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Title: The Synoptic Titles for Jesus

Authors: [Lock, William Joel](#)

Advisor: [Porter, Stanley E.](#)

Department: [Christian Studies](#)

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Abstract: This thesis consists of four chapters that concentrate on seven synoptic titles attributed to Jesus. Chapter one is an historical survey of how the synoptic Gospels have been studied from the second-century until today that specifically focuses on Augustine, Griesbach and the Two-Source hypotheses, Markan priority and redaction criticism. Chapter two is a redaction-critical survey that outlines additions, omissions and alterations made to the synoptic Titles Teacher, Son of Man, Lord, Messiah, Son of God, Son of David and Master. This chapter demonstrates that each Gospel author, for the needs of a new audience or different situation/audience, redacted the traditional material behind the Gospels including these titles. Chapter three specifically focuses on the narrative and exegetical value of three titles out of the seven titles (Teacher, Lord and Master). This chapter proposes that each title is used for specific purposes and in specific contexts to reveal unique theological contributions made by each synoptic evangelist. In chapter four, the results and conclusions from chapters two and three are applied to modern English translations questioning if translators do justice to Matthew, Mark and Luke's creativity. This chapter questions if Matthew's, Mark's and Luke's tendencies in the handling of traditional material are reflected in these translations or do English translations interpret, translate and/or redact in their own unique way(s)? To conclude, this thesis proposes, that, just as Matthew, Mark and Luke redacted certain titles for their new audience and situation, hermeneutically, Christians today must consider the relevance of the Gospel for their "new" audience and situation.

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Two names and a variety of titles are used to refer to Jesus in the New Testament. In Christianity, the two names Jesus and Emmanuel that refer to Jesus in the New Testament have salvific attributes. After the crucifixion of Jesus the early Church did not simply repeat his messages, but focused on him, proclaimed him, and tried to understand and explain his message. One element of the process of understanding and proclaiming Jesus was the attribution of titles to him. Some of the titles that were In the Synoptics Jesus' public career appears to have lasted less than one year, since only one Passover is mentioned, but in John three Passovers occur, implying a ministry of more than two years. In all four Gospels Jesus performs miracles, especially healings, but, while exorcisms are prevalent in the Synoptics, there are none in John. The Synoptic Gospels, then, are the primary sources for knowledge of the historical Jesus. They are not, however, the equivalent of an academic biography of a recent historical figure. Instead, the Synoptic Gospels are theological documents that provide information the authors regarded as necessary for the religious development of the Christian communities in which they worked.