

PUTTING THE GOSPELS TOGETHER

What happens when we try to put the four gospels side by side? Well, there are special books that do just that, called '**gospel parallels**'. One of the best is 'A Synopsis of the Gospels', by H.F.D. Sparks (you may be able to find a copy with Google Book Search on the Internet). This puts on the same line of the page the exact wording of each of the four gospels as they describe that particular event in the life of Jesus. With this approach you can see that one writer

often supplies a phrase or idea that the others do not mention, and so you build up the full picture. For example, in the Parable of the Sower, only Luke identifies the scattered seed as the 'the word of God'. But when Luke gives Jesus' interpretation of the meaning of the good soil, he simply says it represents those who hear the word and *keep* it. Mark adds that they first *accept* the word, while Matthew includes the fact that they have to *understand* it as well.

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