

Why are there differences
in the Gospels?

WHY ARE THERE DIFFERENCES IN THE GOSPELS?

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM
ANCIENT BIOGRAPHY



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FOREWORD BY CRAIG A. EVANS

Which Genre?

A. Horror Fiction

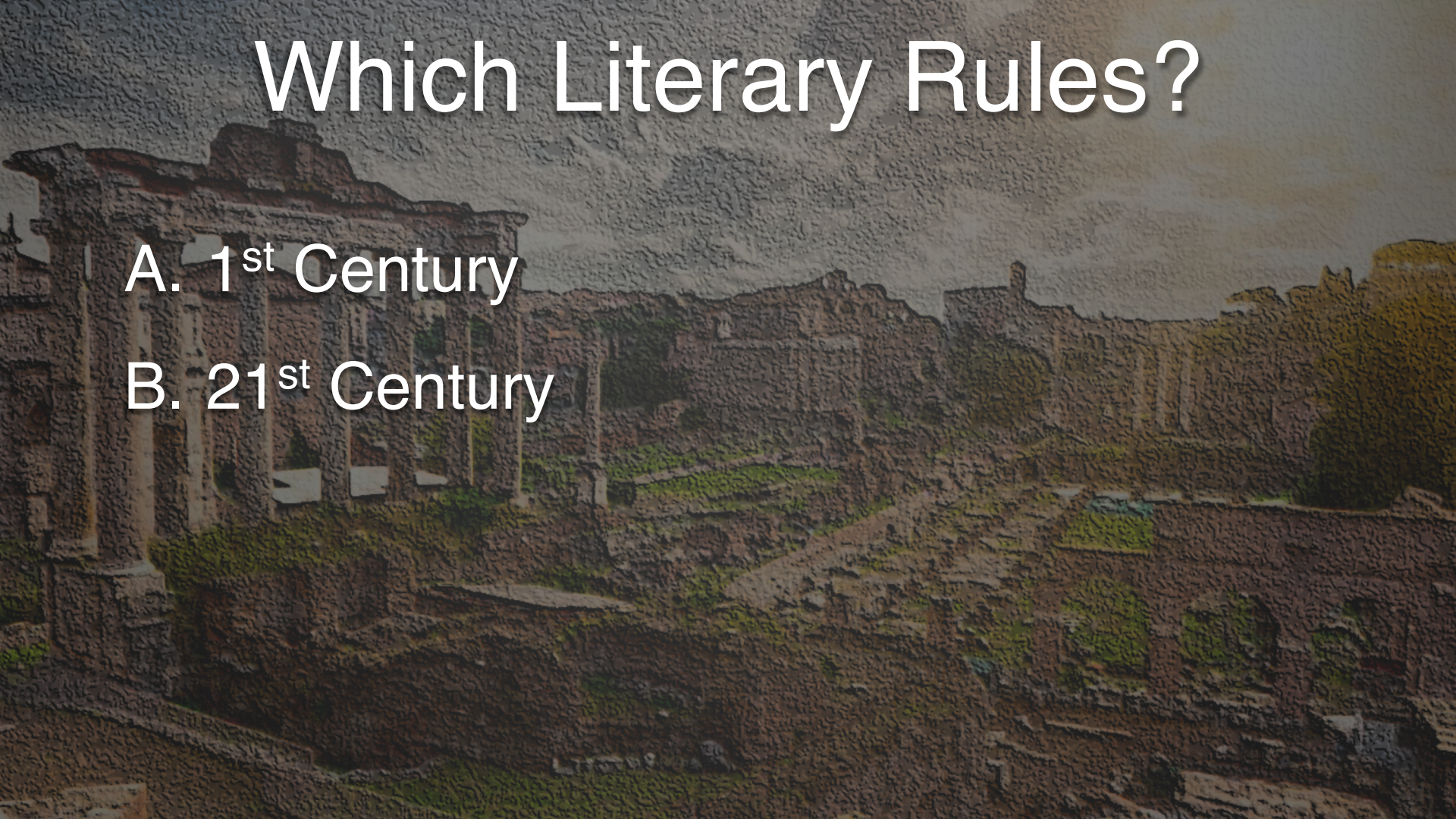
B. Poetry

C. Biography

Which Literary Rules?

A. 1st Century

B. 21st Century



Gospels are Biographies

- Focus is on main character rather than an era, event, or government.
- We learn something of the main character's ancestry and then move rapidly along to the beginning of their public life.

- Ancient biographies were of the same general length: 10,000-25,000 words.
- The main subject's character is illuminated through his words and deeds.

Jesus' Divinity in Mark?

- **Mark 1:** John the Baptist is the prophet who prepares the way for God (Isa. 40:3), who is Jesus
- **Mark 2:** Jesus forgives sins of the paralytic
- **Mark 3:** Jesus says his exorcisms demonstrate he has bound Satan and is plundering his kingdom

- ***Mark 4:*** Jesus calms the wind, something God does (Pss. 89, 107; Eccles 8)
- ***Mark 5:*** Jesus raises someone from the dead, something only God does (Eccles 8).

- **Mark 6:** Jesus walks on water, something only God can do (Job 9:8)
- **Mark 9:** Jesus casts out a demon after his disciples were unable because that kind only comes out by prayer to God. But Jesus did not pray.
- **Mark 12:** Jesus is not only David's son but also his Lord.

- ***Mark 12, 13:*** Jesus stands in a special relationship with God as his Son above all prophets, priests, kings, and even angels.
- ***Mark 12, 13, 14:*** Jesus is the apocalyptic Son of Man who will be worshipped and served in a manner that should otherwise be given only to God.

Ancient Biographers Took *Liberties*

Guy vs Girl version

Compositional Devices

2 Different Sources

Compositional Textbooks



“We have not only invented some additions
to the exercises as described by others,
but also we have tried to give
a definition of each.”

Theon, 59

“Training in exercises is absolutely useful, not only for those who are going to be orators, but also if anyone wants to be a poet or historian, or if he wants to acquire facility with some other form of writing. These things are, in effect, the foundation of every form of writing.”

Theon, 70, cf. 60

Paraphrase

“Paraphrase consists of changing the form of expression while keeping the thoughts. . . .

There are four main kinds: variation in syntax, by addition, by subtraction, and by substitution, plus combinations of these.”

Theon, 108

SYNTAX

(GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE)

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

SYNTAX

(GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE)

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

I heard Mike lecture, today.

ADDITION

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

ADDITION

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

Today, I heard Mike lecture
on Gospel differences.

SUBTRACTION

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

SUBTRACTION

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

I heard Mike lecture.

SUBSTITUTION

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

SUBSTITUTION

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

Today, I listened to Mike teach.

But wait! There's more!

“There are other ways of varying the content along the lines discussed in the chapter on **narration**; for example, recasting an assertion as a question, a question as a potentiality, and similarly other forms of expression that we mentioned.”

Theon, 109

Narrative

“narrative is characteristic of historians” (112)

“a history is nothing other than
a collection of narratives” (60)

“since we are accustomed to setting out the facts sometimes as making a straightforward statement and sometimes as doing something more than making a factual statement, and sometimes in the form of questions, and sometimes as things we seek to learn about, and sometimes as things about which we are in doubt, . . .

“and sometimes as making a command,
sometimes expressing a wish, and sometimes
swearing to something, sometimes addressing the
participants, sometimes advancing suppositions,
sometimes using dialogue, it is possible to
produce varied narrations in all these ways.”

Theon, 87

“If we wish to use a **dialogue form**, we shall suppose some people talking with each other about what has been done, and one teaching, the other learning, about the occurrences.”

Theon, 89

“**Thought** is not moved by any one thing in only one way so as to express the idea that has occurred to it in a similar form, but it **is stirred in a number of different ways**, and sometimes we are making a declaration, sometimes asking a question, sometimes making an inquiry, sometimes beseeching, and sometimes expressing out thought in some other way. . . .

“There is nothing to prevent what is imagined from being expressed equally well in all these ways. There is evidence of this in paraphrase by a poet of his own thoughts elsewhere or paraphrase by another poet and in the orators and historians, and, in brief, **all ancient writers seem to have used paraphrase** in the best possible way, rephrasing not only their own writings but those of each other.”

Theon, 62

“They kill the men, and fire levels the city, and some lead off children and others deep-zoned women.”
– *Homer (Odyssey 18.136-7; 9th c. BC?)*

“When we were on our way to Delphi, necessarily we saw all these things: houses destroyed, walls thrown down, a place deserted by those in the prime of life, few women and children, and pitiful old men.”
– *Demosthenes (19.65; 4th c. BC)*

“Look at their disasters in your imagination and think you are seeing their city captured, the throwing down of walls, burning of houses, temples robbed, women and children led into slavery, old men, old women learning late to forget liberty.” – *Aeschines* (3.157; 4th c. BC)

CHANGE STATEMENT TO QUESTION

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

CHANGE STATEMENT TO QUESTION

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

Did you know that I heard Mike
lecture today?

INFLECTION

Today, Mike gave a lecture.

INFLECTION

Today, Mike gave a lecture.

Today, Mike gave lectures.

INFLECTION

Today, Mike gave a lecture.

INFLECTION

Today, Mike gave a lecture. [DO]

Today, a lecture [s] was given by
Mike.

CREATE DIALOGUE

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

CREATE DIALOGUE

Today, I heard Mike lecture.

- ✧ What did you do today?
- ✧ I heard Mike lecture.
- ✧ How was it?
- ✧ Great! I learned some of the reasons why the Gospels often differ from one another.

Inflection

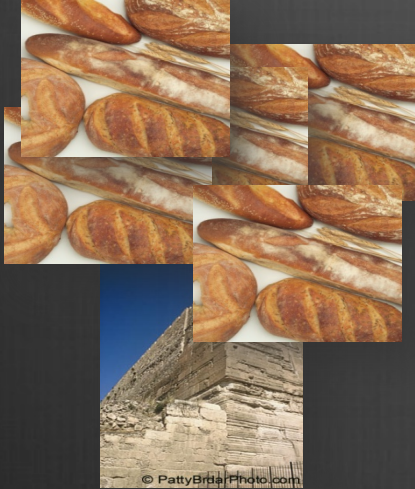
Matthew 4:1-11



Luke 4:1-13



Matthew 4:1-11



Luke 4:1-13



Parable of the Sower

- Mark: 30, 60, 100
- Matthew: 100, 60, 30
- Luke: 100



Jesus
Heals
Withered
Hand

Matt. 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6;
Luke 6:6-11

Matthew 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11

- In all 3 Gospels, this story comes immediately after the story of Jesus' disciples picking grain on the Sabbath. So, differences not because different occasions are being described.

Luke 6:6-11 (cf. Mark 3:1-6)

⁶ On another Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was withered.

⁷ And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse him. ⁸ But he knew their thoughts, and he said to the man with the withered hand . . .

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⁷ And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse him. ⁸ But **he knew their thoughts**, and he said to the man with the withered hand . . .

"Come and stand here." And he rose and stood there. . . . ⁹ And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?" ¹⁰ And after looking around at them all he said to him, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored. ¹¹ But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

Matthew 12:9-14

⁹ He went on from there and entered their synagogue. ¹⁰ And a man was there with a withered hand. And they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"-- so that they might accuse him. ¹¹ He said to them, "Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? . . ."

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Parable of Vineyard & Wicked Tenants



Matthew (21)	Mark (12)	Luke (20)
3 Servants (Beat, Kill, Stone)	1 Servant (Beat, Send Away)	1 Servant (Beat, Send Away)

Matthew (21)	Mark (12)	Luke (20)
3 Servants (Beat, Kill, Stone)	1 Servant (Beat, Send Away)	1 Servant (Beat, Send Away)
-	1 Servant (Struck Head, Treat Shamefully)	1 Servant (Beat, Treat Shamefully, Send Away)

Matthew (21)	Mark (12)	Luke (20)
3 Servants (Beat, Kill, Stone)	1 Servant (Beat, Send Away)	1 Servant (Beat, Send Away)
-	1 Servant (Struck Head, Treat Shamefully)	1 Servant (Beat, Treat Shamefully, Send Away)
-	1 Servant (Kill)	1 Servant (Wound, Cast Out)

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3+ Servants (Beat, Kill, Stone)	Many Others (Beat, Kill)	-

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3 Servants (Beat, Kill, Stone)	1 Servant (Beat, Send Away)	1 Servant (Beat, Send Away)
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-	1 Servant (Kill)	1 Servant (Wound, Cast Out)
3+ Servants (Beat, Kill, Stone)	Many Others (Beat, Kill)	-
Son (Kill)	Son (Kill, Cast Out)	Son (Cast Out, Kill)

Mark 12:9

“What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.”

Mark 12:9

“What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.”

Matt. 21:40-41

“So, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.”

Elaboration

“Elaboration [*exergasia*] is language that adds what is lacking in thought and expression.’ What is ‘lacking’ can be supplied by making clear what is obscure; by filling gaps in the language or content; by saying some things more strongly, or more believably, or more vividly, or more truly, . . .

“or more wordily—each word repeating the same thing--, or more legally, or more beautifully, or more appropriately, or more opportunely, or making the subject pleasanter, or using a better arrangement or a style more ornate.”

Theon, 110

Jesus on Divorce

Mark 10:1-12

- Pharisees ask Jesus if lawful to divorce wife
- Jesus asks, "What did Moses command to you?"
- Pharisees answer, "Moses permitted . . ."
- Jesus replies, "Because your hard hearts he wrote to you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, He made them male and female."

Matthew 19:1-12

- Pharisees ask Jesus if lawful to divorce wife
- Jesus answers, "Haven't you read that the One who created from the beginning made them male and female?"
- Pharisees reply, "Why then did Moses allow divorce?"
- Jesus answered, "Because of your hard hearts Moses allowed. But from the beginning it was not so."

Mark 10:1-12

- Pharisees ask Jesus if lawful to divorce wife
- Jesus asks, “What did Moses command to you?”
- Pharisees answer, “Moses permitted . . .” [statement]
- Jesus replies, “Because your hard hearts he wrote to you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, He made them male and female.” [statement]

Matthew 19:1-12

- Pharisees ask Jesus if lawful to divorce wife
- Jesus answers, “Haven’t you read that the One who created from the beginning made them male and female?” [question]
- Pharisees reply, “Why then did Moses allow divorce?” [question]
- Jesus answered, “Because of your hard hearts Moses allowed. But from the beginning it was not so.”

Mark 10:1-12

- “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

Matthew 19:1-12

- “Whoever divorces his wife, **except for sexual immorality**, and marries another, commits adultery.”

Jesus on Discipleship

Matthew 10:37

- “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and the one who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”

Luke 14:26

- “If someone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.”