

'And now we can afford to be patient. We can afford to wait. Time may seem to be against us. Eternity is on our side. In other words, we do not base our optimism upon a superficial confidence in human nature. We base our confidence upon the very essential quality of the life of God. We know that people have been false. We know that in an environment offering the best sort of opportunity and the noblest stimulus some people will be false. We are not surprised when employers betray workers and workers betray employers. We are not surprised when Peace Conferences are soiled by emerging national and individual selfishness. All these things we under-

stand. All these things we expect. And from the spectacle we look out to that eternal life of God which is perpetually based upon unselfish love. Here we find something solid and dependable. And in every bit of human unselfishness, in every human striving after brotherhood, in every human movement for a more orderly world, we see the expression on the field of this life of that which is the deepest verity in the life of all things. We believe, in spite of sad and heart-breaking experiences, in the triumph of brotherhood here, because we know that the brotherhood which reigns over the whole structure of things must at last come to reign in the life of man.'

Synoptic Variations.

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THE two-document theory of the origin of the Synoptic Gospels has opened up some questions that call for more investigation before the curious phenomena of alternate agreements and differences can be accounted for. I do not refer to the universally acknowledged fact that there is much in Matthew and Luke that cannot be traced either to Mark or to Q—for instance, the infancy stories at the beginning, the resurrection stories at the end, and the large amount of new matter in Luke, now sometimes indicated by the letter S. Nor am I thinking of the great differences in the rendering of some of Christ's sayings, especially the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer, which point to different reports, perhaps two versions of Q (Q^m and Q^l). Over and above these obvious grounds of variations, we are confronted with differences in parallel passages of Matthew and Luke which we attribute to a common source, especially where we take that source to be Mark. How comes it that when Matthew (I use the name for convenience to designate the author of our first Gospel, although we cannot think him to be the Apostle—who may however, perhaps, have collected Papias' Logia, identical with our Q—and so have got his name assigned to the book which contains so much of it)—how comes it that this Matthew and Luke often

vary considerably from Mark even when their authority is Mark's Gospel? Dr. Abbott demonstrated in *Clue* that they used a later recension of Mark than those which we have handed down to us in our New Testament. This fact will account for some small points where we find Matthew and Luke agreeing together verbally in modification of Mark's phraseology. But there are many more cases in which they differ from one another as much as from Mark and to a much greater extent. These are the cases which call for attention, and they meet us on every page of the first and third Gospels.

A little consideration will suggest to us that they may conceivably be attributed to five causes—sometimes to one of these, sometimes to another: (a) *Literary taste*. One of the greatest merits of our Gospels is their ingenuous simplicity, their artless freedom from self-consciousness. None of the evangelists deal with their material in the manner of the literary historian, as in the case of Gibbon, Macaulay, Carlyle, Froude, writers who, differing greatly in their own mental outfits and habits of thought, shape and colour their materials accordingly. Nevertheless there are clear instances of choice of words, personal mannerisms, and, with all their objectivity and loyalty to truth, individual

sympathies, which have affected their ways of telling the common story. (*b*) *Critical emendation*. In some cases the evangelist may have ventured to omit or alter some detail in his source, because of inaccuracy or for some other objection, solely at the dictation of his own judgment. Every thinking historian does this. A little inquiry will enable us to see whether either Matthew or Luke felt at liberty to do so with Mark, and has, in fact, ever acted in this way. (*c*) *Constructive imagination*. All the four British historians just referred to have exercised this faculty, especially Carlyle, in the most daringly brilliant way, and Froude sometimes with unfortunate results as to objective veracity. It is the duty of the author of a literary historical work to go beyond the mere chronicler in making his characters live and give colour to his narrative. But while this awakens the reader's interest and helps him to realize in his own mind the scenes and persons that are presented to him, it has its dangers. We may be thankful, therefore, that the simplicity and directness of purpose manifested by our evangelists have excluded the free play of this valuable but hazardous constructive imagination; still we cannot affirm that they did not possess or employ a spark of it. This is a matter to be inquired about and looked for when we examine and compare the Gospel texts. (*d*) *Additional sources*. If in some cases the three causes of alteration to which I have referred fail to account for the fact, we may reasonably infer that the evangelists have some other source of information with which they are supplementing Mark. This may be either documentary or oral. Since confessedly both Matthew and Luke did use such sources for whole sections of their Gospels, there is no reason to deny that they may also have employed them for modifying or supplementing material drawn in the main from one particular source, such as Mark. (*e*) *Personal remarks and comments* supplied by the author. These, of course, are pure additions.

Now let us test the applicability of the five principles by taking one or two illustrative cases.

I. MARK i. 1-5; MATT. iii. 1-6; LUKE iii. 2-7.

1. Mark begins with a descriptive title of his book (*1*¹), which, of course, neither of the other evangelists would carry over to his work, especially as neither of them begin it at this point. This comes under (*e*).

2. Immediately after his descriptive title and as an introduction to his account of John the Baptist, Mark quotes some sentences of Old Testament prophecy. Both Matthew and Luke repeat a part of this quotation; but they agree in postponing it till after they have mentioned the coming of John. This is very reasonable, because neither of them is here, like Mark, only beginning his book, so that the peculiar impressiveness of starting with a text of Scripture does not fall in with their plans. Still, we note the coincidence of both of them making this change. A more striking coincidence is to be seen in both of them omitting the first part of Mark's quotation (*1*²), for that evangelist had introduced it with an ascription of the whole to Isaiah, whereas this portion is taken from Malachi, and only the second part (*1*³) from the prophet to whom he inadvertently attributed the whole. Evidently this is an instance of (*b*)—a critical emendation. Now certainly this second coincidence of Matthew and Luke is remarkable. They may easily both have noticed Mark's lapse of memory and acted independently in their omissions. But, remembering that they were working on the later edition of Mark, perhaps we should surmise that the emendation was due to the editor of that edition, who may have been the evangelist himself correcting and smoothing his own work.

3. Next, following his Scripture quotation, in accordance with his abrupt style, Mark names John and describes his coming and preaching. The other evangelists, not having yet taken over the Scripture quotation, require to give some form of introduction for the Baptist. Both do this with notes of time. Matthew connects his coming with the preceding narrative, merely citing a favourite form of expression, 'in those days.' But Luke here inserts an elaborate reference to contemporary ruling authorities. This is in accordance with his method of connecting the Gospel narrative with world history. It demands no documentary authority. The evangelist falls back on his own knowledge, as an educated man. In both cases we have examples of (*e*)—personal remarks, or, rather, ascribe them to (*d*) as oral traditions.

4. In referring to the locality of John's mission, both Matthew and Luke make additions to Mark. Matthew simply defines the specific wilderness which Mark had mentioned vaguely, saying, 'the wilderness of Judaea,' an instance of (*e*), as the evangelist knows that this was the particular

wilderness of John's retreat. But Luke adds that John also came 'into all the region round about Jordan.' Here is additional information. We have not to search for any documentary or traditional authority for it; because further on Mk (1⁵) tells us that John was baptizing in the Jordan. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that he was also preaching there as well as in the wilderness. Luke's statement to this effect is an instance of (*c*), a product of constructive imagination.

5. Where Mark had a new sentence in the indicative—'and preached,' both Matthew and Luke turn this Hebraistic form into the more flowing Greek style by using the participle 'preaching.' Since they agree in doing this, we may again suspect the change to have been made ready for them in their edition of Mark.

6. While Luke follows Mark verbatim in giving the theme of John's preaching as 'the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins,' Matthew has an entirely different construction at this point, omitting any reference to baptism and adding important new matter. First, he has the dramatic form of direct speech—'saying, Repent ye.' We might regard this as an instance of (*a*), simply a free literary reconstruction of the material, were it not for the sentence which follows, which is entirely new, having nothing corresponding to it in Mark, namely, 'repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' This is the only passage of the New Testament which states that John the Baptist definitely preached the near approach of the Kingdom, though we may say that all the evangelists imply as much by his announcing the advent of the Christ. Both Mark and Luke only give the announcement of the Kingdom being at hand as first appearing in the teaching of Christ. Matthew, and he alone, tells us that John anticipated Jesus, and that when our Lord made this the burden of His message, He was following the Baptist, this evangelist using exactly the same words in describing it. How came Matthew to do so? Is this a case of (*c*)—his constructive imagination? Did he assume without any authority that the phrase which the other Synoptics give as the main substance of the preaching of Jesus was not original, was taken over by the prophet of Nazareth from His predecessor, the prophet of the wilderness? Matthew's free handling of his material and readiness to construct flowing sentences should allow us to admit the possibility of this view. On

the other hand, the great importance of the statement may well incline us to think this a case of (*d*). Though it is impossible to say what authority, whether oral or documentary, Matthew was here using, there is some probability that it was *Q*, since that document is generally thought to have contained an account of the Baptist. The omission of any reference to baptism here, though that is mentioned by Luke after Mark, may well be attributed to (*a*), Matthew throughout giving the greatest prominence to preaching.

7. In his account of John's clothing and food, the coming of the people, and their baptism in the Jordan, Matthew closely follows Mark, varying the phrases according to his own way of writing (*a*), but depending on no other authority. His inclusion of the region of the Jordan among the districts from which the Baptist drew his disciples may well be accounted for by (*c*). Seeing that this was the scene of the baptism, it would be natural to infer that some of its inhabitants were to be found in the crowd of penitents. Luke is very concise here. He briefly epitomizes Mark (*a*), and reserves himself good space for a quantity of new material.

8. For their accounts of the preaching of John the Baptist, Matthew and Luke had to resort to some other authority than Mark, since that evangelist does not record it. In his characteristic way Matthew mentions the two principal parties among the Jews, saying that many of them were coming to John's baptism. This we assign to (*c*), or possibly to (*d*), Matthew having inferred from what he knew of the subsequent followers of John that these people came under his influence, or perhaps having learnt it from tradition, or again perhaps from the document which he is certainly quoting after this. Luke, a Gentile writing for Gentiles, is not so much interested in Jewish sects and parties, and therefore he makes no reference to them there, although he would have had knowledge of the fact which Matthew mentions, if it was in a common source that both evangelists used. Certainly the matter of John's preaching which they both record comes from a common source. As far as Matthew goes, Luke's agreement with him is verbally exact, except for two trivial variations: (1) where for 'fruit worthy' Matthew has singulars (*καρπὸν ἄξιον*), Luke has plurals (*καρποὺς ἀξίους*), and (2) while Matthew (3⁹) has 'think not,' Luke (3⁸) has 'begin not'—variations which we may easily assign to (*a*). For the rest the verbal

identity proves identity of literary source. This may well have been Q, since there is reason to think that this work included some sayings of John the Baptist. The conversations with various people and the popular impression resulting from it, which Luke (3¹⁰⁻¹⁵) alone records, may have been included in the same document, Matthew not choosing to carry on his quotation so far. On the other hand, its being in part concerned with two classes of people to whom elsewhere Luke gives exceptional attention, namely, publicans and soldiers, may incline us to assign it to (*d*) as derived from S.

II. MARK i. 7, 8; MATT. iii. 11, 12; LUKE iii. 16-18.

When we come to John's announcement of the coming Christ as reported in the three Synoptics we meet with a complicated problem. First, we have the material common to all three. Matthew and Luke give us everything that is in Mark, and therefore might be credited with using that evangelist as their source. Luke is nearer to Mark in having the idea of unloosing the shoe latches, while Matthew has that of bearing the shoes. If it were not for Matthew's close verbal agreement with Luke in what follows, we might think that he was using a different authority at this point. But that fact would lead us to assign the variation to (*a*), especially as elsewhere Matthew inclines to generalities where Mark condescends to graphic details. But now we have the agreements between Matthew and Luke where they have not the support of Mark. They both break with Mark's order of sentences, agreeing to put John's reference to his own baptism prior to the declaration of the coming mightier One, while Mark puts that reference after the declaration. 'This coincidence can hardly be accidental. Then the phrase, 'and with fire,' following 'the Holy Ghost,' in both Matthew and Luke, suggests that the whole sentence in which the two phrases occur comes from one and the same source. If so, we must conclude that, even in that part of it which Mark gives us, the two other Synoptic writers were not following Mark, but were drawing on the source from which they obtained the rest of this speech of John's. Again we may conjecture that this may have been Q. But whether that were the case or not, it would seem that Mark was also using it for so much of the speech as he recorded.

III. MK. i. 9-11; MATT. iii. 13-17; LK. iii. 21, 22.

1. The three accounts of the baptism of Jesus may be assigned to Mark as the basal document of each, though with a very free handling of his introductory verse, some striking variations throughout, and some fresh material contributed by Matthew. Instead of the clumsy Hebraistic 'and' (*καὶ*) and the clause 'in those days,' Matthew begins with 'then' (*τότε*), and Luke with 'now' (R.V. for *δε*); Luke then retains Mark's 'it came to pass,' Matthew dropping this Hebraism, and so characteristically abbreviating Mark in narrative and giving space for additions to the sayings. Similarly, Matthew drops Mark's reference to Nazareth, and so does Luke, who also omits Galilee (*a*). On the other hand, Luke states that Jesus was baptized at the time when all the people were baptized, an addition demanding no extra authority, but to be assigned to (*c*) as a natural historical inference characteristically deemed by Luke of human and theological interest. All the other variations at this point may be assigned to (*a*). They are purely literary; unless perhaps we see some further significance in the peculiarity of Luke's account.

2. The conversation in Mt 3^{14, 15}, found neither in Mark nor in Luke, is an instance of (*d*), and it may probably be assigned to Q.

3. The first clause of Mk 1¹⁰, 'and straightway coming up out of the water,' is omitted from Luke's briefer account. On the other hand, it is enriched in Matthew's characteristic way by an imaginative filling in of the picture (*c*), and so reads, 'And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water.'

4. The changes in the latter part of Mk 1¹⁰ are very striking. That evangelist speaks of the vision (1) as seen by Jesus, and (2) His seeing the very process of the heavens being rent open (present participle *σχιζομένου*). In both these cases the other evangelists state the occurrence objectively, though Matthew preserves a reminiscence of the personal vision in saying, 'the heavens were opened unto him,' while Luke only has 'the heaven (singular) was opened.' These alterations may easily be assigned in each case to the author's personal choice of expressions (*a*).

5. In taking over the last clause of the verse in Mark, Matthew has another reminiscence of the vision as a personal experience of Jesus, saying, 'he saw the Spirit of God,' etc., while Luke is still

purely objective, saying, 'the Holy Ghost descended,' both evidently expressions of the author's own way of regarding the situation and therefore to be assigned to the category (a).

Further, Matthew follows Mark in representing the descent of the Spirit 'as a dove' to be a vision of Jesus. But Luke states this objectively—'the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily form as a dove upon him.' He is even remarkably emphatic on this point, inserting the phrase, 'in bodily form.' We may compare this with his materialistic reference in words that he and he alone ascribes to the risen Christ (Lk 24³⁹). We must assign

the phrase to the evangelist's constructive imagination (c).

6. The last verse in Mark (1¹¹) is taken over verbally by Luke, who only changes 'the heavens' into 'heaven' as before. Matthew retains the former (Hebraistic) form. But he has two variations: (1) The dramatic 'lo' introducing an exclamatory sentence—an instance of (a), his own rhetorical construction. (2) Instead of the address of the *Bath kol* to Jesus Himself, in which Luke follows Mark, Matthew has this in the third person—'This is my beloved son,' etc.—another instance of (a), possibly due to catechetical repetition.

'I am the Good Shepherd': A Study.

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It is not without significance that it is the Fourth Gospel which records the assertion of the claim, 'I am the Good Shepherd.' This is the Gospel in which Jesus is represented as speaking of Himself as the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Resurrection, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the True Vine. These titles show that this Gospel is the Gospel of the Person of Christ as He is for the Church; not, as in the case of the other three, of Christ viewed as far as possible as He appeared in the Earthly Ministry, but of Christ as reflected upon in the light of Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Christian Experience.

And since this is so, the interpretation of the title of Good Shepherd is prescribed for us by its setting. For while on the one hand, as we shall see, it offers a picture quite inadequate beyond a certain point, on the other hand its implications would be narrowed down to falseness, did we restrict them to what the Earthly Ministry manifested Jesus as being and doing.

The assumption of the title during the days of His flesh was mainly proleptic: it would be hardly more than the truth to say that, were it intended to portray Christ as He then was, the picture would have little interest for us to-day.

Two elements in combination were needed for the due realization of the office—the Person, and the Experience; and not until Christ had died and risen had He passed through the only Experience which could fit the Person for His task.

The office of Good Shepherd then is a Post-Resurrection office. It is the recognition of this that has caused the Good Shepherd to be the subject of the Gospel for the Second Sunday after Easter. Involving a personal relation, as is indicated by the fact that the shepherd calls his sheep, knows them, leads them out, suffers for them, it requires the shepherd's presence with his flock and his protecting care of it wheresoever its individual members may be. It is not enough that Christ was once a bright example, a compassionate healer, an inspiring teacher: the Good Shepherd must continue to provide souls with a never-failing rallying-point.

The office further calls for faithfulness and devotion even unto death. But once the shepherd has died for his flock his faithfulness and devotion are memories; he cannot repeat them; they are without effective value when the next crisis comes.

Accordingly, he who is to be the Good Shepherd for mankind must transcend time, place, death, if he is to make good his claim. He must be what the Resurrection alone made Christ, universal, living, penetrating.

I.

The Good Shepherd must be *Universal*.

Something a great deal more extensive is involved than what our Lord could effect as He moved among men during the Ministry. That