



Lecture #2, Part 5

The Shape of the Gospel Story: The Synoptic Gospels

Theme:

Synoptic “seeing together”

Each Gospel was likely written for a different community of faith at a different time and location to bring the Gospel witness to bear on the needs of that particular community.

(Note: [Mark](#) is listed first because it is the simplest version of the narrative, which most biblical scholars consider to be the first Gospel written).

8. The Resurrection

Mk	Mt	Lk
16:1-8 [9-20]	28:1-20	24:1-53

The resurrection accounts vary widely with each Gospel telling the story differently. The finding of the empty tomb by the women is shared by all three Synoptics, although the details of that account differ.

[Mark](#)

is the shortest account, only eight verses. The longer ending of [Mark \(9-20\)](#) is generally considered to be a later addition to the book added to provide closure to the book by some who thought it ended too abruptly. There are many theories as to why the book would end so abruptly at [16:8](#): part of the book has been accidentally lost, the writer was not able to finish the book, etc.

Some even argue that the book was intended to end at [16:8](#). In any case, the longer ending, or several shorter endings in various manuscripts, are usually rejected as not being part of the original Gospel. [Mark](#) differs in several small details from the other Synoptics.

[Matthew](#)

mentions an earthquake and an angel rolling back the stone of the tomb and talking to the women ([28:2-7](#)). In [Matthew](#), Jesus meets the women at the tomb and instructs them to tell the disciples ([28:9-10](#)). Also unique to [Matthew](#) is the Jewish leaders bribing the guards to lie ([28:11-15](#)), and the appearance of Jesus to the eleven and the Great Commission ([28:16-20](#)).

[Luke](#)

has two men at the tomb to explain to the women ([24:4-7](#)). The rest of the account and the way it is told is unique in Luke: the women’s report to the disciples and their response ([24:9-12](#)), the two men on the road to Emmaus and their report to the disciples ([24:13-35](#)), the appearance to the eleven in Jerusalem and Jesus instructions to them ([24:36-49](#)), and the Ascension ([24:50-53](#)).