

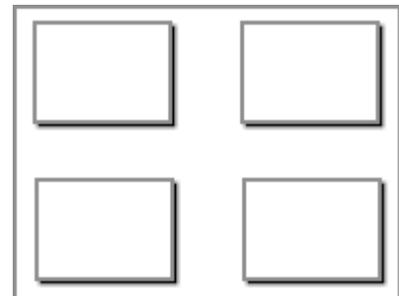
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The Synoptic Problem: A Review

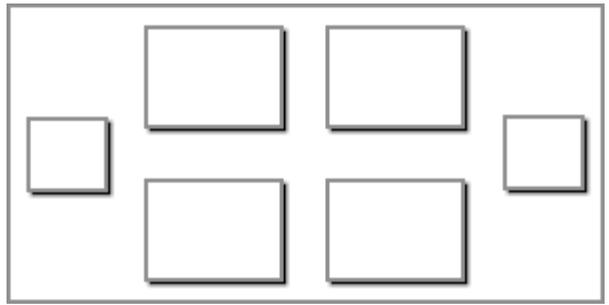
Directions: Use your notes and your Bible to fill in the blanks below.

1. From the earliest days of the church up to the present time, the most popular way of resolving the apparent differences between the gospels has been to combine the unique material from each of the gospels into a _____. The earliest example of this is Tatian's _____. Most modern _____ versions of Jesus' life are also examples.
2. In 1776, _____ produced the first _____, placing the gospels in _____ columns so they could be compared. One consequence of this is that scholars realized that three of the gospels, _____, _____, and _____, seem to tell the story of Jesus' life very similarly. Scholars refer to them as the _____ gospels. However, they also recognized that _____ told a very different story from the others.
3. Scholars also realized that these three gospels did more than just tell the same story, they clearly demonstrated a _____ relationship, showing near _____ agreement in _____ and agreement in _____ order. This is important considering that all three of these gospels were written in _____, which, like Latin, does not depend on _____ order to determine the function of words in a sentence.
4. Furthermore, two of these gospels, _____ and _____, also have some passages in common that are not in _____, but that demonstrate a relationship similar to the material that is in all three. The attempt to understand the relationship between these three gospels is referred to by scholars as the _____.
5. When we look at the material these three gospels have in common, we notice several patterns in the order of the passages and within each passage. Either all three gospels agree in the order of the material, or _____ and _____ agree against _____, or _____ and _____ agree against _____. But we almost never see _____ and _____ agreeing against _____.
6. We also notice that when _____ and _____ are compared, the agreement between these gospels begins where _____ begins (with the preaching of _____ and the _____ of Jesus), and ends where _____ ends (with women finding the _____). This suggests that _____ is the "middle term" between _____ and _____, who probably wrote _____ of each other.
7. The name given by scholars to the material that is in all three synoptics is the _____ tradition. The material that is only found in _____ and _____ is the _____ tradition.
8. Each gospel also has material unique to it. While in _____, only _____% is unique, _____% of _____ is unique, and _____ has the greatest amount of unique material at _____%.
9. The most commonly accepted solution to the Synoptic Problem is the _____ theory. This theory proposes that _____ was used as a source by _____ and _____, who also used another source that is no longer known to us and was independent of the gospels. [Fill in the chart for this theory and draw arrows to show the relationship between the gospels]. Scholars call this hypothetical source "_____" which is from _____, the German word for _____. This source accounts for the _____ tradition material in the gospels.



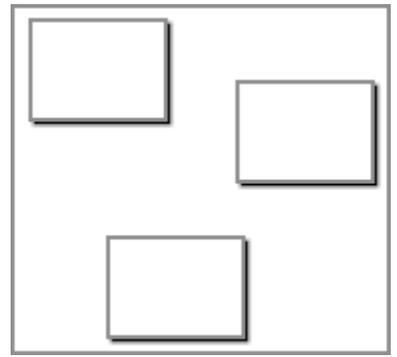
10. When we separate this material from the gospels and look at it by itself, several things can be observed: It is almost all _____ material with virtually no _____, and it is all _____, or pertaining to the coming of the _____ of God.

11. In order to account for the material that is totally unique to _____ and _____, a variation of this theory has been proposed, called the _____ theory. According to this theory, the special material in _____ is labeled "_____" and the special material in _____ is labeled "_____." This simply indicates that we cannot know for certain if this material originates with the _____ themselves or with another _____. [Fill in the chart for this theory and draw arrows to show the relationship between the gospels].



12. Both of the above theories assume that _____ was the earliest written of the synoptics, an assumption called _____. However, this is not the gospel that the early church assumed was written first. Virtually all of the patristic writers claim that _____ was first (an assumption called _____).

13. One theory that relies on this patristic evidence is the _____ theory, named after the German scholar who proposed it. This hypothesis claims that _____ wrote first, followed by _____, who copied from him. Later, both of these sources were copied by _____, who combined these two, using only the material his sources had in common. [Fill in the chart for this theory and draw arrows to show the relationship between the gospels].



14. Whichever is right, the _____ is clearly important to New Testament studies, because it helps to clarify our understanding of _____ as a historical figure, and the development of _____ in the early _____. For example, in the story of _____'s confession, _____ records Jesus blessing him, and making him the "_____ upon which the _____ was built," which has been used by the _____ church as justification for the institution of the _____. But the modern scholarly assumption of _____ priority challenges that, because in _____'s version of the same story, no such authority is given to _____.

15. On the other hand, viewing the gospels in _____ has made clear that _____ has much unique material in his gospel about _____, such as a story where he attempts to _____ on _____, and another where he pays the temple _____ with two coins taken from the _____ of a _____. This may indicate that _____'s community held _____ in higher esteem and was more informed about his relationship with Jesus than _____. While this cannot be considered conclusive proof in either direction, it is certainly cause for careful consideration of the solution to this problem.

16. Finally, the resolution to this problem has also influenced the church's understanding of its relationship to _____, as passages in the gospel of _____ that portray all _____ negatively and that have led to Christian persecution of _____ have come to be understood as reflecting the circumstances of _____'s community rather than the historical ministry of _____, because these passages are not present in _____, who limits Jesus' opposition to certain Jewish _____, and who also claims that Jesus was opposed largely because of the _____ that surrounded his identity.