

A First Study on the Compiled Re-order of the Gospel
of John by Rudolf Bultmann: Highlighting Key
Redacted and Edited Verses

(A Conversation)

by

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Introduction

A long time ago I bought a copy of Bultmann's book "The Gospel of John: A Commentary" paying what was at the time the most money I had spent on a book for my library and at \$55 it was a lot of money.

I put it back on the shelf. Had too much Greek in it. Bultmann writes his commentary in English and mixes in Greek words!

Couple of years ago I started in again on his big blue book and saw his exposition and commentary was making sense. His words (not the Greek) were coming across like a grandfather to me - maybe a Sunday School teacher - but he was making the Fourth Gospel (4G) come alive; better, he was culling 4G. He was explaining and pointing out some words, verses, ideas, were redacted, edited, glossed, parsed, and glassed over. Then he said why. The church folks (ecclesiastical guys) were trying to make John fit in with the Synoptic Gospels or cover up for Peter and John the Baptist. This was not a bother to see his argument but the real problem was marking up my Bible with all the green highlight showing the edits and redacts - and then trying to remember what page I had found the comment(s) on.

Then came my opportunity. When my course for G. of J. was set up in August of '14, I started first to make a copy of Bultmann's re-order and mark the green so I could defend myself when confronted with any literalist with "Well, this is what it says in John" with my rebuttal of "Well, that verse(s) is glossed over by the Evangelist (or the editor) and is not from original work."

Finally, the project is now complete (well, not really - if ever - but I have a copy) and wish I could have had it done for school but if I had not had the little bit of the Greek, it would never have gotten this far or maybe ever finished. This means I have a copy of 4G to look at and will be able to see (and know) who is talking and what is, and what is not, really original work. This to me is an astounding place to be; for sure, at this time I can say yes, no, maybe, or let's look back in the Blue Bultmann Book (B³) and check it out.

The Author

My appreciation for who Bultmann is and what he has done cannot really be expressed. Yes, I know I am in a minority but let me just point out he is more to me than just a scribe or a translator. He speaks with appreciation for the Word in Jesus as few can do but he does it with the deciphering of the Hebrew, Greek, LXX, to see the subtle differences in the parts of script to say who the writer is. Then he backs up his work with more than other person who agrees or does not agree to show the differences so we can make a decision on the authenticity.

My appreciation is for his epistemology, his eschatology, his existentialism, and his theology - all of which, I guess, could better be called neo-reformed - just like me...

My appreciation is for his treatment of characters. He holds Jesus high. He holds those who believe in the stories (non-redacted) high...I just like the way he talks. My example in B³ is his discussion on Easter. I will assure you Easter will never be the same after reading Bultmann - as

I have attested to in a couple of my papers. (See My Monk Carrel for "Mary Magdalene with Exegesis" and "Existential Exegesis of John 4:26.")

My appreciation for Bultmann would be more profound if I could read German and Greek. Reading his book in his language would have really been a trip...which means, thank God for people like him who can speak and write (or get someone to do it for him) so the rest of us can enjoy the Word.

Re-Order of Bultmann (ROB)

To read the re-order let me explain there are some foot-notes to be read to guide you through so you must spend some time here as I have copied what Bultmann said to justify his re-order. The first place is ch. 6 placed after ch. 4.

***See footnote #18 on why the re-order is 4, 6, 5, 7.

Then 13, 17, 15, 16, 14.

Then see all the intros and conclusions that over lap.

Again, look at my foot-notes to see, in some cases, why he re-ordered the text.

***Compare the footnotes for a sense of his re-order on page 26.

The first type of correction is not new and someone will have added in something to explain a detail. Perhaps like Jn. 1.42(c) " You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter)." Pretty easy to see when the publisher (mine is NRSV) helps the reader out by formatting the parenthesis for us. Of course, the footnotes will add sometimes like mine saying the word for rock in Greek is *petra*.

***See page 5 for this example.

Bultmann is able to see the edits, redacts, glosses like they were in different colored text. He sees the original and the hand(s) of the redactor, the editor, and ecclesiastical corrections. I would explain this like using a black light on the text. There will be some differences seen with the use of a black light. So, to his credit he is able to see the problems in textual criticism and redactional influence.

***Check the footnotes on page 4.

I have shown a pretty good example - certainly not exhaustive - and have shown these findings in the use of this blue highlight.

A very important part of seeing differences is to show items like apocalyptic expectations of the future for instance because this is not the original John. These expectations will not fit in John and one of my biggest arguments for doing this project is to be able to show what does NOT belong in 4G. When you see "on that day" and "on the last day" and "I go to prepare a place for you," it can be said these did not come from the original unit. Said another way you can't fit John into the Synoptic Gospels.

So, you can now look at the compiled re-order and highlighted verses to get us back to the original - well, as close as we can get or Bultmann can get us.

Lastly

Bultmann leaves out *The Woman Caught in Adultery* - and this story has been contested for a long time and even moved around making it fit better.

Chapter 21 is covered by Bultmann with his expository comments but classifies it as an appendix. This is the biggest example in Jn. of someone else trying to add in or correct items. **I have it marked in blue.**

What this re-ordered compilation shows, and my footnotes support, is not much on what Bultmann or 4G says about the items/stories/theology. It is a re-order. Again, my task was to get a copy of John re-ordered and redacted so I could read without trying to figure out who was talking or who was trying to redo the original work.

What John says about the Abundant Life, light, and the NOW-ness of Jesus will be easier to read. I thank God for Bultmann and hope (and pray) anyone reading this will be moved more toward the truth of what the Gospel of John says.

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Also, about 96.7% complete is a chart I have designed to show Bultmann's outline in four pages. The chart shows the Bultmann re-order, his titles for the sub-sections, and I have added in certain 4G highlights explaining, for instance, the signs, the women, outline details, and some of the redactions/edits (in green).