

# **THREE WITNESSES**

The Synoptic Gospels in Harmony

by

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Submitted by:

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## Overview

Currently there are no books on the market that deliver a satisfactory presentation of the synoptic gospels – answering the question as to why Matthew and Luke follow Mark’s narrative so closely, while maintaining clarity and ease of use to the reader.

I’m seeking representation for the *Three Witnesses*, a 67,000-word non-fiction manuscript matriculated from the gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke, thus creating a comprehensive biography of Jesus Christ. The above-mentioned gospels are known as the synoptic gospels because Matthew and Luke closely follow Mark’s narrative, since Mark was the earliest written gospel and they had access to it.

This manuscript is broken into four parts, beginning with The Synoptic Gospels According to Mark which makes up about half the total document. The narrative utilizes Mark as its guide which opens with the preaching of John the Baptist (Mark 1:1-8, Matthew 3:1-6, and Luke 3:2-6). It continues with the baptism of Jesus, and so on, until reaching its climax with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Part two, titled the Sayings Gospel Q, is comprised of citations that have similarities between Matthew and Luke that do not originate from Mark and features such vignettes as the Lament over Jerusalem, and The Lord’s Prayer, and The Sermon on the Mount. Quelle is German for “source” and it has long been hypothesized that Matthew and Luke utilized a since lost source of material while formulating their gospels. The final two parts of this manuscript are made up of the remaining material from Matthew and Luke that do

not originate from either Mark or Q, and features verses such as the Nativities of Jesus, The Straight Gate, and The Lost Son.

## About the Author

I was raised a Roman Catholic and have read the Bible cover to cover several times, the Gospels in particular via various different English translations. I was immediately struck upon reading the Gospels for the first time by their repetition and similarity to each other. After successive readings, it occurred to me that there would be a great deal of interest in a harmony of the Gospels in a comprehensive format that would appeal to Christian readers of all creeds.

I self-published General Ward's Colonial Army with the Rehoboth Minutemen of Massachusetts, and have a deep and abiding interest in the Revolutionary War and especially how the state of Massachusetts responded to the crisis. I am a Private in the Rehoboth Minutemen, Thirteenth Continental reenactment company (<https://sites.google.com/view/13thcontlregt/home>). This group precisely represents the lifestyles, clothing, equipment, and drills of the original Revolutionary War unit, chartered in 1774 by the Town of Rehoboth. This company was reorganized and commissioned in 1992 by the town to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the original militia's founding. Dedicated to living history education and in honor of those who fought and died for this country, the group takes part in many events such as parades, ceremonies, encampments, and battle reenactments. It is in this spirit that I brought the minutemen to life in my book General Ward's Colonial Army.

I also recently worked for five years as an editorial assistant for Dr. Samuel Greenblatt's Biography of John Hughlings Jackson Clinical Neurology, Evolution, and Victorian Brain Science first published in 2022 for Oxford University Press.

## Target Audience

It is my intention to make Three Witnesses accesable to Christians of all denominations regardless of their knowledge of the gospels. It works as a guide for experts and laypersons alike, resting between scholarly volumes like Parallel Gospels and A Synopsis of the Four Gospels, which are unfortunately presented in a cumbersome side by side column format, and the more commercial The Chosen Presents which does not feature verse numbers. My audience would also include those people interested in an introduction to the Sayings Gospel Q without having to purchase a second book like The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q. Burton Mack's volume only includes the sayings from Luke's narrative and nothing from Matthew, whereas my manuscript features both Luke followed by parallel sayings of Matthew.

Scholars of the Sayings Gospel Q will find my treatment of particular interest.

## Comparable Titles

In the last century or so, there have been several attempts to combine the three Synoptic Gospels into a volume of three or more columns presenting an amalgamation of the Synoptic Gospels in harmony. My manuscript instead presents without columns and is structured as a biography comprised of the first 37,000 words, about half the manuscript, titled *The Synoptic Gospels According to Mark*. It begins with the Preaching of John the Baptist and the Baptism of Jesus following Mark's narrative through to The Crucifixion of Christ and His Ascension into Heaven. In former treatments, like the Parallel Gospels, begin with the nativities and genealogies of Matthew and Luke. I believe these passages belong at the end of the manuscript, in the Remnants of Matthew and Luke.

The Sayings Gospel Q, part two of this manuscript, is preceeded to the market by The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins, The Gospel of Q: Jesus' Prophetic Wisdom, and The Lost Gospel Q: The Original Sayings of Jesus. These three titles each provide a suitable introduction of the Sayings Gospel Q, but they all include only the entries from Luke and his perspective, while completely neglecting the sayings from Matthew. My narrative instead presents both Luke and Matthew together. Only by presenting both sources, Luke and Matthew, can the complexity of the Sayings Gospel Q be fully realized in print.

For the first section, the Synoptic Gospels According to Mark, the following titles are similar in intent and sometimes, content.

A Harmony of the Gospels: By Robert L. Thomas and Stanley N. Gundry; HarperOne;  
Hardcover; 349 pages; \$21.59; ISBN: 978-0060635244

Gospel Parallels: By Burton H. Throckmorton; Thomas Nelson; Hardcover 5<sup>th</sup> edition; 212  
pages; \$18.42; ISBN: 978-0840774842

Synopsis of the Four Gospels: By Kurt Alard; American Bible Society; Hardcover; 361 pages;  
\$72.58; ISBN: 978-1585169429

The Chosen Presents: A Blended Harmony of the Gospels: By Steve Laube; Broadstreet  
Publishing Group LLC; Imitation Leather; 304 pages; \$11.99; ISBN: 978-1424564903

For the second section, the Sayings Gospel Q, is similar to the following titles:

The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins: By Burton L. Mack; HarperOne;  
Hardcover; 288 pages; \$25.90; ISBN: 978-0060653750

Q, the Earliest Gospel: By John S. Kloppenborg; Westminster John Knox Press; Paperback;  
184 pages; \$14.48; ISBN: 978-0664232221

The Lost Gospel Q: The Original Sayings of Jesus: By Marcus Borg; Ulysses Press; Paperback;  
128 pages; \$14.83; ISBN: 978-1569751893



## **Marketing and Promotion**

I launched a website, [www.ThreeWitnesses.com](http://www.ThreeWitnesses.com), which currently has samples of each of the four segments, the first of which includes the first 4 chapters following Mark through to the Rebuking of the Storm, enough of a sample to understand exactly that it is my manuscript is trying to convey to the reader. The second segment presents the Sayings Gospel Q and what it has meant to Christianity; not the least of which being the Sermon on the Mount, Love your Enemies, and the Lord's Prayer.

The final segments conclude the document with the Remnants of Matthew and Luke, the first of which features not just the Nativity and the Genealogy of Jesus, but also the sayings City on a Hill, Pearls before Swine, and Easy Yoke. Luke features Elizabeth pregnant with John and the relationship between Jesus and John before the Baptism which occurs in all four gospels. It also has a twelve year old Jesus visiting the Temple, and a post resurrection visit on the way to a village called Emmaus, perhaps the most interesting of the time before Jesus' ascension into heaven, which ends the entire manuscript.

I have a modest blog as well, within which I try and describe the document and its inception.

## **Manuscript Specifications and Delivery**

My manuscript is 67,222 words long and is ready for delivery upon request.

## Chapter Overview

Part One – the Synoptic Gospels According to Mark – is the primary body of my manuscript.

Totalling about 37,000 words, about half the book, which follows the narrative Mark established.

It begins with the Preaching of John the Baptist. From there it moves to the Baptism of Jesus and continues along, following Mark's narrative until the climax with the passion of Jesus Christ.

There are only two entries from Mark that are not followed by Matthew, Luke, or both, which means that Matthew and Luke utilized nearly the entirety of Mark's gospel when formulating their own.

The Sayings Gospel Q is comprised of all the verses from Matthew and Luke that feature commonality with each other that does not originate from Mark, known commonly as the lost gospel Q. It features such entries as the Lament Over Jerusalem, The Lord's Prayer, and the Sermon on the Mount. It makes up roughly a quarter of the total manuscript.

Cited below is a short excerpt from the Sayings Gospel Q, known as the Lament Over Jerusalem, which was the singular citation from the Bible that gave rise to this project. The reader will immediately recognize the similarity between these two entries.

Luke 13:34-35: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and

verily I say unto you, ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Matthew 23: 37-39: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

And of course there is The Lord's Prayer (known to Catholics as the Our Father)

Luke 11:1-4 <sup>1</sup>And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. <sup>2</sup>And he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. <sup>3</sup>Give us day by day our daily bread. <sup>4</sup>And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Mathew 6:9-15 <sup>9</sup>After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. <sup>10</sup>Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup>And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. <sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen. <sup>14</sup>For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also

forgive you: <sup>15</sup>but if he forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Parts three and four are made up of the Matthaen and Lucan Remnants, as discussed already, feature such staples as pertaining to the Nativity and Geneology of Jesus of Nazarith. Matthew also features City on a Hill and Pearls before Swine. Luke has a woman washing Jesus' feet with her tears and the forementioned A Village Called Emmaus.