

Chapter 1 : Jesus, the voice, and the text : beyond The oral and written Gospel - ECU Libraries Catalog

*Kelber incorrectly pits oral teachers against written gospels, and insists that "for those committed to the oral gospel, the written gospel was neither necessary nor desirable". This would have been regarded as heresy to Josephus and Philo.*

This article is one of a series we are running this year. The series is called "The Integrity of the New Testament" and deals with textual criticism. Can the New Testament be trusted? Has it been corrupted through time? Can we know what God has said? It should be obvious how important this topic is. This is especially so given the climate of society today and its attitudes toward the Bible. Near the end of the year we are planning to publish these twelve articles in book form Kindle, Nook and old fashioned print and ink. So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. The church had its beginning on the Day of Pentecost in 30 A. It had been just shy of two months since Jesus had made Himself our sin offering unto a righteous God who loved us enough to provide us with this favor. Just ten days previous to Pentecost the living-again Son of God had met with His apostles for the final time, assuring them, instructing them and then ascending into the clouds to take His seat upon His throne at the right hand of the Father. The apostles had then returned to Jerusalem as Jesus had instructed them to do, and waited for the promise. The Holy Spirit descended and gave the apostles the gospel that they began preaching that very day. People gladly responded to this gospel being proclaimed. About obeyed the gospel by faith, putting their trust in God to remit their sins Acts 2: After their conversions, many of them who were visiting Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost from far away places made the decision to stay longer so they could be instructed further in their new faith through the teaching of the apostles. They, on the other hand, listened attentively, putting into their memories all that the apostles taught by the inspiration of God. The written gospels would come into existence before that first generation of Christians ceased from the earth, but still, it would be about three decades in the future before the first of the four inspired gospels would be written. Until then, the message first given through the apostles and prophets by inspiration would be passed on through the receiving and giving of oral teachings put into the memories of the disciples as they also became the teachers of others who, in turn, would repeat the process. Purpose of This Chapter It is important just here that we are all aware of the purpose of this chapter. It is not my contention at all that the writers of the gospels depended only upon these oral traditions for what they wrote. We want to see what was actually going on during this brief period of time. But this is not to say that the oral traditions were not used in the writings. We find many examples of the Spirit-led writers of the New Testament quoting uninspired texts and sayings as they wrote. Luke is much more specific about the methods and process of his writing than are the others. Did Luke write Scripture? That is how his writing was received by his contemporaries. Paul affirms in 1 Timothy 5: Was Luke inspired by God? All Scripture is inspired 2 Timothy 3: Did Luke consult contemporary traditions as he wrote his gospel? Where did these compilations come from? They were handed down from those who had witnessed the events and were servants of the word. Skepticism Updated In the nineteenth century skeptics theorized that none of the gospels were actually written during the first century, and certainly not by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These writings, it was suggested, actually belong to the latter half of the second century, with several generations in between during which fanciful, legendary material was added to the original history of the life and teachings of a man named Jesus. Since all the eyewitnesses had been dead for almost a century, it was rather easy for the story of Jesus to become embellished, they claimed, by the late second century church. This wide dispersal of documents in so many languages rendered the late dating used by the nineteenth century skeptics unworkable. Remember that this had to be done within three short decades instead of two long centuries. Also, other writings of early Christians living in the first century show that they already had the gospels and epistles before the turn of the century - they were quoting from the Scriptures that make up our New Testaments! The written works of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were being cited in writing as the first century closed. This will be considered in greater detail in a later chapter. The point here is that, quite simply, we do not have to wait for over a century after Jesus for the gospels to be written. They were all written during the lifetimes of those that had walked with Jesus. This line of skepticism was dealt a fatal blow. They needed

several generations for their hypothesis to work, but they simply did not have it. It is therefore puzzling that some skeptics today have resurrected this old argument, suggesting that it is likely that the gospels are accounts of the life of Jesus that had become legendary. The problem is that they now only have about three decades between the life of Jesus and the first written gospels, and even less time than that for the early writings of Paul who also affirmed the same gospel, preaching it and writing about it. There were ample numbers of eyewitnesses still available at the time of the writings. There simply was no occasion for the development of legends in the gospel at such an early time. If you wanted to be a part of the nineteenth century intellectual European elite, you had to believe in their theory then. If not, you were considered ignorant, and nobody wants to be thought of in that light! But they were eventually proven wrong by newer evidence that came to light. Presently, skeptics who take a similar approach today have much less room to speculate than did their counterparts of the nineteenth century and their now disproven time sequence. People ought not to so quickly jump on a bandwagon if they are not sure if the wheels are on tight "in centuries past or today. Still, it is important to understand what was happening during those three decades between the life of Jesus and the writing down of the gospels. That is what we want to consider now. Later in Acts we read of a severe persecution that rose up against the church at Jerusalem after the murder of Stephen. But these believers were dedicated to Jesus and His gospel. They had been schooled well. The gospel spread rapidly from Jerusalem out into the world! We have a wonderful example of this endeavor in the preaching of Philip, one of those believers driven out from Jerusalem. We find him preaching in Samaria and later doing some one-on-one evangelism in a chariot Acts 8. He had no New Testament. We do find Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch studying a written copy of Isaiah, and using it to affirm that Jesus is the Messiah. The early Christians did this forcefully and frequently, using the writings of the Old Testament prophets and comparing them to the oral apostolic record of the life, deeds and teachings of Jesus. The things Philip taught were things he had received from the apostles who were eyewitnesses of the gospel events. He may well have also been a prophet. Perhaps prophecy was one of those gifts. In any case, Philip taught to others what he had received from the apostles. Do you see the progression? We need to make one other observation before we continue. We must also acknowledge the work of individuals with various gifts that were provided by God to the church of the first century. The Nature of Oral Traditions But how trustworthy is this method of passing along information? Is there good reason to fear that perhaps the message became corrupted during the thirty or so years from the events until the written record of those events was made? In fact, we have very good reasons to be confident in the accuracy of the written gospels with reference to the events which they record. Written records define our culture. We are, for the most part, a literate people and have come to rely heavily on written material for our own personal record keeping. We have newspapers and books and the internet to inform us. We do not need to do a lot of memorization. As a culture we depend much on the written word to learn and remember things in which we are interested and which are important to us. But this was not so in the first century world. Paper and writing materials were hard to come by. Copying written records was time-consuming and difficult work. The literacy rate in the first century world was much less than what it is today in our own nation, though certainly among the Jews the literacy rate would have been higher than that of many of their contemporaries. Their sons were instructed in synagogue schools. But still, though literate to a large degree, with writing materials being such a precious commodity, it was common to memorize histories and traditions taught orally. This is not to say that these things were never written down by anyone, only that the primary method of passing them along was oral repetition. Certainly anyone could have used written notes who had the means to do so. There were procedures, for example, among the Jews for the passing along of important histories and traditions. Important teachings would be passed along orally using rhythmic patterns and repetition enabling the learner to memorize what to us would be a great amount of material. These were to be well versed in the Torah. The teachings of early and respected rabbis became oral traditions passed on from generation to generation. The Jewish people had been doing this for centuries. These oral teachings remained amazingly consistent from one generation to the next. But this was not so amazing to them. So, a mere thirty year period between the events of the gospel and the writing of the gospel presents no problem at all. And remember, the first proclaimers and memorizers of the teachings of the apostles were these very people who were extremely

skilled at this. These teachers did not have the right to change the message just because it was not yet in written form.

**Chapter 2 : The Oral and the Written Gospel : Werner H. Kelber :**

*The Oral and the Written Gospel The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* Werner H. Kelber, foreword by Walter J. Ong, S.J.

Here it is argued that Paul emphasizes the antithesis between the orality of the Gospel and the literacy<sup>2</sup> of the Torah because he understands himself as living and working in the tradition of the "herald" of Isaiah. Against the orality of the Gospel he stresses the literacy of the Torah when he introduces the Leviticus citation with "Moses writes" in . The focus of discussion concerns the precise relationship between the passages quoted from Scripture: Although it is traditional to perceive some sort of contrast between these quotations, there are some e. Fortress Press, ] are the oral gospel and the written law. Under the heading of the written law he includes negative aspects of the Torah, i. IO Karl Barth, C. Cranfield and Robert Badenas who have resisted such a conclusion. Their argument makes some sense, and is worthy of attention. We need some justification for his prima facie arbitrary use of Scripture in his argument. Proposed Explanations First we shall have a look at some of the explanations proposed in the past. An exhaustive survey cannot be given here, nor is it necessary. A glimpse at some studies will give us a sufficient perspective to work on the subject. Robert Badenas<sup>4</sup> denies any contrast between Lev. He understands the obedience described in v. His primary argument is based on his teleologica! On the basis of his interpretation of the respective passages in their original context in the Torah, he argues that Paul understands them in a complementary relationship. However, despite his serious arguments <sup>4</sup> Badenas, Christ, Those who agree with him are, for example, W. Campbell, "Christ the End of the Law: JSOT, , esp. Humphrey, "Why Bring the Word Down?: The Rhetoric of Demonstration and Disclosure in Romans 9: Essays in Honor of Gordon D. Eerdmans, , esp. A contrast seems to be intended in the ways in which the respective quotations are introduced: Cranfield and others present another interpretation in a somewhat similar vein. It is true that the immediately preceding verse makes a direct reference to Christ, and that those directly following present a christological interpretation of Deut. As we have cursorily argued with regard to the previous interpretation, if we accept that there is a sense of antithesis between v. Their argument is more theological than exegetical. Again the tension between orality and literacy seems to favor a contrast between Rom. John Knox Press, ; C. Kok, , esp. Brill, ; Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Notes on the Epistle in its literary and Cultural Setting* Oxford: Oxford University Press, , Hawthorne with Otto Betz eds. *Essays in Honor of E. IO in the original scriptural context.* Fitzmyer not surprisingly writes: Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*: Fortress Press, Word Books, Eerdmans, ; Thomas R. Baker Books, Neukirchener Verlag, The brief survey above has clarified the problem. In spite of the resistance of some scholars, Paul seems to place a part of Scripture Lev. Out of 21 occurrences of the verb in Romans, 16 are found in the passive perfect tense, which introduces a scriptural quotation. The verb is found only three times in an active voice throughout Romans. Once Paul refers to his own writing ministry, presumably through the hand of his amanuensis Eerdmans, ] Italics added. Dewey "A Re-Hearing of Romans IO introduce a scriptural quotation. There are 10 uses of the verb in 2 Corinthians. Out of 10 occurrences 3 are found in the passive perfect tense. A participle form is used in 4: The form in 1: The second occurrence in 3: Out of the 21 occurrences 14 are found in chapters A cursory survey of other materials confirms our findings so far. Both in the Mishnah and the Dead Sea Scrolls the verbs of writing pro and saying "IQK are employed to introduce an explicit scriptural quotation. On the contrary, I should like to take a markedly different approach to the question. *Wissenschaftliche Buchge- sellschaft, ,* In his parallel passage to Mark This is apparently a literary phenomenon, but can be classified in a special category, which illustrates a tension between orality and literacy. At first sight it appears difficult to make sense of Job The case of Psa. But it is arguable that the psalmist has in mind a scroll of Scripture since he is speaking to his God. A similar picture emerges when we turn to the New Testament. We can count 7 uses in this category. For him the Old Testament passage must be a scriptural prophecy concerning Christ. Thiselton enumerates seven possible interpretations,<sup>41</sup> and proposes to combine the thrust of what Paul has quoted from Scripture with two broader principles: Such a conclusion undoubtedly demands more study from various angles. Thiselton,

The First Epistle to the Corinthians: If we widen our research slightly, the result turns out to be quite similar. Only one of them refers to Scripture as such, but the rest make reference to some sort of official documents. However, it is extremely difficult to distinguish whether the power derives from the writing in general or from the divine writing. Probably it is the case that the power is perceived in the writing in general, but especially in the authoritative writing. Ross Wagner argues that it refers to 1 Sam. A Gall to Boast only in the Lord [1 Cor. IV ; Ufe ; Apion I. A similar usage can be found elsewhere Xenophon, Oeconomicus xiv. I suspect that the tendency we have perceived may reflect the worldview shared among the Jewish people rather than a common Greek usage. It is found in Rom. In LXX it occurs in 1 Esdr. Oxford University Press, This Homeric state of mind can be contrasted with that of Plato c. By the time of Aristotle BCE not only books were abundant, but also a reading public had emerged. Havelock, Preface to Plato Cambridge; London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Harvard University Press; London: Southern Illinois University Press, Ong, Orality and literacy: Kelber, The Oral and the Written Gospel, Yale University Press, ] 54 He deals with complications and overlappings between oral and literate cultures. The Presence of the Word, 55 Cf. Loveday Alexander, "The Living Voice:

Chapter 3 : The Written Gospel - Google Books

*"Oral and Written Gospel" is the culmination of Kelber's editorial and journal work of the previous years regarding the ancient near east textual transition from oral communication to written text. Kelber counters many of the assumptions made by 20th century scholars immersed in print-based culture regarding how texts (oral or written) were interacted with and maintained within their social context.*

They apply source criticism to identify the written sources beneath the canonical gospels. Scholars generally understood that these written sources must have had a prehistory as oral tellings, but the very nature of oral transmission seemed to rule out the possibility of recovering them. However, in the early 20th century the German scholar Hermann Gunkel demonstrated a new critical method, form criticism, which he believed could discover traces of oral tradition in written texts. Gunkel specialized in Old Testament studies, but other scholars soon adopted and adapted his methods to the study of the New Testament. When form critics discuss oral traditions about Jesus, they theorize about the particular social situation in which different accounts of Jesus were told. It needs be remembered that the first century Palestine of Jesus was predominantly an oral society. Ehrman stresses that Jesus was raised in a Jewish household in the Jewish hamlet of Nazareth. He was brought up in a Jewish culture, accepted Jewish ways and eventually became a Jewish teacher, who, like other Jewish teachers of his time, debated the Law of Moses orally. Rabbis or teachers in every generation were raised and trained to deliver this oral tradition accurately. It consisted of two parts: The distinction is one of authority: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony states "The common wisdom in the academy is that stories and sayings of Jesus circulated for decades, undergoing countless retellings and embellishments before being finally set down in writing. Invariably, the story has changed so much in the process of retelling that everyone gets a good laugh. Imagine this same activity taking place, not in a solitary living room with ten kids on one afternoon, but over the expanse of the Roman Empire some 2, miles across, with thousands of participants"from different backgrounds, with different concerns, and in different contexts"some of whom have to translate the stories into different languages. Ehrman, The New Testament. The first stage was oral, and included various stories about Jesus such as healing the sick, or debating with opponents, as well as parables and teachings. In the second stage, the oral traditions began to be written down[ by whom? Modern scholars generally agree that Mark was the first of the gospels to be written see Markan priority. The author does not seem to have used extensive written sources, but rather to have woven together small collections and individual traditions into a coherent presentation. These two together account for the bulk of each of Matthew and Luke, with the remainder made up of smaller amounts of source material unique to each, called the M source for Matthew and the L source for Luke, which may have been a mix of written and oral material see Two-source hypothesis. Current theories attempt to link the three synoptic gospels together through a common textual tradition. However, many problems arise when linking these three texts together see the Synoptic problem. This has led many scholars to hypothesize the existence of a fourth document from which Matthew and Luke drew upon independently of each other for example, the Q source.

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**Tweet Overview** To experience the gospel message as first-century people heard it is to move into an oral world, one with very little reliance on manuscripts. The essays in this book explore this oral world and the Gospel of Mark within it. Further, when the Gospel of Mark was one of four written Gospels these voices were quickly ignored. An ancient audience hearing Mark performed, however, enjoyed a vibrant experience of the gospel message and its urgent call to follow. In the Logos edition, this volume is enhanced by amazing functionality. Scripture citations link directly to English translations, and important terms link to dictionaries, encyclopedias, and a wealth of other resources in your digital library. Take the discussion with you using tablet and mobile apps. With Logos Bible Software, the most efficient and comprehensive research tools are in one place, so you get the most out of your study.

**Key Features** Examines the oral traditions at the time when the Gospel of Mark came into being Highlights the different sorts of oral traditions that helped to form the Gospel of Mark as we know it today Explores the role that women played in oral traditions and the impact of the transition to written word

**Contents** Part 1: Our Text of Mark: How Similar to First Century Versions? Taken together, the essays summarize and illustrate foundational problems in the study of Scripture as a product and shaper of early Christian performances of Jesus tradition. An essential reference tool for scholars interested in media, memory, and Mark. I am especially pleased to see the inclusion of her essays on women and storytelling, an often neglected subject. This is essential reading for anyone interested in the area of orality. Challenging our habits of equating early Christian identity with written texts, she demonstrates persuasively the oral-aural factor in Paul and Mark, illuminates the great significance of the storytelling tradition, and astutely develops links between oral-scribal media shifts and power relations. Turner Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies, Rice University Joanna Dewey has been a pioneer in opening up the world of oral performance and the hearing of the gospel story, including the key role of women storytellers. Each new essay builds on the previous ones and leads to new insights as the gospel comes alive. The Oral Ethos of the Early Church: Speaking, Writing, and the Gospel of Mark Author:

**Chapter 5 : THE ORIGIN OF THE GOSPEL TRADITION**

*So, the gospel was an oral message before it was a written message. Oral or written, in either case, the word was to be handled accurately (2 Timothy ). As the inspired texts that would become the New Testament were being written, there would be an increasing dependence upon the writings.*

There have been other, more recent attempts to classify forms of the gospel tradition, most notably Kelber, *The Oral and Written Gospel*; K. Berger, *Formgeschichte des Neuen Testaments*--Berger offers a more detailed classification. The Forms of the Gospel Tradition

1. Pronouncement Stories are narratives that culminate in a short, poignant saying of Jesus; the narrative actually functions as a frame for the saying. It is common today to use the Hellenistic category of *Chreia* to denote this form [see Sanders, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels*, chap. Taylor explains, "They [Pronouncement Stories] culminate in a saying of Jesus which expresses some ethical or religious precept; the saying may be evoked by a friendly question or other, or may be associated with an incident which is indicated in very few words. The reason that Pronouncement Stories were preserved and told was for the instruction that it offered to the first believers. Examples of pronouncement stories include Mark 12:13-17: Is it lawful to pay a poll-tax to Caesar, or not? Bring me a denarius to look at. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this? Typically, a Miracle Story begins with a description of the situation, followed by the miracle, the results confirming the miracle and the response of the onlookers. The purpose for the creation and telling of Miracle Stories was to present Jesus as compassionate and powerful. Examples of Miracle Stories include Mark 1:21-28: Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are -- the holy one of God! A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him. The third type of narrative form in the synoptic gospels are Stories about Jesus. This classification really describes the content and not the form in which it occurs, since there is considerable formal diversity. Stories about Jesus serve a biographical interest. Examples include Mark 9:2-13: And he was transfigured before them; 3 and his garments became radiant and exceedingly white, as no launderer on earth can whiten them. In addition to narrative forms, Taylor classifies some gospel tradition as Sayings and Parables. Although all the traditions classified as such are sayings material, there is nonetheless considerable formal diversity among this material. Some of these sayings may have circulated in the tradition as part of sayings-collections. Bultmann attempts to find formal consistency by identifying sub-groups of sayings; but even these are partially determined by their content rather than their literary form. In general, the gospel tradition survived and assumed its present form because it functioned to meet the religious needs of the early church. It goes without saying that the early church made use of the gospel tradition in its preaching, teaching and worship. It follows that the tradition was preserved because of and molded by these religious needs. An obvious example is the tradition of the words of institution: Although cast in narrative form, they served the liturgical needs of the church see 1 Cor 11:23-26. This point was made before the rise of Form Criticism by B. Westcott, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*. Based on these assumptions, Form Criticism as a discipline sets for itself a threefold task in its investigation of the synoptic gospels. First, it attempts to classify the gospel tradition formally. It analyses all pericopes and assigns each to a formal category. Second, Form Criticism seeks to identify the "Setting-in-Life" *Sitz-im-Leben* in the early church to which a form is attached. It seeks to uncover the religious needs of the church and identify how the forms of the gospel tradition functioned to meet those needs. Third, Form Criticism seeks to trace the history of the tradition of pericopes from their origins to their inclusion in the synoptic gospels. Although fraught with the peril of speculation, the form critic aims to determine how and why a specific pericope developed as it was passed down orally see K. Berger, *Formgeschichte des Neuen Testaments*; E. Sanders, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels*, *Invalid Form-Critical Assumptions To varying degrees, however, most practitioners of form-criticism, work from other, invalid methodological assumptions. The most extreme of the form critics in this regard is R. Bultmann History of the Synoptic Tradition*; id. These assumptions are as follows: The religious needs of the early church not only shaped the gospel tradition but also gave rise to it. In other words, a saying or a narrative tradition was created in order to meet a religious need in the early church. The source of the creation of these post-Easter gospel

traditions was Christian prophets who spoke in the name of the risen Christ; early Christians allegedly did not make a distinction between the earthly Jesus and the risen Christ. Form critics consider that the year gap between Jesus and the written gospels was sufficient time for the church to create all manner of unhistorical traditions about Jesus and unhistorical sayings of Jesus. What evidence exists, however, does not support this position. First, although there were early Christian prophets, the evidence suggests that they did not identify the earthly Jesus with the risen, who was speaking through them. There is no example of an early Christian prophet speaking in the name of Jesus; Agabus, for example speaks by the Holy Spirit Acts Hill, New Testament Prophecy; J. Second, the fact that the early church did not attribute to the earthly Jesus sayings designed to address problems that arose in the early church suggests that the church was not in the habit of creating sayings of Jesus in order to meet its religious needs. Problems, such as the conditions under which gentiles could be incorporated into the church, were resolved without recourse to a saying of Jesus Acts Along the same lines, when dealing with the question of divorce, Paul cites a saying of Jesus to address one aspect of the problem, but admits that he has no word of the Lord to address its other aspects 1 Cor 7: Third, although in general the gospel tradition was useful to the early church, some apparently non-usable teachings of Jesus were retained and passed on. These include traditions that are difficult but not impossible to reconcile with the theology of the early church see, for example, Mark In addition, the most common Christological title used of Jesus in the synoptic gospels is "son of man," but this title is not used in the early church. For example, Jewish Christians had no "need" of pericopes that defend a particular stance towards the Sabbath see Mark 2: Fifth, it seems likely that the formation of the gospel tradition in part originated with Jesus, not with the early church. Although there are no explicit indications in the gospels, probably Jesus, in conformity with the practice of teachers in the ancient world, required that his disciples memorize teaching material, possibly making private notes see B. Riesner, Jesus als Lehrer. Also Jesus probably carefully crafted his teaching material so as to be poignant and easily committed to memory see C. Jeremias, New Testament Theology, From the fact that the disciples request that Jesus teach them how to pray [Luke In fact, without such teaching material, it would have been impossible for the disciples to have gone out two-by-two to announce the Kingdom of God, as is described in the synoptic gospels H. Schuermann, "Die voroesterlichen Anfänge der Logientradition". The creation and transmission of the gospel tradition was an anonymous, unconscious and spontaneous process. Like folk traditions, it was the product of a community over time. Unfortunately since little is known of the creation, preservation and transmission of the gospel tradition wildly divergent theories have arisen, all claiming the support of what evidence does exist. These range from the position that almost nothing of the gospel tradition is historical [at least nothing that is recognizably Christian] to the hypothesis that the tradition is historically reliable until proven otherwise. Nevertheless, it seems that the gospel tradition is wrongly compared to folk tradition; not all oral tradition is of this kind. In this way vast amounts of legal and other material were transmitted accurately through many generations. Alterations to the tradition may have been made, but these were conscious and deliberate. The gospel tradition should be understood on analogy to this ancient process of the oral transmission of teaching material. Gerhardsson finds the closest analogy to early rabbis and their students, whereas Schuermann sees a closer resemblance to a prophet and his disciples. Besides, it must be noted that the period during which the gospel tradition would have existed in an oral form would have been no more than forty years; contrary to the form critics, this is too short for the type of development that occurs in the passing on of folk traditions to occur see Guettgemanns, Some Candid Questions Concerning Gospel Form Criticism, What some form critics overlook is the role that authoritative eyewitnesses played in the early church. As already indicated, there is sufficient evidence that there existed men called "eyewitnesses and servants of the word" who transmitted authoritative tradition to the early church Luke 1: This group no doubt included the disciples, and possibly consisted solely of them. As "eyewitnesses and servants of the word," the disciples would be in a position to control the transmission of the gospel tradition during the relatively few years in which it circulated orally among the churches. As Gerhardsson points out, in refutation of Kelber, oral tradition does not necessarily mean flexibility as determined by the audience; rather oral tradition can be as fixed [or even more so] than a written text [The Gospel Tradition, That even Paul deferred to their authority is clear from Gal 2: As Riesenfeld put it, the

gospel tradition was "esoteric" in the sense that access to it was controlled by a defined group within the early church. The Gospel Tradition and Its Beginnings, Gerhardsson, Memory and Manuscript; id. Ellis, "New Directions in Form Criticism. But such differences in the can be explained adequately in several ways: Most differences in the triple tradition result from the changes made to Mark by Matthew and Luke see "The Synoptic Question". The only differences that can be said to have existed in the oral tradition or the smaller, written collections are those in the Passion and Resurrection Narratives Mark-Matthew; Luke; John, those between Matthew and Luke in the double tradition and those in the doublets found in the triple and double tradition. But many of these could likewise be ascribed to the redactional activity of the gospel writers, who made alterations to oral tradition or the short, written collections of material. We should note that in the synoptic gospels, there tends to be far greater agreement in the words of Jesus. Differences between parallel pericopes in the gospel tradition in Greek could be the result of simultaneous translations into Greek of oral tradition originally formulated in Aramaic see Gerhardsson, The Origins of the Gospel Traditions, 82; E. Ellis, "New Directions in Form Criticism, Ellis proposes that the need to translate into Greek could have been the occasion for the creation of written collections of pericopes. Different Greek translations of the originally Aramaic gospel tradition would have circulated orally or in written form in the churches. Possibly the so-called Q collections used by Matthew and Luke may each have contained different Greek versions of the same pericope; this could easily explain why the agreement in the double tradition varies so greatly. C. Differences between parallel pericopes in the gospel tradition may be the result of what Gerhardsson calls "interpretive adaptations" The Origins of the Gospel Traditions,

### Chapter 6 : More Oral than We Knew: The Oral Nature of the Gospels

*The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q (Paperback) by Werner H. Kelber and a great selection of similar Used, New and Collectible Books available now at [calendrierdelascience.com](http://calendrierdelascience.com)*

### Chapter 7 : The Gospel: From Oral Tradition to the Written Text

*SUMMARY: Not only was oral transmission quite adequate for the task of preserving the words and deeds of Jesus, but the widespread use of note-taking and ample supply of literate listeners almost guarantees that VERY early written sources for the gospel materials would have existed.*

### Chapter 8 : Gospel - Wikipedia

*In the fourth stage, the authors of our four Gospels drew on these proto-gospels, collections, and still-circulating oral traditions to produce the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Mark, Matthew and Luke are known as the Synoptic Gospels because they have such a high degree of interdependence.*

### Chapter 9 : Oral gospel traditions - Wikipedia

*Matthew's Gospel was once thought to be the first gospel written, but research shows it to be based on Mark's Gospel and the hypothetical Q gospel. It is now accepted that Mark must be the earliest New Testament gospel, and that it was written approximately 70 CE.*