction Criticism and the Great Commission: A Case Study toward a Biblical Understanding of Inerrancy,” *JETS* 19/1 (Mar 1976) 73-85; “The Evangelical and Traditionsgeschichte,” *JETS* 21/1 (Mar 1978) 117-30; “The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology,” *JETS* 22/4 (Dec 1979) 305-22; “Round Four: The Redaction Debate Continues,” *JETS* 28 (1985) 399- 410; and R. H. Stein, “The Proper Methodology for Ascertaining a Markan Redaction History,” *NovT* 13 (1971) 181-98.

to persuade evangelicals to move away from RC and its labels and more fully develop CC together, all while assuming the 2SH.

That same volume included a review²⁷⁶ of Alan Millard's *Reading and Writing in the Time of Jesus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) by reviewer Jonathan M. Watt. In the review, Watt made brief mention of Millard's use of Q, with the reviewer calling it "hypothetical" but without revealing his preference.

2002

March 2002

The first volume of 2002 included an article by John D. Harvey entitled "Orality and Its implications for Biblical Studies."²⁷⁷ Harvey stressed the oral nature of biblical cultures, especially in the first century, and argued that modern biblical scholars should avoid inserting modern assumptions from their highly literate world into the early church's milieu. In the fourth section of the essay, Harvey attempted to refute each of Stein's arguments for literary dependence.²⁷⁸ First, Stein's argument for a literary relationship was undermined entirely by his allowance that the common source for the synoptics could be written or oral. Second, after admitting that the similar parenthetical material of Mt 24:15 and Mk 13:14 was difficult to explain apart from a common written source, Harvey asked "Is it not possible that such parenthetical comments stem from a recognition... that some of Jesus' statements were difficult to understand, a recognition which Matthew and Mark incorporated into their written accounts?"²⁷⁹ This puzzling question was not followed by any further explanation, making it difficult to ascertain Harvey's argument. Third, Harvey allowed that Stein's use of Luke's preface demonstrated the presence of earlier

²⁷⁶ *JETS* 44/4 (Dec 2001) 732-733.

²⁷⁷ *JETS* 45/1 (Mar 2002) 99-109.

²⁷⁸ See Stein, *The Synoptic Problem*.

²⁷⁹ Harvey, 107.

written gospels, but not Luke's dependence on them. Fourth, Stein's argument from agreement in order could be explained by the fact that "memorization in oral culture tends to be thematic."²⁸⁰ Harvey concluded, "It seems – to me, at least – that a common oral source is at least as plausible a solution to the 'Synoptic Problem' as one which is based on literary interdependence and which, in many forms, includes reliance on... 'The Hypothetical Document Q.'²⁸¹ Clearly, Harvey's comments demonstrated his advocacy for the IH.

June 2002

June of 2002 saw three *JETS* reviews relevant to this study. In the first, David M. Scholer mentioned Paul D. Wegner's acceptance of the 2SH in *The Journey from Texts to Translations*,²⁸² but offered no opinion on its appropriateness.²⁸³ In the second, Leslie Keylock offered a detailed review²⁸⁴ of the seminal *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000) by John S. Kloppenborg. The reviewer marvelled at Kloppenborg's knowledge of the extant literature and deemed the work "perhaps the most thorough introduction to Q available today."²⁸⁵ Keylock preferred the first half of the book, which centred on the discussion of how the evangelists used Q, to the second, which (according to Keylock) revealed Kloppenborg's assumptions that those who disagreed with his conclusions did so because of their biases. Keylock was especially dissatisfied with Kloppenborg's scant mention of evangelical scholarship on the SP and his apparent ignorance of the writings of Stein, Guthrie and Carson. Thus, Keylock heartily endorsed Kloppenborg's work on Q (and by necessity the 2SH), but rejected "extreme

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 108.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² The full title is *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origins and Development of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999)

²⁸³ *JETS* 45/2 (June 2002) 343-344.

²⁸⁴ *JETS* 45/2 (June 2002) 356-358.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 357.

ad hominem arguments against those with whom he disagrees.”²⁸⁶ The third review,²⁸⁷ offered by David. L. Turner, mentioned but offered no judgment on Samuel Byrskog’s discussion of Q in *Story as History-History as Story* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000). Thus, two of the three reviews from this volume were neutral, while Keylock’s was in support of the 2SH.

September 2002

The September 2002 issue did not include any articles related to the SP but did contain two important reviews. The first was E. Earle Ellis’ lengthy 22-page review²⁸⁸ of the *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (Abingdon Press, 1999) edited by John Hayes. Though Ellis generally endorsed the dictionary, he had strong reservations with its handling of Q. He pointed out that, though the authors portrayed Q as a single document whose content is known, this assumption had yet to be proven. He deduced, “[The authors] have created a hypothetical setting of a hypothetical community with a hypothetical theology of a hypothetical document Q.”²⁸⁹ Oddly (for a review), Ellis offered his own theory of synoptic gospel origins (but no evidence), with Luke using “(1) Mark or proto-Mark (published AD 55-58), which was being used there in congregations of the Petrine mission; (2) (Matthean) Jesus traditions being used in the Jerusalem-based Jacobean mission (Q); (3) Jesus traditions being used in the (still Palestinian-based) Johannine mission; (4) other Jerusalem traditions.”²⁹⁰ Ellis’ conclusion would seem to preclude him from being classified as in favour of the 2SH, but also difficult to classify elsewhere, so special consideration will be given to his comments at the conclusion of this section.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ *JETS* 45/2 (June 2002) 360-361.

²⁸⁸ *JETS* 45/3 (Sep 2002) 473-95.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 482.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

The second review from September 2002, while only briefly mentioning the SP, revealed a bald presupposition by the reviewer, Craig L. Blomberg. In his review²⁹¹ of John Bowden's translation of *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* by Albert Schweitzer (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), Blomberg remarked, "Schweitzer wrote in an age when Markan priority still had to be vigorously defended."²⁹² This statement revealed Blomberg's opinion that Markan priority no longer needed vigorous defence, and a tacit assumption that many of the readers of *JETS* would likely agree. The review revealed Blomberg's preference for Markan priority but stopped short of endorsing the 2SH.

2003

The next volume to include material related to the SP came in June of 2003, with one article and four reviews of interest. The article was written by Dennis Ingolfsland and included the revealing title "Kloppenborg's Stratification of Q and its Significance for Historical Jesus Studies."²⁹³ Throughout the article, Ingolfsland was critical Kloppenborg's confidence that Matthew and Luke contain practically all of Q as well as Kloppenborg's assumptions in discovering layers of Q. Though he allowed that other theories are viable, Ingolfsland worked from a 2SH perspective which rejected any scholar's ability to uncover strata in Q and find differing theologies and communities in them.

The two reviews²⁹⁴ provided by Robert H. Stein in the June 2003 volume did not endorse a particular approach to the SP.

²⁹¹ *JETS* 45/3 (Sep 2002) 517-518.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 518.

²⁹³ *JETS* 46/2 (June 2003) 217-232.

²⁹⁴ In Stein's review of *The Gospel of Mark* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2002) by John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, Stein mentioned the fact that the authors favored Markan priority – *JETS* 46/2 (June 2003) 343-346. In Stein's review of *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) by R. T. France, Stein acknowledged France's acceptance of Markan priority and reluctance to accept Q – *JETS* 46/2 (June 2003) 346-348.

There were two reviews in the September 2003 issue of interest to this study. In the first, Dennis Ingolfsland championed Philip Jenkins' book, *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). Ingolfsland mentioned but did not comment upon Jenkins' description of "revisionists" who make use of purported early Q strata and the Gospel of Thomas (GThom).²⁹⁵ The second review,²⁹⁶ provided by Craig Blomberg, contained an in-depth discussion of the SP, primarily because the work under review, *Three Views on the Origins of the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), edited by Robert L. Thomas, was entirely dedicated to gospel origins and relationships. *Three Views* offered arguments for three solutions to the SP – the 2SH advocated by Grant Osborne and Matthew Talbot, the 2GH advocated by John Niemala, and the IH advocated by David Farnell – with critiques and rebuttals by each contributor. Blomberg's review considered the strengths and weaknesses of each position as advocated by the authors. First, he was supportive of the 2SH arguments made, but also considered them to be the most "predictable" with the "standard arguments" rehearsed, though Blomberg only mentioned their discussion of Matthew's and Luke's "improving Mark's style and language."²⁹⁷ Blomberg offered praise for Niemelä's attack on Markan priority, but was most impressed with Niemelä's lengthy coverage of Luke's preface and patristic sources to show "that they support literary dependence." However, Blomberg was critical of Niemelä's sometimes confusing statistical analysis of synoptic texts, ultimately determining it to be "faulty."²⁹⁸ Blomberg was least satisfied with the arguments for the IH because Farnell relied on patristic quotes taken out of context, included no citation of a synoptic text to prove

²⁹⁵ *JETS* 46/3 (Sep 2003) 550-552.

²⁹⁶ *JETS* 46/3 (Sep 2003) 552-554.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 552.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 553.

the IH, and charged advocates of other views with “denying inerrancy.”²⁹⁹

Ultimately, Blomberg clearly preferred the 2SH and the arguments made on its behalf.

It is also noteworthy that Blomberg was critical of the choice of the IH as one of the three major solutions to the SP, arguing instead that the FH should be placed alongside the 2SH and 2GH. Confusingly, Blomberg described the FH as a “modification” of the “Augustinian hypothesis,”³⁰⁰ a description that presumably meant that the FH’s order of Mk-Mt-Lk differs only slightly from the canonical to Mt-Mk-Lk.

The year 2003 saw one more review³⁰¹ published in December, a review of Robert Barr’s translation of Schnackenburg’s *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002). The reviewer, Daniel S. Steffen mentioned the author’s use of 2SH labels (Q, M, L) without offering a judgment on the 2SH.

2004

No further mention was made of the SP in *JETS* until September of the following year, when two reviewers included the authors’ assumed solutions to the SP but did not offer their own commentary on the matter. John C. Crutchfield³⁰² documented Richard Beaton’s use of the 2SH in *Isaiah’s Christ in Matthew’s Gospel* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002) and Kevin W. Larsen³⁰³ mentioned Francis J. Moloney’s preference for Markan priority in his commentary, *The Gospel of Mark* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002).

The December 2004 volume included two reviews of interest to this study, again by Craig Blomberg and Dennis Ingolfsson. Blomberg, in his review³⁰⁴ of Lord

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 553.

³⁰¹ *JETS* 46/4 (Dec 2003) 725-727.

³⁰² *JETS* 47/3 (Sep 2004) 519-520.

³⁰³ *JETS* 47/3 (Sep 2004) 522-524.

³⁰⁴ *JETS* 47/4 (Dec 2004) 711-714.

Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity by Larry Hurtado (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), praised Hurtado's conclusion that Q existed and his rejection of Kloppenborg's position "that the Q community had no knowledge of Christ's redemptive death."³⁰⁵ Blomberg again revealed his preference for the 2SH. Ingolfsland followed with a review of *Jesus Remembered* by James D. G. Dunn.³⁰⁶ In his review,³⁰⁷ Ingolfsland noted an apparent contradiction by Dunn who, on the one hand, claimed the gospels relied heavily on oral transmission, and on the other, accepted Markan priority and Q. While not bothering to address how Dunn might reconcile these views, Ingolfsland left the subject of the SP without offering an opinion on which approach he preferred.

2005

There was one article in the June 2005 volume of *JETS* that contained a footnote related to the SP. In the article,³⁰⁸ Robert L. Plummer mentioned that one of his sources, Dennis D. Sylva, assumed "Lukan redactional changes to his Markan source."³⁰⁹ Plummer, however, did not reveal his own opinion.

Dennis Ingolfsland reviewed Donald L. Denton's *Historiography and Hermeneutics in Jesus Studies* in the September 2005 volume.³¹⁰ Ingolfsland agreed with the author's observations that many of Crossan's conclusions were dependent "on Kloppenborg's faulty theory about the stratification of Q."³¹¹ The reviewer failed to offer any more of his own views concerning the SP.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 712.

³⁰⁶ The full title is *Christianity in the Making, vol. 1: Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

³⁰⁷ *JETS* 47/4 (December 2004) 714-716.

³⁰⁸ Robert L. Plummer, "Something Awry in the Temple? The Rending of the Temple Veil and Early Jewish Sources that Report Unusual Phenomena in the Temple around AD 30," *JETS* 48/2 (June 2005) 301-16.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 304, note 9.

³¹⁰ The full title is Donald L. Denton, *Historiography and Hermeneutics in Jesus Studies: An Examination of the Work of John Dominic Crossan and Ben F. Meyer* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004).

³¹¹ *JETS* 48/3 (Sep 2005) 642-643, at p.643.

The final volume of 2005 included one article and two book reviews of interest to this study. In the article,³¹² Grant Osborne described the shift occurring among NT scholars who were combining (instead of separating) history and theology in their handling of biblical texts. Osborne characterized tradition criticism as “the step-child of form and redaction criticism,” and noted that the criterion of multiple attestation, in which more than one source, “like Mark, Q, M, L, [and] John” contain a saying or pericope, lends to its authenticity. Osborne was thankful that scholars such as J.P. Meier and N.T. Wright were moving away from sceptical approaches, giving evangelicals reasons to “trust the historical instincts of the biblical writers and... assess their works positively and constructively.”³¹³ Osborne did not reveal anything more about his approach to the SP in the article.

The first review³¹⁴ to mention the SP in the issue came from Michael W. Pahl, in his review of *Rethinking the Gospel Sources: From Proto-Mark to Mark* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004) by Delbert Burkett. Pahl briefly summarized Burkett’s unique and intricate solution to the SP, which involved two versions of Proto-Mark, one used by Matthew and one used by Luke. Burkett differentiated these Proto-Marks from the gospel of Mark, positing that neither Matthew nor Luke used Mark and thus rejecting Markan and Matthean priority. Though Pahl complemented the author’s ability to handle such a complex subject, he ultimately judged that Burkett failed “to overturn the virtual consensus of Markan priority and to account for the growing awareness of the influence of orality and memory” in gospel formation.³¹⁵ Pahl thus indicated his preference for Markan priority and his belief in its “virtual” consensus.

³¹² “Historical Narrative and Truth in the Bible,” *JETS* 48/4 (Dec 2005) 673-688.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 688.

³¹⁴ *JETS* 48/4 (Dec 2005) 827-828.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 828.

In the same volume, John P. Harrison contributed a review³¹⁶ of *The Date of Mark's Gospel: Insight from the Law in Earliest Christianity* (London: T&T Clark, 2004) by James G. Crossley. In the review, Harrison noted Crossley's assumption of Markan priority but offered no judgment regarding the appropriateness of that assumption.

2006

March 2006

In March of 2006, the *JETS* volume contained two articles and a book review that included relevant information for the present study. First, Nicholas Perrin wrote an article, entitled "Thomas: The Fifth Gospel?"³¹⁷ in which he noted the tendency to suggest strong correlations between GThom and Q by recent scholars, namely J.D. Crossan, Burton Mack, and Stephen Patterson. In a tongue-in-cheek fashion, Perrin commented on the tendency to prefer Q and GThom in the search for the historical Jesus, who "would most likely not be caught dead (much less resurrected) in the... Synoptics."³¹⁸ Because Perrin's topic was GThom, he offered no further remarks on Q, thus refraining from revealing his preferred solution to the SP. Second, Daniel M. Gurtner's article, "The Veil of the Temple in History and Legend," contained an obvious clue to the author's opinion when he stated, "If we assume Markan priority, Matthew seems to have found the account in his Markan source lacking."³¹⁹ However, Gurtner did not go as far to indicate if he preferred the 2SH or another hypothesis such as the FH. Third, Blomberg reviewed³²⁰ Dunn's *A New Perspective on Jesus: What the Quest for the Historical Jesus Missed* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005) and opined that, while the author's thesis allowed for the 2SH, it was not given

³¹⁶ *JETS* 48/4 (Dec 2005) 829-830.

³¹⁷ *JETS* 49/1 (Mar 2006) 67-80.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 67.

³¹⁹ *JETS* 49/1 (Mar 2006) 97-114, at p.112.

³²⁰ *JETS* 49/1 (Mar 2006) 159-161.

“free reign over every last scrap of data.”³²¹ Here, Blomberg stopped short of endorsing the 2SH.

June 2006

The June 2006 volume included four book reviews that briefly addressed SP issues. In the first, Michael F. Bird noted the fact that Dale C. Allison assumed the 2SH in his book *Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters* (London: T & T Clark, 2005), though Allison rejected that Q contained no reference to judgment. Bird did not offer his own opinion on the SP.³²² In the second review,³²³ James P. Sweeney mentioned that Craig Blomberg assumed the 2SH in his book, *Contagious Holiness: Jesus’ Meals with Sinners* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2005), but the reviewer offered no further comment. In the third,³²⁴ reviewer Jon C. Laansma acknowledged but offered no comment on Ulrich Luz’s assumption of the 2SH in his *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005). In the fourth review,³²⁵ Paul Hartog included in his review the fact that Paul Barnett considered Q “the most likely explanation of the relationships among the Synoptic Gospels”³²⁶ in Barnett’s *The Birth of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), but Hartog did not reveal his own preferred solution to the SP.

The September 2006 volume also contained two reviews that briefly mentioned the SP. First, Douglas S. Huffman reviewed³²⁷ *Lukan Theology in the Light of the Gospel’s Literary Structure* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004) by Douglas S. McComiskey. Huffman offered a mixed review of the book, but stated, “McComiskey’s observations of Lukan structure make a strong case – perhaps even

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 161.

³²² *JETS* 49/2 (June 2006) 412-414.

³²³ *JETS* 49/2 (June 2006) 418-419.

³²⁴ *JETS* 49/2 (June 2006) 420-422.

³²⁵ *JETS* 49/2 (June 2006) 424-426.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 426.

³²⁷ *JETS* 49/3 (Sep 2006) 603-606.

stronger than other arguments – for Markan priority as the solution to the Synoptic Problem,³²⁸ another apparent mistake by a writer in equating Markan priority and the 2SH. However, while noting the strength of the author’s argument, Huffman refrained from completely endorsing Markan priority and the 2SH. Next, Monte A. Shanks reviewed³²⁹ François Bovon’s *Studies in Early Christianity*,³³⁰ and offered a blistering critique. Shanks was especially critical of Bovon’s conclusion that Luke only indirectly used Q (through a third source) and Bovon’s assumptions vis-à-vis the Q community. However, Shanks did not reveal his own solution to the SP.

March 2007

The March 2007 contained one brief mention of the SP in a book review³³¹ by James M. Howard, who noted that Peter Balla considered his methodology in *The Child-Parent Relationship in the New Testament and Its Environment* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005) to be consistent with the 2SH but not dependent upon it.

June 2007

An important book review³³² by Michael W. Pahl appeared in the June 2007 volume. Pahl reviewed *Two Gospels from One: A Comprehensive Text-Critical Analysis of the Synoptic Gospels* by Matthew C. Williams (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006). Pahl was disappointed in the authors’ repeated equivalence of Markan priority and the 2SH, a blatant mistake because “Markan priority is one foundation for the Two Source Hypothesis, just as it is for other theories such as the Farrer Hypothesis (Mark without Q).”³³³ Pahl’s appeal to the FH was not incidental, because in the next sentence he referred readers to Mark Goodacre’s *The Case Against Q* (Harrisburg:

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 605.

³²⁹ JETS 49/3 (September 2006) 641-646.

³³⁰ Translated by Laura Beth Bugg, et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

³³¹ JETS 50/1 (March 2007) 200-202.

³³² JETS 50/2 (June 2007) 392-394.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 394.

Trinity Press International, 2002), a reference which indicated Pahl's preference for the FH and marked the first and only occurrence in *JETS* first 50 years in which a writer endorsed the FH.

September 2007

The September 2007 volume contained two reviews of interest to this study, though in both the reviewers refrained from offering their own preference for a solution to the SP. First, Phillip J. Long³³⁴ mentioned David Catchpole's assumptions regarding the SP (without indicating what Catchpole's assumptions were) in *Jesus People: The Historical Jesus and the Beginnings of Community* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), but noted that the work did not have the required space to argue for a solution. In the same volume, Charles L. Quarles³³⁵ offered a strong endorsement of Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), in which he mentioned Bauckham's appeal to Matthew's and Luke's redaction of Mark. Quarles did not, however, indicate whether or not he held to the same position.

December 2007

The final volume of 2007, in December, included a review³³⁶ by James F. Davis of two commentaries bound in the same monograph.³³⁷ First, Davis reviewed David L. Turner's *The Gospel of Matthew* and noted the author's refusal to assume any form of literary dependence and his concern to offer a narrative-critical approach. Davis mentioned that Turner conceded, in his introduction, that early church testimony favoured Matthean priority. Second, Davis reviewed Darrell L. Bock's *The*

³³⁴ *JETS* 50/3 (Sep 2007) 615-617.

³³⁵ *JETS* 50/3 (Sep 2007) 617-620.

³³⁶ *JETS* 50/4 (December 2007) 841-843.

³³⁷ *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary*, vol. 11 (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2005).

Gospel of Mark and mentioned the author's case for Markan priority based on internal data. In his reviews, Davis did not reveal his opinion of either of these approaches.

March 2008

The first volume of 2008 included an article³³⁸ by Douglas S. McComiskey, in which McComiskey assumed Markan priority. This assumption was made clear by the author's frequent appeals to Matthean and Lukan additions to Mark as well as the statement that Matthew and Luke tend to "clarify Mark."³³⁹ McComiskey did not state which solution based on Markan priority he espoused. That same volume had a book review³⁴⁰ by James F. Davis of *Matthew 1:1-11:1* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2006) by Jeffrey A. Gibbs. In the review, Davis seemed surprised that Gibbs frequently argued for the IH, but the reviewer offered no opinion on the validity of the author's approach.

September 2008

The September 2008 volume of *JETS* included three book reviews which addressed the SP. First, Wesley G. Olmstead reviewed³⁴¹ *The Torn Veil: Matthew's Exposition of the Death of Jesus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007) by Daniel M. Gurtner. Olmstead included in his review the fact that Gurtner worked from a Markan priority perspective, but the reviewer did not reveal his opinion on the issue. Next, Leslie Keylock reviewed³⁴² the book *From Q to "Secret" Mark: A Composition History of the Earliest Narrative Theology* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006) by Hugh M. Humphrey. Keylock described in detail Humphrey's unique thesis that Mark's gospel was a combination of two earlier works by Mark. Keylock also mentioned an appendix included by Humphrey designed to briefly refute the FH

³³⁸ "Exile and the Purpose of Jesus' Parables," *JETS* 51/1 (Mar 2008) 59-85.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

³⁴⁰ *JETS* 51/1 (Mar 2008) 140-141.

³⁴¹ *JETS* 51/3 (Sep 2008) 645-646.

³⁴² *JETS* 51/3 (Sep 2008) 647-649.

because of its “easy dismissal of Q.”³⁴³ Though Keylock questioned Humphrey’s handling of Q, he did not offer his preference for a solution to the SP. The third review³⁴⁴ in the volume was by David W. Jones and offered a brief yet revealing comment. Jones was reviewing *Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics* by Richard A. Burridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), and his only remark concerning the SP was “this volume has a few features with which some evangelicals may disagree, such as apparent acceptance of the Q-document hypothesis.”³⁴⁵ While this warning indicated Jones’ reservations with the 2SH, it did not reveal his preferred solution to the SP.

December 2008

The final volume to be considered in this survey of *JETS* is that of December 2008, which contained one article and two reviews pertinent to this study. The article, by Gary R. Habermas,³⁴⁶ considered the works of noted atheists Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens. In Habermas’ discussion of Hitchens’ *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (New York: Warner Books, 2007), Habermas noted that Hitchens discussed Q but offered no opinion on the matter. The first review from the December 2008 volume was written by David L. Turner on *The Gospel of Matthew* by R. T. France (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007). While Turner noted France’s acceptance of Markan priority but rejection of “a discrete Q document,” he stopped short of endorsing a particular hypothesis.³⁴⁷ Cornelius Bennema provided the second review of note, in which he criticized Graham H. Twelftree for assuming the 2SH without justification “in the light of the growing

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 649.

³⁴⁴ *JETS* 51/3 (Sep 2008) 663-664.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 664.

³⁴⁶ “The Plight of the New Atheism: A Critique” *JETS* 51/4 (Dec 2008) 813-827.

³⁴⁷ *JETS* 51/4 (Dec 2008) 842-845, at p.843.

minority view that dispenses with Q.”³⁴⁸ Bennema’s comment, made without providing evidence, exhibited his feeling that challenges to the 2SH were causing more scholars to question the hypothesis. However, it did not reveal Bennema’s solution of choice.

G. The Monographs that Sparked Controversy

Two periods from the first 50 years of *JETS* can be identified as the most fruitful in the publication of articles focusing on the SP: 1) 1982-1983, in which Robert Gundry’s commentary on Matthew was published and discussed in every article of March 1983; and 2) March and June of 1999, in which the book *The Jesus Crisis (TJC)* by Thomas and Farnell was discussed at length. The first period is considered at length above in Chapter VIII, G. The second period is now considered.

2. Robert Thomas, David Farnell and *The Jesus Crisis*

After the Gundry controversy, the debate at the ETS over redaction criticism and other critical methodologies was not revived until 1998 when Robert Thomas and David Farnell edited and published *The Jesus Crisis (TJC)*. Thomas had been a critic of the 2SH and redaction criticism in his earlier *JETS* articles, as well as an advocate for the IH. In *TJC*, Thomas and Farnell echoed these themes on a larger scale. In addition to the critiques of Ladd and Stonehouse mentioned above, Thomas singled out commentaries by three ETS members, Gundry,³⁴⁹ William Lane,³⁵⁰ and I.H. Marshall,³⁵¹ for particular attention in his chapter “Impact of Historical Criticism on Hermeneutics.”³⁵² Lane was guilty of a “tendency toward suspicion,” as evidenced by his remark that Mark 2:10 displays a “commentary character,” which Thomas equated

³⁴⁸ *JETS* 51/4 (Dec 2008) 869-870, at p.870.

³⁴⁹ Gundry, *Matthew*.

³⁵⁰ William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

³⁵¹ I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (NIGTC; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978).

³⁵² Thomas, *TJC*, 317-337.

with calling the verse “a Markan invention.”³⁵³ Marshall’s work was also plagued with problems, according to Thomas, because he admitted that there were several places in Luke where certain discrepancies were “insoluble with the evidence currently at our disposal.” Thomas considered these kinds of statements to be tantamount to pronouncing events in Luke as “unhistorical.”³⁵⁴ But Thomas reserved his most scathing attack for Gundry’s *Matthew*. He noted that Gundry rejected the fixation on historicism that plagued evangelical studies, and concluded, “taking Matthew’s intent to be solely historical is as much of a critical judgment (conscious or unconscious) as taking it to be a mixture of the historical and unhistorical.”³⁵⁵ Thomas recalled the cool reception of Gundry’s commentary by many evangelicals because of his methodology, but surmised that the problem lay in historical criticism.³⁵⁶ As might be expected, the publication of *TJC* was not ignored by the ETS. First, Norman Geisler, president of the ETS in 1998, used *TJC* as his sole source for his Presidential Address at the 1998 ETS Meeting to reject “historical critical thinking” which “undermines orthodox Christianity.”³⁵⁷ These comments about the historical-critical method, both by Geisler and in *TJC*, compelled the editor of *JETS* at that time, Andreas Köstenberger, to offer Grant Osborne an opportunity to respond “in the spirit of scholarly dialogue that has characterized our journal from its inception” in the following issue of *JETS* in March of 1999.³⁵⁸ Osborne’s response to *TJC*, a work in which Osborne had been cited nine separate times,³⁵⁹ prompted Thomas to offer again his views on the SP and RC in the pages of *JETS* the following year. The article proved to be a critical one because in it Thomas offered the longest

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 318.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 320.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 322.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁷ See Geisler, “Beware,” *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 3-20.

³⁵⁸ Köstenberger, “Editorial,” *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 1.

³⁵⁹ See Thomas, *TJC*, 220, 227, 232, 334, 335, 343, 360, 375, and 376.

explanation of the IH in *JETS* history, revealing his belief that the ETS had been “favourably inclined” to the IH from its founding.³⁶⁰ In the same volume, Osborne followed Thomas’ with another article on the matter in which he again offered salutary comments toward Thomas’ arguments, but urged Thomas to soften the tone of the criticism.³⁶¹ Ultimately, the two scholars came together to publish *Three Views on the Origins of the Synoptic Gospels*³⁶² in 2002, a work in which the 2SH, 2GH, and IH were debated. Osborne, along with Matthew C. Williams, wrote the chapters in *Three Views* from the 2SH perspective, and Thomas served as editor as well as providing a few remarks on behalf of the IH in his introduction and later chapter.

H. Summary of the ETS and the Synoptic Problem

1. Statistics

In sum, from its founding in 1958 to 2008, the SP had been addressed in some way in a total of 131 pieces (articles and reviews). Of those pieces, 51 were in articles and the other 80 took place in book reviews. However, in far fewer cases did the writer make a clear assumption of or argument for a particular solution to the SP. In only 27 articles and book reviews were the contributor’s preference for the 2SH made clear. In 5 others, the writers advocated Markan priority without further specifying their solutions to the SP. In 3 articles, the authors argued for the IH. In only one article did the author make arguments for the 2GH. Likewise, in only one book review did the reviewer advocate the FH.

2. Mistakes and Misnomers

While not a common occurrence in *JETS*, there were a few occasions in which the contributor incorrectly labelled or described a particular solution to the SP. In his

³⁶⁰ Thomas, “Historical Criticism,” 99.

³⁶¹ Osborne, “Historical Criticism: A Brief Response.”

³⁶² *Three Views* was reviewed by Craig Blomberg in *JETS* in 2003. See *JETS* 46/3 (Sep 2003) 552-554.

1964 article against Q, Lewis Foster incorrectly attributed Austin Farrer with a hypothesis that rejected Q and Markan priority.³⁶³ In a book review in 1981, Douglas J. Moo repeatedly conflated the 2SH and Markan priority.³⁶⁴ The same mistake was made by Huffman in his 2006 book review.³⁶⁵ And finally, in 2003, Craig Blomberg faulted the authors of *Three Views* for neglecting to consider the FH, but Blomberg described the FH as a “modification” of the AH.³⁶⁶ This description was at best misleading, and at worst wrong, because it failed to take into account the major characteristics of the FH, which are Markan priority without Q.

3. Majority or Consensus Opinion?

On four separate occasions, contributors claimed a consensus opinion was held regarding the SP. In 1981, Moo stated that Stoldt’s attack on Markan priority had not “proven against the consensus.”³⁶⁷ Likewise, in David G. Clark’s review of McNicol’s *Jesus Directions* the reviewer observed that McNicol’s arguments for the 2GH and against the 2SH “will not change the consensus” of the 2SH.³⁶⁸ Blomberg made a similar assumption regarding Markan priority when, in his review of Schweitzer’s *Quest* that the author “wrote in an age when Markan priority still had to be vigorously defended.”³⁶⁹ Pahl similarly opined that Burkett’s novel solution to the SP failed “to overturn the virtual consensus of Markan priority.”³⁷⁰ In addition, Moo made a similar statement in 1983 in his comments on Gundry’s *Matthew* when he posited, “Most scholars would agree with the supposition that Matthew has used

³⁶³ L. Foster, “The ‘Q’ Myth,” 118.

³⁶⁴ *JETS* 24/4 (Dec 1981) 359-360.

³⁶⁵ *JETS* 49/3 (Sep 2006) 642.

³⁶⁶ *JETS* 46/3 (Sep 2003) 553.

³⁶⁷ *JETS* 24/4 (Dec 1981) 360.

³⁶⁸ *JETS* 42 /2 (June 1999) 349.

³⁶⁹ *JETS* 45/3 (Sep 2002) 518.

³⁷⁰ *JETS* 48/4 (Dec 2005) 828.

Mark”³⁷¹ though in this instance the author refrained from calling Markan priority a consensus position.

4. The ETS Predisposition Toward a Solution?

The most significant hint at a supposed consensus opinion among members of the ETS came from Thomas’ article in the March 2000 volume, in which he stated, “From all I have been able to learn, since its founding in 1948 the Evangelical Theological Society has been favourably inclined toward the independence position regarding the Synoptic Gospels.”³⁷² Thomas did not offer an explanation of how he had come to learn this, and it is a questionable statement. Considering the initial makeup of the ETS officers, the list of names³⁷³ does not suggest the group of scholars shared a united view concerning the SP. Because most of the founding officers did not publish opinions on the SP, it is difficult to ascertain exactly how much support any solution had among them. While Merrill C. Tenney, the first Vice President of the ETS, later published a monograph³⁷⁴ indicating his unease with the 2SH and endorsement of the IH, Tenney was the only founding member of the ETS who had published views in favour of the IH, and even he wrote approvingly of theories that included literary dependence. For example, Tenney stated that the “tide was turning on Q,” favourably citing Farrer and hypotheses that posited multiple documents behind the synoptics.³⁷⁵

However, the available information on others who helped form of the ETS indicates Thomas’ suggestion was most improbable, a conclusion clearly justified if

³⁷¹ Moo, “Matthew and Midrash,” 32.

³⁷² Thomas, “Historical Criticism,” 99.

³⁷³ For the participants of the founding meeting and agenda, see the online archives of the ETS provided by Wheaton College – [<http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/243.htm>, accessed 12 Jun 2010].

³⁷⁴ Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961).

³⁷⁵ Merrill C. Tenney, “Reversals of New Testament Criticism,” in Carl F.H. Henry, ed., *Contemporary Evangelical Thought*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958) 353-367.

one considers the work of George E. Ladd. Ladd was one of three men at Gordon Divinity School in Boston who formed a committee that planned and ultimately invited initial members into the ETS in 1948.³⁷⁶ Ladd was a founding member of the ETS and a member of the Executive Committee from the outset. Thomas was, by the time he wrote the suggestion, well aware of Ladd's positions on the SP, evidenced by his multiple references to Ladd as an example of poor evangelical methodology in *TJC*. Thomas cited Ladd's article³⁷⁷ in *Christianity Today* of 1959 and faulted him for choosing bad pericopae to prove his argument for the 2SH and for underestimating the memorization capabilities of Near-Eastern peoples in the first century.³⁷⁸ Likewise, Thomas also wrote disapprovingly of the work of Ned B. Stonehouse,³⁷⁹ one of the first presidents of the ETS, for his treatment of the SP. Again in *TJC*, Thomas was very critical of Stonehouse's description of the evangelists' redactional activities.³⁸⁰ Thomas especially faulted Stonehouse for claiming his approach to the gospels was similar to B.B. Warfield's, and noted that Robert Gundry had cited Stonehouse's methods for inspiring his own.³⁸¹ Interestingly, Stonehouse composed the very first article in *BETS*, in the inaugural volume of 1958, and there he argued for freedom to be granted to evangelical scholars in their handling of the SP.³⁸²

5. Lack of a Consensus

However, on several occasions contributors to *JETS* observed the lack of consensus and the existence of competing theories on the issue of the SP. After arguing against Q, Lewis Foster admitted that "there are conservatives who disagree

³⁷⁶ John Wiseman, "Introduction," *JETS* 28/5 (Index Issue 1985) 6.

³⁷⁷ Ladd, "More Light on the Synoptics."

³⁷⁸ Thomas, *TJC*, 236.

³⁷⁹ Stonehouse, *Origins of the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1963).

³⁸⁰ For example, see Thomas' remarks in *TJC*, 24, 75 note 2, 358-360.

³⁸¹ Thomas, *TJC*, 359.

³⁸² Ned B. Stonehouse, "The Infallibility of Scripture and Evangelical Progress," *BETS* 1 (Winter, 1958) 9-13

with this argument,” namely Ladd and Stonehouse.³⁸³ In the March 1983 volume, Moo criticized Gundry’s commentary for accepting Markan priority “with so little argumentation,”³⁸⁴ thus neglecting the debate that surrounded the issue. Similarly, though Grant Osborne endorsed the 2SH, he admitted that “while challenges regarding the priority of Matthew or independence of the evangelists have not won the day,” redaction critics should reflect a more nuanced view than simply assuming the 2SH.³⁸⁵ The reluctance to admit a consensus was also evident when Stanley E. Porter remarked on the statement by Neill that Markan priority is “one of the assured results” of NT criticism, in which Porter humorously noted that the statement simply proved the “great man was not infallible.”³⁸⁶ In a briefer fashion, Samuel Lamerson’s review observed the need for recognizing competing hypotheses by authors.³⁸⁷ Michael Pahl echoed the same sentiment while encouraging authors to recognize that Markan priority was a component of more than one SP hypothesis, the FH specifically.³⁸⁸ Last of all, Bennema faulted Twelftree for his unquestioning acceptance of 2SH “in light of the growing minority view that dispenses with Q.”³⁸⁹

6. Theology and the SP

As has been seen, nothing akin to an “evangelical solution” to the SP has ever been espoused by the ETS. While 27 of the 32 occurrences where a contributor made his position known were in favour of the 2SH, the normal situation involved an author refraining from endorsing a particular solution to the SP (the remaining 99 times). This is consistent with the statement by the editor in 1999, Andreas Köstenberger, which said, “[The] ETS has no policy on the orthodoxy of certain positions on Gospel

³⁸³ L. Foster, “Q Myth,” 112.

³⁸⁴ Moo, “Matthew and Midrash,” 32.

³⁸⁵ Osborne, “Preaching,” 29.

³⁸⁶ *JETS* 35/4 (Dec 1992) 547.

³⁸⁷ *JETS* 43/1 (Mar 2000) 137-138.

³⁸⁸ *JETS* 50/2 (June 2007) 394

³⁸⁹ *JETS* 51/4 (Dec 2008) 870.

criticism or theories of Synoptic interrelationships and that members in good standing hold to a variety of views.”³⁹⁰ Köstenberger’s statement echoed the belief voiced by Brooks in his 1996 review, which said that an evangelical scholar’s approach to the SP did not “greatly [affect] his or her exegesis, theology and practical application.”³⁹¹

However, there were contributors who disagreed. For example, the final article of the March 1983 volume included an article by Breckenridge in favour of the 2GH. He claimed that there was “an obvious theological benefit to Matthean priority” because of the “foundational integrity” offered by admitting the Matthean material often seen as late by Markan priorists to be part of the earliest written gospel.³⁹² To Breckenridge, Gundry’s commentary was doomed not to be an evangelical work because “no evangelical solution to the synoptic problem is going to be found through Markan priority.”³⁹³ However, Breckenridge did not refrain from totally rejecting critical methodologies. He singled out FC as a criticism that had been used properly by 2GH authors, but incorrectly by those who endorsed Markan priority.

While Robert Thomas offered an explanation of the IH in March of 2000, his primary tactic in *JETS* was to critique interpretations offered by other evangelical authors who adopted the 2SH and used RC. The primary targets of his articles were Gundry, Marshall, Lane, and Osborne. In 1986, he questioned whether the phrase “evangelical redaction criticism” was a legitimate term. He challenged his evangelical opponents to “name an evangelical historical critic who has done extensive work in the Synoptic Gospels who has not as a result of that methodology sacrificed historical accuracy at one point or another.”³⁹⁴ In a harsher tone, Geisler echoed Thomas’ sentiments, preferring to label approaches to the SP and

³⁹⁰ Köstenberger, “Editorial,” *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 2.

³⁹¹ *JETS* 39/3 (Sep 1996) 484.

³⁹² Breckenridge, 119.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, 121.

³⁹⁴ Thomas, “Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View,” 108.

methodological approaches as “orthodox” or “unorthodox.” Geisler used these terms during the periods of two great controversies involving the SP at the ETS. The first, in his attack on Gundry’s Commentary in March of 1983³⁹⁵ and the second in his presidential address to the ETS Annual Meeting in 1998 (which appeared in article form as “Beware of Philosophy: A Warning to Biblical Scholars”).³⁹⁶ Geisler’s rhetoric caused unease among some members of the ETS. In the build-up to Gundry’s resignation at the 1982 Annual Meeting of the ETS, then president Alan Johnson encouraged the ETS members to remember – “We are an organization where the current use and assumptions of the historical-critical method are not a foregone conclusion that everyone accepts uncritically as the ‘orthodox’ method.”³⁹⁷

Similarly, in the midst of the controversy in 1998-2000, the editor of *JETS*, Andreas Köstenberger warned in his March 1999 editorial that “discourse in virtually every area of human existence is increasingly becoming more adversarial, even when this is arguably not the best way to resolve a given issue” and he encouraged his fellow members to consider the “style of our academic discourse.”³⁹⁸ The editor specifically mentioned the 1998 Presidential Address by Geisler and the controversy it provoked as well as his decision to allow space for Osborne to “take up several of the issues raised” in the speech “in the spirit of scholarly dialogue.” It is noteworthy that in his March 2000 article Thomas apologized that, though he had always tried to avoid having a “harsh and grating” he had obviously failed in Osborne’s opinion. He did, however, point out places where he felt Osborne had mischaracterized *TJC*.³⁹⁹

7. Unique Solutions

³⁹⁵ Geisler, “Methodological Unorthodoxy,” 87-94..

³⁹⁶ *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 3-20

³⁹⁷ Alan F. Johnson, “The Historical-Critical Method: Egyptian Gold or Pagan Precipice?” *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 15.

³⁹⁸ Köstenberger, “Editorial,” *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 2.

³⁹⁹ Thomas, “Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View,” 110.

While throughout the years arguments were made for the 2SH, 2GH, IH and FH, there were also contributors to *JETS* who provided their own unique solutions to the SP. For instance, in 1982 Simon Kistemaker rejected the notion that Luke copied Matthew, and instead suggested that the evangelists personally shared information as they composed their gospels based on the Paul's information that Luke and Mark were his co-workers.⁴⁰⁰ In 2002 in a book review, E. Earle Ellis offered the novel explanation of Luke's sources. Ellis rejected the existence of Q, endorsed Markan priority, and admitted Luke's exposure to Matthean (and Johannine) traditions, but did not consider Luke to have utilized Matthew, as the FH holds.⁴⁰¹ Robert Gundry's solution to the SP is also noteworthy in that it combined elements from the 2SH, 2GH, and FH. In his commentary on Matthew, Gundry suggested that Mark wrote first, Matthew wrote second using Mark and an expanded Q, and that Luke wrote last using Mark, Matthew, and the expanded Q. Gundry's Q included birth and passion narratives, but it was not a single document.⁴⁰² And while R.T. France did not contribute any articles to *JETS* on the SP, it is worth noting that on four separate occasions reviewers of his work mentioned his unique solution to the SP, which included Markan priority but rejected Q as a single document.⁴⁰³ Because France rejected Luke's use of Matthew, he is not considered a proponent of the FH.

8. Handling of Q

While many contributors to *JETS* endorsed the 2SH, several revealed uneasiness with the handling of Q demonstrated by non-evangelical scholars. In 1991, Fairchild considered Kloppenborg's analysis of the various layers of Q in *Formation* and questioned whether scholars can "discover such distinctions with any

⁴⁰⁰ "The Structure of Luke's Gospel," *JETS* 25/1 (Mar 1982) 33-39.

⁴⁰¹ *JETS* 45/3 (Sep 2002) 482.

⁴⁰² Gundry, "A Response to 'Matthew and Midrash,'" 41.

⁴⁰³ M. Fairchild, *JETS* 31/4 (Dec 1988) 473-474; McKnight, *JETS* 35/3 (Sep 1992) 424-426; R. Stein, *JETS* 46/2 June 2003) 342-348; and D. Turner, *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 138-140.

degree of certitude.”⁴⁰⁴ Eight years later, Lamerson criticized Aichele’s assumptions that Q contained no references to the resurrection and only hints at Jesus’ death in the author’s *Jesus Framed*.⁴⁰⁵ Kloppenborg was again criticized in 2002, this time for his *Excavating Q*, in Keylock’s review, in which the reviewer disapproved of the implication “that Jesus really had very little to do with the sayings the Q community preserved.”⁴⁰⁶ Kloppenborg’s stratification of Q was deemed “faulty” by Ingolfsland in his review of Denton’s *Historiography and Hermeneutics*.⁴⁰⁷ In the September 2002 volume, Ellis was suspicious of the authors’ handling of Q in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* because they created “a hypothetical setting of a hypothetical community with a hypothetical theology of a hypothetical document Q.”⁴⁰⁸ In 2006, Bird commended Allison for his acknowledgement that Q must have contained references to judgment in his *Resurrecting Jesus*, contra the view of the Jesus Seminar.⁴⁰⁹ Keylock offered another review in 2008 in which he remarked that the Humphrey’s *From Q* “suffers from ...unjustified assumptions that also plague Q studies.”⁴¹⁰ The implication seems to be that, from the contributions in *JETS*, many evangelical advocates of the 2SH are uncomfortable in excluding from Q certain elements prevalent in the synoptics (judgment, resurrection, etc.) and disapprove the practice of scouring the gospels looking for various layers of Q. However, evangelical scholars also appear unwilling, or perhaps unable, to delineate Q’s exact content. It is no surprise that Keylock remarked, “We still await an evangelical work on Q.”⁴¹¹ As of 2010, his words still hold true.

⁴⁰⁴ *JETS* 34/1 (Mar 1991) 124.

⁴⁰⁵ *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 358-359.

⁴⁰⁶ *JETS* 45/2 (June 2002) 357.

⁴⁰⁷ *JETS* 48/3 (Sep 2005) 642.

⁴⁰⁸ *JETS* 45/3 (Sep 2002) 482 .

⁴⁰⁹ *JETS* 49/2 (June 2006) 412.

⁴¹⁰ *JETS* 51/3 (Sep 2008).

⁴¹¹ *JETS* 43/2 (June 2000) 329.

9. Repeated Contributors

In this survey, it is clear that many of the contributors to *JETS* who mentioned the SP did so on multiple occasions. Perhaps the greatest voice in *JETS* on synoptic matters, Grant Osborne, contributed eight articles in all over a span of 29 years,⁴¹² in which he argued for the 2SH and for the evangelical use of redaction criticism.

Likewise, Robert Thomas' three lengthy articles arguing against the use of RC and for the IH were published over a period of 24 years.⁴¹³ Thomas also had one book, *Three Views*, which he edited and in which he composed a chapter, reviewed in the journal.⁴¹⁴

Robert Gundry had almost an entire volume of *JETS*, March 1983, dedicated to other's views of his commentary on Matthew and Gundry's responses to them. In that volume, he contributed four articles⁴¹⁵ and his work was mentioned in every article. Gundry also had two of his books that addressed the SP reviewed in *JETS*. The first was a review of *Survey of the New Testament* by Cyril J. Barber,⁴¹⁶ and the second was Trotter's review of *Matthew*.⁴¹⁷ Gundry's saga at the ETS is considered in Chapter VIII, G, 1.

⁴¹² "Redaction Criticism and the Great Commission: A Case Study Toward a Biblical Understanding of Inerrancy," *JETS* 19/2 (June 1976) 73-86; "The Evangelical and Traditionsgeschichte," *JETS* 21/2 (June 1978) 117-130; "The Evangelical and Redaction Criticism: Critique and Methodology," *JETS* 22/4 (Dec 1979) 305-322; "Preaching the Gospels: Methodology and Contextualization," *JETS* 27 (1984) 27-42; "Round Four: The Redaction Debate Continues," *JETS* 28/3 (Sep 1985) 399-410; "Historical Criticism And The Evangelical," *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 193-210; "Historical Criticism: A Brief Response to Robert Thomas's 'Other View'," *JETS* 43/1 (Mar 2000) 113-117; "Historical Narrative and Truth in the Bible," *JETS* 48/4 (Dec 2005) 673-688.

⁴¹³ "An Investigation of the Agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark," *JETS* 19/2 (1976); "The Hermeneutics of Evangelical Redaction Criticism," *JETS* 29/4 (Dec 1986) 447-459; "Historical Criticism and the Evangelical: Another View," *JETS* 43/1 (Mar 2000) 97-111.

⁴¹⁴ *JETS* 46/3 (Sep 2003) 552-554.

⁴¹⁵ "A Response to 'Matthew and Midrash,'" *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 41-56; "A Surrejoinder to Douglas J. Moo," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 71-86; "A Response to 'Methodological Unorthodoxy,'" *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 95-100; "A Surrejoinder to Norman L. Geisler," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 109-115.

⁴¹⁶ *JETS* 13/3 (Sep 1970) 255-256.

⁴¹⁷ *JETS* 27/1 (Mar 1984) 27-42.

Robert Stein also contributed three articles that touched on the SP.⁴¹⁸

In addition to the articles, Stein provided one review of four books that mentioned the SP.⁴¹⁹ Stein also had two of his own books reviewed in *JETS* that addressed the issue, a review of his *The Synoptic Problem* provided by Herron⁴²⁰ and another of *Luke* contributed by Carlson.⁴²¹

Norman Geisler contributed three articles that argued against the use of RC, the first two of which came during the controversy at the ETS over Gundry's *Matthew* and the last of which followed the publication of *The Jesus Crisis*.⁴²²

In addition to these authors, several contributors shared their views on the SP primarily in the midst of book reviews. In fact, by the 1990s, the book review had become the primary vehicle in *JETS* by which a writer could make his or her opinions concerning the SP known. This is seen in the fact that in the 1980s, of the 27 times the SP was mentioned in *JETS*, 20 of those came in articles and only 7 in book reviews. By the 1990s, the proportions had almost reversed, with 27 reviews mentioning the SP and only 8 articles. This trend continued into the 2000s, in which there were 45 mentions of the SP, of which 36 came in book reviews and 9 in articles.

Craig Blomberg reviewed more books and mentioned the SP on a larger number of occasions than any other reviewer, with five reviews of interest to this study.⁴²³ In the 2002 review, he revealed his preference for Markan priority, and in the 2003 and 2004 reviews he endorsed the 2SH. In addition to his reviews, Sweeney

⁴¹⁸ "Is It Lawful for a Man to Divorce His Wife?" *JETS* 22/2 (June 1979) 115-121; "Luke 1:1-4 and Traditionsgeschichte." *JETS* 26/4 (Dec 1983) 421-430; "An Early Recension of the Gospel Traditions?" *JETS* 30/2 (June 1987) 167-183.

⁴¹⁹ *JETS* 46/3 (Sep 2003) 550-552.

⁴²⁰ *JETS* 33/2 (June 1990) 240-241.

⁴²¹ *JETS* 39/2 (June 1996) 293-294.

⁴²² "Methodological Unorthodoxy," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 87-94; "Is There Madness to the Method? A Rejoinder to Robert H. Gundry?," *JETS* 26/1 (Mar 1983) 101-108; "Beware of Philosophy: A Warning to Biblical Scholars." *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 3-20.

⁴²³ *JETS* 41/3 (Sep 1998) 487-489; *JETS* 45/3 (Sep 2002) 517-518; *JETS* 46/3 (Sep 2003) 552-554; *JETS* 47/4 (Dec 2004) 711-714; *JETS* 49/1 (Mar 2006) 159-161.

reviewed Blomberg's *Contagious Holiness* and in the review mentioned Blomberg's assumption of the 2SH.⁴²⁴

Leslie R. Keylock also offered five reviews that made mention of synoptic gospel issues.⁴²⁵ In three of the reviews (1999, June 2000, and 2002), Keylock revealed his preference for the 2SH. Samuel Lamerson offered four reviews mentioning the SP, but in none did he reveal a preferred solution to the SP.⁴²⁶ Mark R. Fairchild contributed three book reviews that made mention of the SP.⁴²⁷ In the 1988 review, Fairchild endorsed the 2SH. Dennis Ingolfsland wrote one article and three book reviews of interest to this study.⁴²⁸ In the article of 2003, Ingolfsland endorsed the 2SH.

It should be noted that of those authors with three or more contributions to *JETS*, seven – Osborne, Gundry, Stein, Blomberg, Keylock, Fairchild, and Ingolfsland – were proponents of the 2SH. Two others, Thomas and Geisler, both rejected the 2SH and modern critical methods in favour of the IH. Lamerson did not make his preferred solution known.

10. Redaction Criticism

As seen in the Gundry furore and the dialogue that resulted from the publication of *TJC*, the issue of redaction criticism was also routinely discussed in conjunction with the SP. Often, redaction criticism was considered as part of a general category of modern biblical criticism, and grouped together with tradition criticism, source criticism. In *JETS*, several authors defended the method. The first

⁴²⁴ *JETS* 49/2 (June 2006) 418-419.

⁴²⁵ *JETS* 42/ 2 (June 1999) 349-350; *JETS* 43/2 (June 2000) 328-329; *JETS* 43/ (Sep 2000) 546-547; *JETS* 45/ (June 2002) 356-358; *JETS* 51/3 (Sep 2008) 647-649.

⁴²⁶ *JETS* 42/1 (Mar 1999) 143-144; *JETS* 42/2 (June 1999) 341-342; *JETS* 42/ 2 (June 1999) 358-359; *JETS* 43/1 (Mar 2000) 37-138.

⁴²⁷ *JETS* 31/4 (Dec 1988) 473-474; *JETS* 34/1 (March 1991) 123-124; *JETS* 37/3 (Sep 1994) 431-432.

⁴²⁸ "Kloppenborg's stratification of Q and its Significance for Historical Jesus Studies." *JETS* 46/2 (June 2003) 217-232; *JETS* 46/3 (Sep 2003) 550-552; *JETS* 47/4 (Dec 2004) 714-716; *JETS* 48/3 (Sep 2005) 642-643.

was the president of the ETS during the initial publication of *BETS* in 1958, who in the very first article of the bulletin defended the practice with qualifications. Likewise, RC was advocated by: Lane in the 1960s; by Bilezikian, Osborne (on three occasions), and Morosco in the 1970s; by 10 writers on 16 occasions in the 1980s; by six contributors in the 1980s; and by four contributors in the 2000s. Conversely, several arguments against the use of RC and related methods were made as well: Thomas and Kistemaker warned against its use in the 1970s; Feinberg, Geisler (on two occasions), and Thomas opposed RC in the 1980s; once again Geisler argued against it in the 1990s; and finally Thomas and Dorman were critical of RC in the 2000s. From *JETS*, one can easily construct a spectrum of the arguments for and against RC, and those in between, from the articles of those who wrote extensively on the subject. On the side of almost unequivocal acceptance of RC were the articles of Lane and Gundry. On the opposite end should be grouped the articles of Thomas and Geisler. Osborne's consistent arguments for limited use of RC could perhaps be placed in between but somewhat closer to Lane and Gundry. Tan's argument for the adoption of Compositin Criticism in the stead of RC may allow him to also be placed in the middle of the spectrum. Further, Moo offered critical observations that demonstrate the dilemma evangelical scholars face over whether and how much to use redaction criticism.⁴²⁹

11. Conclusion

This appendix has dealt with the manner in which the SP was discussed in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* over its first 51 years. As the journal grew in length, from a mere 24 pages in the inaugural issue in 1958 to an average of over 200 pages per volume by 2008, the opportunity for the SP and related critical

⁴²⁹ Moo, "Once again," 57-70.

issues to be discussed grew as well. While there has always been a minority who have held to other views, the solution to the SP most often discussed and/or espoused in *JETS* was the 2SH. Likewise, though many scholars argued against evangelical use of critical methodologies like RC, most contributors looked upon those methods favourably. In general (80% of the time), when the subject of the SP was mentioned, contributors refrained from offering their own preferred solutions. Though the 2SH was the preferred solution by the majority of those contributors who made their views known, it was also clear that the ETS allowed freedom for its members to disagree on the issue. The first half-century of the journal was not without its periods of disagreements over synoptic issues. The time-period 1982-1983 saw many articles in *JETS* and discussions at ETS meetings dealing with the use of the RC in conjunction with the 2SH by Robert Gundry in his commentary on Matthew, and ultimately witnessed Gundry's forced resignation from the Society. Likewise, the years 1998-2000 were full of controversy after the publication of *TJC* in 1998, a book in which several current and former members of the ETS were criticized for using supposedly unorthodox methodologies. However, the result of those disagreements was a happier one, with two of the main participants ultimately cooperating in publishing a book dedicated to different solutions to the SP, *Three Views on the Origins of the Synoptic Gospels*, edited by Robert Thomas.

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