

Luke as a Redactionist: Mark 14:36 and Luke 22:42

XXXXXXXXXXXXX xxxxxx@xxxxx.com netid/11-111-1111
Faculty Advisor: Michael Pope

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the proposed research is to answer this question: Was Luke's revision of Jesus' garden prayer in 22:42 a grammatical correction alone or a thematic/theological/interpretive one?

PROJECT IMPORTANCE

Christian theology relies on the passion narratives for doctrinal questions such as the divinity of Jesus, the role of the sacrament, and the purpose of crucifixion to name a few. Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane is a similarly weighty moment. But each gospel writer takes an individual approach, resulting in questions about the finer details of what Jesus experienced there and how he responded to it. Consequently, the textual tradition (i.e. the study of how manuscripts are copied, handed down and altered) shows us that scribes and theologians of the subsequent centuries altered these texts in order to correct grammar, to harmonize disparate versions among gospels or to make interpretive alterations. Often, however, textual critics (those who study the manuscript tradition) are uncertain as to the purpose of these changes. This project will identify, break down and closely study the textual questions surrounding various readings of Jesus' Garden Prayer as recorded in Matthew and Luke. The result will be a clearer understanding of 1) Luke's role as a redactionist for Mark's gospel, 2) a sensible explanation for the problematic textual history of Mark 14:36 and 3) a more informed understanding of the nuanced historical accounting of Jesus' Garden prayer. Consequently, Luke 22:42 and Mark 14:36 will become more informative and instructive for devotional and academic readers of the Passion Narrative at large.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

This research will shed light on the relationship between Mark 14:36 and Luke 22:42, two versions of Jesus' garden prayer. To this end, my research will take on three phases: 1) A summary of the textual tradition of Mark 14:36, 2) an identification of each change Luke makes in 22:42 to Mark's version in 14:36, and 3) a discussion of surrounding literary evidence that contributes to an informed hypothesis of Luke's intention with these changes.

Phase one will be to present an in-depth survey of each significant textual variant of Mark 14:36. The purpose of this step is to establish the ambiguity of Mark's grammar. While some of these textual variants of Mark 14:36 may be thematic/theological, most of them are almost certainly not. They appear to be attempting to clarify the grammar in this verse. In fact, most of the textual tradition for this verse serves the purpose of informing us just how confused scribes and theologians were by Mark's language and how quick they were to try their hand at "correcting" his unwieldy grammar. This phase of research will also present an image both of the grammatical problem itself as misunderstood by some ancient scribes as well as the modern-day, scholarly understanding of Mark's original construction.

Phase two includes a shift in focus from Mark to Luke. Phase two will begin turning the research more towards the direction it will ultimately face: Luke's editorial bent as a grammarian and theologian. To this end, section two will parse each change in Luke's version of Jesus' garden prayer as they differ from Mark's. By so doing, readers will be confronted with a the real focus on my research: are all these changes which Luke makes to Mark's version due to an effort to clarify grammar – as later scribes certainly did with Mark's text – or were they instead intending to alter the theological implications of the scene itself? New Testament scholars almost universally agree on the conclusion that Mark wrote his gospel first and that Matthew and Luke had his version in front of them and chose which parts to add/take away.

The final research phase will work to persuade readers that Luke altered Mark's confusing grammar not only to create more comprehensive prose, but also to add his own interpretive spin on this important moment in the Christian narrative. In order to accomplish this, I will reference *other* clearly thematic changes Luke made to the narrative of events itself, beyond the grammatical nuance. For instance, Luke omits the Marcan detail of Jesus falling on his face during his Garden prayer and experiencing *ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι* (thoroughly rattled up), *ἀδημονεῖν* (disturbed), and *περιλθπός* (surrounded with grief) (Mark 14:34). Clearly Luke is doing more with Mark's gospel than simply clarifying grammar. This section will explore this, as well as other instances of Luke's editorial alterations to portray a trend. The notion that Luke altered the theology of Mark (beyond just his grammar) aligns with this trend.

CULMINATING EXPERIENCE

The main academic outcome of this Honors Thesis will be to provide a writing sample for my application to graduate programs in Classical Studies. However, a secondary result will certainly be an academic article within an undergraduate journal. I anticipate multiple opportunities to present this research as it relates so closely both to the world of Classical Studies and also to Divinity. *Studia Antiqua*, an on-campus journal dedicated to research involving the ancient world, would be especially suited to publish this paper. *Aisthesis*, published by Stanford University, is another journal that would be especially well-suited to this genre of research.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THESIS COMMITTEE

Faculty Advisor: Professor Michael Pope, Department of Comparative Arts and Letters: Professor Pope is an especially good fit for a faculty advisor, owing to his training in Classical Philology and Early Christianity from University of Chicago. I have written term papers for Prof. Pope on New Testament topics twice in the past, both of which involved the Marcan and Lucan passion narratives. Consequently, I am already familiar with the larger scholarly backdrop behind this topic and Prof. Pope and I are already accustomed to researching together.

Department Honors Coordinator: Professor Cecilia Peek, Department of Comparative Arts and Letters: Professor Peek's emphasis in Classical Historiography will offer a needed second perspective on our historical analysis of this text. While Professor Pope and I will mainly focus on literary and linguistic evidence in the text, Professor Peek on the other hand can give much-valued perspective into broader historical trends to consider.

Faculty Reader: Professor Thomas Wayment, Department of Comparative Arts and Letters: Professor Wayment is a known quantity on campus for his work in Early Christianity. His training and experience in this field are beyond question, by now in his career. I am thankful for his willingness to be a faculty reader for this project.

PROJECT TIMETABLE

JANUARY – 2019	-Complete section 1 of my research (see "project overview" above)
FEBRUARY 2019	-Complete section 2 of my research
MARCH 2019	-Complete section 3 of my research
APRIL 2019	-Defend my Honors Thesis
MAY-DEC 2019	-Submit paper to various journals (see "culminating experience")