

Kayden Bryan

Dr. White

REL 3020: New Testament Studies

11 September 2023

Position Paper Three

Just as there are multiple accounts of the story of Jesus on trial, there are multiple accounts of the resurrection of Jesus. The three synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke all have their own accounts of Jesus' resurrection. While there are many similarities and agreements both between each of the three gospels as well as between two of the gospels, there are also many differences between the accounts. From slight differences in wording and organization to completely different accounts as to what happened, there are many differences.

At the beginning of the story of Jesus' resurrection, all three gospels agree that the story began early in the morning on the sabbath, albeit they each used different wording and organization. Matthew and Mark both immediately describe who the first people to visit the empty tomb were. They both say that both "Mary Magdalene and Mary" went to "the tomb" (Matthew 28:1, Mark 16:1-2). Luke includes the identities of the people only at the end of chapter 24, almost as if it were irrelevant. All three gospels use similar words throughout their accounts of the resurrection, but rarely include exact and verbatim quotes from each. They each word their own account in their own way for the most part. Matthew and Mark appear to be the most similar in the way that they wrote and recorded what happened.

While there are some similarities, the differences seem to be more prevalent and obvious. In Matthew's account, Mary Magdalene and Mary left the tomb and "quickly with fear and great joy, ran to tell his disciples" (Matthew 28:8). However, in Mark's account, Mary Magdalene and

Mary “went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid” (Mark 16:8). Luke’s account mirrors Matthew’s more so as he writes that the women returned “from the tomb, [and] told all this to the eleven and to all the rest” (Luke 24:9). Only two of the accounts show that the women followed what the ‘man’ or ‘angel’ told them to do while one describes them as directly disobeying and ignoring what they were told to do. Luke is also the only one to include the detail that “Peter got up and ran to the tomb,” while the other two do not even mention his name in the least (Luke 24:12). Just these differences create tremendous and confusing questions of accuracy and credibility of the accounts.

Personally, I believe that the similarities and differences between each of these narratives can be explained by the manner in which these texts were translated and from the language they were originally written in. They were in Greek and, as is in the English language, there are words that are used to describe the same thing. When translating text from English to Spanish or vice versa, you can find that the Spanish language does not include half as many words to describe the same thing as the English language does, so this could have easily been the case for these stories. As for the differences between what the women did, I believe that Mark may have simply been told a different story that had been altered as word of mouth spread, just as it is in a game of Telephone. I think that Matthew is trying to emphasize the importance of the stone being rolled away and what the impact of the angel appearing had on people as a whole. Mark, I believe, is trying to emphasize the importance of the man in the tomb that spoke to the women when they arrived and the impact that he had on them, as they were apparently so frightened, they told no one of what they saw. Luke, I believe, is trying to emphasize more of what Jesus had told his

disciples before being crucified and showing the way that His promise had been fulfilled and kept.