

Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels

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Introduction

Modern New Testament scholarship employs several techniques in its quest to better comprehend and interpret our understanding of Jesus in the Gospels. Some of these methodologies for criticism are: source, form, redaction, and literary. **Source Criticism** devotes itself to the study of the other sources the evangelists may have used in order to attempt to discover its development and veracity. **Form Criticism** attempts to find the setting in which the Gospel traditions arose. The objective is to interpret the tradition as it would have been interpreted in its original setting. Thus, it depends upon the use of purported historically accurate customs, culture, events, personal mannerisms, patterns of speech, in-character actions, etc. to discover the “real” facts. **Redaction Criticism** tries to discover evidence of the Gospel editor’s activity. Thus, its goal is twofold: to determine the theological perspective of the editor and to determine the audience for which the editor prepared the Gospel. Finally, **Literary Criticism** deals with the Gospel narrative as a purposeful unity with the goal of discovering the meaning of the author’s story.

Each Gospel presents a unique portrait of who Jesus is and what His life, death and resurrection meant for His followers. Scholars have long recognized that three of the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark and Luke—have a remarkable similarity in both wording and structure. They can easily be put into parallel columns and viewed together at one glance. This has led scholars to call them the Synoptic Gospels—from the Greek word for “seeing together or at the same time” (Moyer).

The relationship between these accounts has been, on the one hand, a reassurance to believers of the historical validity of the Gospels. But on the other, such comparisons using the modern forms of criticism have given rise to a multitude of questions about which Gospel was written first, whether subsequent authors borrowed from each other, and why there are differences in wording, style and order as the authors report the same events. Together, these issues form the Synoptic problem (Moyer).

Synoptic Problem

Taken at first glance, the Gospels seem intended to present a sequential account of Christ’s life: they each progress through His birth, baptism, temptation, ministry, passion, death and then resurrection. However, a closer examination of the order of their accounts reveals several points at which they differ over the sequence of events. Matthew places the healing of the centurion’s servant before the disciples’ controversial plucking of grain on the Sabbath and Jesus’ healing of the man’s withered hand. Luke, however, places the healing of the centurion’s servant after these same events. Matthew places the clearing of the Temple immediately following the triumphal entry, before the cursing of the fig tree. Mark places the clearing of the Temple on the day after the triumphal entry and after the cursing of the fig tree.

It is evident from the Gospels themselves that the authors used source materials as the basis for all or part of their writings. This is manifest from their quotations or references to Old Testament verses, as well as, the self-declaration of Luke (1:2) that he used as sources, “those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us.” Luke was also known to be in close association with Paul and may have also used him as another source. Matthew was a disciple of Jesus and so at least for some of his accounts

he was probably an eyewitness. By tradition, Mark was mentored by Peter and so Peter may have been the primary source of Mark's writings (Blomberg). Additionally, most of those who were involved with the incidents enumerated in all of the Synoptic Gospels were probably still alive, and thus may have been consulted as to their recollections. Finally, there was the inspiration and special revelation of the Holy Spirit (and possibly Christ also) prior to and during their Gospel writing (Moyer).

The early church (from the time of Augustine) to the 1700's held to the belief that the four Gospels were written in the order: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and that each prevailed upon its antecedents. At that time, the Synoptic order was shuffled to be: Matthew, Luke, Mark. In 1776 and 1778, two essays by A.E. Lessing opined that the similarities must be due to use of a common source, an Aramaic Gospel of the Nazarenes. This opened the floodgates to a host of others (J.J. Griesbach and H.J. Holtzmann, among them) who extended and expanded Lessing's idea of a primary source that was subsequently dubbed "Q" from the Deutsch word *Quelle*. This two source theory argued that Matthew and Luke were derived from the use of Mark and Q. Modern literary critics abound in all sorts of theories (such as B.H. Streeter's four source theory), each assuming that there is interdependence between the three Synoptic Gospels (see also Smith) but now asserting other sources unique to Matthew and Luke that are expressed in their distinct childhood narratives, sayings and resurrection accounts (Constable).

When these literary criticisms were combined with an *a priori* rejection of anything supernatural in the 1900's, literary criticism gave way to form criticism. The object of form critics (K.L. Schmidt, M. Dibelius, and R. Bultmann) was to find a 'bridge' back from the Gospels to their supposed earliest written and oral sources. The Gospel, except for the Passion account, was diced into isolated sections and then classified as to form. The historical veracity was then measured against specified criteria, e.g. the "criterion of dissimilarity"—screened out sayings of Jesus that were related to what Israel Judaism or early Christianity may have said. Only if that statement was "dissimilar" was it attributed to Jesus. This resulted in a corrosive, skeptical view of Gospel historicity (Gaebelein, p. 492).

After World War II, redaction criticism took preeminence with the publication in 1948 of G. Bornkamm's essay *The Stilling of the Storm in Matthew*. The new view of redaction critics (G. Bornkamm, G. Barth, H.J. Held, Bonnard, Hill, Kilpatrick, Stendahl) was that the Gospel writers were more than collectors and editors of oral traditions. They were also theologians who formed and arranged their materials into cogent theological arguments. The issue now was how to separate traditions from "reduction." The later was not authentic history, but rather the author's own additions and changes to the original sources. Most redaction-critical writings (Trilling, Strecker, Cope, Hare, Frankemolle, Thysman and Kunzel) try to determine the historical context that created the Gospel writer's theology and ignore the historical context of Jesus in the actual text (Gaebelein, pp. 492-3).

Historical Criticisms

Into this mess now strides a motley group call The Jesus Seminar, with the publication of their tome, The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus by Robert W. Funk and Roy W. Hoover. This liberal assemblage is a California-based collection of seventy-four scholars from secular universities and liberal seminaries that claim to represent a "consensus" of modern scholars on the historical Jesus. They have examined some 503 sayings of Jesus and using historical criticism, such as patterns of speech, determined that most of what is attributed to Jesus was not said by Him (Blomberg).

“Rules of Written Evidence” in The Five Gospels (p. 16), “The evidence provided by the written gospels is hearsay evidence...none of them [gospel writers] was an ear or eyewitness of the words and events he records...because the evidence offered by the gospels is hearsay evidence, scholars must be extremely cautious in taking the data at face value.” This despite Matthew 9:9-13, Mark 2:14, Luke 5:1-11, 27-28, and 6:12-16 listing Matthew, John, and Peter as followers of Jesus (see also: Luke 1:1-4, II Peter 1:16, & I John 1:3). Because of this *a priori* rejection of first hand authenticity, The Jesus Seminar developed several General Assumptions to determine historicity of Jesus’ sayings in the Gospels (Thomas):

- If it is only mentioned in one Gospel, it is doubtful that it happened. [Note that there should be a corollary that if it is in two Gospels it may have happened; three is probably happened; four is a certainty - that would make the resurrection a certainty!]
- If it reflects the needs, likely questions, or problems of the early church, it is doubtful that it was said or done by Jesus. Instead, the words and deeds were written back into the Gospel records (pp. 24-25).
- If it reflects something that was already being taught in Judaism or some other philosophy at the time, it is doubtful that it was said or done by Jesus. “Words borrowed from the fund of common lore or the Greek scriptures are often put on the lips of Jesus.” (p. 23)
- If it has a miraculous element, it didn’t happen. “Sayings and narratives that reflect knowledge of events that took place after Jesus’ death are the creation of the evangelists or the oral tradition before them.” (p. 25)
- The Gospel writers added to or expanded upon Jesus’ sayings with their own interpretations or comments, or attributed their own statements or stories to the Gospels.
- Many sayings of Jesus (primarily non-teaching) are invented for the occasion. (p. 30)
- Only sayings and actions that fit a specified portrait of Jesus are authentic. [His divinity is never seen as being in character.]

Logic is never applied to the Jesus Seminar’s criteria and only mildly in their application. The use of unsupported presuppositions as determinative of conclusions that echo the presuppositions is both circular and subjective speculation. Thus, in claiming to be objective in their examination of Jesus words they fall under the spell of their own highly subjective opinions by deeming themselves to be arbiters of what words Jesus would have used. Unsupported conjecture supplants objective evidence, such as early church fathers, manuscripts or archaeology.

Instead they either appeal to authority by arguing that another liberal scholar said so (pp. 538-540 lists reference materials that are decidedly liberal in nature and self-appointive in fact) or they use faulty analogies, such as their inclusion of the Gospel of Thomas (why this second or third century Gnostic writing and not any of the dozens of others). Page 501 states, “Thomas is rooted in the Jewish wisdom tradition...” but this statement is clearly false. Thankfully, the book itself warns us of its unsupported arguments on page 16, “Because the significant lack of evidence offered by this book is fallacious hearsay assumptions, readers must be extremely cautious in taking this book at face value.” (Funk and Hoover)

Textual Criticisms

There are many explanations for the apparent contradictions among the Synoptic Gospels. The most common issue is that of allegedly different chronologies. First, each Gospel writer was not trying to set down a purely historical work. Though accurate where they deal with history, each author included or excluded events and sayings and arranged them in certain didactic order to help them shape a certain message to a certain audience (Dawson). There are times in which the writer is clearly signaling chronology and times when he is not, and the arrangement is then usually topical (R.T. France, pp. 115-116).

Some have argued that Matthew's Gospel must be largely chronological because he was the only eyewitness to the events he records, but in Matthew 9:9, in the middle of Jesus ministry, Jesus finally calls Matthew to be His disciple. What about all of the events that occurred before his calling? Mark may have been acquainted with Jesus, but his primary source was Peter. Ladd writes, "This language (Mark's) suits the Papiian tradition about Markan authorship...There is, therefore, no strong reason to reject the tradition [that Peter was Mark's source] from Papias about Mark..." (p. 132). So, is his Gospel more chronological? And Luke sets about to give an "orderly account." Does that translate to chronological (more like Acts)? Each of the sources of the Gospel writers attests to their accuracy, but not their chronology. Thus, there are discernible patterns in each Gospel. Matthew's is event and then teaching' Luke's is more sequential, but seems to follow the progression used in Mark.

Some events seem to have different occurrences that appear to be mutually exclusive. But it must be remembered that much of Jesus teachings were as an itinerant rabbi so there would naturally be repetitive teachings that would be shaped to the particular audience or occasion that created a teachable moment (parables are a good example—Mark 4:33-34). One such example is the Beatitudes in Matthew (5:3-10) and a similar event in Luke (6:20-26). Another instance could be the Matthew's "Sermon on the Mount" where the teachings are echoed by Luke in a "Sermon on the Plain." Geographical and other differences could be attributed to two such occurrences (R.T. France, p. 112).

Also, there are two accounts of a woman putting perfume on Jesus in the house of Simon at different ends of His ministry—Luke at the beginning of His ministry in Galilee, and Matthew and Mark in His last week. But these are different events because the first is at Simon the Pharisee's house and the perfume is placed on His head and the second is at Simon the Leper's house in Bethany where the perfume is placed on His feet. Jesus not only repeated His teachings over and over again, but He also healed many of the sick, cast out many demons and dined with many people (Moyer).

Thematic considerations also account for some of the apparent contradictions noted, such as the teachings centered around the Sabbath day in Luke 6:1-5 and then the next verse introduces another pericope set on another Sabbath (6:6) signaling a topical transition. Another arrangement is to omit intervening events to connect to another later event more related to the theme that the author is trying to communicate to the reader, such as grouping stories concerning healings.

Lastly, we must consider that Jesus probably taught in Aramaic, but all of the Gospels are written in Koine Greek (a dead language). So what we have is translations of what Jesus said and did, and all translations are not exact equivalents. Adding to this are idiomatic expressions and colloquialism that make for additional possibilities for misunderstandings (France, p. 117). (Note that even Luther's translation of the Bible uses dynamic equivalency rather than a literal word-for-word methodology.)

The early Church Fathers attest that the Synoptic Gospels were developed over a time span of 3 or 4 years in locales greatly separated, which should be sufficient to attest to, in the absence of equally valid evidence, their independence. Literary similarities or contradictions are simply not strong enough, especially in light of plausible alternative explanations for most apparent contradictions and similarities, that they should not be taken as conclusive, nor even presumptive of either interdependence or of invalid historicity (Linnemann, pp. 185-191).

Jesus in the Gospels

How then do we determine the Jesus that is presented in the Synoptic Gospels? Consider first that each Gospel is a unique writing intended to present a certain view of Jesus that is not unlike the three blind men relating a description of the elephant each touched in a different place. The first said it was like a tree trunk when he put his hands around a leg. The second said it was like a snake when he felt the trunk. And the third that it was like a wall when he bumped into its side. All were correct in their reporting, but each needing the others to be more complete. This is not unlike ancient Jewish wisdom, where apparent contradictions point to a deeper theological teaching. We should therefore not try to harmonize them, but let each speak to provide another aspect of who Jesus is (A.C. Gaebelien, p. 96).

Second, there are much more teachings, events and activities in Jesus' life than are recorded in the four Gospels (John 21:25). So, we must pay attention to what God thought was significant that we learn concerning His Son and how it relates to us. God is speaking eternity and we are arguing picky details. Properly understood, none are direct contradictions (Linnemann, p. 10-11).

Lastly, humans are flawed and frail creatures that reason with a corrupt logic system that can produce paradoxes. Scripture is to be interpreted with Scripture. Is what God is trying to teach us dependent upon our grasping every nuance that God has placed there or is it more important that we listen with our hearts? Do we see ourselves in the role of doubtful Thomas, wanting to place our hands in His side or are we more like Martha attending to the details and forgetting the main course?

Jesus is the only living God among many gods. He is with us even now and to the ends of this age (Johnson, pp. 141-149). Why seek the living among the dead? All of the modern critical methodologies (excepting some of textual criticism) have at their heart a disbelief in the veracity of Scripture. The only way to find the true Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels is to start with Scripture.

God is able to give us one comprehensive, chronological account of Jesus' life, but for His purposes gave us four distinct and differing accounts. Each Gospel is a different voice in one song—bass, tenor, alto and soprano. Different perspectives expressed in each Gospel, each blending with the other to give a full, rich account of who Jesus is.

Each author believed that Jesus was the solution to the problems of their audience. Mark presents an action-oriented account of the life of Jesus. It was written to the Romans, so it stresses power and is short on teachings. There is little of His Judaic history, but Mark explains Jewish customs where necessary to understand the plot. It uses a similar genre to that of a mystery novel. Who is Jesus and what did He do? Again and again his readers are made to readjust their comfortable expectations in the light of unexpected and difficult information about who Jesus really was. Mark stresses that Jesus is a suffering Messiah which

opens a new way of relating to God as the beginning of the good news (1:1), because following Jesus might mean persecution and perhaps even death. Jesus is also the obedient Servant of the Lord, constantly on the go, serving others throughout the Gospel, until finally performing the ultimate act of service: death on a cross for the sake of others (Harmony).

Luke wrote for the Greeks (Gentiles). He stressed Jesus' perfect humanity because of the Greek high view of man. To emphasize Jesus' humanity, Luke traces His genealogy all the way back to the very first man, Adam (3:23-38). Jesus is further identified as "the Son of Man who has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (19:10). As one of us, He shows compassion on women, children, and the downtrodden of society. He highlights the healing and prophetic work of Jesus in order to provide energy and purpose for following Jesus into a world-wide mission. Jesus was a compassionate prophet whose teachings and suffering gathered everyone, especially the poor, to Him in a new universal fellowship of service to others as a new action of God for salvation. His careful investigations and detailed recounting of the various people's feelings towards Jesus was as inspiring to these Greeks as his enumeration of the wide variety of those who followed Him. Luke wanted them to know that this really happened (Harmony).

Matthew was a Jew writing to the non-Hellenic Jews about Jewish concerns with Jesus. Jesus is the authoritative rabbi bringing new teachings for life in a right relationship with God. He uses the Old Testament as a lens to view the New Testament promises (9 times "it is written"; 14 times "that which was spoken"; 129 references to Old Testament verses or allusions. Jesus is the Messiah of the Old Testament prophecy fulfilled. The Gospel even opens with the genealogy of Jesus, traced back to Abraham (the forefather of all Jews) and to David (Israel's great king). Thus, Matthew's pattern was event followed by teaching. He avoids using language that would offend his audience, such as the Jewish prohibition against using God's Name for fear of doing so with less respect than it should be accorded. His tome is thematic and theological (Harmony).

Therefore, the real reason for studying the Synoptic Gospels is not to harmonize them, but rather to pay attention to their differences. Each Gospel's unique revelations provide a richer and fuller picture of who Jesus is than any single account could. Each writer selected specific materials, arranged them and then shaped them in order to teach us a different lesson on who Jesus is and address the needs and concerns of different audiences.

We should, therefore, come to see and appreciate the Gospel writers as theologians instead of biographical reporters. Rather than merely recording about the life of Jesus, they seek to interpret the meaning and implications of His life, death and resurrection for their readers.

Appendix A - Short Outline of the Contents of the Three Synoptic Gospels

Matthew	Mark	Luke
Messiah's coming (Matthew 1-4)		Messiah's coming (Luke 1-4)
		Conception and birth of Jesus (Luke 1-2)
		Jesus' early life (Luke 2)
Jesus' genealogy and advent in the line of Abraham, David, and the kings of Judah (Matthew 1-2)		Jesus' genealogy in the line of Abraham, David, and the "seed of the woman" (Luke 3)
	Birth of John the Baptist (Mark 1)	Birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1)
Jesus' Baptism and temptation by Satan (Matthew 3-4)	Jesus' Baptism and temptation by Satan (Mark 1)	Jesus' Baptism and temptation by Satan (Luke 3-4)
Messianic ministry (Matthew 4-27)	Messianic ministry (Mark 1-16)	Messianic ministry (Luke 4-22)
In Galilee (Matthew 4-18)	In Galilee (Mark 1-7)	In Galilee (Luke 4-9)
	Beyond Galilee (Mark 7-9)	
	Between Galilee and Judea (Mark 10)	Between Galilee and Judea (Luke 10-19)
In Judea (Matthew 19-27)	In Judea (Mark 11-15)	In Judea (Luke 19-23)
Presentation as the King (Matthew 19-25)	Presentation as the King (Mark 11)	Presentation as King (Luke 21)
Rejection as the King (Matthew 26-27)	Rejection as the King (Mark 11-15)	Rejection as King (Luke 22-23)
Triumphant resurrection (Matthew 28)	Triumphant resurrection (Mark 16)	Triumphant resurrection (Luke 24)

Appendix B: Synoptic Events of Jesus' Life and Ministry

Event	Approx. date	Location	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Jesus is born	4 B.C.	Bethlehem	1:18-25 2:1-18		2:1-20
Jesus grows up in Nazareth		Nazareth	2:19-23		2:39-52
Jesus baptized by John the Baptist	26 A.D.	Jordan	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-23
Chooses the 12 disciples	28 A.D.	Capernaum		3:13-19	6:12-15
Preaches the Sermon on the Mount	28 A.D.	Capernaum	5:1-48 6:1-34 7:1-29		6:20-49
Raises widow's son from the dead	28 A.D.	Nain			7:11-17
Quiets the storm	28 A.D.	Sea of Galilee	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25
John the Baptist beheaded by Herod	28 A.D.	Machaerus	14:1-12	6:14-29	9:7-9
Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes—feeds 5000 men	29 A.D.	near Capernaum	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17
Walks on water	29 A.D.	Sea of Galilee	14:22-23	6:45-52	
The Transfiguration—Jesus' face shone like the sun	29 A.D.	Caesarea Philippi	17:1-13	9:2-13	9:28-36
Restores sight to two blind men	30 A.D.	Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43
Triumphal entry to Jerusalem (Palm Sunday)	30 A.D., Sunday	Jerusalem	21:1-11	11:1-10	19:29-44
The Last Supper	Thursday	Jerusalem	26:17-29	14:12-25	22:7-20
Arrest, trial, and crucifixion (Good Friday)	Friday, Passover	Jerusalem	26:47-75 27:1-66	14:43-72 15:1-47	22:47-71 23:1-56
Resurrection (Easter)	Sunday	Jerusalem	28:1-10	16:1-8	24:1-12
Appears to disciples	week after Easter	Jerusalem		16:14	24:36-43
Ascends to Heaven	40 days after Easter	Mount of Olives	28:16-20	16:19-20	24:44-53

Much of the above table abstracted from Zondervan, pp. 719-720

Appendix C: Synoptic Gospel Parallels by J.P. Dawson

	Subject	Matthew	Mark	Luke
1	John's Ministry Begins	3:1-12	1:1-8	<u>3:1-18</u>
2	Jesus baptized	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-23
3	Jesus Tempted	<u>4:1-11</u>	1:12-13	<u>4:1-13</u>
4	Leaves for Galilee	4:12	1:14	4:14
5	Returns to Galilee		1:15	4:15
6	Fishers of men	4:18	1:16-20	<u>5:1-11</u>
7	Simon's mother-in-law	8:14-15	<u>1:29-31</u>	4:38-39
8	Sick healed in evening	8:16-17	1:32-34	<u>4:40-41</u>
9	First Preaching tour of Galilee	4:23-25	<u>1:35-39</u>	4:42-44
10	Cleansing of leper	8:1-4	<u>1:40-45</u>	<u>5:12-16</u>
11	Healing of the paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	<u>5:17-26</u>
12	Calling of Levi	9:9-13	<u>2:13-17</u>	5:27-32
13	Question about fasting	9:14-17	2:18-22	<u>5:33-39</u>
14	Picking grain on Sabbath	<u>12:1-8</u>	2:23-28	6:1-5
15	Man with withered hand	12:9-14	3:1-6	<u>6:6-11</u>
16	Multitudes Healed	<u>12:15-21</u>	<u>3:7-12</u>	6:17-19
17a	Choosing of the twelve Disciples	10:1-4	<u>3:13-19</u>	6:12-16
17b	Jesus Accused of Blasphemy	<u>12:22-37</u>	3:20-30	<u>11:14-23</u>
18	Mothers, Brothers Seek	<u>12:46-50</u>	<u>3:31-35</u>	8:19-21
19	Parable of sower	<u>13:1-9</u>	<u>4:1-9</u>	8:4-8
20	Why Jesus used parables	<u>13:10-17</u>	4:10-12	8:9-10
21	Interpretation of Sower parable	13:18-23	<u>4:13-20</u>	8:11-15
22	Parable of the Mustard Seed	13:31-32	<u>4:30-32</u>	13:18-19
23	Stilling the storm	8:23-27	<u>4:35-41</u>	8:22-25
24	Gerasene demoniac	8:28-34	<u>5:1-20</u>	8:26-39
25	Jairus' daughter & woman with hemorrhage	9:18-26	<u>5:21-43</u>	8:40-56
26	Twelve sent out	<u>9:35-11:1</u>	6:6-13	9:1-6

	Subject	Matthew	Mark	Luke
27	Opinions Concerning Jesus	14:1-2	<u>6:1</u>	<u>9:7-9</u>
28	Death of John the Baptist	14:3-12	<u>6:17-29</u>	3:19-20
29	Feeding of the five thousand	14:13-21	<u>6:32-44</u>	9:10-17
30	Jesus walks on Water	<u>14:22-33</u>	6:45-52	
31	Teachings on defilement	15:1-20	<u>7:1-23</u>	11:37-41
32	Confession of Peter	<u>16:13-20</u>	8:27-30	9:18-21
33	First passion prediction	<u>16:21-23</u>	<u>8:31-33</u>	9:22
34	Teaching on discipleship	16:24-28	<u>8:34-9:1</u>	9:23-27
35	The Transfiguration	17:1-9	9:2-10	<u>9:28-36</u>
36	Demon-possessed boy	17:14-21	<u>9:14-29</u>	9:37-43a
37	Second passion prediction	17:22-23	9:30-31	9:43b-45
38	Teaching on true greatness	18:1-5	<u>9:33-37</u>	9:36-48
39	Jesus blesses children	19:13-15	<u>10:13-16</u>	18:1-17
40	Rich young man	<u>19:16-22</u>	10:17-22	18:18-23
41	On riches and rewards	19:23-31	<u>10:23-31</u>	18:24-30
42	Third passion prediction	20:17-19	<u>10:32-34</u>	18:31-34
43	Healing the blind man	<u>20:29-34</u>	<u>10:46-52</u>	18:35-43
44	The triumphal entry	21:1-9	11:1-10	<u>19:28-40</u>
45	Cleansing the temple	21:12-13	<u>11:15-17</u>	19:45-46
46	Question of authority	21:3-17	<u>11:27-33</u>	20:1-8
47	Parable of talents	<u>21:33-46</u>	12:1-12	20:9-19
48	Paying taxes to Caesar	<u>22:15-22</u>	12:13-17	20:20-26
49	On the resurrection	22:23-33	12:18-27	<u>20:20-26</u>
50	Concerning David's son	<u>22:41-46</u>	12:35-37a	20:41-44
51	On the destruction of the Temple	<u>24:1-2</u>	13:1-2	21:5-6
52	Signs before the end	24:3-8	13:3-8	21:7-11
53	Coming Persecution	<u>24:9-14</u>	13:9-13	<u>21:12-19</u>
54	Desolating sacrilege	<u>24:15-22</u>	<u>13:14-20</u>	21:20-24

	Subject	Matthew	Mark	Luke
55	Coming of the Son of Man	<u>24:29-31</u>	13:24-27	21:25-28
56	Parable of fig tree	<u>24:32-36</u>	<u>13:28-32</u>	21:29-33
57	Conspiracy against Jesus	<u>26:1-5</u>	13:28-32	21:29-33
58	Anointing by Mary	26:6-13	14:3-9	
59	The betrayal of Judas	26:14-16	14:10-11	<u>22:3-6</u>
60	Preparations for the Passover	26:17-20	<u>14:12-17</u>	<u>22:7-14</u>
61	Judas revealed	<u>26:21-25</u>	14:18-21	22:21-23
62	The Last Supper	<u>26:26-29</u>	14:22-25	<u>22:15-20</u>
63	Peter's denial foretold	<u>26:30-35</u>	14:26-31	22:31-34
64	Gethsemane	<u>26:36-46</u>	<u>14:32-42</u>	22:39-46
65	Betrayal, Arrest & Trial of Jesus	26:57-68	<u>14:43-65</u>	22:47-53
66	Peter's Triple Denial	<u>26:58-75</u>	<u>14:54-72</u>	22:54-62
67	Condemned by the Council	27:1	15:1	<u>22:66-71</u>
68	First Appearance before Pilate	27:11-14	15:1-5	23:107
69	Jesus before Herod	27:15-26	15:6-15	23:13-25
70	Led to Golgotha	27:31-34	15:20-23	23:26-33
71	First 3 hours on the Cross	27:35-44	15:24-32	23:33-43
72	Last 3 hours on the Cross	27:45-50	15:33-37	23:44-46
73	Events of Jesus Death	27:51-56	15:38-41	23:45-49
74	Burial of Jesus	27:57-60	15:42-46	23:50-54
75	Women visit the Tomb	28:1-10	16:1-8	<u>24:1-11</u>
76	Jesus appeared to Disciples		16:14	24:36-43
77	Great Commission	28:16-20	16:15-18	<u>24:44-49</u>

The longest Gospel version is indicated by underlining and **bolding** indicates almost identical length or words. <http://www.jp dawson.com/synopt/tab4b.html>

Appendix D - Subjects Covered by the Different Gospel Writers

	Mark	Luke	Matthew	John
All four Gospels	77	75	75	22
Only one Gospel		49	56	45
Only two Gospels	18	18	12	2
TOTALS	95	142	143	69
Percentage of Longest Verses	17%	30%	31%	21%

Appendix E - Some of Jesus Self-descriptions:

Jesus Self-Description	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Preexistent	Matthew 10:34-35	Mark 1:38	Luke 12:49
Forgiver of Sins	Matthew 9:2	Mark 2:5-10 Mark 9:5	Luke 7:48-49
Lord of the Sabbath	Matthew 12:6-8	Mark 2:28	Luke 6:5
Suffering Servant of Isaiah	Matthew 16:21 Matthew 20:28	Mark 8:31 Mark 10:45	
Messiah	Matthew 10:42 Matthew 11:10 Matthew 26:31	Mark 8:38 Mark 9:41 Mark 11:3 Mark 14:27	Luke 12:8-10 Luke 19:43-44 Luke 22:44 Luke 24:49
Worthy object of faith	Matthew 18:6 Matthew 7:21-23 Matthew 25:31-46	Mark 9:42	Luke 17:2
Unique Heir & Son of God	Matthew 11:27	Mark 12:1-11	Luke 22:29-30
Divine Eschatological Son of Man (Daniel)	Matthew 16:27	Mark 13:26 Mark 14:62	Luke 17:30
Possessor of angels and the elect		Mark 13:27	
Speaker of eternally binding words	Matthew 5:18	Mark 13:31	
King of the Jews	Matthew 27:11	Mark 15:2	Luke 23:3
Greater than the angels		Mark 13:32	
Greater than OT Law	Matthew 5:17 Matthew 5:21, 27, 33, 38 & 43		
Greater than family	Matthew 10:37		Luke 14:26
Greater than David	Matthew 22:42-45	Mark 12:35-37	Luke 20:41
Greater than Jonah & Solomon	Matthew 12:41-42		
Omnipresent	Matthew 18:20 Matthew 28:20		Luke 21:14-15
Omniscient	Matthew 10:17,23 Matthew 23:34	Mark 14:28-30	Luke 11:49 Luke 22:31, 34
Omnipotent	Matthew 28:18-20	Mark 16:17-18	Luke 10:19

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