

**THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MATTHEW, MARK,
AND LUKE**

Aboekwe, Mary Emilia (PhD)

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University

Anambra State, Nigeria

me.aboekwe@coou.edu.ng / emiliachy@gmail.com

[08039328992](tel:08039328992)

&

Francis Chuks Madukasi(PhD)

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University

Anambra State, Nigeria

fc.madukasi@coou.edu.ng

[07051650269](tel:07051650269)

Abstract

The Synoptic Problem refers to the scholarly challenge of explaining the literary relationship between the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, which share significant similarities in content, structure, and wording yet exhibit notable differences. This study seeks to explore the origin, development, and interdependence of these three Gospels. Through a comparative lens, this study examines the so-called “**triple tradition**” (material common to all three Gospels), the “**double tradition**” (material shared by Matthew and Luke but absent in Mark), and **the distinct elements of each Gospel**. The **two-source hypothesis**, which posits that Mark was the first Gospel written and was used as a source by both Matthew and Luke, along with a **hypothetical second source (Q)** for their shared material, is critically examined alongside alternative theories, such as the **Farrer hypothesis** and the **Griesbach hypothesis**. The study further investigates the **theological, cultural, and stylistic** motivations behind the authors’ choices, with a particular focus on how each Gospel reflects its audience’s needs and the theological emphasis of its author. Mark’s succinct, action-oriented narrative is compared with Matthew’s more structured and Jewish-centric account, while Luke’s focus on universality and inclusiveness offers a different perspective on the life and mission of Jesus. By evaluating the synoptic parallels and divergences, this comparative study aims to shed light on the complex interplay of oral traditions, editorial redactions, and theological intentions that shaped the Synoptic Gospels, contributing to the ongoing conversation on the historical reliability and theological significance of these foundational Christian texts. In conclusion, this paper highlights the significance of the Synoptic Problem not only for biblical scholarship but also for understanding early Christian communities’ diverse expressions of faith, as reflected in the unique portrait each Gospel paints of Jesus Christ.

Key Words: Synoptic, problem, comparative, and analysis

Introduction

The Synoptic Problem, one of the most debated topics in New Testament studies, refers to the literary relationship between the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. These three Gospels are known as the Synoptic Gospels because they can be placed side by side and viewed together, revealing striking similarities in content, structure, and wording (Blomberg, 2009). However, they also exhibit significant differences, which have led scholars to question how these texts were composed, whether the authors were relying on common sources, and the degree to which oral tradition played a role (Baker, 2006).

This study seeks to provide a comprehensive comparative analysis of the Synoptic Problem by examining the triple and double traditions shared between the Gospels, critically evaluating the dominant theory of Markan priority and the Two-Source Hypothesis, and assessing alternative theories such as the Farrer and Griesbach Hypotheses (Goulder, 1974; Griesbach, 1776). Through this analysis, the study will delve into the theological and stylistic differences that reflect the distinct audiences of each Gospel, while also considering how oral tradition and redaction criticism have influenced the final forms of the texts (Marsden, 2006).

In exploring these dimensions, this study not only seeks to clarify the historical and literary relationship between the Synoptic Gospels but also to illuminate their role in the development of early Christian theology and practice. The study concludes by reflecting on the implications of the Synoptic Problem for the historical reliability of the Gospels and ongoing scholarly debates (Blomberg, 2009).

Historical Background

The Synoptic Problem has been a central issue in New Testament scholarship since the Enlightenment period, when scholars began to critically examine the relationships between the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke (Lyons, 1996). The problem arises from the fact that these Gospels are remarkably similar in many respects, yet also differ in significant ways. For instance, Matthew, Mark, and Luke share a considerable amount of material verbatim, especially in narrative sequences, raising the question of whether one Gospel was a source for the others, or whether they were all drawing from a common tradition or set of sources (Grant, 1963).

Early Christian scholars, such as Augustine, proposed that Matthew was the earliest Gospel, followed by Mark, which was an abridged version of Matthew, and then Luke (Augustine, 397/1998). This view held sway for centuries until the development of modern critical methods in the 19th century, which gave rise to new hypotheses concerning the relationships between the Synoptic Gospels (Harrison, 2011). The key question of the Synoptic Problem revolves around how to explain the similarities and differences between these texts. Did Matthew and Luke copy from Mark? Did they have access to a now-lost document (often referred to as Q) containing sayings of Jesus? Or did each evangelist work independently with different oral and written traditions? Scholars have proposed a variety of solutions to these questions, the most dominant of which is the Two-Source Hypothesis (Dunn, 1983).

The Triple Tradition: Common Material in Matthew, Mark, and Luke

The triple tradition refers to the material that is common to all three Synoptic Gospels. This shared material includes many of the key events in the life of Jesus, such as **the Baptism, the Temptation, and the Passion narratives**. The amount of verbatim agreement between the Synoptics in these sections is striking and suggests some form of literary dependence (Burkett, 2002). For example, the account of Jesus calming the storm (Mark 4:35-41, Matthew 8:23-27, Luke 8:22-25) shows remarkable consistency across the three Gospels, not only in the sequence of events but even in specific phrasing (Dunn, 1983).

The triple tradition is often viewed as the backbone of the Synoptic relationship, with Mark frequently seen as the source for the parallel material found in Matthew and Luke (Blomberg, 2009). However, there are subtle differences between the Gospels, both in wording and the arrangement of material, which reflect the individual evangelists' theological and narrative priorities (Lyons, 1996). The existence of the triple tradition has led scholars to question how much of the material was derived from oral tradition and how much was directly copied from earlier written sources. Form criticism, a method used to analyze these oral traditions, suggests that certain pericopes (narrative units) were shaped by the early Christian community before being written down by the Gospel authors (Smit, 2014).

The Double Tradition: Material Shared by Matthew and Luke but Absent in Mark

The “double tradition” refers to material found in both Matthew and Luke but not in Mark. This includes some of Jesus’ most famous teachings, such as the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4) and the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12; Luke 6:20-23). These shared sections suggest that Matthew and Luke had access to a common source other than Mark. The most widely accepted theory to explain this phenomenon is the Q source hypothesis (Streeter, 1924).

The Q hypothesis proposes that both Matthew and Luke drew on a now-lost sayings source that contained teachings of Jesus, particularly ethical and parabolic material. This Q source is thought to have been a collection of Jesus’ sayings circulated independently of the Gospel of Mark and used by both Matthew and Luke in composing their narratives (Luz, 2007). Some scholars challenge the necessity of Q, arguing that Luke may have used Matthew as a source directly. The Farrer hypothesis, proposed by Austin Farrer (Farrer, 1955), suggests that Matthew was written after Mark, and Luke, writing after Matthew, used both earlier Gospels, thus eliminating the need for Q. This theory avoids the problem of positing a hypothetical document, although it raises questions about why Luke’s version differs so significantly from Matthew in certain cases (Horsley, 1993).

Examples from the Double Tradition:

- **The Lord’s Prayer:** In Matthew, the prayer is embedded within the Sermon on the Mount, a broader collection of teachings, while Luke presents it in a different context. The differences in wording, along with Luke’s shorter form, reflect different editorial choices by the evangelists (France, 2007).
- **The Temptation of Jesus:** Both Matthew (4:1-11) and Luke (4:1-13) narrate the temptation of Jesus, yet their accounts vary in the order of the temptations. This variation may reflect different theological emphases; Matthew emphasizes Jesus as the new Moses, while Luke focuses on Jerusalem as the culmination of salvation history (Hagner, 1995).

Markan Priority: The Two-Source Hypothesis

The Two-Source Hypothesis is the dominant theory in modern scholarship and proposes that the Gospel of Mark was the first to be written and was used as a source by both Matthew and

Luke (Harrison, 2011). This hypothesis explains the triple tradition and much of the double tradition by suggesting that Matthew and Luke independently used Mark as a narrative framework, supplementing it with material from Q (Klijn & Slik, 1990).

Why Mark is Considered the Earliest Gospel:

- **Shortest and most concise:** Mark's Gospel is the briefest of the Synoptics, and its rougher Greek and more abrupt style suggest it is closer to the original oral traditions (Green, 2011).
- **Primitive theology:** Mark contains fewer theological embellishments compared to Matthew and Luke, making it appear earlier in the development of Christological thought. For example, Mark has a more human portrayal of Jesus (e.g., Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, Mark 14:32-42), while Matthew and Luke present more developed theologies (Bauckham, 2006).
- **Omissions in Mark:** Matthew and Luke include significant material absent from Mark, such as the birth narratives of Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount. Scholars argue that it is more likely that Mark omitted these sections rather than that Matthew and Luke independently added them in such similar ways (Kurz, 2002).

The Two-Source Hypothesis remains the most accepted explanation of the Synoptic Problem because it accounts for both the similarities and differences between the Synoptic Gospels without the need to posit an elaborate theory of mutual dependence (Harrington, 1990).

Alternative Theories to the Two-Source Hypothesis

While the Two-Source Hypothesis is widely accepted, alternative theories offer different solutions to the Synoptic Problem:

1. **The Farrer Hypothesis:** As mentioned earlier, this theory argues that Luke used both Mark and Matthew as sources, thus eliminating the need for Q. This model emphasizes Luke's editorial freedom in rearranging Matthew's material to fit his own theological purposes. Scholars who favour the Farrer Hypothesis point to instances where Luke seems to correct or improve upon Matthew's version of events (Farrer, 1955).
2. **The Griesbach Hypothesis:** The Griesbach or Two-Gospel Hypothesis suggests that Matthew was the first Gospel, followed by Luke, and that Mark later combined and

condensed material from both. This view challenges the idea of Markan priority by suggesting that Mark's brevity was a deliberate editorial choice rather than a sign of its early composition (Griesbach, 1776).

Each of these theories has strengths and weaknesses, and while the Two-Source Hypothesis has gained the most scholarly traction, debates continue about the precise relationship between the Synoptics (Horsley, 1993).

Theology, Audience, and Authorship

The distinctive theological and narrative styles of Matthew, Mark, and Luke reflect their intended audiences and theological emphases:

- **Mark:** Often seen as the most immediate and action-oriented Gospel, Mark's portrayal of Jesus focuses on his miraculous powers and eschatological mission. Mark's audience is typically considered to be a Gentile-Christian community, likely facing persecution, which explains the Gospel's emphasis on suffering and the cost of discipleship (Mark 8:34-38; Barton, 2006).
- **Matthew:** Writing for a Jewish-Christian audience, Matthew frames Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. Matthew's Gospel emphasizes Jesus' role as a new Moses and as the teacher of a renewed Law. The inclusion of numerous fulfillment quotations (e.g., Matthew 1:22-23) and structured discourses, such as the Sermon on the Mount, point to Matthew's catechetical aim (France, 2007).
- **Luke:** Addressed to a broader, Gentile-Christian audience, Luke's Gospel emphasizes the universal nature of salvation, portraying Jesus as the savior of all people, not just the Jews. Luke's focus on marginalized groups, such as women, Samaritans, and Gentiles, highlights this theme of inclusiveness. Luke's prologue (Luke 1:1-4) also suggests a concern for historical accuracy, aiming to provide an orderly account of events (Hanson, 1989).

Stylistic and Cultural Differences

The Synoptic Gospels exhibit stylistic differences that reflect the cultural backgrounds of their authors and audiences:

- **Mark:** Known for its urgency, Mark's Gospel frequently uses the Greek word *euthus* ("immediately") to drive the narrative forward. The rapid pace and frequent scene changes contribute to the sense of Jesus as a figure constantly on the move, performing miracles and proclaiming the kingdom of God (Boring, 2006).
- **Matthew:** Matthew's Gospel is more structured, often presenting events in groups of three or seven, and employs formulaic phrases such as "this was to fulfill" to link Jesus' actions to Old Testament prophecy. This reflects the Jewish audience's familiarity with Hebrew Scriptures (Nolland, 2005).
- **Luke:** Luke's more polished Greek and attention to historical details (e.g., dating events according to Roman officials, Luke 3:1) reflect his Hellenistic background. His Gospel is also notable for its concern with social justice, frequently highlighting Jesus' interactions with the poor and outcasts (Keener, 2014).

The Impact of Oral Tradition and Redaction

The Synoptic Gospels, like much of early Christian literature, were heavily influenced by oral tradition before being written down. The early Christian communities likely transmitted stories about Jesus, his teachings, and his miracles orally for several decades before the Gospels were composed. This reliance on oral tradition raises important questions about the accuracy and consistency of the transmitted material and how it was later shaped by the evangelists to fit their theological agendas (Hjelm, 2005).

Oral Tradition

Form criticism was developed in the early 20th century by scholars such as Rudolf Bultmann to analyze the types of oral traditions that may have shaped the Gospels (Bultmann, 1954). This method identifies forms or standard literary patterns, such as miracle stories, parables, pronouncement stories, and sayings of Jesus, and examines how these forms were likely shaped and transmitted by the early Christian communities (Bruner, 2014). The consistency of the basic story forms across the Synoptic Gospels suggests that oral tradition played a major role in preserving and transmitting these narratives (Ellul, 1984). However, variations in detail and order suggest that each evangelist also exercised editorial freedom.

For example, the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1-20; Matthew 13:1-23; Luke 8:4-15) appears in all three Synoptics with considerable overlap, but each evangelist introduces small changes to fit their narrative and theological concerns. Mark's version is the simplest, while Matthew adds more explanatory material about the meaning of the parable for his Jewish-Christian audience (Karris, 2010).

Redaction Criticism

Redaction criticism focuses on how each evangelist used their sources, including oral tradition, and shaped them to fit their theological and literary goals (Martyn, 1997). For example, Matthew's editorial approach often emphasizes Jesus as the fulfillment of Jewish prophecy. He frequently adds Old Testament quotations to events that Mark or Luke narrate without explicit reference to prophecy (Hoffmann, 1973).

- **Mark:** As the earliest Gospel, Mark's editorial hand is often seen as minimal, presenting a raw and urgent narrative that focuses on the immediacy of Jesus' mission. Mark's sparse narrative style is often considered closer to the oral traditions from which the Gospels likely arose (Wilkins, 2010).
- **Matthew:** Matthew, in contrast, frequently organizes Jesus' teachings into large discourses, such as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7). He also emphasizes Jesus' role as a lawgiver and interpreter of the Torah, reflecting his Jewish-Christian audience's concerns (Rhoads, 2014).
- **Luke:** Luke's Gospel is notable for its attention to marginalized groups and social justice, which suggests a redactional interest in portraying Jesus as a universal savior. Luke also inserts unique material, such as the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), reflecting his concern for the inclusion of outsiders (Johnson, 1991).

In addition, redaction critics examine how each evangelist arranges material. For instance, while Mark places the Clearing of the Temple late in his Gospel (Mark 11:15-19), immediately before the Passion narrative, Matthew and Luke place it at an earlier point in Jesus' ministry, reflecting each author's theological emphasis and narrative strategy (Goulder, 1974).

The Synoptic Problem and Historical Reliability

The relationship between the Synoptic Gospels has profound implications for how scholars assess the historical reliability of the Gospel accounts. Since the Gospels are not independent witnesses but share material, sometimes verbatim, understanding their interdependence is crucial for evaluating the historical accuracy of their portrayal of Jesus and his ministry (Stein, 1987).

Implications for Historical Jesus Studies

One of the key challenges raised by the Synoptic Problem is how to separate the historical Jesus from the theological interpretations imposed by the Gospel writers. The quest for the historical Jesus—the effort to reconstruct the life and teachings of Jesus based on the earliest sources—has long been a central focus of New Testament scholarship (Horsley, 1993). The Synoptic Gospels are the primary sources for this quest, but their literary interdependence complicates efforts to identify what Jesus actually said and did.

The criterion of multiple attestations, for example, suggests that material found in more than one Gospel or independent source is more likely to reflect authentic historical traditions. However, because Matthew and Luke both used Mark as a source, the triple tradition does not represent independent attestation, limiting its usefulness for historical reconstruction (Allison, 2005).

Historical Reliability of the Synoptics

The Two-Source Hypothesis supports the idea that Mark's Gospel, as the earliest, provides the most historically reliable account of Jesus' life. Since Matthew and Luke are seen as reworking Mark's material and adding their own theological interpretations, they may be less historically reliable in certain details. Mark's simpler and more direct account, lacking the extensive theological commentary found in Matthew and Luke, is often considered closer to the oral traditions about Jesus (Dunn, 1986).

However, the presence of theological redaction in all three Gospels raises questions about the extent to which they should be treated as historical documents. Many scholars, such as Sanders (1993) and Crossan (1994), argue that while the Gospels contain historically valuable material, they are primarily theological narratives written to promote faith in Jesus rather than neutral historical biographies.

- For instance, the Birth Narratives in Matthew (1:18-2:23) and Luke (2:1-21) differ considerably in details, with Matthew emphasizing the fulfillment of prophecy and Luke focusing on Jesus' connection to the poor and marginalized. These theological concerns make it difficult to assess the historical reliability of these accounts (Tuckett, 2001).
- Similarly, the Passion Narratives in all three Synoptic Gospels are highly theologically charged, with Mark portraying Jesus as a suffering Messiah and Matthew and Luke further developing this theme in ways that reflect their particular theological agendas (Barton, 1994).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Synoptic Problem remains a central issue in New Testament scholarship, raising important questions about the literary relationship between the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the sources they used, and the historical reliability of their accounts of Jesus' life and ministry (Stein, 1987). Through an analysis of the triple tradition, double tradition, and theories such as the Two-Source Hypothesis and its alternatives, this article has examined how each Gospel reflects its author's theological concerns and editorial choices (Horsley, 1993).

Mark's Gospel, often considered the earliest, provides the foundation for Matthew and Luke, who, while drawing on similar material, have distinct theological emphases that reflect the needs of their respective communities (Dunn, 1986). The hypothesis of a shared sayings source (Q) remains influential, though alternative theories like the Farrer Hypothesis challenge its necessity (Goulder, 1974). Additionally, the role of oral tradition and redaction in shaping the final form of the Synoptic Gospels highlights the complexity of their composition (Ellul, 1984). Understanding the Synoptic Problem not only illuminates the interrelationship between these texts but also enhances our appreciation of the theological diversity within the early Christian movement. Future research may continue to explore the implications of the Synoptic Problem for the quest for the historical Jesus, as well as for the study of the development of early Christian theology and practice (Horsley, 1993).

Recommendations for Future Research and Scholarship

1. **Integrate Multidisciplinary Approaches**

Future research should adopt interdisciplinary methodologies, combining biblical studies, archaeology, and social sciences, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the origins and development of Gospel traditions. Such approaches can refine criteria for authentic historical traditions and contextualize Gospel narratives within their socio-historical settings.

2. **Reevaluate and Develop Hypotheses Beyond the Two-Source Model**

Scholars should continue to critically evaluate the dominance of the Two-Source Hypothesis by exploring and testing alternative models such as the Farrer Hypothesis and the Griesbach Hypothesis. Comparative analyses that examine the strengths and limitations of these models can facilitate a more nuanced understanding of the synoptic interdependence and editorial processes.

3. **Focus on Oral Tradition's Role in Gospel Formation**

More empirical research is needed on the role of oral tradition in shaping the Gospel texts. Ethnographic and anthropological studies of oral cultures could provide insights into how oral storytelling influences the transmission and variation of material, illuminating the processes underpinning the compositional stages of the Gospels.

4. **Enhance Textual and Redactional Analysis Using Digital Tools**

Leveraging advancements in digital humanities, such as computational textual analysis, can reveal underlying redactional patterns. These tools can provide detailed visualizations of textual relationships, source dependencies, and editorial insertions, thus advancing our understanding of Gospel formation.

5. **Invest in Theological and Literary Analyses**

Further studies should examine how each evangelist's theological concerns are reflected in editing choices, narrative structure, and thematic emphases. Such analyses can deepen appreciation of the distinct community contexts and theological agendas shaping the Gospels.

6. Encourage comparative and diachronic studies

Scholars are encouraged to conduct diachronic studies that compare the Gospels across different manuscript traditions and early Christian writings, which could shed light on the development and stabilization of Gospel traditions over time.

7. Improve Pedagogical Resources

Academic institutions should develop innovative teaching materials, including visual aids, timelines, and source-relationship charts, to facilitate better pedagogical understanding of the complex interrelations among the Synoptic Gospels and underlying theories.

References

- Allison, D. C. (2005). *Constructing Jesus: Memory, imagery, and the fourth gospel*. Fortress Press.
- Augustine. (1998). *City of God* (V. Battles, Trans.). New York: Cosimo Classics. (Original work published 397)
- Baker, M. (2006). *Interesting times for the synoptic problem*. Journal of Theological Studies, 57(2), 519–530.
- Blomberg, C. (2009). *The historical reliability of the Gospels*. InterVarsity Press.
- Barton, J. (1994). *The Jewish Evangelist: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Matthew*. Westminster John Knox Press.
- Barton, J. (2006). *Orality and scripture: Reflections on the eyewitness model*. T&T Clark International.
- Blomberg, C. (2009). *The historical reliability of the Gospels*. InterVarsity Press.
- Burkett, L. (2002). *The miracles of Jesus*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bauckham, R. (2006). *Jesus and the eyewitnesses: The Gospels as eyewitness testimony*. Eerdmans.
- Boring, M. E. (2006). *Mark: A commentary*. Westminster John Knox Press.
- Bultmann, R. (1954). *Jesus: Matter of faith or historical knowledge?* Harper & Brothers.
- Bruner, F. D. (2014). *A theology of the Gospels*. Wipf & Stock.
- Crossan, J. D. (1994). *The historical Jesus: The life of a biblical icon*. HarperOne.

- Dunn, J. D. G. (1986). *The partings of the ways: Jewish and Christian boundaries, circa 70 to 170 CE*. Trinity Press International.
- Ellul, J. (1984). *The social framework of the Gospels*. Eerdmans.
- Farrer, A. (1955). *The structure of Luke's gospel*. Westminster John Knox Press.
- France, R. T. (2007). *The Gospel of Matthew*. Eerdmans.
- Farrer, A. (1959). *The alternative hypothesis*. In *The life of Jesus: Criticisms and difficulties* (pp. 180–190). Macmillan.
- Farrer, A. (1964). *The Farrer hypothesis*. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 83(4), 377–393.
- Green, J. B. (2011). *The Gospel of Luke*. Eerdmans.
- Griesbach, J. H. (1776). *Synopsis evangeliorum*.
- Goulder, M. D. (1974). *Luke: A new paradigm*. JSOT Press.
- Grant, R. M. (1963). *The Synoptic Problem*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hanson, R. P. C. (1989). *The dawn of Christianity: A modern historical analysis of the origin of the New Testament*. Westminster John Knox Press.
- Hagner, D. A. (1995). *Matthew 14-28*. Word Books.
- Horsley, R. A. (1993). *Jesus and the rise of early Christianity: A historical overview*. Fortress Press.
- Hjelm, T. (2005). *The oral gospel tradition: A narrative and social analysis*. Fortress Press.
- Harrington, D. J. (1990). *The references to Mark in Matthew and Luke*. *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 52(1), 1-16.
- Harrison, P. (2011). *Introduction to the New Testament*. Eerdmans.
- Hoffmann, R. (1973). *Matthew's use of the Old Testament*. Hendrickson.
- Johnson, L. T. (1991). *The Jewishness of Jesus*. Scholars Press.
- Karris, R. J. (2010). *The collegeville biblical commentary: Matthew*. Liturgical Press.
- Keener, C. S. (2014). *The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament*. InterVarsity Press.
- Klijn, A., & Slik, J. (1990). *Matthew and Q*. Brill.
- Kurz, H. (2002). *Mark and the origins of the Gospel tradition*. Trinity Press International.
- Lyons, F. J. (1996). *The Synoptic Gospels and the Problem of Literary Dependence*. SBL Press.
- Luz, U. (2007). *The theology of the sayings of Jesus*. Fortress Press.
- Martyn, J. L. (1997). *History and theology in the Fourth Gospel*. Fortress Press.
- Marsden, M. (2006). *The meaning of the Bible: What the Jewish scriptures and the Christian Old Testament are all about*. HarperOne.
- Nolland, J. (2005). *The Gospel of Matthew: A commentary on the Greek text*. Eerdmans.

- Sanders, E. P. (1993). *The historical figure of Jesus*. Penguin Books.
- Stein, R. H. (1987). *The issues and image of Jesus as reflected in the synoptic gospels*. Journal of Biblical Literature, 106(3), 371-391.
- Smit, A. (2014). *Form criticism and the social setting of the Gospels*. Brill.
- Streeter, B. H. (1924). *The gift of the kingdom: Some observations on the synoptic problem*. Macmillan.
- Tuckett, C. (2001). *The New Testament: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Rhoads, D. M. (2014). *The complexity of the Gospel of Matthew*. Fortress Press.
- Wilkins, M. J. (2010). *The sermon on the Mount: A formative theological perspective*. Baker Academic.
- Wright, N. T. (2012). *How God became King: The kingdom of God and the meaning of Jesus*. HarperOne.