

Research Proposal

Title – Temporal Deixis in Matthew 13: Using Porter’s Temporal Thesis to Better Understand Kingdom Parables.

Program of Study – Master of Divinity: Biblical Studies

Presentation Type – **Choose one of the following:** PowerPoint

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Category – **Choose one of the following:** Textual

Abstract: This work will employ Stanley Porter’s Temporal Thesis throughout Jesus’ discourse on kingdom parables in Matthew 13. Porter’s Temporal Thesis has already been applied by means of examining temporal Deixis throughout the book of Mark by Rodney Decker in his book *Temporal Deixis of the Greek Verb in the Gospel of Mark with Reference to Verbal Aspect* in 2001. The work offered here is not intending to further prove out Porter’s theory of a “tenseless” verbal model any more than Decker has already done. Rather, this work is simply intending to provide a deeper understanding of authorial intent behind his selection of Greek verbs in light of a “tenseless” verbal model. It is critical to establish a working knowledge of Porter’s Temporal Thesis as Greek scholarship is still very polarized on the issue of the understanding the presence of time in the Koine Greek verb. However, to avoid a reworking of what Porter and Decker have already accomplished, this portion of the work will simply discuss the importance of differentiating between a “Metalingual” tense from a “Language” tense. Identifying these two and their separation in the Greek mind will allow for the argument for Porter’s Temporal Thesis to be established without engaging the argument too deeply. With this “tenseless” model in place, the Greek’s understanding of tense employed in a text is far less convoluted and creates an unobstructed view of time in the passage. This clearer view of the tenses also affords the exegete to extrapolate the author’s intended literary force within the text.

This work will also have to address what deictic indicators are working throughout the chapter. This will establish a groundwork in which these indicators will be seen when the verbs are identified. Once the manner in which the temporal concepts will be identified, this work will systematically move through the verbs throughout the chapter. Once the temporal forces have been identified with their verb's appropriate moods and action, a continuity can be created. This work will then show the contrasts in thought throughout the parables and help establish a better understanding of how the parables and their interpretations should be understood.

Christian Worldview integration: The primary Christian Worldview that is influencing this work is the worldview that the Kingdom of Heaven is imminent. However, this work also operates under the worldview that Jesus' first coming brought the kingdom of heaven to earth in a certain way. This is explicitly seen when Jesus says "The Kingdom of God is in your midst." In Luke 17:21. It is also clear that the kingdom of God has not yet fully come. This is evidenced when Jesus prays to his heavenly father that "Your Kingdom come," indicating that God's kingdom has not yet come, in Luke 11:2. This contention between the kingdom currently residing on earth and the kingdom not yet realized creates the necessity to clarify certain Kingdom passages. One of the most kingdom saturated passages is Jesus' discourse on kingdom parables in Matthew 13. This work also operates under the Christian worldview of *Sola Scriptura* and that this discourse in Matthew is inspired by God through the personality of Matthew. This is evidenced in 2 Timothy 3:16 where Paul makes it clear to Timothy that all scripture is God-Breathed and is necessary for teaching. With inspiration in mind, this passage about the Kingdom of Heaven cannot create discontinuity within the scriptures but must fit within a larger canonical and theological context. This work will aid in understanding the

authoritative scriptures on the topic of the Kingdom of Heaven in its original language. In holding to the inspiration of the scriptures, interpreting this passage in the same manner as the original audience affords the modern exegete the opportunity to participate in the continuity of the inspired text.