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UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Many people have very strong opinions about what they believe the Bible teaches. And since there are so many different churches with different beliefs and different practices, it is clear that they cannot possibly all be right. In every disagreement about what the Bible means at least one party has to have it wrong; and at times all the parties involved may have it wrong. That is because nobody has perfect understanding of everything that relates to biblical statements and teachings.

One major source of such conflicts in understanding, even amongst the various churches of God, is THE VAST NUMBER OF MISTRANSLATIONS found in virtually every translation of the Bible that is available to us, including the KJV. When we read our particular translation of the Bible we typically assume that what we are reading is an accurate and faithful translation of what was originally recorded. And we may build strong arguments on "what the Bible says", when in fact our arguments are built on nothing more than a flawed translation of the original text, an error of which we were simply not aware.

A great many of the mistranslations in our English language Bibles can be traced back to the Latin Vulgate translation prepared by the Catholic scholar Jerome. Many mistranslations can be traced back even further to the Greek language LXX translation compiled by the Catholic scholar Origen, which translation was also a major source document for Jerome's Latin translation. While many English language translations have made use of the Hebrew text for the Old Testament and the Greek text for the New Testament (e.g. KJV, etc.), they were nevertheless heavily influenced by precedents that had been set by earlier translations from the Vulgate, as well as by "traditional understanding" of specific expressions found in the Greek or Hebrew texts.

As a result they have in many instances retained an incorrect, but traditionally accepted translation, rather than having translated LITERALLY the Hebrew or Greek text available to them. In most such cases the typical reader is not even aware of such incorrect translations. Even subtle (now where in Genesis have I seen that word before?) mistranslations can have a very profound impact on how we understand the Scriptures.

Another major source of conflicts in understanding is that we very easily interpret the Scriptures to fit in with our own ideas and the ideas that were inculcated into our minds as we grew up. We read meanings into specific verses that are in fact not contained in those verses at all! This may or may not involve an incorrect translation, but our "traditional understanding" prevents us from examining the Scripture involved at face value. When we have a strong bias that something simply "has to be right and true", then it is almost impossible for us to objectively examine any Scriptures that may possibly challenge that strong bias.

A simple case in point is the mistranslation found in 2 Timothy 3:16, which in the KJV reads: "ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, and is profitable for ...". That statement is something we WANT to believe, even if it is a mistranslation. A correct translation of the Greek adjective involved in this verse should make this text read: "ALL GOD-BREATHED SCRIPTURE is profitable for ...". The obvious implication of the correct translation of this verse is that NOT ALL Scripture is "God-breathed", or "God-inspired". Yet it is a part of the Bible; it is "Scripture".

Jesus Christ made exactly the same point when Satan came to tempt Him. We all know Jesus Christ's clear statement: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF

THE MOUTH OF GOD" (Matthew 4:4). The point is that not every word within the covers of the Bible has "proceeded out of the mouth of God". The statements that are "God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16) are EXACTLY the same statements that have "proceeded out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). But there are also many other things in the Bible, which have not come from God's mouth, and yet they are nevertheless a part of the Bible.

And in 2 Timothy 3:16 it is really the "God-breathed" sections of the Bible that the Apostle Paul was telling Timothy to use for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. Paul's focus in this statement was NOT "all Scripture", but "all GOD-BREATHED Scripture".

Now we don't like that limitation. It is somewhat unsettling and insecure for us to face the prospect of some statements or some sections in the Bible actually not being "God-inspired", because we have made a commitment to base our lives on what is contained in the Bible, and because we have always taken the incorrect translation of 2 Timothy 3:16 to be a fact beyond any question. So we WANT to believe that ALL Scripture is given by God's inspiration, and we simply block out of our minds any statements that call into question the things we want to believe.

I have discussed the mistranslation found in 2 Timothy 3:16 at great length in another article, and don't wish to do so here again. Rather, here I want to examine one particular application of the correct understanding of this verse.

If we want to correctly understand the Book of Luke, as well as all the other books in the Bible, we need to put aside our own prejudices and our own preconceived ideas.

THE REAL ISSUE

We need to be very clear about what parts of the Bible are "inspired" and what parts are only an expression of the thoughts of the respective authors of the various books of the Bible. It is taken as a given that the authors of all of the books of the Bible had the best intentions to present what is right and true and correct. It is also taken as a given that none of the authors of any of the books of the Bible had any ulterior motives for anything that they wrote in those books. And it is further taken as a given that what those authors wrote originally (in Hebrew or in Greek) had God's acceptance, including those parts that are not "God-breathed".

THE PURPOSE for being able to distinguish between "an infallibly inspired statement by Almighty God", and "a well-meaning statement by the human writer of a book" is NOT TO FIND FAULT! The purpose is NOT TO DO AWAY WITH ANYTHING, or to discredit anything. It also does not mean that the "well-meaning statements by the writers" are necessarily wrong in some way or other. The overwhelming majority of "non-inspired statements" in the Bible are in fact perfectly correct and accurate and factual; they are just "not inspired". That "not inspired" status does not affect the validity of the overwhelming majority of the biblical statements that fall into this category. But this category of statements is also responsible for the existence of some statements in the Bible that are technically speaking incorrect in some way or other.

In this specific case it is not a matter of discrediting the Book of Luke (or any other book of the Bible). Rather, it is a matter of understanding this book correctly, so that we don't use certain statements in this book, which in fact only reflect Luke's own level of understanding of what had taken place, to draw some TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED CONCLUSIONS! That is the real potential problem here: asserting that EVERY STATEMENT in the Gospel of Luke is "God-inspired" may allow people to draw conclusions that are clearly wrong. For example, I am aware of one case where someone has incorrectly altered the sequence of events at the annual observance of the Passover, based completely on some unjustified conclusions drawn from the Book of Luke, conclusions that actually stand in conflict with statements in

the other gospel accounts.

In this context I cannot overstate the importance of correctly discerning what statements in the gospels are "God-inspired", and what statements are nothing more than a reflection of the well-meant understanding and perspective of the authors involved. It is NOT a matter of trying to do away with or to discredit anything. It is simply a matter of BEING PROTECTED FROM DRAWING COMPLETELY WRONG CONCLUSIONS. For example, statements in the Gospel of Luke should NEVER be used to challenge and to contradict statements in any of the other gospels. It is that type of situation that a clear understanding of the difference between divine inspiration and statements made by the authors themselves is intended to avoid. And, even though not "inspired", such statements can still be factually correct, and overwhelmingly they ARE correct; but in some cases they may also be the result of the author's incomplete understanding of the facts.

So the real issue is as follows:

1) IF every word of Luke's Gospel (the same is true for the other gospel accounts as well) is supposed to be "inspired by God", then there cannot possibly be any details in the book that could be challenged for accuracy. God does not make mistakes and God does not contradict Himself. So there is no room for any flaws of any kind. It also leaves no room for any conflicts between Luke's gospel account and the other gospel accounts. All "apparent conflicts" must be able to be reconciled in some way or other, if every word in all of the gospel accounts was "inspired by God".

PROPONENTS OF THIS BELIEF ARE FORCED TO GO TO EXTREME LENGTHS IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO TRY TO RECONCILE ALL THOSE STATEMENTS THAT ARE CLEARLY CONTRADICTORY IN SOME WAY OR OTHER.

2) On the other hand, IF Luke's Gospel contains both, the inspired words of Jesus Christ, and also Luke's descriptions, in his own words, of what he fully believed was correct, then that would readily account for minor differences in the descriptions of some events, when compared to the parallel accounts found in the other gospels, whose authors also described those same events in THEIR own words. This is not to say or to imply that the basic information Luke and the other writers provide is wrong; it is not wrong.

What is in some cases slightly flawed is THE CONTEXT in which Luke presents the basically correct information; and possibly also some of the details pertaining to the basically correct information are presented in a less than perfect description. And in some cases an incomplete quotation of the words of Jesus Christ can create a different focus than the one we get when we view the more complete quotation as recorded in a different gospel. Such minor variations don't really cause any problems in grasping the significance of the situation, or the message involved in the situation, UNLESS people want to somehow draw major conclusions from this less than perfectly described context. And because such minor variations don't really prevent us from understanding the message involved, therefore God permitted such things to be included in "the Scriptures".

Below are over 70 examples to illustrate what I mean. Now perhaps 5 or 10 or 15 examples might have been enough to make the point. But because there is such a strong bias towards assuming that "every word in the Bible was inspired by God", I felt it necessary to go through the entire Gospel of Luke to highlight this large number of examples. Those people who desperately try to reconcile all "apparent contradictions" in the Bible might attempt to explain away 5 or 10 or 15 examples that challenge their position; but the greater part of the examples I have presented here simply cannot be explained away.

Some of the illustrations below are clearly more significant than others. Many other examples are included not to be seen as "proof" in themselves, but simply as supplementary information to illustrate in

fact how commonly this situation is found in the Bible.

So to make this quite clear: The examples below which I consider to be the "clearest" proof for the points I will make are: #1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 20, 26, 31, 32, 37, 38, 39, 42, 67, 72, 73, 74, 76.

The examples below that I consider to be "average" or "fair" in supporting the points I will make are: #3, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 33, 35, 36, 40, 41, 44, 46, 50, 53, 54, 60, 61, 65, 66, 71, 75.

All the "remaining" examples are simply included to show that this is a very common phenomenon, even when it in many cases does not actually have a major impact. I would not present these particular "remaining" examples as proof on their own, since for some of these particular examples it could easily be argued that Jesus Christ could perhaps have said it "both ways". It is the "clearest" and the "average" or "fair" examples that expose the flaws in this "both ways" approach, not the "remaining" additional examples.

In going through the entire Gospel of Luke, I felt that I should highlight all of the places where there are conflicts of some kind or other with the other gospel accounts. I understand that some people will try to find ways to reconcile these conflicts, and to relegate them to the status of being only "apparent conflicts". If you really want to take that approach, then I am not going to argue with you about those cases that fall into the category of "remaining" examples. It is the "clearest" examples and the "fair" examples enumerated above that amply make the point; and all the others simply further illustrate this trend.

After we have examined all these examples, we should be able to draw some conclusions. As you go through these examples, I suspect that you too will be able to see that some things in the Bible were not really "inspired by God". However, I also suspect that you will be somewhat surprised as to the final conclusions that I will present, regarding why God has very clearly allowed many things to be included in the Bible that were not even "inspired by God". Yet they are assuredly parts of the Bible. Please keep an open mind until you come to those conclusions.

Let's now notice the following examples of what I mean.

EXAMPLES FROM THE BOOK OF LUKE

Here is a list of some examples which illustrate that the information in those examples is presented in the writers' own words and with their own levels of understanding, rather than being presented in words which God somehow "inspired" the writers to record verbatim.

1) LUKE 4:1-13 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 4:1-11

When Satan came to tempt Jesus Christ, Matthew lists the sequence of the three temptations as: 1. tempted to turn stones into bread, 2. tempted to commit suicide by jumping off a pinnacle of the temple, 3. tempted to fall down and worship Satan.

Luke changes this sequence of temptations as follows: 1. tempted to turn stones into bread, 2. tempted to fall down and worship Satan, 3. tempted to commit suicide by jumping off a pinnacle of the temple.

Now while both accounts list the same three temptations, and therefore both present the same basic information, they cannot possibly both be correct as far as THE SEQUENCE of these three temptations is concerned. If one sequence is right, then the other sequence is not right. Therefore the precise wording in at least one account is definitely not "inspired". Both sequences cannot possibly have been

"inspired" by God.

However, while THE SEQUENCE of events presented by Luke is different from the sequence of events presented by Matthew, the actual "GOD-BREATHED" statements of Jesus Christ in response to all three temptations are the same (ignoring the very minor omission of the phrase "that proceeds out of the mouth" in Luke 4:4 when compared to Matthew 4:4) in both accounts. Thus there is no problem with any "God-breathed Scripture" in these particular accounts. But equally clearly THE CONTEXTS in which the authors have presented these "God-breathed" statements were provided by the authors AT THEIR OWN DISCRETION. I get the distinct impression that it didn't bother God that Luke was slightly confused regarding the sequence in which these three events took place, because Luke's slight confusion doesn't change anything regarding what God wants us to learn from these events. So Luke's slight confusion was probably a non-issue to God.

By way of explanation: these three temptations represent a build-up. From God's perspective the temptation to worship Satan represented the most serious temptation of all, and that is the sequence in which it really happened (i.e. Matthew's account). But from the perspective of many people in the Church who heard this story the temptation to commit suicide seemed the most serious temptation of the three. Thus in some cases Church members repeated this story with the changed sequence for these three temptations. Luke, who got all of his information about Christ's ministry from other people, heard the story with this changed sequence, and therefore recorded it in that way. Luke got his information from "eyewitnesses" of Christ's ministry, but these three temptations by Satan were not witnessed by anybody else. The whole incident happened without any spectators.

2) LUKE 5:33 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 9:14 AND TO MARK 2:18

The situation was as follows: the disciples of John the Baptist and also the disciples of the Pharisees would fast quite often. But the disciples of Jesus Christ were at that point in time not fasting very often. So the disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus Christ with a question.

Matthew 9:14 and Mark 2:18 has them asking Jesus Christ the question: why do the disciples of John and also of the Pharisees fast often but Your disciples FAST NOT?

Luke has added the statement "and make prayers". And then Luke has changed the last part of the statement to read: but Yours EAT AND DRINK.

The meaning of the statement Luke presents is certainly identical to the statements Matthew and Mark have presented. However, the actual words "but Your disciples fast not" are clearly different from the words "but Yours eat and drink". It is a different focus. The statement "Yours don't fast" focuses on Christ's disciples NOT ABSTAINING from food, a focus on what they were NOT DOING. The statement "Yours eat and drink" focuses on what Christ's disciples WERE DOING, eating and drinking".

There is no problem with the accuracy of the information presented in all three accounts. And it can certainly be argued, successfully so, that the complete statement by John's disciples could have included both phrases (i.e. "Your disciples fast not, but they eat and drink"), and that each writer is only presenting a part of what was said. And so I don't present this example as "proof" for anything. I present this example simply to illustrate that God permits and accepts a writer using his own perception to describe an event, or, put another way, to be selective in what information he presents. The writer's own personal way of recording what took place is not necessarily "inspired", but it is a basically correct picture of what took place or what was said, and it certainly had God's acceptance for being included in the Bible.

This is something we find throughout the entire Bible. Writers have recorded the words of God, and they

have recorded their own thoughts, and they have recorded their own descriptions of events that took place. The Book of Revelation is a clear example of this. The Apostle John tells us that he recorded "the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, AND (OF) ALL THE THINGS THAT HE SAW" (Revelation 1:2). In verse 11 of chapter 1 God specifically instructed John: "what you see write in a book". God was instructing John to USE HIS OWN WORDS to describe the things he would see, in addition to recording the inspired words of God the Father and of Jesus Christ that he would hear.

Luke's statement in Luke 5:33 is just one example of this latitude that God has allowed. The only place where God does not permit such latitude is when we are dealing with "thus says the LORD" statements (as recorded in the O.T.), which God required to be recorded verbatim.

3) LUKE 6:5 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 12:5-8 AND TO MARK 2:27-28

The situation was as follows: the disciples had been walking through the fields on the Sabbath and they had eaten a few ears of grain as they walked along. This action was being criticized by the Pharisees. In response to this criticism Jesus Christ referred to the incident of David eating the "shewbread".

In Luke 6:5 Luke wrote: "And He said to them, that the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath". Now it is not just that Luke's account here is a little shorter. The real point is that Luke's account actually displays a lack of understanding the situation that took place. Luke's account leaves the reader hanging in the air asking WHY did Jesus Christ make this statement? Christ's statement is A CONCLUSION, and Luke completely omits the reasoning leading up to that conclusion, thereby presenting an incomplete picture.

Matthew's record of Jesus Christ's statement "if you had known what this means, I will have mercy and not sacrifice" in Matthew 12:7 places Jesus Christ's statement about being "Lord of the Sabbath" into a totally different perspective. Similarly, Mark's statement about "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" also places Christ's statement about being "Lord of the Sabbath" into a different perspective from what we find in Luke's account.

This again illustrates the latitude God has allowed the writers, with Matthew and Mark presenting slightly different perspectives from one another for that same event. No doubt the statements recorded by both of them were made by Jesus Christ in the course of that discussion.

To summarize this point: there is no problem with the accuracy of Luke's statement here, but his account creates a rather incomplete picture for the reader, by leaving out all the reasoning that led up to Christ's statement about being "Lord of the Sabbath". Such an incomplete picture is surely not the result of "God's inspiration". It is really the result of Luke's incomplete grasp of the whole situation that had taken place.

4) LUKE 6:20 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:3

Luke 6:20 is the start of Luke's account of what is known as "the sermon on the mount", recorded in Matthew chapters 5-7.

Luke's statement says: "blessed be ye poor, for your's is the kingdom of God". But Matthew 5:3 says: "blessed are the poor IN SPIRIT, for their's is the kingdom of heaven". The point here is that Luke's statement creates a completely wrong picture! There is a vast difference between being "poor" and being "poor in spirit". The unqualified description "poor" implies a lack of finances, means and resources. It refers to the physical material things. The expression "poor in spirit", on the other hand, creates a completely different picture. The expression "poor in spirit" refers to an attitude and a character trait, totally independent of any material qualifications. People who are physically "poor" are not necessarily "poor in spirit" at all, and neither are people who are "poor in spirit" necessarily physically poor.

Comparing "poor" with "poor in spirit" is like comparing apples with onions. Luke's account allows readers to draw some wrong conclusions about Jesus Christ's statements regarding "the poor".

We can hardly attribute Luke's incomplete, and thereby somewhat misleading statement to God's "inspiration". This incomplete statement by Luke (i.e. "blessed be ye poor") is a clear example of the descriptions provided in the gospel accounts being simply reflections of the understanding and grasp of the situations of the respective authors. And in this instance Luke didn't really fully understand what Jesus Christ was actually speaking about when He made this statement about "the poor".

We should never confuse being "poor" with being "poor in spirit".

5) LUKE 6:21 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:4, 6

Luke again creates a wrong picture. Luke reports Jesus Christ as saying "blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be filled", implying that physical hunger is somehow good or a blessing. But that is not what Jesus Christ was saying at all.

Matthew correctly records Jesus Christ as saying "blessed are they which do hunger and thirst AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS, for they shall be filled".

Again, there is a vast difference between being physically hungry now and "hungering after righteousness". Luke was not present during Jesus Christ's ministry, and his understanding, based on what other people had told him years later, was somewhat incomplete. And that incomplete understanding resulted in Luke presenting a vastly different perspective from the correct perspective that Matthew recorded here.

Again, we can hardly attribute Luke's incomplete statement here to God's "inspiration".

Luke also wrote: "blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh". This is also a somewhat altered version of Jesus Christ's correctly reported statement "blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted".

It is not that Jesus Christ somehow said it both ways, the words Matthew has recorded, and also the words Luke has recorded. Matthew, one of the original 12 apostles, has recorded the correct words of Jesus Christ, and Luke has recorded those same words as they were reported to him by other people. What we see in Luke's account is that even a small change in the actual words that were spoken can result in a completely different focus.

Jesus Christ's focus was on attitude and on character, independent of physical circumstances. Thus He spoke about being poor "IN SPIRIT", and about hungering and thirsting "AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS". By the time Luke heard these things they had been given a physical and material focus; thus Luke reports Jesus Christ as speaking about "being poor" and about "hungering now" and about "weeping now".

Luke's unintentionally incomplete quotations have given a misleading focus to the words of Jesus Christ. That is the exact same way all of us would understand those words if we were presented with the same incomplete quotations. Again we cannot really attribute Luke's incomplete quotations here to having been "inspired" by God.

6) LUKE 6:22 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:11

The correct quotation of Jesus Christ's words in this case is found in Matthew 5:11, which reads: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against

you FALSELY, for my sake".

Luke's account here presents a paraphrase of the above statement, the way it had been orally preserved by people in the Church. Luke states: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake." Jesus Christ's words of "revile, persecute, and say evil against you" have been altered to read "hate, separate, reproach and cast out". The meaning is basically the same. However, Luke's account has left out one significant factor.

It is not just that people may speak against us in one way or another, as is implied in Luke's account. The really important thing here is that we are reproached FALSELY, as is recorded by Matthew. There are many evil people in the world (mass murderers, tyrants, etc.), and such people are also reviled and they have many evil things said against them, but their reviling is fully deserved. The key for a blessing coming from having to cope with such reviling is when the reviling is totally undeserved. And THAT focus (i.e. being FALSELY accused) is absent from Luke's account.

Again, this absence is surely not attributable to God's divine inspiration.

7) LUKE 6:27-28 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:43-44

In Matthew 5:43 we have an introduction to a new topic. It had been said that we should love our neighbor and hate our enemy. This introduction presents the platform for what follows. Luke omits this introductory statement and thus does not prepare his readers for the point that will be made.

Luke also changes the sequence of things in this statement.

MATTHEW records Jesus Christ saying that to love our enemies amounts to: 1) bless them, 2) do good to them, 3) pray for them. LUKE changes this sequence of loving our enemies amounting to: 1) do good to them, 2) bless them, 3) pray for them.

Now the information in both accounts is the same. And the sequence in which these three points are presented is not really important. All three points taken together amount to expressing love towards our enemies. However, IF Jesus Christ did say those three points in the sequence recorded by Matthew, THEN Jesus Christ did not say them in the sequence recorded by Luke. Only one of those two sequences can be correct.

Again, it is clear that Luke recorded the correct information, but not in the correct sequence. And it makes no difference as far as what God wants us to learn is concerned. But it illustrates that God didn't somehow "inspire" Luke to record a different sequence for these three points.

8) LUKE 6:29 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:39-40

These verses deal with people "smiting us on one cheek" and "taking our cloke". Again Luke has presented this information in the wrong sequence.

Matthew presents these statements (i.e. verses 39-40) BEFORE Christ spoke about loving our enemies (i.e. verse 44). In effect these statements are a part of the build-up to speaking about how to treat our enemies.

Luke, on the other hand, presents these statements (i.e. verse 29) AFTER Christ spoke about loving our enemies (i.e. verses 27-28).

There is no problem with the information presented in both accounts. However, both sequences cannot be correct. EITHER Jesus Christ said these statements before speaking about dealing with enemies, or He said them after speaking about dealing with enemies. And there is no way that God would somehow have "inspired" both of these sequences.

Matthew was an eyewitness of Jesus Christ's ministry, and Luke's information was based on second-hand reports. Both present the correct information, but only Matthew also got the sequence correct. Luke presented the correct information in the wrong sequence. That is not really a problem, but neither is it inspiration.

Furthermore, in this context Luke also omits one key ingredient. Luke simply says: "him that takes away your cloke, forbid not to take your coat also". That implies something Jesus Christ had not intended to convey. Luke does not provide any context or any limitations for this statement.

Matthew provides the correct CONTEXT in which this statement is to be understood. Matthew records Jesus Christ as saying: "IF ANY MAN WILL SUE YOU AT THE LAW, and take away your coat, let him have your cloke also".

That presents a totally different situation than the carte blanche statement "him that takes away your cloke". [Did you notice that Luke has also reversed the "coat-cloke" sequence?] Jesus Christ's statement was not intended to have a carte blanche application. It was aimed at dealing with a lawsuit in which we, the defendants, are clearly the guilty party. If we were innocent, then those who would sue us wouldn't get our "coat" in the first place, and therefore we wouldn't offer them the cloke either.

The point Jesus Christ was really making, as correctly recorded by Matthew, was that when we are pushed to make good any losses we have caused someone else, then we should really make full reparations for the damage we have caused, rather than trying to get away with making the least possible reparations for our actions. The whole matter was presented in a legal context. This context is completely lost in Luke's account. That loss is hardly due to divine inspiration.

9) LUKE 6:30 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:42

The context of Matthew 5 makes clear that Jesus Christ was speaking about situations in which some people have certain legal claims over us. Verse 40 speaks about people suing us at law, implying that we are to some degree guilty of something. Verse 41 speaks about someone compelling us to walk with them, referring to the legal right a Roman had to compel a Jew to carry his load for one mile. Verse 42 is still in the same basic vein. Verse 42 reads: "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

Luke presents the same statement as follows: "Give TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ASK [THEM] NOT AGAIN.

Jesus Christ was speaking about two categories of situations. There were those who would "ask" us for something, implying a certain legal right to ask for those things; and then there were those who did not have the same legal rights to ask for something, and they therefore wanted "to borrow" something.

In this context the word "ask" implies that we will not receive back the thing we give; and the word "borrow" implies that we fully expect to get back the thing we are lending to someone. That is the meaning of Christ's statement as recorded by Matthew.

However, Luke has dramatically changed the meaning of Christ's statement. First of all, Luke has changed "to him that asks" into "TO EVERY MAN that asks". Luke has changed Christ's statement into

something that has no limitations, implying that it applies to all possible situations. That was not what Christ's statement in Matthew implied.

Next, Luke has changed "from him that would borrow" into "HIM THAT TAKES AWAY". That is also a major change! When Jesus Christ said "borrow" He did not mean "him that TAKES AWAY". And when Jesus Christ said that we should not hold back from lending something to someone, that is not the same as not asking such people to return our goods to us. Luke has taken Jesus Christ's statement, as recorded in Matthew 5:42, far further than was intended by Jesus Christ.

It would be a mistake to claim "divine inspiration" for Luke's statement in Luke 6:30, and at the same time relegate Matthew's statements in Matthew 5:42 to a subordinate status. Seen in isolation Luke 6:30 creates a wrong picture. The only correct way to understand Luke 6:30 is to subordinate Luke's statement to the one recorded by the eyewitness Matthew.

10) LUKE 6:31-32

Luke 6:31 is a concluding summary statement for a certain part of the sermon on the mount. Luke's statement of "as you would that men should do to you, do you also to them likewise" is the parallel of Matthew 7:12, which reads "whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them". This is now in the last part of the sermon on the mount in Matthew's account.

But the next verse, Luke 6:32, goes back to Matthew 5:46. So Luke once again has a correct statement in the wrong context. Luke 6:32 reads "for if you love them which love you, what thank have you? For sinners also love those that love them." And Matthew 5:46 reads "for if you love them which love you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans the same?"

These two verses are clearly intended to be a quotation of the one same statement by Jesus Christ. Yet Luke records this statement in a different context from the one in which Matthew records this statement.

There is one other thing to notice in these two verses.

Matthew correctly records Jesus Christ as saying "do not even THE PUBLICANS the same?". Luke INCORRECTLY has Jesus Christ saying "for SINNERS also love those that love them".

In this context Jesus Christ used the word "publicans", as correctly recorded by the eyewitness Matthew. The word "publicans" was a term that identified "tax collectors", a group that was generally hated by most people. Matthew himself had been such a "publican"; i.e. Matthew had been a tax collector, and he surely recorded this statement correctly. But by the time this account reached Luke, the word "publicans" had been replaced by the word "sinners", which Luke then included in his account.

Once again, it should be clear that God did not somehow "inspire" Matthew to record the word "publicans", and then also "inspire" Luke to record the word "sinners" for the supposed same quotation from Jesus Christ. "Publicans" was the correct designation for a certain specific segment of society, whereas "sinners" was the rather derogatory designation the Pharisees applied to the greater part of the general population. Before God ALL human beings are "sinners", and it seems highly unlikely that in this context Jesus Christ would have used this pharisaical term "sinners" to refer to a specific limited segment of society.

11) LUKE 6:34

Here Luke's statement does not make sense. This verse reads: "And IF YE LEND to them OF WHOM YE HOPE TO RECEIVE, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again."

The point is that we can either "give" something away, or we can "lend" something to somebody. But the word "lend" ALWAYS implies that we hope to get back the thing we have lent to someone. Ideally we should hope to receive back our goods from EVERYBODY that we lend to, not just from a select few borrowers. This verse here seems to be Luke's version of Matthew 5:42 (i.e. don't turn away from those who want to borrow from us).

It seems highly unlikely that God would somehow have "inspired" Luke to record this statement, when Matthew 5:42 very clearly records Jesus Christ speaking about the same subject with a different focus.

12) LUKE 6:35 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:45

Luke 6:35 has Jesus Christ repeating the statement "love your enemies" from verse 27, and as also recorded in Matthew 5:44. However, once again Luke introduces a slightly different focus into the words of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:45 records Jesus Christ as saying "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise ON THE EVIL AND ON THE GOOD, and sendeth rain ON THE JUST AND ON THE UNJUST."

Luke 6:35 has Jesus Christ saying "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto THE UNTHANKFUL AND [TO] THE EVIL."

These verses are intended to represent the same quotation from Jesus Christ. The point Jesus Christ made in Matthew 5:45 is A CONTRAST. God provides light and rain (i.e. the essentials for life) for two categories of people, the evil and the good, also referred to as the just and the unjust.

This contrast is totally lost in Luke's quotation. Luke only lists two categories of evil people: the unthankful and the evil. Luke has totally left out the positive category comprised of the good and the just. Luke's quotation of the words of Jesus Christ is not as balanced, as is Matthew's quotation.

Once again, we can hardly imply divine inspiration for Luke's incomplete quotation of the words of Jesus Christ in this instance.

13) LUKE 6:36 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:48

The context makes clear that Luke 6:36 is Luke's version of Matthew 5:48.

Now in Matthew 5:48 Jesus Christ said "be you therefore PERFECT even as ...", while in Luke 6:36 Christ is reported as saying "be you therefore MERCIFUL as ...".

Now "merciful" is a logical follow-on after having talked about loving our enemies, and I have no objection at all against the concept expounded by this verse. But the point is that it is not necessarily an accurate reflection of what Jesus Christ actually said. Did He say "be you therefore PERFECT", or did He say "be you therefore MERCIFUL"? Both statements are good principles we should heed, but only one of them was said by Jesus Christ in that context.

Again, when we view this variance here we are hardly dealing with divine inspiration of every word recorded in every gospel account.

14) LUKE 6:39 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 15:12-15

Luke 6:39 reads: "And he spake a parable unto them, CAN THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND? shall they not BOTH FALL INTO THE DITCH?"

This is Luke's record of the parable recorded in Matthew 15:12-15, which reads: "Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: THEY BE BLIND LEADERS OF THE BLIND. And if the blind lead the blind, BOTH SHALL FALL INTO THE DITCH. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable."

Luke presents this parable in the context of the sermon on the mount, but Matthew presents this parable in A MUCH LATER CONTEXT. The proof that Matthew's context is the correct one is Peter's request "declare unto us this parable". IF Jesus Christ had already given the same parable much earlier, as is implied by Luke's account, THEN Peter would not have asked for an explanation at this later stage.

So Luke has presented some correct information in a completely wrong context. Luke's lack of complete understanding here is also exposed by Luke's complete omission of any context for why Jesus Christ gave this parable. Matthew shows that the reason why Jesus Christ gave this parable was because some Pharisees had taken offense at what Christ had said. But Luke was not aware of that context, and therefore omitted it. And being unaware of the correct context for this parable, Luke simply associated it with the teachings Jesus Christ gave at the sermon on the mount.

The information Luke has provided is good, but the context in which it is presented by Luke was hardly "inspired".

15) LUKE 6:41

This verse reads: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"

With this statement Luke is clearly back into the context of the sermon on the mount, this being the identical quotation as Matthew 7:3.

This highlights how Luke 6:39 is completely out of context, and therefore not a quotation of any statement Jesus Christ made in the sermon on the mount.

16) LUKE 6:43 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 7:15-18

Luke 6:43 reads: "For A GOOD TREE BRINGETH NOT FORTH CORRUPT FRUIT; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

That is another correct statement, but with an omission of the context in which Jesus Christ made this statement. Luke has this statement following the statement about casting the beam out of our own eyes; however, bringing forth good or corrupt fruit has nothing to do with "casting out a beam". So Luke's readers are left with the question: WHY did Christ make this statement about not bringing forth fruit that is incompatible with the tree involved in producing that fruit?

Matthew provides the correct context and the reason for this statement. Matthew shows Jesus Christ first giving a warning about false prophets in verse 15. This is followed by the reasoning that we will be able to identify them by the fruits they produce (verse 16). Then Christ pointed out that good trees produce good fruits and corrupt trees produce evil fruit (verse 17). This is still in the context of identifying false prophets. It is only after providing this whole context that Matthew 7:18 then states:"A GOOD TREE

CANNOT BRING FORTH EVIL FRUIT, neither [can] a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

From Luke's incomplete account a reader would not know that this statement was really aimed at identifying and dealing with false prophets. Again, we can hardly attribute this incomplete picture to God's inspiration.

17) LUKE 6:44-45 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 12:33-35

This verse reads: "FOR EVERY TREE IS KNOWN BY HIS OWN FRUIT. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes."

While this may seem like a follow-on to the previous verse, and no doubt this is how it appeared to Luke himself, it is in fact a quotation from something Jesus Christ said in a much later context in Matthew 12.

In Matthew 12 the Pharisees accused Jesus Christ of performing healings by the power of Satan (Matthew 12:24), an extremely serious accusation. In response to this accusation Jesus Christ gave a warning about committing the unpardonable sin (verses 31-32). The context was that of "a good fruit" (i.e. the healing of sick people) being falsely attributed by the Pharisees to "a corrupt tree" (i.e. supposedly coming from Satan's power). These two opposites cannot be reconciled. And that is why Jesus Christ then said in Matthew 12:33:

"Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: FOR THE TREE IS KNOWN BY [HIS] FRUIT."

The "either-or" situation referred to the fact that BOTH, the tree and its fruit, must be "either of God or of Satan". But it cannot be a mix of God and Satan, as the Pharisees inferred (by attributing a good healing to a bad source).

Luke's following statement in Luke 6:45, about bringing forth good or evil treasures out of the heart, is the same as the following statement in Matthew 12:35, thereby confirming that Luke was really quoting something Jesus Christ said in the context of Matthew 12, and not something that Christ had said in the sermon on the mount.

So we have the following situation recorded by Matthew, the eyewitness of Christ's ministry:

First, in the sermon on the mount, Jesus Christ warned people about false prophets. He explained that we can differentiate between good prophets and false prophets by looking at the fruits they produce, because a good tree CANNOT bring forth evil fruit, and a corrupt tree CANNOT bring forth good fruit.

Much later the Pharisees accused Jesus Christ of performing healings by the power of Satan, and in that context Jesus Christ spoke about RECONCILING a tree with its fruit, and about bringing into the open the good or evil treasures of the heart. We must be logical in evaluating the facts (in that case, a perfectly good healing).

While Jesus Christ spoke about trees and fruits in both those situations, they actually had a completely different focus for each occasion. This different focus escaped Luke, and he blended both these situations into one account within the context of his discussion of the sermon on the mount.

That's not really a problem, and it doesn't necessarily detract from the principles Jesus Christ was explaining; but it also is not something that would suggest divine inspiration for Luke's account. It is simply Luke's attempt at trying to piece together all the information he had learned from different sources over a number of years.

18) LUKE 6:46 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 7:21

We are coming to the end of the record about the sermon on the mount. In Matthew 7:24-27 we have Jesus Christ's analogy to building a house either on rock or on sand. This same point is also made in Luke 6:47-49. So Luke 6:46 and Matthew 7:21 are the statements made immediately before the end of the sermon on the mount.

Luke 6:46 reads: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Matthew 7:21 reads: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

While these statements report the same subject matter, they do so from different perspectives. Matthew's statement has a POSITIVE focus. That focus is that those who DO God's will are also going to be in God's kingdom. Luke's statement has a NEGATIVE focus. That focus is on those who DON'T DO God's will.

The two statements make the same point, but from different perspectives. Again, that difference is hardly due to divine inspiration.

19) THE WHOLE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

In Matthew's Gospel the sermon on the mount goes from Matthew 5:1 - 7:29, covering approximately 110 verses. In Luke's Gospel the sermon on the mount goes from Luke 6:20-49, covering about 30 verses. But within those 30 verses Luke has also included statements from Jesus Christ that are recorded in Matthew chapters 10, 12 and 15.

While there is no problem with some of Jesus Christ's statements appearing in the wrong context in Luke's gospel account, this type of thing is surely not evidence of "divine inspiration" for Luke's account?

It is a matter of understanding that Luke used his own mind to report as accurately as he knew how the things he had learned about the ministry of Jesus Christ. And simply because some information is presented in the wrong context, that does not somehow negate the intrinsic value of that information.

That is precisely why God included FOUR gospel accounts in the Scriptures. With four different accounts of basically the same events, God has given us the tools to put the whole picture together, even if there are minor discrepancies between these four gospels regarding some of the details pertaining to specific events and occasions.

Consider this:

We don't have four different accounts for the stories of Genesis or Exodus, or for the prophecies of Isaiah or Jeremiah or Ezekiel. When God has DIRECTLY INSPIRED something, then there is no need to have two or three or four accounts of basically the same material. To do so would imply that one "directly inspired account" would somehow not be enough.

It is precisely because God required human beings to use their own minds to record, as faithfully as they knew how, certain events that they had witnessed or which had been reported to them, that God saw to it that "the Scriptures" would include TWO accounts of the history of the nations of Israel and Judah (i.e. the books of Samuel and Kings and Chronicles). By providing two different accounts of basically the same period of time, God has given us the means to piece together the history of the two kingdoms, with both nations eventually going into national captivities.

And likewise, for a record of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ God saw to it that the Scriptures would include FOUR accounts of basically the same events. These different accounts enable us to put the whole picture of Christ's ministry together. Had any one of those four gospels been inspired by God to record the exact words that God wanted recorded, and only those exact words, then God would surely not have inspired another writer to record slightly different words to describe the exact same events. If God had one writer record the story exactly, word for word, as God wanted it recorded, then any other accounts of the same events would be superfluous.

These differences between Luke's Gospel and the other accounts we are examining here are the proof of this point. God provided us with four gospel accounts, with each writer recording things as accurately as he knew how, so that we would be able to have a more complete picture than if we had access to only one account of Christ's life and ministry.

Let's continue with our examples from Luke's Gospel.

20) LUKE 7:1-10 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 8:5-13

This is the account of Jesus Christ healing the servant of a centurion.

Luke 7:3 reads: "And when he heard of Jesus, HE SENT UNTO HIM THE ELDERS OF THE JEWS, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant."

But Matthew 8:5 reads: "And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, THERE CAME UNTO HIM A CENTURION, beseeching him,"

So Matthew, who was an eyewitness of Christ's ministry, says that the centurion himself came to Jesus Christ. But Luke, who only heard the story much later from other people, says that the centurion himself did not come to Christ, but that he sent an impressive delegation of "elders".

Luke 7:4-5 says that these elders put in a good word for the centurion, listing some of his good deeds. Matthew 8:6 has the centurion himself in person appealing to Jesus Christ for his servant, without any references to any of the centurion's "good works".

In Matthew 8:7 Jesus Christ responds to the centurion himself, saying that He would go and heal the servant. But Luke 7:6 has the centurion watching out of the door or window of his house to see if Jesus Christ would actually come. When he then sees Christ coming, he is fully prepared for sending another delegation, this time "friends", to meet Jesus Christ and to give Him a message. The message must also have been prepared in advance, so that the "friends" could know what they were supposed to say to Jesus Christ. Luke makes the centurion appear very reluctant to meet Jesus Christ in person.

The rest of the story is basically the same in both accounts. But here are the differences.

Matthew's account has the centurion himself coming to Jesus Christ. This in itself was an expression of humility, the chief Roman official in the area coming to this "Jewish preacher". Matthew shows Jesus Christ responding to the man himself, and being pleasantly surprised by the man's attitude and perception.

Luke's account, on the other hand, implies that Jesus Christ never actually saw the centurion himself. Supposedly Jesus Christ only saw two different sets of delegates the centurion had sent to Him.

One other point to notice in Luke's account is the following:

Luke 7:3 reads: "And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, BESEECHING HIM THAT HE WOULD COME and heal his servant." So Luke pictures the centurion first asking Jesus Christ to come to his house.

But Luke 7:6 reads: "Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, TROUBLE NOT THYSELF: FOR I AM NOT WORTHY THAT THOU SHOULDEST ENTER UNDER MY ROOF." This represents a change of heart on the part of the centurion: first he asks Jesus Christ to come, and then he says "don't come". This change of heart doesn't really make sense.

Matthew 8:6-8, on the other hand, does not contain such a change in the man's request. The centurion himself asked Jesus Christ for healing, but he did NOT ask Christ to actually "come" to do the healing. Verse 7 shows Jesus Christ OFFERING to come to the man's house. It is in response to that offer that the centurion then made the statement that he did not feel worthy for Jesus Christ to come into his home. Matthew's account gives no indication that the centurion at any point had wanted Jesus Christ to actually come to his house, unlike the statement in Luke 7:3.

It should be clear that both accounts cannot possibly be "inspired", since they present conflicting details. Either the man came in person and he then presented his plea personally in his own words; or he sent two sets of delegations to present his pleas on his behalf.

It seems clear to me that Matthew's account is the correct one, and that Luke's account has some of the details confused. For one thing, sending a high-power delegation of elders shows the man as a commander who is making use of his own status, which is not exactly an attitude of humility. And supposedly having a second delegation standing at the ready for Jesus Christ's response implies that the centurion was already prepared for Jesus Christ's next move. At any rate, it seems very unlikely that Jesus Christ would have made the statement about the centurion's unusually high level of faith without ever having seen or spoken to the centurion himself.

At any rate, the differences in the details of these two accounts make clear that both cannot possibly be inspired by God. They represent how their respective authors understood this particular event, to which Matthew had been an eyewitness.

21) LUKE 7:10

Luke again leaves out some of the important details. In verse 9 Luke shows Jesus Christ speaking to the people who were with Him. But Luke does not record Jesus Christ's answer to the centurion's messengers. Verse 10 simply shows the delegation returning to the centurion's house, but not a word from Jesus Christ regarding healing the man. This leaves the reader with some questions.

Matthew 8:13 gives us Jesus Christ's reply to the centurion's faith. This verse reads: "And Jesus said unto the centurion, GO THY WAY; AND AS THOU HAST BELIEVED, [SO] BE IT DONE UNTO THEE. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour." This statement by Jesus Christ is the culmination of the whole episode.

It is highly unlikely that God's "inspiration" would have caused Luke to leave out this key statement regarding healing the centurion's servant. For Luke, Jesus Christ's statement in verse 9 (i.e. "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel") was the highpoint, and nothing more needed to be said in regard to the man's request for healing. But Matthew shows that Jesus Christ verbally assured the centurion that his servant would indeed be healed.

22) LUKE 8:6 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 13:5

This is the account of the parable about the sower sowing seed.

Luke 8:6 says: "And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, BECAUSE IT LACKED MOISTURE."

And Matthew 13:5 says: "Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, BECAUSE THEY HAD NO DEEPNESS OF EARTH:

This is a record of the exact same parable. The eyewitness Matthew quotes Jesus Christ as saying "because they had no deepness of earth". That's a logical follow-on: seeds that land on stony places don't have much soil, though they may still get some rain? But Matthew says nothing about "moisture". Luke, on the other hand, states that the problem was a lack of moisture. Luke's statement seems more "reasoned out", whereas Matthew's statement seems more directly tied to the stony environment.

It seems unlikely that Jesus Christ said it both ways, and it is extremely unlikely that both sets of statements were somehow "inspired by God" to be recorded in this way.

23) LUKE 8:8 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 13:8 AND TO MARK 4:8

Still discussing the same parable, Luke 8:8 states: "And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit AN HUNDREDFOLD. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Matthew 13:8 reads: "But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, SOME AN HUNDREDFOLD, SOME SIXTYFOLD, SOME THIRTYFOLD."

And Mark 4:8 reads: "And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, SOME THIRTY, AND SOME SIXTY, AND SOME AN HUNDRED."

There is no problem understanding the information presented here. However, if we want to claim "divine inspiration" for every word in these passages, then the question arises: WHY would God "inspire" one writer to record "100, 60, 30", and "inspire" another writer to record "30, 60, 100", and "inspire" another writer to record only "100", completely omitting the variable results? For that matter, IF Jesus Christ actually said "100, 60, 30", then He didn't say it in the sequence of "30, 60, 100".

Now the differences here are totally insignificant and inconsequential. But the point is that somebody's memory served him incorrectly as far as the precise verbal statements are concerned; yet it served him correctly as far as conveying the intended message and the lessons are concerned. This simply illustrates that we are dealing not with "divinely inspired written records", but with accounts that were recorded as faithfully as the authors remembered and understood, to the best of their abilities.

This same point also applies to Luke 8:15, when compared to Matthew 13:23 and to Mark 4:20. Here Luke leaves out not only references to 30 and 60, but also to 100, figures that are repeated in the other two accounts.

24) LUKE 8:10 COMPARED TO MARK 4:11-12

Luke 8:10 reads: "And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

And Mark 4:11-12 reads: "And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all [these] things are done in parables: That seeing they

may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; LEST AT ANY TIME THEY SHOULD BE CONVERTED, AND [THEIR] SINS SHOULD BE FORGIVEN THEM."

While Luke's statement is correct as far as it goes, it does leave out the key statement "lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them". That statement is in fact the most important part of the whole quotation, because it reveals THE SIGNIFICANCE and THE CONSEQUENCES of people not really seeing and understanding the truth. Luke's omission of this vital statement shows that he wasn't aware of the complete correct quotation. And we can hardly attribute Luke's omission of this vital statement to divine inspiration.

25) LUKE 8:13 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 13:21

Luke 8:13 reads: "They on the rock [are they], which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and THESE HAVE NO ROOT, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away."

And Matthew 13:21 reads: "Yet hath he NOT ROOT IN HIMSELF, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

Again Luke's account displays a lower level of understanding. Luke's statement of "these have no root" does not necessarily convey the same picture as Matthew's (and also Mark's) statement of "he has no root IN HIMSELF". To understand this parable correctly, it is imperative that we understand that WE OURSELVES must provide those roots; God doesn't somehow do that for us. Luke's statement leaves itself open to some misunderstanding regarding who is supposed to provide those roots: God or do we provide them ourselves? But Jesus Christ's statement here, as correctly recorded by Matthew and Mark, makes our own responsibility in this case very clear: we ourselves must provide the roots for the seed God has sown in our minds to grow and to bear fruit.

Luke's omission of this significant perspective is hardly due to divine inspiration.

26) LUKE 8:14 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 13:22 AND TO MARK 4:18-19

Luke 8:14 reads: "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with CARES and RICHES and PLEASURES of [this] life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

And Matthew 13:22 reads: "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care OF THIS WORLD, and THE DECEITFULNESS OF riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."

And Mark 4:18-19 reads: "And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares OF THIS WORLD, and THE DECEITFULNESS OF riches, and THE LUSTS OF OTHER THINGS entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."

This Scripture again reveals Luke's own perception of wealth and poverty. In Luke 6:20 we have already seen the completely different perspective Luke creates by quoting Jesus Christ's statement regarding "blessed are the poor in spirit" as "blessed are the poor". In this case here Luke again creates a picture that is not exactly the same as the one Jesus Christ presented.

Luke's statement that they "are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of life" creates a very negative picture of life, implying that both, riches and pleasures are evil. But Jesus Christ was not speaking against riches per se, but against "the deceitfulness of riches". That is a different perspective. Likewise, it is not all cares and concerns that Jesus Christ was speaking about, but about "the cares of this world". And where Luke speaks simply against "pleasures", Mark correctly quotes that as "the lusts

of other things". There is a difference between "pleasures" in general, and "lusts". Luke does not make this distinction.

Luke's statement taken on its own creates a considerably different picture than the picture we get from Matthew's and Mark's quotations of this specific statement. We can hardly attribute this changed picture to God's inspiration of Luke.

27) LUKE 8:19-21 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 12:46-50 AND TO MARK 3:31-35

This is a record of the time when Jesus Christ's mother and His half-brothers came to Him. Luke has recorded this incident out of sequence.

Both, Matthew and Mark are quite clear in recording this incident BEFORE Jesus Christ told the parable of the sower. But Luke has recorded this incident as taking place AFTER Christ had given the parable of the sower.

Once again, while this mix-up of context is really inconsequential to the things God wants us to understand, it is nevertheless quite clear that this inconsistency between Luke's account and the other writers is certainly not the result of divine inspiration.

Next, Luke records Jesus Christ's ANSWER as "My mother and My brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it". But Luke omits THE QUESTION Jesus Christ had asked, which both Matthew and Mark record (i.e. "WHO IS MY MOTHER? AND WHO ARE MY BRETHREN?").

Again, including Jesus Christ's question in this context provides a clearer context for His answer. Luke's omission of Jesus Christ's question here is again hardly due to divine inspiration.

Further, Matthew and Mark both clearly have Jesus Christ saying that those who do THE WILL OF GOD are His brother and sister and mother. Luke's account here is less emphatic in referring to "these which hear the word of God and do it". Matthew and Mark are probably closer to quoting the actual statement Jesus Christ made than Luke, who provides a more general record of what was said at that occasion.

28) LUKE 8:23-25 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 8:24-27 AND TO MARK 4:37-41

This is a record of the incident when Jesus Christ was asleep in a boat during a violent storm.

Matthew, who was on that boat with Jesus Christ, makes clear that this event took place some time BEFORE Jesus Christ told the parable of the sower in Matthew 13. Yet Luke has recorded this AS IF it took place AFTER Christ had told the parable of the sower.

Obviously both sequences cannot be correct. This event took place either before or after the telling of the parable of the sower. Matthew has the sequence correct, and Luke placed this event into THE WRONG CONTEXT.

29) LUKE 8:45 COMPARED TO MARK 5:30

This is the record of the woman, who had an issue of blood for 12 years, touching Jesus Christ's robe and being healed.

Luke 8:45 reads: "And Jesus said, WHO TOUCHED ME? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press [thee], and sayest thou, Who touched me?"

And Mark 5:30 reads: "And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, WHO TOUCHED MY CLOTHES?"

The message of both verses is the same. However, as far as recording Jesus Christ's EXACT words is concerned, did He say "who touched ME", or did He say "who touched MY CLOTHES"? While this difference is completely insignificant, it does illustrate that it is not always the EXACT words that are recorded.

It is unlikely that God would "inspire" such differences in the records.

30) LUKE 8:49-51 COMPARED TO MARK 5:35-38

This is the account of Jesus Christ healing the daughter of Jairus. Again we see a minor difference in the perspectives.

Luke 8:49-51 reads: "While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagoge?s [house], saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard [it], he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. And WHEN HE CAME INTO THE HOUSE, he suffered no man to go in, SAVE PETER, AND JAMES, AND JOHN, and the father and the mother of the maiden."

And Mark 5:35-38 reads: "While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagoge?s [house certain] which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagoge, Be not afraid, only believe. And HE SUFFERED NO MAN TO FOLLOW HIM, SAVE PETER, AND JAMES, AND JOHN the brother of James. AND HE COMETH TO THE HOUSE of the ruler of the synagoge, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly."

There is nothing wrong here. Both accounts provide information that is correct. But Mark writes (his gospel account seems to have been dictated by Peter, who was personally involved in this incident) that from the time the messengers had come to Jairus Jesus Christ did not allow any others to follow Him to the house of Jairus, except for Peter, James and John. And then these three men went into the house with Him.

Luke's account implies that the whole group of people followed Christ all the way to the house of Jairus, and only then did Jesus Christ select Peter, James and John to go in with Him.

While there is no real difference here, it is unlikely that "God's inspiration" would somehow be responsible for these different perspectives. Had God really "inspired" the account to be recorded one way first, it is unlikely that God would then later "inspire" the same account to be recorded to create a slightly different impression. This is once again evidence that we are dealing with the authors themselves presenting us with the picture as they themselves understood it.

31) LUKE 9:28 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 17:1 AND TO MARK 9:2

This is the account of the transfiguration. Notice that Luke chapter 9 records an event that is only mentioned in chapter 17 of Matthew's Gospel, where events recorded in Luke 8 are recorded in Matthew 8.

Luke 9:28 reads: "And it came to pass ABOUT AN EIGHT DAYS AFTER THESE SAYINGS, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray."

But Matthew 17:1 reads: "And AFTER SIX DAYS Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,"

And Mark 9:2 reads: "And AFTER SIX DAYS Jesus taketh [with him] Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them."

While this discrepancy between "6 days" or "8 days" is really inconsequential to us, it should be clear that this difference is certainly not the result of "divine inspiration". Matthew and Mark have it correct as "6 days", and Luke has it wrong as "8 days".

Next, Luke clearly missed some of the significance of this event because he completely left out the disciples' question: WHY do the scribes say that Elijah must first come? Matthew 17:10-13 and Mark 9:11-13 record this discussion about Elijah. It was a logical follow-on to the vision in which they had just seen Elijah.

The reason why Luke left out this question and answer about Elijah is because Luke himself was not aware that this question had been asked in this context, not because God's "inspiration" somehow deemed it unimportant to include this detail in Luke's account.

32) LUKE 9:42 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 17:18-21 AND TO MARK 9:26-29

This event immediately followed the transfiguration. Here Jesus Christ cast out a demon which His disciples had not been able to cast out.

Luke records this event as follows in Luke 9:42: "And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare [him]. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father."

What Luke has recorded is certainly correct. But THE VITAL LESSON that this healing is supposed to teach us is completely omitted by Luke. This lesson is recorded by both, Matthew and Mark.

Matthew 17:18-21 reads: "And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, WHY COULD NOT WE CAST HIM OUT? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, IF YE HAVE FAITH AS A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out BUT BY PRAYER AND FASTING."

And Mark 9:26-29 reads: "And [the spirit] cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, WHY COULD NOT WE CAST HIM OUT? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, BUT BY PRAYER AND FASTING."

It is the lesson that Jesus Christ attached to this healing that gives this whole account its significance. And Luke does not appear to have been aware of that lesson, or else he would surely have recorded it.

So while there is nothing wrong with Luke's account, his omission of the most important part of this incident is hardly due to "God's inspiration" of Luke. Luke's account is nothing more than his own knowledge and understanding of this incident.

33) LUKE 9:57-60 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 8:19-22

Luke 9:57-60 reads as follows: "And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain [man] said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air [have] nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay [his] head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."

And Matthew 8:19-22 reads: "And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air [have] nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay [his] head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."

This is another example where Luke has recorded this incident in a completely wrong context. Luke records this as having taken place AFTER the transfiguration, but Matthew shows this taking place LONG BEFORE the transfiguration.

While Luke's out-of-context presentation of this incident does not cause any real problems, it certainly is not indicative of any "inspiration" for Luke in recording this. Not having been there himself, Luke had a considerable number of difficulties in placing every incident he had been told about by various other people into the overall correct time-frame. And this is one more example of where Luke placed an event into a wrong context.

34) LUKE 10:1-2 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 9:36-38

Luke 10:1-2 reads: "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, THE HARVEST TRULY [IS] GREAT, but the labourers [are] few: PRAY YE THEREFORE the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

And Matthew 9:36-38 reads: "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, THE HARVEST TRULY [IS] PLENTEOUS, but the labourers [are] few; PRAY YE THEREFORE the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."

The point here is that Luke has once again placed this in a context AFTER the transfiguration, when Jesus Christ in fact made this statement a considerable time BEFORE the transfiguration. The next comment below regarding verses 13-14 also makes clear that this is indeed in a wrong context.

So what Luke has said here is correct, but God did not inspire Luke to record this correct incident in THE WRONG CONTEXT.

35) LUKE 10:13-15 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 11:20-24

Following a few verses after the above statement, Luke 10:13-14 reads: "Woe unto thee, CHORAZIN! woe unto thee, BETHSAIDA! for if the mighty works had been done in TYRE and SIDON, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. And thou, CAPERNAUM, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell."

And Matthew 11:20-24 reads: "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, CHORAZIN! woe unto thee, BETHSAIDA! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in TYRE and SIDON, they would have

repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, CAPERNAUM, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in SODOM, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."

These two quotations clearly refer to the same event. Yet Luke shows this as taking place AFTER the transfiguration, while Matthew places this event solidly BEFORE the transfiguration. Clearly Luke was not aware of the exact circumstances in which some of the things he knew about had taken place. So he recorded them in the contexts in which he believed they occurred. And at times he made some mistakes in this regard. Placing events into the wrong context is certainly not something we would associate with divine inspiration.

36) LUKE 11:1-4 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 6:9-13

Luke 11:1-4 reads: "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES SAID UNTO HIM, Lord, TEACH US TO PRAY, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, WHEN YE PRAY, SAY, OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

This quotation actually takes us back into the context of the sermon on the mount. This is recorded in Matthew chapter 6.

Matthew 6:9-13 reads: "AFTER THIS MANNER THEREFORE PRAY ye: OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as [it is] in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

There were not two occasions when Jesus Christ somehow gave this same instruction. By Luke having one of the disciples ASKING Jesus Christ to teach them how to pray, Luke makes clear that he did not realize that this is EXACTLY what Jesus Christ had already taught His disciples early on in His ministry, at the sermon on the mount. Those disciples who had witnessed that sermon would certainly not have asked the question that Luke has one of them asking at a later time, because that is EXACTLY what Jesus Christ had done during that sermon on the mount, teaching them how to pray.

Notice also that Luke's account gives the much more direct implication that we are to simply repeat the words Jesus Christ gave at that time, praying mechanically from rote memory. Matthew's inclusion of the Greek adverb that is translated as "after this manner" puts the actual words that follow into a somewhat different perspective. That different perspective is lost in Luke's account.

Notice also that Luke has omitted THE LAST PART of the guidelines Jesus Christ gave in this context. As Matthew records, Jesus Christ concluded this prayer outline with the statement "for Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever". That outline Jesus Christ gave consists of 7 parts, and Luke has left out part #7 of that outline.

This is hardly evidence for God's divine inspiration on Luke in recording this outline. It is totally unlikely that GOD would ever "inspire" someone to leave out this important statement about God's power and glory in recording this whole statement from Jesus Christ!

37) LUKE 11:9-13 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 7:7-11

Luke 11:9-13 reads: "And I say unto you, ASK, and it shall be given you; SEEK, and ye shall find; KNOCK, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ASK BREAD of any of you that is a father, will he give him A STONE? or if [he ask] A FISH, will he for a fish give him A SERPENT? Or if he shall ask AN EGG, will he offer him A SCORPION? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall [your] heavenly Father give THE HOLY SPIRIT to them that ask him?"

Matthew 7:7-11 reads: "ASK, and it shall be given you; SEEK, and ye shall find; KNOCK, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ASK BREAD, will he give him A STONE? Or if he ask A FISH, will he give him A SERPENT? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give GOOD THINGS to them that ask him?"

Matthew makes clear that this instruction also belongs squarely in the context of the sermon on the mount. Yet Luke places it into a much later situation, which is hardly evidence for inspiration.

Besides this statement being presented in the wrong context, Luke also got the quotation slightly wrong. Consider the following:

A) Jesus Christ said, as correctly reported by Matthew, that the Father would give "GOOD THINGS" to them that ask Him.

B) But Christ did at that point in time NOT SAY that the Father would give "THE HOLY SPIRIT" to them that ask Him. That is a later modification of what Jesus Christ had actually said.

C) In all four gospels Jesus Christ did not offer anyone "the Holy Spirit" (or in the KJV "the Holy Ghost") until right at the end of His ministry. Luke 11:13 is the only exception to this, and there it stands in stark contrast to all the other times Jesus Christ spoke about the Holy Spirit. There is no other record of Christ offering "the Holy Spirit" to a large general audience. Specifically, the gospel authors who were eyewitnesses of Christ's ministry never make such a statement.

D) Consider that to the audience at large Jesus Christ still referred to the Holy Spirit as "living waters", a codeword for the Holy Spirit (see John 7:38-39). And at His last Passover, shortly before being killed, Jesus Christ again at first did not speak in terms of "the Holy Spirit", but in terms of "the Comforter" and "the Spirit of truth" (see John 14:16-17). It was only then, less than 24 hours before He died, that Jesus Christ then proceeded to identify the Comforter as "the Holy Spirit" (see John 14:26).

E) Then, after His resurrection, Jesus Christ finally showed them that they would soon receive the Holy Spirit, as recorded by John in John 20:22, which reads: "And when He had said this, He breathed on [them], and saith unto them, RECEIVE YE THE HOLY GHOST".

It seems fairly clear that during the sermon on the mount Jesus Christ was not yet presenting people with the expression "the Holy Spirit" as something that God would make available to human beings. It is really from a far later perspective, one of the Church of God having been around for over a decade, where references to "the Holy Spirit" had become a standard expression within the Church of God community, that the term "the Holy Spirit" is freely used by Luke in this passage of his gospel.

It is not that what Luke says is wrong, not at all. "The good things" God will give to those that ask Him

amount to being given the Holy Spirit. But that is not what Jesus Christ literally said so early in His ministry. What Christ actually said is recorded correctly by Matthew, that God will give "good things" to those that ask Him.

Furthermore, I suspect that the expression "if he shall ask for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion" that Luke records, but which is omitted by Matthew, is something that was not really said by Jesus Christ in the sermon on the mount. Very likely this is one of the "slight modifications" or "expansions" that had crept into the repeated telling of this story before it was told to Luke. It doesn't change anything regarding the point Jesus Christ was making, and therefore doesn't do any harm. But I suspect that Jesus Christ Himself only used the two expressions recorded by Matthew (i.e. bread - stone, fish - serpent), and not the third expression added by Luke (i.e. egg - scorpion).

At any rate, Luke's record of this occasion is certainly placed in the wrong context, and thus unlikely to be a product of divine inspiration.

38) LUKE 11:14-20 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 12:22-28

With the previous verse Luke was clearly in the context of the sermon on the mount in Matthew chapter 7. Now, one verse later, Luke's account is dealing with an event in the context of Matthew chapter 12. This is the occasion where Jesus Christ healed a blind and dumb man, and when the Pharisees then accused Him of using the power of Satan to achieve the healing.

Under point #16 above we have already seen that Luke 6:44-45 is the equivalent of Matthew 12:33-35. And here we see that Luke 11:14-20 is the equivalent of Matthew 12:22-28. This means that LUKE 11:14-20 OCCURRED CHRONOLOGICALLY JUST BEFORE LUKE 6:44-45, even as Matthew 12:22-28 occurred chronologically just before Matthew 12:33-35.

Comparing these two passages in Luke to their two corresponding passages in Matthew is probably one of the clearest ways to illustrate how Luke has repeatedly presented some basically correct information in a totally wrong context. In this case he has presented one event approximately five chapters after he presented another event that happened basically at the same time as this event he mentions five chapters later.

Luke 11:14-15 reads: "And HE WAS CASTING OUT A DEVIL, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils."

And Matthew 12:22-24 reads: "Then was brought unto him ONE POSSESSED WITH A DEVIL, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard [it], they said, This [fellow] doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."

We see that Luke did not know that the man who was healed by Christ in this event had been not only dumb, but also blind. Notice that Matthew draws a clear distinction between the people in general, who were amazed and wondered about Christ being the promised Messiah, and the sect of the Pharisees, who accused Christ of working with demonic powers. Persecution of Jesus Christ came from the religious leaders, the Pharisees; it did not come from the general population. This important distinction is obscured in Luke's account by his description of "the people wondered, BUT SOME OF THEM SAID ...". Luke's knowledge of this incident was clearly less complete than Matthew's knowledge of this incident, and this less complete knowledge is very evident in Luke's version of this event. But that less complete understanding is not due to divine inspiration of Luke. It is only a reflection of Luke's own grasp of the situation.

In this context let's also compare Luke 11:20 to Matthew 12:28.

Luke 11:20 reads: "But if I WITH THE FINGER OF GOD cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you."

And Matthew 12:28 reads: "But if I cast out devils BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

While it does not change the meaning here, Matthew's quotation of "by the Spirit of God" is correct, and Luke's quotation of "with the finger of God" represents a slight modification of the words Jesus Christ had actually spoken. We are dealing with the exact same occasion in both of these verses, and only one of them represents an accurate record of the literal words Jesus Christ had spoken. Both statements certainly cannot lay claim to "divine inspiration", even though they both convey the same basic meaning.

39) LUKE 11:24-32 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 12:39-45

This is a record of the same occasion, but Luke has again changed the sequence of the order in which Jesus Christ said certain things.

In Matthew 12 we find Jesus Christ speaking first about the sign of Jonah (verses 39-40), then about the men of Nineveh (verse 41), then about the queen of the south (verse 42), and then about the unclean spirit going out of a man (verses 43-45).

Luke 11 records those same statements in the following order: first Christ speaks about the unclean spirit going out of a man (verses 24-26), then about the sign of Jonah (verses 29-30), then about the queen of the south (verse 31), and then about the men of Nineveh (verse 32).

So Matthew's sequence is: sign of Jonah - men of Nineveh - queen of the south - unclean spirit.

Luke's sequence is: unclean spirit - sign of Jonah - queen of the south - men of Nineveh.

Luke's account contains two alterations here. First Luke places the discussion about the unclean spirit out of sequence, and then Luke also switches the sequence of the men of Nineveh and the queen of the south.

These minor differences are obviously inconsequential, though that is also certainly not due to any inspiration from God. What is more significant is Luke's discussion of "the sign of Jonah". It seems that Luke himself did not really understand the full significance of what that sign actually was. That becomes apparent from his comments.

Notice Luke 11:30, which reads: "For AS JONAS WAS A SIGN UNTO THE NINEVITES, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation."

Luke has missed the point here!

The focus of Jesus Christ's comment in this regard was not at all on Jonah having been "a sign to the Ninevites". Luke doesn't actually identify the real sign at all. If we did not have Matthew's account of this, we would miss the point completely with only Luke's version of this. THE TIME PERIOD that Jonah spent inside the great fish was not at all a sign to the Ninevites. And Luke apparently wasn't aware of Jesus Christ's complete statement in this context.

Luke also apparently did not realize that the sign Jesus Christ here offered was in response to the hostile

Pharisees asking for a sign (see Matthew 12:38). This creates a different perspective than if some people in general had asked this question for a sign. Had Luke realized that this was a reply to certain Pharisees, he likely would not have used the phrase "a sign unto the Ninevites" in his discussion of this incident, as that focus misses the point.

The correct quotation of Jesus Christ's words is found in Matthew 12:40, which reads: "For as Jonas was THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS in the whale's belly; SO shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Mt 12:40 AV)

The exact time period Jonah spent inside the great fish was a sign for the length of time that the Messiah would be in the grave. And that sign was for the "evil and adulterous generation" alive during Jesus Christ's ministry. The most important aspect of "the sign of Jonah" was not the location where Jonah spent that time (i.e. inside a fish), or even the condition Jonah was in during that period of time (i.e. whether he was alive or dead while in the fish, and he was alive for that whole period); the most important aspect of "the sign of Jonah" was THE EXACT TIME PERIOD OF THREE FULL 24-HOUR DAYS.

And Luke's account has omitted this most important aspect of "the sign of Jonah". That omission is hardly due to divine inspiration.

40) LUKE 11:33 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:15

Luke 11:33 reads: "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth [it] in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light."

And Matthew 5:15-16 reads: "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Once again Luke has placed one of Christ's statements from the sermon on the mount greatly out of context. This is the equivalent of having a verse from Matthew 5 follow a section of verses from Matthew 12.

Notice also that while Luke has presented Jesus Christ's statement, he has in fact left out the most important part of that particular context, which is THE LESSON that Jesus Christ attached to that statement. That lesson is recorded in Matthew 5:16, that we are to let OUR lights shine.

Instead of following this statement with the lesson recorded in the next verse in Matthew, Luke has associated this statement with A LATER STATEMENT from the sermon on the mount. This is discussed in the next point below.

Again, presenting this quotation from Jesus Christ in a completely wrong context, and omitting the application Jesus Christ attached to this statement is certainly not due to any inspiration from God. It is nothing more than a reflection of Luke's own understanding, based on what he had heard from other people.

41) LUKE 11:34-35 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 6:22-23

Luke follows Christ's statement about not putting a candle under a bushel with these verses: "The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when [thine eye] is evil, thy body also [is] full of darkness. TAKE HEED THEREFORE THAT THE LIGHT WHICH IS IN THEE BE NOT DARKNESS."

While this also represents a quotation from Jesus Christ, it was in fact about a different subject, mentioned somewhat later in the sermon on the mount.

Matthew 6:22-23 reads: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. IF THEREFORE THE LIGHT THAT IS IN THEE BE DARKNESS, HOW GREAT [IS] THAT DARKNESS."

This section was also a part of the sermon on the mount, and it is thus once again placed into a wrong context by Luke. And it really had nothing to do with the statement about "lighting a candle", as is implied in Luke's account. Notice further that where Jesus Christ actually worded his statement as a strong assertion (i.e. "If THEREFORE the light which is in you be darkness, HOW GREAT is that darkness"), as correctly recorded by Matthew, Luke has changed Christ's words into a general admonition (i.e. "TAKE HEED THEREFORE that the light which is in you BE NOT DARKNESS").

The two statements (i.e. by Matthew and by Luke) basically mean the same thing, but only one of them is a correct quotation of what Jesus Christ actually said; and the other is a free paraphrase of the meaning Christ intended to convey. But that once again is not any evidence for divine inspiration.

42) LUKE 11:39-44, 51 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 23:23-28, 35

Whereas in the previous verses Luke was quoting something that occurred in Matthew chapter 6, he has now skipped to things that took place in Matthew chapter 23. That is a vast skip forward.

Luke places the comments here into the context of Jesus Christ having a meal at the home of a Pharisee. However, these comments were in fact not given at a private dinner, but they were addressed to "the multitude and to his disciples" (Matthew 23:1). This context of Matthew 23 becomes quite clear in the following verses.

Luke 11:39-40 reads: "And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees MAKE CLEAN THE OUTSIDE OF THE CUP AND THE PLATTER; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. [Ye] fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?"

And Matthew 23:25-26 reads: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye MAKE CLEAN THE OUTSIDE OF THE CUP AND OF THE PLATTER, but within they are full of extortion and excess. [Thou] blind Pharisee, cleanse first that [which is] within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also."

Luke 11:41 reads: "But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you."

This is completely out of context! It represents a jump to a completely different subject. The next verse makes clear that this new context is tithing. Luke 11:42 reads: "But woe unto you, Pharisees! FOR YE TITHE THE MINT AND RUE AND ALL MANNER OF HERBS, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

Luke 11:41-42 is in fact Luke's version of Matthew 23:23, which reads: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for YE PAY TITHE OF MINT AND ANISE AND CUMMIN, and have omitted the weightier [matters] of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

First notice that Luke has once again changed the sequence of statements. Matthew 23 shows Christ first speaking about tithing (verse 23), and then about the outside of the cup (verses 25-26). Luke 11

records this as Christ first speaking about the outside of the cup (verses 39-40), and then about tithing (verse 42).

Next, Luke has changed Christ's intended focus on showing mercy and having pity (Matthew 23:23) into a focus of giving alms (Luke 11:41). Both are valid approaches, but giving alms is a practical application of the principles Jesus Christ has presented, not necessarily a direct quotation of His actual words.

Luke 11:43 reads: "Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets." This is Luke's equivalent of Matthew 23:6-11, with a notable distinction. Luke has again left out the most important part of this section, the lesson Jesus Christ attached to this statement. That lesson is summed up in Matthew 23:11 as "but HE THAT IS GREATEST AMONG YOU shall be your servant". Without the attached lesson the statement is nothing more than a sharp criticism of a certain group of people. It is the lesson that applies to that statement that gives it significance. And that lesson is once again completely absent from Luke's account.

That omission is certainly not due to divine inspiration.

Notice also Luke's threefold repetition of the expression "woe unto you Pharisees" in verses 42, 43 and 44. This is a clear indicator of the context of Matthew 23. The context of Matthew 23 is further reinforced by Luke 11:51 with reference to "from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias", the parallel verse to Matthew 23:35.

So after reporting something that happened in the context of Matthew 6, Luke has jumped to things that were said in the context of Matthew 23. In the process Luke has also altered the sequence in which those things were said, as well as having left out some vital statements that in fact give the real significance to the statements that Luke has quoted. All of this certainly has nothing to do with divine inspiration for Luke.

43) LUKE 11:46 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 23:4

Luke 11:46 reads: "And he said, Woe unto you also, [ye] lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."

And Matthew 23:4 reads: "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay [them] on men's shoulders; but they [themselves] will not move them with one of their fingers."

The eyewitness Matthew has correctly recorded this statement before the other statements about tithing and cleaning the outside of the cup, etc. But Luke has recorded this statement as having been made AFTER these other statements. And while the chronologically incorrect placement of this statement within the context of the statements made in Matthew 23 is not a problem, neither is it attributable to divine inspiration for Luke.

Luke's next statement (i.e. Luke 11:47) is the equivalent of Matthew 23:29-30. This again illustrates that Luke moves very freely back and forth in his narrative, basically because he himself was only writing down what other people had told him. And in some cases those people didn't have the chronology of Christ's sayings correct either.

44) LUKE 11:49 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 23:34

Luke 11:49 reads: "Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them PROPHETS AND APOSTLES, and [some] of them they shall slay and persecute:"

And Matthew 23:34 reads: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you PROPHETS, AND WISE MEN, AND SCRIBES: and [some] of them ye shall kill and crucify; and [some] of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute [them] from city to city:"

The point here is that at that time Jesus Christ did NOT use the word "apostles" in this context. That is correctly recorded by Matthew, who himself was an apostle. Luke's statement is basically a paraphrase of what Christ had said. That paraphrase doesn't do any harm, but it is certainly not the product of divine inspiration.

Jesus Christ did not actually send out "the apostles" until Matthew 28:18-20. And in the context of Matthew 23 (or Luke 11:49) Jesus Christ did not yet use the word "apostles". By the time Luke wrote this gospel account, the apostles had also already been "sent", and so Luke's statement is not a problem. But it is not a direct quote either, as is Matthew's statement.

45) LUKE 11:52 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 23:13

Luke 11:52 reads: "Woe unto you, lawyers! for YE HAVE TAKEN AWAY THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."

And Matthew 23:13 reads: "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for YE SHUT UP THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AGAINST MEN: for ye neither go in [yourselves], neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

Again, Jesus Christ did not literally say this both ways. Matthew has recorded the actual words Jesus Christ had spoken, and Luke has recorded the way those words had been paraphrased by the time he heard them, a paraphrase that basically captures the intended meaning of Christ's original statement.

Luke's paraphrased record of the actual words of Jesus Christ does not create any difficulties in understanding what Jesus Christ meant, but it is also not the product of divine inspiration.

46) LUKE 12:3 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 10:26-27

In the context of speaking about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, which actually ties in very well with Matthew 23 (where Jesus Christ repeatedly called the Pharisees hypocrites), Luke says the following in Luke 12:3: "Therefore WHATSOEVER YE HAVE SPOKEN IN DARKNESS SHALL BE HEARD IN THE LIGHT; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

This is a record of the same quotation which Matthew has recorded in Matthew 10:26-27, which reads: "Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. WHAT I TELL YOU IN DARKNESS, [THAT] SPEAK YE IN LIGHT: and what ye hear in the ear, [that] preach ye upon the housetops."

First of all, notice that Luke had jumped from the context of Matthew 23 back to the context of Matthew 10. Luke's next statements make very clear that he has indeed reverted to the situation recorded in Matthew 10. Next, notice that Luke has also unintentionally changed the subject of the statement. As correctly recorded by Matthew, Jesus Christ actually said "what I tell you in darkness", and Luke has changed this to "whatsoever YOU have spoken in darkness". Obviously, Jesus Christ did not say it both ways.

Once again, this going back to a much earlier occasion, without in any way indicating this, is certainly not the result of divine inspiration.

47) LUKE 12:4-9 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 10:28-33

Luke 12:4 reads: "And I say unto you my friends, BE NOT AFRAID OF THEM THAT KILL THE BODY, and after that have no more that they can do."

And Matthew 10:28 reads: "And FEAR NOT THEM WHICH KILL THE BODY, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

The obvious parallels in the following verses also show quite clearly that Luke's account is now firmly in the context of Matthew 10. This is not the product of divine inspiration.

48) LUKE 12:10 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 12:32

With the very next verse Luke jumps forward into the context of Matthew chapter 12.

Luke 12:10 reads: "And WHOSOEVER SHALL SPEAK A WORD AGAINST THE SON OF MAN, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven."

And Matthew 12:32 reads: "And WHOSOEVER SPEAKETH A WORD AGAINST THE SON OF MAN, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the [world] to come."

Matthew records the more complete statement. But notice that Luke has recorded this statement by Jesus Christ in the wrong context. This becomes very apparent when we see that in the two verses following this statement Luke actually again reverts to the context of Matthew chapter 10.

Again, we cannot claim divine inspiration for Luke's record of this statement, even though recording it in the wrong context does not actually cause any problems.

49) LUKE 12:11-12 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 10:17-20

Luke 12:11-12 reads: "And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and [unto] magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For THE HOLY GHOST SHALL TEACH YOU IN THE SAME HOUR WHAT YE OUGHT TO SAY."

And Matthew 10:17-20 reads: "But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For IT IS NOT YE THAT SPEAK, BUT THE SPIRIT OF YOUR FATHER WHICH SPEAKETH IN YOU."

Matthew provides the more complete quotation, and Luke's record is basically a paraphrase of those statements. But Luke has clearly regressed back into the context of Matthew 10. That is not a sign of divine inspiration.

50) LUKE 12:22-31 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 6:25-33

Now Luke skips back into the context of the sermon on the mount.

Luke 12:22 reads: "And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, TAKE NO THOUGHT FOR YOUR LIFE, WHAT YE SHALL EAT; neither for the body, what ye shall put on."

And Matthew 6:25 reads: "Therefore I say unto you, TAKE NO THOUGHT FOR YOUR LIFE, WHAT YE SHALL EAT, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"

The following references to "the ravens" (verse 24) and to "the lilies" (verse 27), etc. make clear that this is indeed the parallel account for Matthew 6:25-33.

Once again Luke has presented some quotations from Jesus Christ in THE WRONG CONTEXT. It is quite clear that Luke simply did not know the correct context in which Jesus Christ had presented many of His teachings. And Luke has repeatedly placed such quotations into a wrong context. That is certainly not attributable to divine inspiration.

51) LUKE 12:33-34 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 6:20-21

In the preceding verses Luke had been quoting the equivalent of Matthew 6:25-33. Now, in the next verses, Luke quotes the statements found in Matthew 6:20-21. He has once again recorded an incorrect sequence of statements.

Luke 12:33-34 reads: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; PROVIDE YOURSELVES bags which wax not old, A TREASURE IN THE HEAVENS that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

And Matthew 6:20-21 reads: "But LAY UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN HEAVEN, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Quoting the statements found in Matthew 6:20-21 AFTER having already quoted the statements found in Matthew 6:25-33 is once again not attributable to divine inspiration.

52) LUKE 12:37-46 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 24:42-51

In these verses Luke is recording the information found in Matthew 24:42-51. Once again Luke has brought in quotations from A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CONTEXT.

Luke 12:37-39 reads: "Blessed [are] those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find [them] so, blessed are those servants. AND THIS KNOW, THAT IF THE GOODMAN OF THE HOUSE HAD KNOWN WHAT HOUR THE THIEF WOULD COME, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through."

And Matthew 24:42-44 reads: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. BUT KNOW THIS, THAT IF THE GOODMAN OF THE HOUSE HAD KNOWN IN WHAT WATCH THE THIEF WOULD COME, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Luke 12:43 reads: "BLESSED [IS] THAT SERVANT, WHOM HIS LORD WHEN HE COMETH SHALL FIND SO DOING."

And Matthew 24:46 reads: "BLESSED [IS] THAT SERVANT, WHOM HIS LORD WHEN HE COMETH SHALL FIND SO DOING."

Luke 12:44 reads: "Of a truth I say unto you, that HE WILL MAKE HIM RULER OVER ALL THAT HE HATH."

And Matthew 24:47 reads: "Verily I say unto you, That HE SHALL MAKE HIM RULER OVER ALL HIS GOODS."

Luke 12:45 reads: "BUT AND IF THAT SERVANT SAY IN HIS HEART, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;"

And Matthew 24:48-49 reads: "BUT AND IF THAT EVIL SERVANT SHALL SAY IN HIS HEART, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite [his] fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;"

These quotes should suffice to make clear that Luke is indeed quoting statements that correctly belong into the context of Matthew 24. So once again Luke has from one verse to the next skipped into a completely different context. This is certainly not the result of divine inspiration for Luke.

53) LUKE 12:49-53 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 10:34-36

Now Luke reverts to quoting some statements from Jesus Christ that correctly belong into the context of Matthew 10:34-36.

Luke 12:49 reads: "I AM COME TO SEND FIRE ON THE EARTH; and what will I, if it be already kindled?"

Luke 12:51-53 reads: "SUPPOSE YE THAT I AM COME TO GIVE PEACE ON EARTH? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. THE FATHER SHALL BE DIVIDED AGAINST THE SON, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and THE DAUGHTER AGAINST THE MOTHER; the mother in law against her daughter in law, AND THE DAUGHTER IN LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER IN LAW."

And Matthew 10:34-36 reads: "THINK NOT THAT I AM COME TO SEND PEACE ON EARTH: I CAME NOT TO SEND PEACE, but a sword. For I am come TO SET A MAN AT VARIANCE AGAINST HIS FATHER, and THE DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND THE DAUGHTER IN LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER IN LAW. And a man's foes [shall be] they of his own household."

Matthew and Luke are clearly referring to the same occasion. But Luke has reverted to something that belongs into the context of Matthew 10. Also, Luke has recorded what amounts to a paraphrased version of what Jesus Christ had actually said. Again, this is not the result of any divine inspiration.

54) LUKE 12:54-56 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 16:1-4

Luke 12:54-56 reads: "And he said also to the people, WHEN YE SEE A CLOUD rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And WHEN [YE SEE] THE SOUTH WIND BLOW, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. [Ye] hypocrites, YE CAN DISCERN THE FACE OF THE SKY and of the earth; but HOW IS IT THAT YE DO NOT DISCERN THIS TIME?"

And Matthew 16:1-4 reads: "The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, WHEN IT IS EVENING, YE SAY, [It will be] fair weather: for the sky is red. AND IN THE MORNING, [IT WILL BE] FOUL WEATHER TO DAY: for the sky is red and lowring. O [ye] hypocrites, YE CAN DISCERN THE FACE OF THE SKY; but CAN YE NOT [DISCERN] THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet

Jonas. And he left them, and departed."

Again, Jesus Christ didn't say it both ways. What Christ said is correctly recorded in the correct context by Matthew. The knowledge of the main point was retained (i.e. you can discern the face of the sky), but the two specific illustrations Jesus Christ used to make this point (i.e. when it is evening, and when it is morning) had been (unintentionally) modified to two different illustrations (i.e. when you see a cloud, and when you see the south wind blow) by the time Luke heard this story.

Luke was also not aware of the correct context in which Jesus Christ had made these statements (i.e. in response to a provocative request from the Pharisees), and therefore Luke also left out Christ's final statement in this context about the sign of Jonah. This is also an example of the harmlessness of the completely unintentional modification of some of the details. Luke is clearly not reporting the things Jesus Christ literally said (as is the case with Matthew's account of this), but it really makes no difference. It is of no consequence whether Jesus Christ said "when it is evening you say", or whether He said "when you see a cloud rise you say". Both statements make exactly the same point.

But that is certainly not the result of any divine inspiration.

Now we come to the last time that Luke switches contexts in this chapter 12 of his gospel account.

55) LUKE 12:57-59 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:25-26

Luke 12:57-59 reads: "Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, [as thou art] in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; LEST HE HALE THEE TO THE JUDGE, AND THE JUDGE DELIVER THEE TO THE OFFICER, AND THE OFFICER CAST THEE INTO PRISON. I tell thee, THOU SHALT NOT DEPART THENCE, till thou hast paid the very last mite."

And Matthew 5:25-26 reads: "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; LEST AT ANY TIME THE ADVERSARY DELIVER THEE TO THE JUDGE, AND THE JUDGE DELIVER THEE TO THE OFFICER, AND THOU BE CAST INTO PRISON. Verily I say unto thee, THOU SHALT BY NO MEANS COME OUT THENCE, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

Here Luke has gone back to quoting something that Jesus Christ had said early on in the sermon on the mount. This is once again something that Luke presents in a completely WRONG CONTEXT. That obviously is not the result of divine inspiration.

56) LUKE 13:18-21 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 13:31-33

Luke 13:18-21 reads: "Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it? It is LIKE A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? IT IS LIKE LEAVEN, WHICH A WOMAN TOOK AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF MEAL, till the whole was leavened."

And Matthew 13:31-33 reads: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is LIKE TO A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he unto them; THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO LEAVEN, WHICH A WOMAN TOOK, AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF MEAL, till the whole was leavened."

This shows that Luke's account is now dealing with the material covered in Matthew 13. That is A LARGE JUMP FORWARD from the context of Matthew 5 a few verses earlier.

57) LUKE 13:23-24 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 7:13-14

Luke 13:23-24 reads: "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, STRIVE TO ENTER IN AT THE STRAIT GATE: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

And Matthew 7:13-14 reads: "ENTER YE IN AT THE STRAIT GATE: for wide [is] the gate, and broad [is] the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait [is] the gate, and narrow [is] the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Luke's account has basically paraphrased the actual words Jesus Christ spoke, as recorded by Matthew. Once again, this jumping back to a far earlier context is certainly not the result of divine inspiration.

58) LUKE 13:25-27 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 7:21-23

Luke 13:25-27 reads: "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, WE HAVE EATEN AND DRUNK IN THY PRESENCE, AND THOU HAST TAUGHT IN OUR STREETS. But he shall say, I TELL YOU, I KNOW YOU NOT whence ye are; DEPART FROM ME, ALL [YE] WORKERS OF INIQUITY."

And Matthew 7:21-23 reads: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, HAVE WE NOT PROPHESED IN THY NAME? AND IN THY NAME HAVE CAST OUT DEVILS? AND IN THY NAME DONE MANY WONDERFUL WORKS? And then will I profess unto them, I NEVER KNEW YOU: DEPART FROM ME, YE THAT WORK INIQUITY."

And Matthew 25:11-12 reads: "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I SAY UNTO YOU, I KNOW YOU NOT."

This comparison shows that Luke's account is indeed back in the context of Matthew 7. However, Luke seems to not have been aware of the distinction between the references in Matthew 7 and those in Matthew 25; and so Luke appears to have combined those two accounts into one in his gospel account. Also, Luke's comments regarding "we have eaten and drunk in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets" are a free paraphrase of the words Jesus Christ actually used, as recorded by Matthew. Again, that has nothing to do with divine inspiration.

59) LUKE 13:28 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 8:11-12

Luke 13:28 reads: "THERE SHALL BE WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH, when ye shall see ABRAHAM, and ISAAC, and JACOB, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and YOU [YOURSELVES] THRUST OUT."

And Matthew 8:11-12 reads: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with ABRAHAM, and ISAAC, and JACOB, in the kingdom of heaven. But THE CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM SHALL BE CAST OUT into outer darkness: THERE SHALL BE WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH."

With this verse, right on the heels of one discussing the context of Matthew 7, Luke has moved forward

to the context of Matthew 8. Presenting this quotation in the wrong context (i.e. of Matthew 7) is again not due to any divine inspiration.

60) LUKE 13:30 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 19:30

Luke 13:30 reads: "And, behold, THERE ARE LAST WHICH SHALL BE FIRST, and there are first which shall be last."

And Matthew 19:30 reads: "BUT MANY [THAT ARE] FIRST SHALL BE LAST; and the last [shall be] first."

We see that Luke has once again jumped forward without giving the slightest consideration to the context in which the statement he is quoting was made. Luke ascribes the above statement to the wrong context.

Now Matthew shows that this statement was the introduction to a parable about the kingdom of God, and that Jesus Christ repeated this statement at the end of that parable (i.e. Matthew 20:16). The parable between the two times Jesus Christ made this statement is actually the explanation for what this statement is supposed to convey. And that explanation is completely omitted by Luke. Without the parable of the laborers in the vineyard the statement "the last shall be first and the first shall be last" would be very difficult to apply correctly. Since Luke does not seem to have been aware of this parable, it is unlikely that he grasped the full meaning of the statement he was here quoting.

Luke's omission of any kind of explanation for the statement he is quoting here is certainly not due to divine inspiration.

61) LUKE 13:34-35 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 23:37-39

Luke 13:34 reads: "O JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM, WHICH KILLEST THE PROPHETS, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen [doth gather] her brood under [her] wings, and ye would not!"

And Matthew 23:37 reads: "O JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM, [THOU] THAT KILLEST THE PROPHETS, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not!"

So Luke has changed contexts once again, from the equivalent of Matthew 20 to the context of Matthew 23. That is not the result of divine inspiration.

The next verse in Matthew's account following this quotation (i.e. Matthew 24:1) is the introduction to the Olivet prophecy. Luke, by contrast, does not come to the Olivet prophecy for another 7 full chapters (i.e. from Luke 21:5 onwards). This illustrates how out of context THIS QUOTATION HERE (i.e. Luke 13:34-35) really is.

62) LUKE 14:34-35 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:13

Luke 14:34-35 reads: "Salt [is] good: BUT IF THE SALT HAVE LOST HIS SAVOUR, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; [but] men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

And Matthew 5:13 reads: "Ye are the salt of the earth: BUT IF THE SALT HAVE LOST HIS SAVOUR, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden

under foot of men."

Luke's account is now BACK IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, the equivalent of Matthew 5:13. That again is not due to any divine inspiration.

63) LUKE 15:3-7 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 18:12-14

Luke 15:3-4 reads: "And he spake this parable unto them, saying, WHAT MAN OF YOU, HAVING AN HUNDRED SHEEP, IF HE LOSE ONE OF THEM, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?"

And Matthew 18:12 reads: "How think ye? IF A MAN HAVE AN HUNDRED SHEEP, AND ONE OF THEM BE GONE ASTRAY, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?"

Luke's account has now moved forward to the equivalent of Matthew 18:12. Notice the slight alteration in Luke's version. Matthew records Jesus Christ as focusing on the sheep with His statement "and ONE of them BE GONE ASTRAY". Luke's account has shifted this focus to the man with the statement "if HE LOSE ONE of them". This change is totally insignificant, but it illustrates that the eyewitness Matthew records the actual statement Jesus Christ made, and that Luke records this statement how it had come to him by word of mouth, with the same meaning overall. But it again illustrates that this record is not the result of divine inspiration, but Luke's attempt to faithfully record something that he had been told by others.

64) LUKE 16:13 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 6:24

Luke 16:13 reads: "NO SERVANT CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

And Matthew 6:24 reads: "NO MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Luke's account has once again gone BACK INTO the context of THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. This switch in context is obviously not due to any divine inspiration.

65) LUKE 16:16 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 11:11-13

Luke 16:16 reads: "THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS [WERE] UNTIL JOHN: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and EVERY MAN PRESSETH INTO IT."

And Matthew 11:11-13 reads: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and THE VIOLENT TAKE IT BY FORCE. FOR ALL THE PROPHETS AND THE LAW PROPHESED UNTIL JOHN."

Luke's account has now moved forward to the context of Matthew 11. Notice that Jesus Christ's actual words, as recorded by Matthew, were that "the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force". This is a somewhat enigmatic statement, not exactly the easiest thing to understand. Church members very likely had some difficulties grasping the intended meaning. And so by the time Luke heard

of this statement, it had basically been interpreted to mean "since John's time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it", and that is how Luke recorded it.

It should be easy for us to understand that Jesus Christ Himself NEVER said the exact statement "EVERY MAN presses into it"! No way did Jesus Christ say it like that! Does Jesus Christ ever, anywhere else, make any statement to the effect that "EVERY MAN" is going to press into the kingdom of God? Surely we can see that this statement "EVERY MAN presses into it" stands in open opposition to Jesus Christ's other statement, correctly recorded by Matthew, that "STRAIT IS THE GATE, AND NARROW IS THE WAY, which leads to life, AND FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT" (Matthew 7:14).

They may on the surface sound like similar statements, but there is actually a big difference between the statement "the violent take it by force", and the statement "EVERY MAN presses into it". Think about the statement that Matthew recorded, and then consider how Luke's version of that statement has changed the focus, albeit totally unintentionally.

In all fairness, while Luke's statement is not a verbatim quote of what Jesus Christ had actually said, it is nevertheless an attempt to make a difficult statement more understandable. And IF we take the expression "every man" to be limited to members of God's Church, people who have been specifically called by God the Father, THEN Luke's paraphrased statement can actually be considered helpful.

Now let's look at the next verse.

66) LUKE 16:17 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 5:18

Luke 16:17 reads: "And IT IS EASIER FOR HEAVEN AND EARTH TO PASS, THAN ONE TITTLE OF THE LAW TO FAIL."

And Matthew 5:18 reads: "For verily I say unto you, TILL HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS, ONE JOT OR ONE TITTLE SHALL IN NO WISE PASS FROM THE LAW, till all be fulfilled."

This statement by Luke is ONE MORE REGRESSION into the context of the sermon on the mount. It should be easy to see that Matthew records the correct words of Jesus Christ, and that Luke's version is basically a paraphrase of that statement. Again, Luke's statement reveals a lack of some understanding.

Jesus Christ actually put a time constraint on his statement, which constraint is totally missed by Luke. Jesus Christ didn't say that the jots and tittles would NEVER pass from the law; He really said that they will not pass from the law UNTIL all be fulfilled. Implied in Jesus Christ's correctly recorded statement is that once everything HAS been fulfilled, THEN some jots and tittles will also pass from the law. When we get to the time where all human beings have either been changed into spirit beings, or else they have been burned up in the lake of fire, THEN those jots and tittles that are aimed specifically at guiding the PHYSICAL EXISTENCE of human beings will pass away, because there will not be any physical human beings around from then onwards.

Likewise, Jesus Christ's statement "TILL heaven and earth pass away" implies that they will pass away at some point. That information is also lost in Luke's comparative statement of "IT IS EASIER for heaven and earth to pass".

While Luke's record of this statement doesn't really create any problems, neither is it the product of divine inspiration. Now let's look at the next verse in Luke's account.

67) LUKE 16:18 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 19:9

Luke 16:18 reads: "WHOSOEVER PUTTETH AWAY HIS WIFE, AND MARRIETH ANOTHER, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from [her] husband committeth adultery."

And Matthew 19:9 reads: "And I say unto you, WHOSOEVER SHALL PUT AWAY HIS WIFE, except [it be] for fornication, AND SHALL MARRY ANOTHER, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

One verse after quoting from the context of Matthew 5, Luke is now quoting from the context of Matthew 19. Now Jesus Christ didn't say it both ways, the way Matthew has recorded it, and also the way Luke has recorded it. The point is: Matthew has recorded Jesus Christ's words correctly, and Luke has left out one very vital qualifying phrase, that phrase being "except it be for fornication (Greek "porneia")". This qualifying phrase "except it be for porneia" has an enormous impact on Jesus Christ's overall statement, and its omission in Luke's account is certainly not due to divine inspiration.

Luke also provides no context at all for this statement about divorce and remarriage. The subject is suddenly introduced for no apparent reason. Matthew's account provides the correct context for this statement. Luke's account here is hardly the result of divine inspiration.

68) LUKE 17:1-2 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 18:6-7

Luke 17:1-2 reads: "Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe [unto him], through whom they come! IT WERE BETTER FOR HIM THAT A MILLSTONE WERE HANGED ABOUT HIS NECK, AND HE CAST INTO THE SEA, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

And Matthew 18:6-7 reads: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, IT WERE BETTER FOR HIM THAT A MILLSTONE WERE HANGED ABOUT HIS NECK, AND [THAT] HE WERE DROWNED IN THE DEPTH OF THE SEA. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"

From the context of Matthew 19 in the previous verse Luke's account has now reverted back to the context of Matthew 18. This also is not due to divine inspiration.

69) LUKE 17:23-24 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 24:26-27

Luke 17:23-24 reads: "And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after [them], nor follow [them]. FOR AS THE LIGHTNING, THAT LIGHTENETH OUT OF THE ONE [PART] UNDER HEAVEN, SHINETH UNTO THE OTHER [PART] UNDER HEAVEN; SO SHALL ALSO THE SON OF MAN BE in his day."

And Matthew 24:26-27 reads: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, [he is] in the secret chambers; believe [it] not. FOR AS THE LIGHTNING COMETH OUT OF THE EAST, AND SHINETH EVEN UNTO THE WEST; SO SHALL ALSO THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN BE."

Luke is now clearly quoting from the context of Matthew 24. But it is not until Luke 21 that Luke's account really gets to the context of Matthew 24. So this is once again presented COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTEXT. This also is not the result of divine inspiration.

70) LUKE 17:26-27 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 24:37-39

Luke 17:26-27 reads: "And AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOE, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all."

And Matthew 24:37-39 reads: "But AS THE DAYS OF NOE [WERE], so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

This shows that Luke's account continues with the context of Matthew 24 that was introduced in the previous verses.

71) LUKE 18:15-17 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 19:13-15

Luke 18:15-17 reads: "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when [HIS] DISCIPLES saw [it], they REBUKED THEM. But Jesus called them [unto him], and said, SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME, AND FORBID THEM NOT: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."

And Matthew 19:13-15 reads: "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put [his] hands on them, and pray: and THE DISCIPLES REBUKED THEM. But Jesus said, SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN, AND FORBID THEM NOT, TO COME UNTO ME: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid [his] hands on them, and departed thence."

The disciples' response shows that these two passages refer to the same occasion, as they would not have made that same mistake twice. So Luke's account has now regressed back into the context of Matthew 19. That regression is not due to any divine inspiration.

The verses that immediately follow the above quotations in both accounts also deal with the same incident. Thus:

Luke 18:18 reads: "And a certain ruler asked him, saying, GOOD MASTER, WHAT SHALL I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?"

And Matthew 19:16 reads: "And, behold, one came and said unto him, GOOD MASTER, WHAT GOOD THING SHALL I DO, THAT I MAY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE?"

This confirms that Luke's account is now indeed discussing the context which is equivalent to the context of Matthew 19.

From here onwards Luke's account runs basically parallel to Matthew's account. Both accounts are heading for a discussion of the final week of Jesus Christ's ministry, and His final observance of the Passover. There are some further things to consider in Luke's account of that final Passover.

But before we look at some more details, let's keep the following things in mind: We have now looked at about 70 examples, where Luke has either placed something into a completely wrong context, or where he has presented some altered details regarding events that took place, or where he has presented a different order for the statements that Jesus Christ made, or where he has omitted certain vital parts of quotations, which results in some completely different meanings than the meanings the complete quotations actually convey (e.g. "the poor" versus "the poor in spirit").

Luke's record of some events and some of the things that Jesus Christ said being placed into a wrong context by Luke is not limited to the description of Jesus Christ's ministry before His last Passover. There are some things in Luke's description of the events surrounding that last Passover that are also at odds with the other accounts. Let's now look at some of those things.

72) LUKE CHAPTER 22

In this chapter Luke introduces a number of statements that seem unlikely to be contextually correct, as they are at odds with the other accounts written by the eyewitnesses Matthew and John. Mark's gospel was very likely dictated to Mark by the Apostle Peter, and so for all practical purposes that gospel is also the report of an eyewitness. Luke's gospel is the only one which is not the work of an eyewitness of Christ's ministry.

Notice the sequence of statements in Luke 22:

Verse 8 = Peter and John go to prepare the Passover during the 13th day of the month.

Verse 14 = The sun has set and the 14th day has started. They sit down for the Passover meal.

Verse 15 = Jesus Christ speaks about EATING THIS PASSOVER with them.

Verse 17 = Jesus takes a cup of wine and gives thanks. This reference adds some confusion to Luke's account, since he mentions another cup of wine later. The explanation is that Luke must have intended this reference to "the cup" to refer to the wine they drank DURING THE PASSOVER MEAL.

Luke was trying to describe THE MEAL with verses 15-18. He makes two parallel statements in these verses. They are:

A) Verse 15 = Christ ATE the Passover

Verse 16 = I won't EAT this again UNTIL ...

B) Verse 17 = Christ Himself also DRANK of the cup

Verse 18 = I won't DRINK wine again UNTIL ...

The key to understanding that these verses are NOT A REFERENCE TO THE NEW TESTAMENT PASSOVER are verses 16 and 18. They show that Jesus Christ Himself ate and drank something. But as far as the introduction of the New Testament emblems of the Passover is concerned, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF DID NOT EAT OR DRINK THOSE NEW EMBLEMS!

In plain words: when Jesus Christ broke the bread to represent His broken body, He Himself did NOT eat a piece of THAT bread. And when Jesus Christ blessed the wine to represent His own shed blood, He Himself did NOT drink any of THAT wine. Since verses 15-18 identify eating and drinking that Jesus Christ Himself also partook of, therefore those verses cannot be a reference to the new symbols for the Passover; they can only refer to the OT Passover meal.

That should also be clear from the next two verses in Luke's account, which DO DISCUSS THE NEW TESTAMENT PASSOVER.

Verse 19 = This is now AFTER supper. Here Jesus Christ now takes a piece of bread and breaks it and gives a piece to each of the 11 apostles still present (Judas had by then left, and before he left he

certainly had no inkling that Jesus Christ would still introduce something new to this Passover observance). Jesus Christ Himself did not eat any of THIS bread, but He explained to them that this piece of bread was to represent His body which would shortly "be broken".

Verse 20 = Then Christ takes a cup of wine ALSO AFTER SUPPER (the "also" tells us that the bread in the previous verse was "also" taken after supper), and explains that this wine was to represent His blood which would shortly be shed.

Verse 21 = This statement is now once again OUT OF CONTEXT!

Luke apparently did not grasp that Judas had already left the room BEFORE Jesus Christ introduced the bread and the wine.

To establish the correct sequence of events, we need to examine the other accounts of that Passover and compare them with Luke's account.

A) Luke has CORRECTLY stated in verses 19-20 that Jesus Christ introduced the new symbols for the Passover AFTER SUPPER.

B) In Matthew's account, Matthew 26:20 refers to the meal they ate that night. Matthew 26:21-25 discusses Judas being the one who would betray Christ, and Judas is clearly identified.

C) THEN ONLY, after Judas has been identified, does Jesus Christ introduce the New Testament symbols for the Passover (Matthew 26:26-29).

D) Immediately after discussing the bread and wine Matthew refers to them singing a hymn and going out (verse 30), inferring that the introduction of the bread and wine had only taken place after the actual meal had come to an end.

E) In Mark's account, Mark 14:17-26 represents the identical picture to Matthew's account without providing any additional information.

F) In John's account, John 13:2 shows that the footwashing took place DURING supper. While the KJV here reads "supper being ended", this is a well-known mistranslation, which has been corrected in many other translations to read "DURING SUPPER", or words to that effect (e.g. ASV, RSV, NIV, NRSV, DARBY, WILLIAMS, ROTHERHAM, YOUNG's, etc.).

C) John 13:12 shows Jesus Christ sitting down again and continuing with the supper. Christ proceeds to explain the significance of the footwashing. This leads to immediately referring to the one who would betray Him (verse 18). This prompted Peter to ask John to ask Jesus Christ who the betrayer would be (verse 24).

D) In response to this question from John, Jesus Christ then identified Judas by giving Judas "a sop", an action that shows quite clearly that this was still "during supper".

E) "IMMEDIATELY" after having received the sop Judas went out (verse 30). The meal, though not yet completely finished, was now drawing to a close. This was therefore BEFORE Jesus Christ introduced the new symbols of the bread and the wine. John's use of the word "immediately" in John 13:30 shows that Judas must have left "immediately after Matthew 26:25", and "immediately after Mark 14:21". In both those accounts that is BEFORE Jesus Christ introduced the new symbols for the Passover.

F) Now Luke 22:19-20 shows that Luke did understand that the New Testament Passover symbols were

only introduced AFTER supper. Therefore this took place only AFTER Judas had left the group.

G) Luke traveled with the Apostle Paul. And Paul shows the same understanding that the New Testament symbols of bread and wine were only introduced when Christ "HAD SUPPED", meaning AFTER supper (see 1 Corinthians 11:25). Now Paul states quite categorically that he had "RECEIVED OF THE LORD" his understanding regarding the institution of the New Testament Passover symbols (1 Corinthians 11:23). Thus it seems likely that Luke got his correct information regarding the timing of the institution of the New Testament Passover from Paul, since Paul and Luke are the only ones who spell out in clear terms that this actually only took place "after supper". I take that to mean that JESUS CHRIST is the One who made this timing clear to Paul, who then related that information to Luke.

So the correct sequence of events that evening was as follows: they started eating the meal that comprised the Old Testament Passover. During that meal Jesus Christ performed the footwashing; then He spoke about Judas and identified Judas as the betrayer; and then Judas went out immediately after Jesus had identified him. After that Jesus Christ entered into the lengthy teaching session recorded in John's Gospel (John 13:31 - John 17:26). At some point during that teaching session, probably towards the end of it, Jesus Christ introduced the New Testament symbols of the bread and the wine for the Passover. Then they went out to the garden where Jesus Christ was later arrested.

With this background, let's now look at some more specific verses.

73) LUKE 22:21-23 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 26:21-23 AND TO MARK 14:18-21

Luke 22:21 reads: "But, behold, THE HAND OF HIM THAT BETRAYETH ME [IS] WITH ME ON THE TABLE."

And Matthew 26:23 reads: "And he answered and said, HE THAT DIPPETH [HIS] HAND WITH ME IN THE DISH, THE SAME SHALL BETRAY ME."

And Mark 14:18 reads: "And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, ONE OF YOU WHICH EATETH WITH ME SHALL BETRAY ME."

These three verses are all a record of the same basic statement by Jesus Christ regarding Judas. However, while Luke has Jesus Christ making this statement AFTER having introduced the new symbols (i.e. in Luke 22:19-20), Matthew and Mark both show Jesus Christ making this statement about Judas BEFORE He introduced the new symbols (i.e. in Matthew 26:26-29 and in Mark 14:22-25).

When taken with John's precise statement that Judas left IMMEDIATELY AFTER Jesus Christ had spoken about him and identified him, then it means that Matthew's and Mark's accounts both imply that Judas did NOT partake of the New Testament bread and wine symbols, while Luke's account implies that Judas also partook of the New Testament bread and wine symbols. It boils down to the three gospel accounts written by the eyewitnesses of that last Passover observance being in full agreement with one another, while the one gospel account written by the non-eyewitness Luke is at odds with the other three accounts regarding the time when Judas left the meeting.

The different implications created in these different accounts are certainly not due to divine inspiration.

74) LUKE 22:24-27 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 20:20-28

Luke 22:24-26 reads: "And THERE WAS ALSO A STRIFE AMONG THEM, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, THE KINGS OF THE GENTILES EXERCISE LORDSHIP OVER THEM; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye

[shall] not [be] so: but HE THAT IS GREATEST AMONG YOU, LET HIM BE AS THE YOUNGER; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

And Matthew 20:24-26 reads: "And when THE TEN heard [it], they WERE MOVED WITH INDIGNATION AGAINST THE TWO BRETHERN. But Jesus called them [unto him], and said, Ye know that THE PRINCES OF THE GENTILES EXERCISE DOMINION OVER THEM, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but WHOSOEVER WILL BE GREAT AMONG YOU, LET HIM BE YOUR MINISTER."

Here Luke once again quotes an incident GREATLY OUT OF CONTEXT! This incident was initiated by the mother of James and John asking Jesus Christ to give her two sons the top positions in the kingdom of God (Matthew 20:20-21). This happened some time BEFORE that last Passover. When Luke heard about that rivalry amongst the apostles, together with the teachings that Jesus Christ gave at that occasion, it appears that he was incorrectly told that this happened during the last Passover.

It is interesting that Mark's account (which was dictated by Peter) doesn't have THE MOTHER of James and John making this request to Jesus Christ. No, Mark's account has JAMES AND JOHN THEMSELVES asking Jesus Christ for this special treatment (see Mark 10:35-37). This is probably a reflection of the personal rivalry between especially Peter and John for preeminence amongst the apostles. That tension between Peter and John appears to have surfaced again in a small way after Christ's resurrection, when Peter, upon being told his fate by Jesus Christ (see John 21:18-19), asked, paraphrased, "and what about John?" (see John 21:20-21), and to which Jesus Christ replied, also paraphrased, "that's not your business, Peter" (see John 21:22).

So while Peter may have felt that James and John themselves initiated the request for the two top spots, whether or not they used their mother to present this request to Jesus Christ, the uninvolved Matthew presents the more factual and objective view that THE MOTHER of James and John had presented this request.

Luke, in placing this episode within the context of the last Passover, did not really grasp the mood and atmosphere at that last Passover observance by Jesus Christ. Let's note the following things:

A) When Jesus Christ began to speak about being betrayed by one of them, Matthew shows that they became "EXCEEDING SORROWFUL" (Matthew 26:22), and seriously asked "is it I"?

B) Mark likewise shows that Jesus Christ's discussion about being betrayed by one of them made them "SORROWFUL" (Mark 14:19), likewise asking very soberly "is it I"?

C) Luke records this same situation as follows: "And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing" in Luke 22:23. But notice that Luke has not captured THE MOOD OF SORROW that Jesus Christ's comment had produced in the group. Luke's comment about this situation is more clinical and detached from any feelings. Had Luke grasped the mood of sorrow that had come over the group, he would have realized that his next comment (i.e. Luke 22:24) certainly did not belong within the context of that Passover.

D) The strife and selfish arguments, which are implied by Luke's statement in Luke 22:24, are completely out of place in the context of all those men being filled with sorrow and asking the question "am I going to be the traitor"?

This episode of them openly in front of Jesus Christ arguing about being more important than the others did not happen twice! It was triggered by the mother of James and John, no doubt with the approval of her sons, asking Jesus Christ for preeminence for James and John. That event was correctly and

objectively recorded by Matthew. Mark records the same event from Peter's perspective. Luke, on the other hand, later heard about this event in more general terms, and either was told or else assumed that this had taken place at the last Passover. The identical responses by Jesus Christ, as recorded by Matthew and by Luke, show that this was in fact one and the same occasion.

Luke placing this incident within the context of the last Passover was certainly not the result of divine inspiration.

75) LUKE 22:29-30 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 19:27-28

Luke 22:29-30 reads: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and SIT ON THRONES JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL."

And Matthew 19:27-28 reads: "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; WHAT SHALL WE HAVE THEREFORE? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, YE ALSO SHALL SIT UPON TWELVE THRONES, JUDGING THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL."

Luke has once again placed this statement into THE WRONG CONTEXT. A careful examination of the lengthy discourse that John records for that night should make clear that talking about them sitting on thrones and ruling was not a part of that occasion. Keep in mind also that the occasion Luke is describing had ONLY ELEVEN APOSTLES PRESENT, since Judas had already left the group (although Luke seems to not have realized this), and since Jesus Christ MOST ASSUREDLY was not thinking of giving "a throne" to the one apostle who would betray Him within the hour. That Passover was simply the wrong context to talk about "twelve thrones".

Luke placing this comment, which rightly belongs within the context of Matthew 19, right into the context of the last Passover is also certainly not due to divine inspiration.

76) LUKE 22:34 AND MATTHEW 26:34 COMPARED TO MARK 14:30

Luke 22:34 reads: "And he said, I tell thee, Peter, THE COCK SHALL NOT CROW THIS DAY, BEFORE that thou shalt THRICE deny that thou knowest me."

Matthew 26:34 reads: "Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, BEFORE THE COCK CROW, thou shalt deny me THRICE."

And Mark 14:30 reads: "And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, [even] in this night, BEFORE THE COCK CROW TWICE, thou shalt deny me THRICE."

These words were spoken to Peter, and Peter no doubt remembered them very vividly. Jesus Christ said "before the cock crow TWICE", and that is how Peter dictated this episode to Mark. But both, Matthew and Luke, have left out this reference to "twice".

Now Mark 14:68 reads: "But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; AND THE COCK CREW."

The point is that when the "cock crew" here in Mark 14:68 Peter had thus far only denied Jesus Christ once! It was only after he had denied Jesus Christ two more times that THEN the cock crew "the second time" (Mark 14:72).

So, strictly speaking, the statements in Luke 22:34 and in Matthew 26:34, that Peter would deny Jesus Christ THRICE before the rooster would crow, are not correct! When the rooster crowed for the first time Peter had thus far only denied Jesus Christ ONCE!

If, in the absence of Mark 14:30, anyone had correctly reported when "the cock crew" for the first time, it would have implied that Jesus Christ's prediction was not really correct! A correct record of the rooster's crowing that night required a correct record of Jesus Christ's complete prediction regarding Peter's conduct that night. And that complete quotation is only recorded in Mark's account.

The omission of the word "twice" in both, Matthew's account and also in Luke's account, is certainly not due to any divine inspiration.

77) LUKE 10:7 COMPARED TO MATTHEW 10:10

Chronologically this fits between points #34 and #35 above. Luke presents this statement in the correct context. But Luke has made a small change to the words of Jesus Christ.

In Luke 10:7 Luke wrote: "for the labourer is worthy of HIS HIRE", the Greek expression here being "axios gar ho ergates tou misthou autou estin".

But the parallel in Matthew 10:10 reads: "for the workman is worthy of HIS MEAT", the Greek expression here being "axios gar ho ergates tes trophes autou estin".

[Comment: The words "the labourer" and "the workman" are a translation of the same Greek expression "ho ergates" in both cases. It would have been helpful if the translators had been more consistent with their translations here.]

So where Matthew quotes Jesus Christ as saying "HIS MEAT" (Greek "tes trophes"), Luke quotes Jesus Christ as saying "HIS HIRE" (Greek "tou misthou"). The Greek word "trophe" basically means "FOOD", represented in the KJV by the word "meat". And the Greek word "misthos" basically means "WAGES" or "reward for work done" or "hire".

The basic meaning that is conveyed by these two verses is the same, but Jesus Christ obviously only said the actual words from one of these two quotations. If He said "food", then He didn't say "hire"; and if He said "hire", then He didn't say "food". What we have here is that the eyewitness Matthew has recorded the correct statement that "the labourer is worthy of his food", and by the time Luke heard this, the statement had been somewhat expanded to state the more general principle "the labourer is worthy of his hire (or wages)". And that principle is certainly fine and good.

It is interesting to note that shortly before his own death the Apostle Paul quoted Luke's statement here, rather than quoting Matthew's statement. Luke was Paul's traveling companion. In 1 Timothy 5:18 Paul told Timothy: "For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, THE LABOURER [IS] WORTHY OF HIS REWARD", quoting this statement from Luke's Gospel.

[Comment: The Greek word translated as "hire" in Luke 10:7 is in 1 Timothy 5:18 translated as "reward". Again, it would have been helpful if the translators had also been more consistent with the translation of this Greek word.]

It appears that Paul was not familiar with Matthew's account of this incident. At any rate, while this slight change does not really make any difference to what God wants us to understand, this modification of Christ's words is certainly not the result of divine inspiration. This also illustrates once more that in many places the Bible has recorded the basically correct meaning of a statement, even if that record does not

represent the actual precise literal words that were spoken by someone.

We have now looked at enough parallel passages in the gospel accounts to reach some initial conclusions. But now it is time for us to examine the introduction to Luke's Gospel, since some statements in that introduction are also frequently misunderstood and misapplied.

THE INTRODUCTION TO LUKE'S GOSPEL: LUKE 1:1-4

Notice how Luke starts his gospel account:

Forasmuch as MANY HAVE TAKEN IN HAND TO SET FORTH IN ORDER a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, (Luke 1:1)

For the first 20-plus years after Jesus Christ's crucifixion and resurrection the Church had gone along WITHOUT ANY OFFICIAL WRITTEN RECORD of Jesus Christ's ministry. The original apostles had related very many of the events from Christ's ministry in their preaching to the people. But while most people in the Church at that time had heard various events from Christ's ministry and His teachings, they did not have any chronological account that would have placed all the things they had heard into their correct context. They might have heard WHAT had happened at different times, but with many of those things it was still quite difficult for people to know WHEN, and under what exact circumstances, those things had happened.

So then at some point, possibly when the apostles realized that they might all die before the second coming of Jesus Christ, Peter decided to dictate a basic chronological outline of Christ's ministry to Mark, which resulted in the Gospel of Mark. Then Matthew, also one of the original apostles, decided to write a somewhat more detailed account based on his own personal experiences, basically following the outline that had been established by Mark's Gospel.

This opening statement here in Luke's Gospel shows that then MANY OTHER PEOPLE were also trying to produce chronologically accurate accounts of Jesus Christ's ministry (i.e. they were trying to "set forth in order" the things they had heard and been taught). Since these were all accounts written by people who were not a part of the original apostles, the result was that there were numerous clearly conflicting statements within these various accounts.

Perhaps Luke had at some point read Mark's Gospel, but he was also acquainted with a number of these other accounts of Christ's ministry, written by people who are unknown to us and whose works have since disappeared completely. This becomes apparent when we consider that Luke records 18 parables that are not mentioned in any of the other three gospels; and where the other three accounts record no more than four occasions each when Jesus Christ prayed, Luke records 11 instances when Jesus prayed, again presenting information he had obtained from other sources. But Luke had also noticed the obvious conflicts within some of these accounts he had read, and he felt that these conflicts needed to be corrected.

While Luke was perhaps familiar with Mark's Gospel, this does not mean that Luke knew the content of Mark's Gospel off by heart. His recall of that information, obtained perhaps a few years earlier (?), was not necessarily perfect. And his recall was no doubt also influenced and even somewhat blurred by the added information he had learned from some of these many other (unofficial) accounts.

Luke had also done some of his own research into certain background information regarding the birth of John the Baptist and certain information about Jesus Christ's early life. Perhaps he had at some point even had the opportunity to speak to Mary, the mother of Jesus? That might explain Luke's knowledge of some of the details he presents for the birth of John the Baptist and also for the birth of Jesus Christ.

At any rate, it seems clear that Luke made a very conscientious effort to gather as much factual information as he could, and then he did his best to put that all into what he believed was the correct chronological framework.

Luke continued to say in his introductory comments:

Even as THEY DELIVERED THEM UNTO US, which from the beginning were EYEWITNESSES, and ministers of the word; (Luke 1:2)

This is a very clear admission that all of the information Luke presents in his account was "delivered to him" by other people. Many of those "other people" had been eyewitnesses of at least a part of Jesus Christ's ministry.

This is a vastly different foundation than, for example, the direct statement by the Apostle Paul, who wrote: "for I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD THAT WHICH ALSO I DELIVERED UNTO YOU" (see 1 Corinthians 11:23). At no stage does Luke claim to have received ANYTHING "of the Lord", as far as what he presents in his gospel account is concerned. At no stage does Luke himself claim any "divine inspiration" for the gospel that he wrote.

We also need to place the expression "which FROM THE BEGINNING were eyewitnesses" into its correct context. It is unlikely that by "eyewitnesses" Luke meant any of the original apostles, or he would assuredly have stated the names of those apostles that had furnished him with any of the information he presents.

Luke appears to have been one of Paul's converts, but at the time of the Jerusalem conference he does not yet seem to have been a part of Paul's traveling group. In Galatians 2:1 Paul specifically mentions the non-Jew Titus as someone who went with him to Jerusalem. Had Luke, also a non-Jew, been there with Paul at that time, he would have faced the same situation as Titus and Luke would very likely have been named by Paul in this context.

Luke himself, in writing about this event in the Book of Acts, still speaks very clearly about "when THEY were come to Jerusalem" in Acts 15:4. Then "they" went back to Antioch. And after that Paul and Barnabas split up, and Paul took Silas with him and went on another trip. It is only after Timothy joined Paul's group in Acts 16:1-3, and after Paul had a vision at Troas that Luke reveals himself to be a part of the traveling group, by writing "and after he had seen the vision immediately WE ENDEAVORED to go into Macedonia" (Acts 16:10). We see Luke with Paul by the time of the writing of Colossians (Colossians 4:14), at the time when Paul was imprisoned for the first time. And Luke was still with Paul at the time of the writing of 2 Timothy (2 Timothy 4:11).

With the very limited contact that Paul had with only two of the original apostles (i.e. Peter and John), it is likely that Luke had even less contact with any of them. Further, giving the names of any of the original apostles as his sources for the information in his account would immediately have increased the whole status of his account. Luke only claims sources that are not specifically identified for us, sources that carried less authority than quoting any of the original apostles would have conferred.

It seems very unlikely that Luke would ever have had the chance to meet any of the original apostles; and if perchance he had met some of them, to then have had the opportunity to have them relate to him the whole story of Jesus Christ's ministry.

Keep in mind that the original apostles went to "the circumcision", while Paul went to "the uncircumcision". Anyone working with Paul and traveling with Paul would not really have had many opportunities to meet any of the original apostles. So "the eyewitnesses" Luke appeals to for authority

are extremely unlikely to have been any of the original 12 apostles.

Now notice what Luke said in the next verse:

It seemed good to me also, HAVING HAD PERFECT UNDERSTANDING of all things FROM THE VERY FIRST, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, (Luke 1:3)

Let's understand what Luke is actually saying in this verse, because this KJV translation is not correct and it creates a wrong impression.

Luke's expression "it seemed good to me also" makes quite clear that HE HIMSELF thought of the idea of writing another gospel account. "It seemed good unto me" is another way of saying "I thought it would be a good idea for me to also write an account of the gospel". That is not the same as saying: "I was moved by God's Spirit within me to write another gospel". Luke here very clearly does not claim any kind of special inspiration in writing down his particular account of the gospel. He simply tried to be as objectively correct as possible.

The word "perfect" is an INCORRECT translation from the Greek text. The Greek adverb "akribos", which is here incorrectly translated as "perfect", really means "accurately" or "diligently" or "circumspectly". The word "akribos" is derived from "akron" which means "the topmost point". It refers to having a good view of everything. But that is not the same as "perfect".

The expression "understanding of all things" is a translation of the two Greek words "parekolouthekoti pasin", and this literally means "having traced the course of all things".

The expression "from the very first" is another MISTRANSLATION! It is a translation of the Greek adverb "anothen" which actually means "from above" or "from a higher place". For example, the expression "born AGAIN" in John 3:6 is "gennethe ANOTHEN" and in John 3:7 it is "gennethenai ANOTHEN"; and this expression really means "born FROM ABOVE". The word "anothen" does NOT mean "from the very first", and neither does it mean "again". It really means "from above". It is incorrect to believe that here Luke was somehow claiming a good understanding "from the very first". Luke was basically saying that he tried to present the whole picture "from a higher perspective". This thought is not correctly conveyed by the KJV translation.

The reason why Luke makes this statement is because HE HAD SEARCHED OUT THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION which he presents in Luke 1:5 - Luke 3:38, which information the other writers do not present. All of that information Luke had SEARCHED OUT DILIGENTLY, but it is not information that God had somehow put into Luke's mind. Luke depended for this information on what other people had told him.

Realize that with this expression, which is incorrectly translated into the English expression "from the very first", Luke is NOT claiming to have been "around" from the start of Christ's ministry; he is simply referring to the information he had searched out through making diligent enquiries, like the information he presents in Luke 1:5 - 3:38, as well as the many other places where Luke presents information that is just not found in the other gospel accounts. Luke had done his research as carefully as possible.

Green's Literal Translation captures the thought Luke was expressing far better than the KJV. Here is Green's rendering of this verse.

it seemed good also to me, HAVING TRACED OUT ALL THINGS ACCURATELY FROM THE FIRST, to write in order to you, most excellent Theophilus, (Luke 1:3, Green's Literal Translation)

It would have been more accurate still had Green translated this verse as: "having traced out all things DILIGENTLY FROM ABOVE, from a higher perspective, to write in order to you".

With this expression Luke is also automatically acknowledging that he had not seen these things himself. He is showing HOW he had acquired all this information, by, as far as possible, TRACING EVERY ACCOUNT to its source, until he became convinced of its truth. Luke had used his mind in coming to the conclusions he presents in his gospel account. And God accepted that process by including Luke's gospel account in the Bible.

Now it is one thing to "diligently trace out all the historical facts", but it is another matter altogether to have been AN EYEWITNESS to the things one writes down. Luke certainly believed that what he was presenting was accurate, because he was confident of the reports given to him by various eyewitnesses, some of whom had witnessed some things, and some of whom had witnessed other things. And WHAT Luke presents is basically correct. But as we have seen in the approximately 70 examples, Luke also gets some of the details wrong, and he in many cases places a correct statement into an incorrect context.

Furthermore, by writing this account for someone named "Theophilus" it should be clear that Luke himself had no idea that the account he was writing would later be included in the New Testament "Scriptures". It was only towards the end of the life of the Apostle Paul, in the second half of the 60's A.D., that we see the Apostle Paul referring to Luke's Gospel as "Scripture" (the reference in 1 Timothy 5:18). And when God later used the Apostle John to finalize the canonization of the writings of the New Testament (Isaiah 8:16 predicted that the canonization would be completed by Christ's "disciples"), in all likelihood Luke had been dead for many years; and he very possibly died knowing nothing more than that his account of Christ's ministry was one of "many" (see Luke 1:1 again) that were available to people in God's Church.

So while Luke's Gospel contains some things that are technically not correct, or that are presented in a wrong context, Luke himself makes no claims for any divine inspiration, and neither does he claim that the things he presents are "perfectly correct". It wasn't Luke's decision to include his account in "the Scriptures"; that was God's decision. And

while Paul at the end of his life already recognized Luke's Gospel as "Scripture", God saw to it that this was indeed the case by having the Apostle John firmly establish the Gospel of Luke within the canon of the New Testament. And God was certainly fully aware of the fact that Luke's account varied in minor ways from the other accounts, and that in some cases Luke's account even creates a wrong impression or a wrong focus.

The next verse also shows that Luke thought he was doing nothing more than writing this account for a friend, to strengthen that friend's faith and confidence. Notice:

That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed. (Luke 1:4)

When Luke wrote this verse, he had no idea that this would later become a part of the New Testament "Scriptures". This is unlike the Apostle Paul, who before his death wanted to go through all of the letters he had written, to determine which ones should be included in the canon, and which letters should just fade into oblivion (see 2 Timothy 4:13). Paul KNEW that some of his writings would become a part of the Scriptures, but Luke didn't have that kind of knowledge at the time that he wrote this gospel account.

So, to summarize this point, Luke claimed neither divine inspiration, nor "perfect" understanding, nor yet understanding "from the very first". Luke simply wrote both of his books to help a friend, Theophilus, to have a better understanding of the life and the teachings of Jesus Christ, and of the historical

development of the early Church. It was GOD who decided to later include Luke's two books within the canon of the New Testament.

And an objective assessment of the approximately 70 examples from Luke's Gospel that we have looked at must conclude that, while Luke presents a generally fair and accurate picture of the basic teachings Jesus Christ presented during His ministry, Luke does at times also present information in a wrong sequence, or in a wrong context, or as paraphrased statements of Jesus Christ's actual words. And while this is certainly not any evidence of divine inspiration for Luke, none of this prevented God from including the Book of Luke in the Bible.

To understand WHY God included the Book of Luke in the Bible, we need to look at all of the gospels as a group.

ANOTHER LOOK AT ALL OF THE GOSPELS

God had told the prophet Isaiah the following:

Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. (Isaiah 8:16)

This was a prophecy that the Bible would be completed by "the disciples of Jesus Christ". Now it seems that the apostles did not understand this responsibility for a long time. But somewhere along the line they finally realized this responsibility, that it was up to them to establish and to preserve a written record of Jesus Christ's ministry and teachings. And once they realized this responsibility they wrote more than one account of Christ's ministry, as witnessed by four gospel accounts, three of which were the products of those eyewitnesses.

But what exactly was their responsibility? Were their writings to become "the word of God"? Let's notice a statement John records in his gospel account.

Jesus Christ was speaking to the eleven apostles at His last observance of the Passover, after Judas had left, and He promised to send them the power of the Holy Spirit. Notice this statement:

But the Comforter, [which is] THE HOLY SPIRIT, which the Father will send in my name, it SHALL teach you all things, and BRING ALL THINGS TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE, WHATSOEVER I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU. (John 14:26)

This is a statement Jesus Christ made to exactly 11 men. Only 3 of those 11 men were instrumental in writing any parts of the New Testament: Peter, John and Matthew.

Now all 11 of them became teachers of God's people in the early Church. And with this promise Jesus Christ was here guaranteeing them ACCURATE RECALL of all the things He had taught them. So all 11 of them became "witnesses" of Christ's ministry, accurately recalling the things Jesus Christ had said in their presence. And they constantly quoted the words of Jesus Christ in their preaching and teaching.

However, we should recognize that "accurate recall" of what Christ had said is not necessarily the same as "accurate understanding". Nor is "accurate recall of spoken words" necessarily the same as "accurate recall of non-verbal details regarding specific situations that had taken place". So even though they were promised "accurate recall", they did not really understand correctly that the establishment of the kingdom of God was another approximately 2000 years away. Nor did they understand correctly how to deal with non-Jews, until God gave Peter a vision that led to the baptism of Cornelius. Nor did they always recall the circumstantial details of certain events in the same way as someone else recalled those same circumstantial details (e.g. the rooster crowing once or twice, there being one angel or two angels in the

tomb after Christ's resurrection, the mother of James and John asking Jesus Christ, or James and John themselves doing this asking, etc.)

The Book of Revelation is an example of how THE ENTIRE BIBLE is composed. In the opening verse John reveals that God the Father gave a revelation to Jesus Christ, which Jesus Christ then sent by His angel to His servant John. In the next verse John tells us EXACTLY of what the book he wrote (i.e. the Book of Revelation) is made up. Notice:

Who bare record of THE WORD OF GOD, and of THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST, and of ALL THINGS THAT HE SAW. (Revelation 1:2)

The content of the Book of Revelation consists of three things:

- the words of God the Father
- the words of Jesus Christ
- the words of the Apostle John, who described the things he saw IN HIS OWN WORDS!

This formula applies to the whole Bible. The Bible gives us the words of God the Father, the words of Jesus Christ, the words of some angels, very occasionally even the words of Satan, and in very many cases "the words of men". In this regard "the words of men" contained in the Bible not only applies to the words that were actually spoken by some human being or other (obviously excluding the words they spoke directly for God); this also applies to THE DESCRIPTIONS we find for many events and historical circumstances: those descriptions (e.g. the reigns of various kings, descriptions of what happened when, etc.) reflect how their human authors saw and evaluated the situations they were describing.

We need to understand that the whole Bible is a collaborative effort between God and man, but controlled by God. It contains all the statements from God that God really WANTED recorded for posterity. And it also contains very many thoughts, ideas and descriptions provided by men and women, which God in some cases COMMANDED men to provide, and which God in other cases PERMITTED to be recorded. Right from the start God wanted to establish a cooperative relationship with mankind. That is why, barely a few hours after Adam had been created, God brought all the animals to Adam to let ADAM determine the names for all the animals (see Genesis 2:19). And God ACCEPTED all of the names that Adam selected.

At the other end of the Bible, in Revelation, God did NOT LEGISLATE to John exactly HOW John was to describe the things he would see. The actual wording of the descriptions of what he saw God left COMPLETELY UP TO JOHN! John chose the words for the actual descriptions we find in the Book of Revelation; God did not put any words into John's mouth or mind in this matter. But what God did do, is give John DIRECT QUOTATIONS TO RECORD. And those John certainly recorded.

Now as far as the gospels are concerned, they have recorded the words of Jesus Christ. Those words certainly are a large part of the "God-breathed Scriptures" that Paul told Timothy to use to establish doctrines, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness (see 2 Timothy 3:16). Those records of the words of Jesus Christ are the counterpart of the "thus says the LORD" statements in the Old Testament.

But in the same way that God was not really too concerned about whatever strange names Adam might perhaps have given to some animals, so likewise God was not really too concerned about whether the descriptions regarding the circumstantial details of Christ's ministry recorded in the gospels were 100% correct, or whether there might even be some minor discrepancies between the different accounts.

What difference does it REALLY make if Matthew records the correct sequence for the three temptations Jesus Christ faced, and if Luke records those three temptations in an incorrect sequence? What difference does it really make if Luke records some of Jesus Christ's statements from the sermon on the mount in a range of different incorrect contexts? What difference does it really make if Luke presents the three components of showing love to our enemies in an incorrect sequence, as established by Matthew's record? What difference do these things really make? For that matter, what difference do certain discrepancies that we can find in various Old Testament books REALLY make?

NONE WHATSOEVER!

From the time God created Adam, God has ALWAYS been in the business of TESTING OUR HUMAN MINDS. God has ALWAYS wanted us human beings to USE our minds in determining how to conduct our lives and how we are to respond to God's instructions. God has never wanted the obedience of mindless robots. God has always applied the principle that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (see Matthew 12:34).

One of the major differences between the true religion of Almighty God and all other religions of this world is that God DEMANDS that we use our minds in establishing how we can best apply all the principles of His way of life in our daily lives and circumstances. All of the religions of this world, on the other hand, basically operate on the principle of: "you don't have to think for yourself; just do what we tell you to do". The false religions are designed by Satan to control the actions and behavior of people, to enforce outward compliance and conformity with whatever rules may be established, regardless of people's frame of mind and motivation. And if we are not on our guard, this could even become the primary outlook for us in the churches of God, as evidenced by the commonly seen desire of some church members to have the ministers make their decisions for them. In this regard we need to heed the principle of Jesus Christ's admonition: "but it shall not be so among you".

With God's true religion the rules themselves are not really that important. The rules are really only TOOLS, designed to establish a desirable training environment for the mind. Now obviously, non-compliance with the rules God has established will incur penalties, including the ultimate penalty of death, because deliberate non-compliance reflects a wrong frame of mind.

But the point is that COMPLIANCE, on the other hand, is not necessarily enough to make the grade with God. When we comply to the best of our ability with all of God's laws and instructions, THEN God is not looking at our compliance (i.e. obedience) itself. In that situation what God is REALLY looking at is OUR MOTIVATION for our obedience. And it is our motivation for doing what is right which is MORE IMPORTANT than the actual right conduct itself.

None of the world's religions function like that, because Satan himself doesn't function like that. With Satan compliance with required actions is an end in itself. With God it is THE MOTIVATIONS for the right actions that are the deciding factor as to whether or not those right actions are worth anything. With God it is the thoughts and INTENTIONS of the heart that are far more important than the correct outwardly discernible actions themselves (see Hebrews 4:12-13).

If we can REALLY understand this, then it should become very apparent just how insignificant and unimportant differences in the "circumstantial details" between different gospel accounts (or between some OT books) really are! What do those technicalities really have to do with how God wants us to live our lives and how God wants us to develop our minds? NOTHING! NOTHING AT ALL!

Can YOUR faith be shattered if someone could really beyond any doubt prove to you some discrepancy between different biblical statements? I know of one man who resigned from the Church of God on June 14, 1974, because he found "irreconcilable differences" between certain insignificant statements in the

books of Kings and Chronicles. Can YOUR faith be shattered like that? Does YOUR faith depend on desperately trying to reconcile all of the approximately 70 examples I have presented in this article, or have some of those examples shaken your faith in the Bible? I know that some people will ignore this evidence and insist that all of the gospels are "inspired by God", in spite of whatever discrepancies between the various accounts anyone may be able to present, because their faith really depends on the premise that there cannot possibly be any "discrepancies" between different books of the Bible.

But if the clearly demonstrable conflicts in insignificant details that I have presented can really shake your faith, then your faith is indeed weak, and is certainly not built on the right foundation! Those examples prove that the statements in question are not "inspired by God", but they do not at all mean that the whole Bible is not somehow the book which reveals God's will and laws and instructions and interactions with mankind, and the preservation of which God Himself has insured. And those examples certainly do not mean that the Gospel of Luke should somehow not be a part of the New Testament.

It is the "God-breathed Scriptures" that tell us how we are to conduct our lives. It is all the words that have "proceeded out of the mouth of God" that show us how to live. It is THE LAWS OF GOD that are to regulate our lives. Reports of certain situations that took place, or reports of verbatim or paraphrased conversations must always defer to the clearly stated laws of God and words of God.

As mentioned above, God has always required us human beings to use our minds in determining how to live our lives, and in determining our conduct and behavior.

For example, God very obviously wanted Balaam to not go with the messengers of Balak (see Numbers 22:12). So when Balaam then later asked God a second time, and God actually said "RISE UP AND GO WITH THEM" (Numbers 22:20), then God really wanted Balaam to USE HIS MIND and to say "NO, I don't believe that You really want me to go with them, because that is what You told me earlier". But Balaam didn't use his mind, and so God nearly killed him on three occasions, and Balaam was killed soon afterwards anyway (Numbers 31:8).

Similarly, when God showed Peter a vision of unclean animals and then told Peter: "RISE, PETER, KILL AND EAT" (Acts 10:13), God expected Peter to use his mind to reply "NOT SO, LORD" (verse 14). And that is precisely what Peter did do.

Now the Apostle John tells us that the vast majority of all the things Jesus Christ did were never recorded in ANY of the gospel accounts. As John wrote at the end of his account:

And there are also MANY OTHER THINGS WHICH JESUS DID, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen. (John 21:25)

What this tells us is that God allowed all four of the authors of the gospels to be SELECTIVE IN WHAT THEY RECORDED. God did not force Matthew to record some things, and then force John to record some other things. The authors all used their own discretion as to which things from Christ's ministry they decided to record. It is only when it came to them recording the words of Jesus Christ in whatever incidents they were reporting that God's Spirit ensured accurate recall of Christ's words for those authors who had been at that last Passover.

Instead of having one man write an entire gospel account under direct inspiration, with every word specifically selected by God in a "thus says the LORD" manner, something that would have eliminated all possible arguments, God decided to have FOUR men each write an account of the basic details pertaining to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, but from their own backgrounds and with their own understanding. Three of those reports come from eyewitnesses (Peter being responsible for the content

of Mark's Gospel). And the reason God provided four gospel accounts is because God once again expects all of us to USE OUR MINDS. As the Apostle Paul wrote:

For WHO HATH KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. (1Corinthians 2:16)

The point is that God EXPECTS us to make the effort to come to know "the mind of the Lord". We must think about God's laws and instructions. We must think about the examples Jesus Christ set us during His ministry. By giving us four gospel accounts, God expects us to study all four of them. And in those cases where certain discrepancies appear in the different accounts, the more we come to know "the mind of the Lord", the more we will be able to determine the correct picture in each case. And the more often we can come to understand the correct picture, the more we will be growing in understanding God's mind.

This is the process that ensured that the Bible is "a closed book" for all those who do not understand "the mind of the Lord". To those who understand God's mind, the truth is there to be discerned, and for everyone else it is hidden from view. The process of understanding is completely dependent on us using our minds from the foundation of being in full agreement with God's laws and ways. Without that foundation the real significance of the Scriptures is largely obscured.

When you think about some minor mistakes in some of the gospel accounts, consider also the following point.

WHO HAS EVER HAD THE COMPLETE CORRECT BIBLE?

What difference is there in the following two situations:

A) You have access to the whole Bible as it was written, correctly preserved; BUT some of the things that were originally written contained minor, insignificant errors here and there, because the authors of those passages did not have perfect understanding of the things they were writing down.

B) Everything in the Bible is written down PERFECTLY exactly as God inspired it, with no flaws of any kind and no contradictions of any kind; BUT later scribes make some alterations, and on top of that every translation that is ever made from those original documents contains both, unintentional and deliberate mistranslations.

The overwhelmingly vast majority of the people who have ever read the Bible, and who to one degree or another base their lives and their conduct on the Bible, have depended on translations into their respective languages (i.e. English for us), because they simply can't read Hebrew and/or Greek. So what difference does it REALLY make for the overwhelmingly vast majority of people whether the Bible they have access to has come to them through "Process A" or whether it has come to them through "Process B"?

Until about 500 years ago the only Bible to which people in Europe had access was the Latin Vulgate translation, which contains a vast number of mistranslations from the original Hebrew and Greek texts. Besides the fact that most people in Europe at that time didn't even speak or understand Latin, their only choice was: the corrupt Latin Vulgate version or no Bible at all. How could any of them possibly know about all the wrong ideas that are presented in the Vulgate?

Is there really a difference between some technicality being wrong at the time the book (e.g. Luke) was written, or a book being written perfectly correctly, but a flaw being introduced into it AT A LATER STAGE (e.g. the addition in 1 John 5:7-8)? What is the effect on the reader at a later time? If there is

something that is not perfectly correct when he reads it, does it make a difference whether that flaw was there to start with, or whether it was only introduced later? It doesn't really make a difference to the reader, who assumes he is reading a correct text, how some flaw or other came to be in the text.

Now we have been able to figure out that the addition in 1 John 5:7-8 was a deliberate alteration made to lend credibility to the trinity doctrine. But what about the other alterations that we don't know about, because there is no external evidence available to expose those alterations? What about them? Whether it is an alteration of the text, or whether it is an incorrect translation; the effect on the readers is the same, namely, the readers have no way of knowing that they are in fact reading information that is not fully correct.

For the record: not a single one of all of the examples that I have mentioned from the Gospel of Luke even remotely approaches THE SEVERITY OF THE UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED MISTRANSLATION "LUCIFER" IN ISAIAH 14:12! That diabolical mistranslation of the Hebrew word "heylel" in Isaiah 14:12 as "Lucifer", slipped into the Latin Bible by Satan's instruments, has done far more damage than any of the minor technical flaws in the Gospel of Luke have ever done! And millions of people have lived and died and never known that it is a gross insult to Jesus Christ to EVER apply the name "Lucifer" to Satan. Yet God has allowed that perverse mistranslation to go virtually undetected. And if God is willing to let such an insult go undetected for many centuries, why should God be concerned if a writer of integrity (i.e. Luke) makes some genuine mistakes, which really don't have any significant consequences, because that writer didn't have access to all the facts?

We try and deal with this type of situation by comparing numerous different translations, in the hope that some of them will present the correct information. But we have no guarantee that we've caught every wrong translation. At the start I mentioned that there are a vast number of mistranslations in all of the Bible versions available to us, of most of which mistranslations we are not even aware. God hasn't intervened to stop any completely wrong translations of specific expressions or passages from being published.

Since almost nobody would have access to the original documents in the original languages, whether God originally inspired a man to write verbatim exactly what God wanted written (i.e. referring to the whole books, not to the sections that are specifically identified as "thus says the LORD") and then allowed people to mistranslate those correct books into any number of wrong ways, or whether God, in addition to inspiring direct quotations from God to be correctly recorded, also allowed authors the latitude to express many things in their own words (like letting Adam give names to all the animals), which would later also be mistranslated into any number of wrong ways, what is really the difference? The effect on the end-user, the reader, is the same: he only has access to a document which contains some flaws.

It gets back to God requiring us to use our minds. As far as the gospel accounts are concerned, God expects us to compare the different accounts with one another. That should be sufficient to help us establish the correct picture for those cases where there is conflicting information. And in the end it doesn't make a difference whether Luke records statements from the sermon on the mount in wrong contexts or not; it is the teachings themselves, contained in those statements, that are important, not the context in which they are presented. And for those few cases where an incomplete quotation of the words of Jesus Christ presents a somewhat different picture than the one Jesus Christ really presented, God saw to it that the information recorded in the other gospel accounts enables us to put the correct picture together. But it requires us to use our minds a little bit in comparing similar statements. That is surely not a problem?

And if God expected Peter to have the discernment to say "not so, Lord" to an instruction that he understood to be contrary to God's ways, why should God not expect us to have enough discernment to figure out that expressions like "blessed are the poor" are really references to "blessed are the poor IN

SPIRIT"?

Our real problem, I suppose, is not that something has somehow changed. Our real problem is that we have always assumed that THE WHOLE BIBLE is nothing other than the Word of God. The correct picture is that the Bible CONTAINS "the Word of God", but it also contains the words and thoughts of men. Those words and thoughts of men are in there with God's acceptance. But God also expects us to use our minds in determining on which parts of the Bible we are to base our lives. Jesus Christ was very specific (i.e. Matthew 4:4) in quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3. Paul was equally specific in 2 Timothy 3:16. And simply because some things are "the words of men" (e.g. the whole books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon), that does not mean that there is therefore automatically something wrong with those "words of men". It just means that we approach "the words of men" more circumspectly than we approach the words that are clearly "the words of God".

So where does that leave the Gospel of Luke?

The Gospel of Luke is without contradiction one of the books of the New Testament. It provides us with very many details about Christ's life and ministry that are simply not recorded in any of the other gospels. In any conflict with information contained in the other gospels, we can usually figure out what the correct information should be. And reporting many of Jesus Christ's most profound teachings in the wrong settings is not really a problem. We do that type of thing all the time in our sermons: we need a Scripture from Matthew 5, then another Scripture from Matthew 19, then a verse from Romans 8, then another Scripture from Luke 16, then a verse from Isaiah 65, etc. We don't stick to a specific context in our preaching! No, we take whatever Scriptures we feel we need, and then we present those Scriptures in OUR context, whatever our subject matter may happen to be. Is it really a problem if we have the same sort of thing in the Gospel of Luke (though to a far, far lesser degree)?

So, apart from proving that a particular account was not "divinely inspired", I don't see any problem of any kind with a correct quotation appearing in the incorrect context. It is the message embodied in that quotation that should be important to every Christian; the correct context simply further refines that message. When we quote a principle in our sermons, it doesn't matter whether that quotation comes from Luke's Gospel, or from Genesis or from Matthew's Gospel or from Ephesians; the principle itself is valid, not necessarily its contextual source.

It is when there is a potential clash with information in another gospel that this correct perspective is needed. In those situations the correct perspective can stop us from reaching wrong conclusions (like trying to establish a different sequence for the observance of the Passover). A correct understanding of the Book of Luke is not a challenge to anything the Church of God believes; a correct understanding of the Book of Luke is an insurance policy against being drawn away by "strange doctrines", as the Apostle Paul admonished the Hebrews.

BE NOT CARRIED ABOUT WITH DIVERS AND STRANGE DOCTRINES. For [it is] a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. (Hebrews 13:9)

Frank W. Nelte