Theology of the Synoptics

• Diagrams of the four gospels
• Higher criticism of the Synoptics
• Characteristics of the Synoptic Gospels

The Four Gospels: Mark

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By William Hull

The Four Gospels: Matthew

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Higher Criticism

- The evangelists are theologians, too.
- Redaction criticism - how the evangelists adapted ("edited") the Jesus material to suit their theological purposes (process).
- Composition criticism - the structure, contents, and themes of the Gospel document as a whole (end product).
- These two are often grouped together as "redaction criticism."
Higher Criticism

- Doing redaction criticism requires a theory of the literary relationship between the Gospels (the “Synoptic Problem”).
- Most common = “two-source hypothesis.”

“Two source hypothesis” and “four source hypothesis” solution to the Synoptic Problem:

```
  Mark ------- Q ------- M
  |         |         |
  L       Q       M
  |       |       |
  Luke   Matthew
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Q = Quelle (source); L = material unique to Luke; M = material unique to Matthew.

Characteristics of the Synoptics

- Characteristics of Mark?
Characteristics of the Synoptics

• Characteristics of Matthew?

Characteristics of the Synoptics

• Characteristics of Luke?

Characteristics of the Synoptics

• Compare Jesus’ teaching on nonresistance in Matthew and Luke.
  – What are the differences?
  – Why do you think these differences exist?
  – How may they reflect the distinctive concerns of Matthew and Luke?