The Discourse Function of ἀλλά
in Non-Negative Contexts

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ABSTRACT

In a paper presented to the ETS in November 2007, Dr. Steven Runge discussed the use of the conjunction ἀλλά in negative point-counterpoint sets ("Teaching Them What NOT To Do: The Nuances of Negation in the Greek New Testament"). The basic pattern is that of an exceptive ου or μη clause followed by a clause introduced by ἀλλά; the effect in English translation is "not … but …".

While most of the instances of ἀλλά in the Greek New Testament occur in negative point-counterpoint sets, this does not account for all instances of ἀλλά. What is happening with ἀλλά in these other contexts? Is the discourse function of ἀλλά in these contexts similar, or is there something different going on?

Instances of ἀλλά in the Greek New Testament in non-negative contexts will be examined with the hope of further describing the function of ἀλλά within the discourse. Additionally, standard Greek grammars will be mined for further insight into the function of ἀλλά, as will the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. The goal is not to isolate additional "senses" or "classes" of ἀλλά, but, building upon Runge's previous work, the goal is to examine further instances of ἀλλά in differing contexts to contribute toward a more precise overall understanding of the general function of ἀλλά within the discourse.

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INTRODUCTION

Robert Funk, in his *Beginning-Intermediate Grammar of Hellenistic Greek*, writes:

> Negatives, conjunctions, sentence connectors, and subordinators may be termed *function words* (Fries: 87-109) or *structure signaling words* (Roberts, 1958: 151f., 224ff.). The point of these labels is that such words are nearly lexically empty, i.e. they have little or no dictionary meaning of their own. However, they are grammatically significant in indicating the structure of sentences and parts of sentences (cf. §§001ff.). Some of them are so common as to require acquaintance at the grossest level of the language. This simply means that one must learn how they function early in the process. One may guess at the meaning of lexically full words, or leave them blank when reading (cf. §003), but one must know the grammatical "meaning" of function words to be able to proceed at all.[2]

The conjunction ἀλλά is one of these "function words". And, as Funk describes, ἀλλά is "nearly lexically empty". Yet with their distillation of several senses of ἀλλά, many Hellenistic/Koine grammars and lexicons import lexical freight upon ἀλλά. These senses lead students to think that the instance of ἀλλά itself is what is 'adversative', 'continuative' or 'emphatic'; ignoring that these are descriptions applicable to the larger context of usage. Subsequently, each instance of ἀλλά is evaluated by determining which "sense" fits best, often by testing the translation with sense-based English glosses: "but", "indeed", "yet", etc.

The perspective of this paper is different. It does not advocate the examination of ἀλλά through determining the specific sense used in a particular instance. Instead, the basic function of ἀλλά must first be understood; only then can the proper examination of the full context of the passage take place.

Consequently, the focus of this paper is not on how to translate ἀλλά, or how to determine what "sense" a particular instance may be, but on how to understand the function of ἀλλά in context with the hopes that this will bear better exegetical fruit.

A Working Hypothesis Regarding ἀλλά

Virtually every grammar, monograph and lexicon article that discusses or classifies ἀλλά notes that it is an "adversative" conjunction.[3] Several even go so far as to say that it is a "strong adversative".[4] Upon an examination of every instance of ἀλλά in the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers, one learns that the vast majority of instances of ἀλλά in these corpora (approximately 80%)[5] involve the comparison of two items (phrases, clauses or otherwise), one of which uses a negator. It is this larger context that is

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[2] Robert W. Funk, *Beginning-Intermediate Grammar of Hellenistic Greek* (Missoula, MT: Scholar's Press, 1973), §611 (p. 475).

[3] *e.g.*, Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1999), 12, 2.1 (p. 205); A. T. Roberston, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2006), 1187-1188; Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner and Robert Walter Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), §448.

[4] *e.g.* H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956), §2775; see below.

[5] In the 638 New Testament instances, 510 instances use negators in one or both statements, 84 have no negation present, and 44 are questionable as regards negation, using terms like οὐκέτι or μηκέτι. If the marginal instances are counted as non-negative, the ratio is 510/638, or approximately 80%. Including the marginal situations as negatives, the ratio is 554/638, or approximately 87%. For the 352 instances in the Apostolic Fathers, 249 use negation, 76 have no negation present, and 27 are questionable; for a ratio of 249/352 or approximately 71%. Including the marginal situations as negatives, the ratio is 276/352, or approximately 78%. By far, the most common case is for ἀλλά to be used in conjunction with a negative statement.

"adversative"; ἀλλά itself does not create the adversity or contrast. It is more proper in such instances to speak of ἀλλά as being used in adversative contexts. But ἀλλά is used in other contexts as well, as the standard lexicons and grammars readily display. So there must be more to understanding ἀλλά than the isolation of a lexical or contextual sense.

This leads to the larger and more appropriate question: What function does ἀλλά play in the larger context, the discourse? What sorts of contextual cues can be gleaned to inform the understanding of ἀλλά's function? Recall Funk's distinction between function words, which are "lexically empty", and other words which are "lexically full".[6] One must understand the function of ἀλλά, not simply substitute sense-derived glosses, in order to understand what a particular passage communicates.

If one consults a few simple guidelines when examining an instance of ἀλλά, its role in that passage becomes apparent. Proposed guidelines for understanding the role of ἀλλά in a given passage include:[7]

- **ἀλλά involves the joining of two things for the purpose of contrasting them.** To understand a particular instance, the two contrasting items must be located. The antecedent item[8] usually directly precedes the ἀλλά; but it may be discontiguous[9] and it may even be a general assumption in the current context.[10] Context (e.g., presence of a negator, contrast based on word choice) determines the degree of contrast between the two items.
- **ἀλλά involves correction or replacement.** The second item either corrects or replaces the first.[11] "Correction" is when the second item sharpens, redirects or clarifies the first item. "Replacement" is when the second item wipes the first item off of the table and replaces it completely. Most non-negative instances involve correction. In the discourse, the correction or replacement has the effect of making the second item more prominent than the first. In the context of exegeting a passage, this typically means that the second item is the more important of the two.

Applying these two guidelines when examining New Testament passages that contain instances of ἀλλά will result in clearer understanding of passage flow; this in turn bears exegetical fruit.

The balance of this paper will ground these ideas in the existing literature and apply these guidelines to non-negative instances of ἀλλά. Specifically, this paper examines all non-negative instances in the synoptic gospels as well as some seemingly atypical examples found in Pauline epistles. For the purposes of this paper, the constitution of a "non-negative instance" of ἀλλά is thus: If the statement previous to or

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[6] Funk, *BIGHG,* §611 (p. 475).

[7] It bears mentioning that these guidelines are for ἀλλά in both non-negative and negative contexts. The default case is negative, e.g., "I did not come to destroy the law, but [ἀλλά] to fulfill it" (Mt 5.17). But they are appropriate for non-negative formulations as well.

[8] Terminology is somewhat difficult. This paper uses terms like "antecedent item" to refer to the first statement of the two that ἀλλά joins. Additionally, when appropriate, "counterpoint" and "point" are used. In other contexts, words like "protasis" and "apodosis" (language usually used when discussing conditional statements) is used to refer to the former and latter statements or ideas joined by ἀλλά.

[9] J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950), Introduction, p. *l.*

[10] *ibid.*

[11] Distinguishing ἀλλά from δέ, which is a marker of development. See Jacob K. Heckert, *Discourse Function of Conjoiners in the Pastoral Epistles* (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1996), 37-57.

following ἀλλά contains a negator, it is not examined. If the negative/non-negative status is unclear (e.g. terms like οὐκέτι or μηκέτι), it is not examined. There are over 80 NT "non-negative" instances using this breakdown.

The goal is to demonstrate the reliability and usefulness of these guidelines toward understanding the discourse function of particular instances of ἀλλά in the New Testament and in other early Christian literature.

THE LITERATURE: GRAMMARS AND MONOGRAPHS

Grammars

H. W. Smyth, Greek Grammar

Smyth is the standard classical Greek grammar, and so surveys a larger amount of literature than grammars which focus upon New Testament/Hellenistic Greek. Smyth follows the somewhat standard approach of isolating contexts in which ἀλλά occurs, and then discussing each context to delimit senses. Smyth's overall description is helpful:

> ἀλλά, a strongly adversative conjunction (stronger than δέ) connects sentences and clauses, and corresponds pretty closely to *but*; at times ἀλλά need not or cannot be translated (2781b). … ἀλλά marks opposition, contrast, protest, difference, objection, or limitation; and is thus used both where one notion entirely excludes another and where two notions are not mutually exclusive. ἀλλά is often freely repeated in successive clauses.[12][13]

Smyth makes plain that ἀλλά commonly stands between two things, marking relationship of some sort between those two things. §2781 notes that "ἀλλά is sometimes found after an affirmative statement" though no distinction is made between positive and negative succeeding statements.

Robert Funk, Beginning-Intermediate Grammar of Hellenistic Greek

Funk's *Beginning-Intermediate Grammar of Hellenistic Greek* is perhaps the most brief (outside of supplied examples) and the most helpful, at least for considerations of the discourse function of ἀλλά. In §627, Funk writes that ἀλλά

> … is commonly preceded by a negative (*not … but …*, cf. §617), although it is also used in other ways (§628). In combination with a negative, ἀλλά is employed to join grammatical elements of the same order, as is the case with other conjunctions.[14]
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> …
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> §628: ἀλλά not preceded by a negative may mark a transition to something contrasted or different.[15]

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[12] Smyth, *Grammar,* §2775.

[13] A New Testament example of ἀλλά "freely repeated in successive clauses" would be 1Co 6.11; see discussion below.

[14] Funk, *BIGHG,* §627 (p. 494).

[15] Funk, *BIGHG,* §628 (p. 495).

Funk's description is helpful because he acknowledges the primary use of ἀλλά with a negative but does not limit it to this context. He also reminds that ἀλλά joins things—that it is, after all, a conjunction. It does not simply act alone or on following material; it is in some sort of relationship with preceding material as well. Most importantly, in §628 Funk notes the aspect of contrast commonly seen when ἀλλά is used without a preceding negator.

Richard Young, Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach

Young's article notes four primary senses of ἀλλά: contrast, emphasis, exclusion and transition. On contrast, Young notes, "Semantically, propositions introduced with adversative conjunctions (e.g., "I came to fulfill the law") are more prominent than the propositions with which they are contrasted (e.g., "I did not come to destroy the law")".[16] Young's point is important for understanding the function of ἀλλά at the discourse level. In Mt 5.17, the statement after the ἀλλά is more prominent than the negated statement before it. The point of the passage is that Jesus came to fulfill the law. While the antecedent statement is true, the statement following is the one that is highlighted in the overall context. Stating the point like this ("I did not come to destroy the law, *but [ἀλλά] to fulfill it*") highlights it in a way that the simple statement on its own ("I came to fulfill the law") can never achieve.

Monographs

J. D. Denniston, The Greek Particles

Denniston's treatment is too voluminous to handle in any completeness here. Generally, Denniston sketches four "methods of connexion": Additional, Adversative, Confirmatory and Inferential. He notes that ἀλλά can be generally classed as an adversative. Of adversatives, he further notes:

> (b) Adversatives are of two kinds: eliminative adversatives, used often where one of two contrasted members is negative, the true being substituted for the false (*par excellence* μὲν οὖν and normally ἀλλά), and balancing adversatives, where two truths of divergent tendency are presented (δέ, μήν, μέντοι, etc.)[17]

In describing "eliminative adversatives" (other grammars/lexicons typically call them "strong adversatives") Denniston notes a substitutionary or corrective aspect to the commonly seen instances of ἀλλά with a negator along with the implicit notion that contrast exists between both items. Other treatments hint at this, but do not state it quite so bluntly.

Further along in his introduction, Denniston notes some peculiarities to the manner in which some conjunctions, including ἀλλά, connect things:

> *Abnormalities of reference in connexion.* The connexion established is, normally, of course, between consecutive units of speech: words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. There are, however, certain exceptions. In dialogue, owing to the quickness of thrust and parry, or the self-absorption of one of the participants, a speaker sometimes links the opening of his speech to his own preceding words, not to the intervening words of the other person. ... **In S.*El.*1035 (p. 443) ἀλλ' οὖν looks back to 1017-26: or perhaps it would be truer to say that its *point d'appui* is the general situation, the whole attitude of Chrysothemis, rather**

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[16] Richard A. Young, *Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 180.

[17] Denniston, *Greek Particles,* Introduction *xlix*

than any particular set of words, an explanation which applies also to E.*Alc*.713 (καὶ μήν, p. 354), and IT 637 (μέντοι, p. 405).[18]

Denniston translates this cited instance:

> 1035 ('Well, since you refuse to help me (1017-26), do at least realize what that refusal means').[19]

Importantly, Denniston introduces and supports the idea that ἀλλά can be used to connect discontinuous text, and that it can even be used to contrast or counter "general situations" instead of "any particular set of words".

Jakob Heckert, Discourse Conjoiners in the Pastoral Epistles

Heckert's work examines the discourse function of several conjunctions within the subcorpus of the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus). One of the conjunctions treated is ἀλλά. After a brief survey of "traditional scholars", "traditional scholars of the New Testament" and "discourse linguists", Heckert posits that ἀλλά is a marker of contrast:

> … the basic function of the adversative particle ἀλλά in the pastoral epistles is to mark global contrast, although this function may be modified to a degree, depending on the presence or absence of a negative marker and its position in relation to ἀλλά. Even in the set construction ου μονον .. ἀλλά καὶ, ἀλλά functions contrastively within the limits set by οὐ μόνον, on the one hand, and καὶ, on the other.[20]

Heckert isolates five contexts that ἀλλά appears in within the Pastoral Epistles: when preceded by a negative marker, when followed by a negative marker, with no negative marker, with the set construction ου μονον .. ἀλλά καὶ, and when combined with a non-negative particle. Heckert's overall conclusion is:

> Thus, when a negative marker *precedes* ἀλλά, the second conjunct replaces a rejected proposition; when a negative marker *follows* ἀλλά the expectations raised by the preceding conjunct are denied; **and when a negative marker is absent, the second proposition corrects the expectations initiated by the first one**.[21]

Relevant to the current study, Heckert's work shows that discourse function of ἀλλά as a marker of contrast is relatively stable, and that surrounding context (presence or absence of negatives, or use in combination with other non-negative particles such as γε) contributes to the degree of contrast between the conjuncts joined by ἀλλά. Also relevant is Heckert's conclusion that, in addition to being a marker of contrast, use of ἀλλά is associated with correction or replacement.

Stanley Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell, "Conjunctions and Levels of Discourse"

Porter and O'Donnell presented this paper to the 2006 symposium of the Linguistics Institute of Ancient and Biblical Greek (LIABG). Porter and O'Donnell posit

> … that there are three axes along which the conjunctions function. One of these is vertical, and the other two are horizontal. Selection of a given conjunction requires that one of the two horizontal axes be chosen, and that a level on the vertical axis be chosen. The vertical axis is a cline of discourse levels, while the

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[18] Denniston, *Greek Particles*, Introduction, *l*, **emphasis** added.

[19] Denniston, *Greek Particles*, 443.

[20] Heckert, *Discourse Function*, 19.

[21] Heckert, *Discourse Function*, 28, **emphasis** added.

horizontal axes represent two different clines, one of continuity-discontinuity and the other of logical-semantic relations.[22]

Porter and O'Donnell place ἀλλά on the first horizontal axis, the axis of continuity-discontinuity, noting that ἀλλά indicates a high degree of discontinuity[23] and can function at multiple levels along the vertical axis of discourse level.

> … the conjunction ἀλλά only functions at the lower levels (but perhaps not the lowest level of the word). This conjunction joins word groups in Matthew 9.13: "he did not come to call the just but sinners"; clauses in Mark 4.17: "they do not have roots in themselves but they are for a time"; and clause complexes in 1 Thessalonians 5.15: "watch lest someone return evil for evil but always pursue the good both to others and to all."[24]

The levels of discourse on the vertical axis "move from the conjoining of words to word groups to clauses to clause complexes to paragraphs to discourses".[25] In the above statement they note ἀλλά functions at the word group, clause and clause complex levels and potentially at the word level. However, later in the paper, they assert:

> An initial analysis indicates that there are a limited number of conjunctions that function at all of the levels of discourse. These include only καί, δέ, ἀλλά and some of the negative conjunctions, such as οὐδέ and μηδέ. All of the rest of the conjunctions are more circumscribed in the linguistic levels at which they may be used.[26]

Thus, according to Porter and O'Donnell, ἀλλά marks a high level of discontinuity and can be used as a conjoiner at various discourse levels; at least including word group, clause and clause complex levels but perhaps including word, paragraph and even discourse levels.

Steven Runge, "Teaching Them What NOT to Do"

In a paper presented to the Evangelical Theological Society in 2007,[27] Runge examined the phenomena of negation from the perspective of discourse grammar. Outside of simple negated clauses, Runge isolated negation patterns, some of which include the use of ἀλλά.[28] Regarding each of the examples featuring the use of ἀλλά, Runge notes "In each instance, the negated clause functions as a counterpoint, highlighting

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[22] Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell, "Conjunctions and Levels of Discourse" (paper presented at the Symposium of the Linguistics Institute of Ancient and Biblical Greek (LIABG), Hamilton, ON, Canada, August 24-26, 2006), 150-151.

[23] Porter and O'Donnell, "Conjunctions and Levels of Discourse," 152. Along the continuity-discontinuity cline, the most continuous conjunctions are καί and τέ; levels of discontinuity increase along the cline, from low levels (τέ and τότε) to mid levels (δέ, μέν, οὖν and γάρ); to high levels of discontinuity (ἀλλά, πλήν and ὅμως).

[24] Porter and O'Donnell, "Conjunctions and Levels of Discourse," 151.

[25] Porter and O'Donnell, "Conjunctions and Levels of Discourse," 151.

[26] Porter and O'Donnell, "Conjunctions and Levels of Discourse," 151-152.

[27] Steven Runge, "Teaching Them What NOT to Do: The Nuances of Negation in the Greek New Testament" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, San Diego, CA, November 13-16, 2007). Available online: http://www.logos.com/media/academic/runge/negation_pragmatics.pdf. Accessed May 23, 2008.

[28] Runge, "Teaching Them What NOT to Do", 7-11. Pattern 3, "Emphasis on corrective or restrictive information introduced by ἀλλά/εἰ μή", particularly example groups 11-13 which focus on instances of ἀλλά.

the 'point' which is introduced by ἀλλά."[29] Earlier in the section concerning negation and ἀλλά, he defines point and counterpoint, noting that they work in concert with each other to set the point in prominence:

> … the result of providing a negative answer followed by a positive one is to create a rhetorical 'counterpoint-point' set.[30] … the negated clause serves to highlight something that functions as a *counterpoint* in order to set the stage for a more important *point* that follows. Use of the counterpoint-point strategy results in effectively giving the positive answer more emphasis than it would have otherwise received using only the positive answer.[31]

Runge (building on Heckert[32]) further notes a restrictive or corrective aspect to the point-counterpoint sets that feature use of ἀλλά:

> In roughly one quarter of the instances of negation found in the Greek NT, there is a counterpoint-point strategy at work to restrict or correct the negated clause by supplying additional information introduced by either ἀλλά or εἰ μὴ.[33]

Runge posits and later demonstrates that structures that feature ἀλλά and that rely on a rhetorical use of negation, such as "not that, but [ἀλλά] this" use the first half of the structure (the "counterpoint") to bring the second half (the "point") into even more prominence in the current discourse.[34] Importantly, Runge does not limit the point-counterpoint set to use with ἀλλά; he also includes examples that rely on εἰ μὴ as the hinge. In forthcoming work,[35] he demonstrates that point- counterpoint sets are flexible and not bound to particular grammatical or vocabulary requirements.[36]

Building on Runge's insights, one contention of the current paper is that point-counterpoint sets that use ἀλλά as a hinge need not require a negative counterpoint.

Summary of Descriptions of ἀλλά

Smyth's work brings to light ἀλλά's marking of some relationship between two items. Funk's similar recognition that ἀλλά joins things (§627) along with Young and Runge's individual but complementary

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[29] Runge, "Teaching Them What NOT to Do", 9, note 21.

[30] Runge, *Discourse Grammar and the Greek New Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., forthcoming). §4.3 uses the term "point-counterpoint set", which is the terminology that this paper uses as well.

[31] Runge, "Teaching Them What NOT to Do", 7-8, *emphasis* his.

[32] Heckert, *Discourse Function*, 18.

[33] Runge, "Teaching Them What NOT to Do", 8.

[34] Note that "counterpoint" and "point" have their origin as strict logical terms where the counterpoint is a foil that is relatively useless to the current context and the point is the salient bit that overshadows and knocks out the counterpoint. In Runge's application, the terminology is not intended to be this strict. Instead, counterpoint and point are used to isolate the two items/areas that are working in conjunction with each other, with the prominent/salient bit encoded in the point. But complete or strict replacement is not implied by Runge's usage of this terminology. His usage of counterpoint is more in line with the *Concise OED's* second sense, "a thing forming a pleasing or notable contrast with something else."

[35] Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, §4.3.

[36] For example, the counterpoint-point structure need not involve ἀλλά or εἰ μὴ at all; it could be denoted by a prospective (anticipatory) μὲν followed (at some point, not even contiguously) by δέ, ἀλλά, καὶ or asyndeton. Denniston also notes such structures, though he describes them using traditional grammatical terminology.

assertions regarding an antecedent statement being used as a foil to make a succeeding statement more prominent (Runge labels these point-counterpoint sets) contribute much to the picture. Denniston's articles on ἀλλά and μὲν arrive at similar conclusions (recall his "eliminative adversatives") and further demonstrate how the statement antecedent to ἀλλά may be discontinuous or even a general situation instead of particular text.

Heckert's description is most directly applicable to the current study. His view of ἀλλά as a "marker of global contrast" that, in non-negative contexts, indicates correction or replacement is central to arriving at a brief, unified and consistent view of the discourse function of ἀλλά. Porter and O'Donnell complement this with their description of ἀλλά as marking a high level of discontinuity between conjoined items. Runge's further work, bringing in the concept of a point-counterpoint set that can use ἀλλά (among other words and structures) as hinge provides further framework with which to evaluate non-negative instances of ἀλλά in the New Testament and other contemporary literature.

With all of this in mind, consider again the aforementioned "working hypothesis":

- ἀλλά involves the joining of two things for the purpose of contrasting them.
- ἀλλά involves correction or replacement.

Thus, when examining items joined by ἀλλά, one should ask two questions:

1. What items (words, phrases, clauses) are being contrasted?
2. What is the correction or replacement that is taking place?

With this in mind, examples from the New Testament will be examined.

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES

It is impossible to work through each non-negative instance of ἀλλά in the New Testament in the scope of this paper. Instead, each instance in the synoptic gospels will be evaluated; a few atypical instances from within the Pauline epistles will be evaluated as well. The goal of this section is to evaluate these instances using the working hypothesis to arrive at an understanding of in-context usage. Again, the goal is not necessarily the best *translation* of ἀλλά for a given instance, but an *understanding* of what function ἀλλά plays in each instance. For each instance, citations in BDF and BDAG will be noted and play a role in the discussion.

To this end, 1Co 3.6 will be evaluated as a prototypical example; the other examples will follow.

A Prototypical Example: 1Co 3.6

Paul's words in 1Co 3.6 offer a good example of the function of ἀλλά in the context of a familiar passage.[37]

> ⁶ I planted,
> Apollos watered,
> but [ἀλλά] God gave the growth. (1Co 3.6, ESV)

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[37] BDF cite 1Co 3.6 as an example of §448.2, however this must be erroneous as 1Co 3.6 does not contain οὐ. Perhaps a reference to 1Co 3.7 is intended, where οὔτε is used in the clauses previous to the instance of ἀλλά. BDAG does not cite this instance in its entry for ἀλλά.

Here Paul's illustration uses a planting/gardening metaphor within a point-counterpoint set to communicate his point. The counterpoint includes the information about Paul and Apollos; the point is that "God gave the growth". The larger context (vv. 1-9) shows that there may be strife between those who claim to follow Apollos, and those who claim to follow Paul. Paul wants the Corinthians to see that both he and Apollos are involved in the same task, and that any profit comes not from Paul or Apollos, but from God.

In this present illustration, the contrast is evident along two axes. First is the personal axis, contrasting both Paul and Apollos with God. The second is the axis of the metaphor, using agricultural terminology as the basis of contrast. Both φυτεύω ("to plant", LN43.5) and ποτίζω ("to water", LN43.9) are represented in Louw and Nida's "Agriculture" domain; this instance of the verb αὐξάνω ("to grow", LN59.63) is represented in the "Quantity" domain, within the "Increase/Decrease" subdomain. Thus while Paul and Apollos are doing the work of planting and watering, whatever results are evident (here an "increase") are attributable to God.

In this the element of correction is apparent as well. What Paul does or what Apollos does is not the point—what God does is the point.

Strikingly, this very concept is repeated in verse 7 using a more typical (negative) ἀλλά statement within a point-counterpoint set that mirrors the vocabulary of verse 6 (planting, watering, increasing/giving growth):

> ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything,
> but [ἀλλά] only God who gives the growth. (1Co 3.7, ESV)

This reiteration of the content of verse 6 confirms that God giving growth is the more important of the two joined portions.

ἀλλά in the Synoptic Gospels

In addition to examining individual non-negative instances of ἀλλά in the synoptic gospels, the synoptic parallels,[38] where available, will also be examined. In most cases, different information structures present the same information in different ways. This will help shed light on the function(s) that ἀλλά plays within the larger discourse.

Mt 9.18 (‖ Mk 5.23 ‖ Lu 8.41)

> ¹⁸ While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying,
> "My daughter has just died,
> but [ἀλλά] come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." (Mt 9.18, ESV)

Regarding classification, BDF cite this instance in §448(3), noting ἀλλά is used "before commands or requests".[39] BDAG classify in sense 5, "with an imperative to strengthen the command."[40] These are both

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[38] Parallels from Kurt Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels: Greek-English Edition of the Synopsis Quattor Evangeliorum* (United Bible Societies: New York, 1982).

[39] BDF §448(3).

[40] BDAG, 45.

correct in identifying the collocation of ἀλλά with a command, but both descriptions focus on the placement of ἀλλά in respect to what follows and pay little attention to the items that ἀλλά conjoins.

In this case, there are two clauses joined by ἀλλά; "My daughter has just died" (where "My" refers to "a ruler" in the previous clause) and "come and lay your hand on her and she will live". In this instance, the counterpoint is the first clause, the point is included in the two clauses following ἀλλά.

The parallels in Mark and Luke disclose that the "ruler" in this instance is Jairus. His daughter has died (disclosed in the counterpoint); he desires Jesus to restore her to life (disclosed in the point). In this case, there is a degree of contrast involved in Jairus' request. He asks for Jesus to move his daughter from the state of death (τελευτάω, aorist active indicative) back into the state of life (ζάω, future middle indicative). The underlying contrast is both lexical (contrast between death and life) and grammatical (between the aorist and future tenses). In this instance, ἀλλά functions as a hinge between the counterpoint and the point, heightening the contrast and shifting the focus onto the point: Jairus believes that if Jesus comes and touches his daughter, Jesus will restore her to life.

The Markan and Lucan Parallels

The differences between the synoptic accounts of this event are notable. Here are the Markan and Lukan accounts:

> [23] and implored him earnestly, saying,
> > "My little daughter is at the point of death.
> > > Come and lay your hands on her,
> > > > so that she may be made well and live." (Mk 5.23, ESV)

> [41] And there came a man named Jairus,
> who was a ruler of the synagogue.
> And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house,
> > [42] for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying.
> As Jesus went, the people pressed around him. (Lu 8.41-42, ESV)

In the Markan and Lukan accounts, Jairus initially represents his daughter as being sick unto the point of death but still alive; information of the girl's death comes later from a servant who arrives on the scene (Mk 5.35 ‖ Lu 8.49). In Matthew she is represented as being dead throughout Jesus and Jairus' interaction.

In Mark, Jairus' request is twofold: "so that she be made well and live". The request in Luke is much more subtle: "he implored [Jesus] to come to his house". But recall that in Matthew, the request is not to make Jairus' daughter well, but for Jesus to place his hands on her so that she may live again.

Matthew, compressing the event of Jesus and Jairus' initial interaction,[41] packs all of the contrast and drama of the event into Jairus' request that Jesus, by touching his daughter, restore her life from death. Jairus by his statement shows that he thinks Jesus is able to, with his very touch, restore the dead to the living. Mark and Luke both spread this aspect of the drama out. First, Jairus requests that Jesus heal his daughter (Mark only refers to Jesus healing through touch; Luke has Jairus requesting that Jesus simply come to his house to heal, with means unspecified). Then the interlude with the healing of the woman

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[41] Instead of following Mark (and Luke), who place the initial meeting and healing request before the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, with news of Jairus' daughter's death coming after the healing of the woman with the issue of blood.

with the issue of blood, who is healed through touching Jesus' garment, which shows the power of Jesus to heal by touch. Only after this do Mark and Luke update the reader with the further information that Jairus' daughter has died. They both do this by focusing on the hopelessness of the situation; now that the daughter has died there is no reason to further bother Jesus. But Jesus overhears this report (Mk 5.36 || Lu 8.50) and goes to Jairus' house anyway, where his touch—in all accounts he takes the daughter by the hand—restores her to life.

In Matthew, then, Jairus' request is a larger and more hopeless. Instead of asking Jesus to heal his daughter from a grave illness, he asks that his dead daughter be restored to life. Each synoptic account uses different grammatical means to make this request: Mark focuses on means, requesting Jesus' touch to reverse the slide from death back toward life. Luke focuses on Jairus' method of request, passionately imploring that Jesus come to his house to heal his dying daughter. Matthew's version, with ἀλλά in a non-negative context, relies on the contrast between death and restoration to life to quickly establish the impossibility of the situation.

All three instances end up in the same place, with Jesus' touch restoring Jairus' daughter to life. Matthew's use of ἀλλά in a non-negative context is the only instance that places all of the contrast at the head of the story, previous to the healing of the woman with the issue of blood.

Mt 11.7-9 (|| Lu 7.24-26)[42]

> [7] As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John:
>> "What did you go out into the wilderness to see?
>> A reed shaken by the wind?
>> [8] [ἀλλά] What then did you go out to see?
>> A man dressed in soft clothing?
>> Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.
>> [9] [ἀλλά] What then did you go out to see?
>> A prophet?
>> Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. (Mt 11.7-9, ESV)

Commentaries, lexicons and grammars explain these instances in different ways. BDF note ἀλλά may be "used after a question to one's self as in classical"[43] offering Mt 11.8[44] as an example of the phenomenon. BDAG note that ἀλλά may be used "before independent clauses, to indicate that the preceding is to be regarded as a settled matter, thus forming a transition to something new".[45] Commentaries generally focus on explaining the answers to the questions,[46] going into some detail about reeds and soft clothing to show

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[42] The Lukan account is almost a mirror-image of the Matthean account, with the only substantive change from "those who wear soft clothing" (Mt) to "those who are dressed in splendid clothing" (Lu) in answer to the second rhetorical question. Thus the text of the Lukan account will not be included in this section.

[43] BDF §448.4.

[44] Note that BDF actually cite Mk 11.8f, but this is surely a typo as ἀλλά is not used in this way in Mk 11.8, and the cited parallel material (Lu 7.24ff) is actually a parallel to Mt 11.8, not Mk 11.8.

[45] BDAG, p. 45; ἀλλά sense 3.

[46] *e.g.* Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8–20* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001); Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1992); Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13* (WBC; Dallas: Word, 1993).

the relevance of the text. It is important to understand the answers because, likely, this is information that Jesus takes the crowd to know as a given; otherwise it would not be an effective rhetorical technique. On these answers, Luz is perhaps the most concise:

> The wilderness is first of all the place where, along the Jordan, one may find reeds. The wilderness is a place where in those days one could find people in splendid apparel in the royal winter palaces.[47]

In this case, instead of the point-counterpoint set of previous examples, Jesus uses a series of questions which he answers with rhetorical questions to address the crowd's perception of John the Baptist. The same initial question is asked three times; ἀλλά is used previous to the last two instances of the question.

The pattern points to something else. The repeated question ("What did you go out to see?") with further questions as answers make the final answer in v. 9, "A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet" much more prominent by it being both the end of a series of questions and other discourse features.[48] The goal is for the crowd to agree that they have come to the wilderness to see a prophet; the rhetorical structure brings this reason for the crowd's being into focus. This would be true whether or not ἀλλά was used as the conjoiner of the questions.

In these instances, the primary function of ἀλλά is to replace the previous information with new information. Consider the progression of answers. On the initial answer; people did not go to the wilderness to see reeds bend in the wind. This was a common occurrence; one need not travel to the wilderness area to witness it.[49] The assumed answer to the first rhetorical question is "no".

Instead of answering the question directly, the answer is assumed to be "no" and Jesus returns to his original question. Because they did not come to see reeds bent by the wind, they must have come to see something else.

This next interchange, after the first ἀλλά, replaces the previous interchange. Jesus asks his question again, "what did you come here to see?" This instance of the question is also answered with a rhetorical question; "[did you go to see] a man dressed in soft clothing?" The answer here is an assumed "no", but Jesus goes further and provides an explicit answer: Those with soft clothing are found in the houses of kings, not the desert. Whether this is a point of absurdity (people in royal robes are not found in the desert wandering around); or whether it is in contrast to the harshness of John the Baptist's chosen wardrobe; or whether it is a reference to Herod's winter palace, where people in royal robes would be found; the effect is the same. The crowd was not in the desert to see people walking around in royal robes. Jesus forcefully answers the question (complete with ἰδού, "Behold!") and then—still seeking the answer to his original question, re-asks the question: "What did you go out to see?"

This last instance of the question is again prefaced with ἀλλά to conjoin it to the previous series of questions. This again has the effect of replacing the previous interchange and providing yet another new answer, this time the correct answer: a prophet. The people came to see a prophet, and this is a very

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[47] Luz, *Matthew 8–20*, 143.

[48] This answer is highlighted both by a forward-pointing reference and target combination, and, in the final answer, the redundancy of "I tell you" (which Runge terms a "meta comment"). See Runge, *Introduction*, §1.2 (forward-pointing references); §1.3 (meta-comments).

[49] A common occurrence in the wilderness, cf. Luz above. Also see Roberston, *Word Pictures*, Mt 11.7.

important piece of information. But—with the full attention now of the hearer—Jesus goes further. John the Baptist is more than a prophet; by quoting Scripture Jesus proclaims John as Elijah, preparing the way for the Messiah.

Functionally, each question wipes the slate clean to start over again. Each previous question/answer is replaced with a new instance of the question/answer. The progression is like this:[50]

> Did you do this?
> No.
> So [ἀλλά], (slate is now clean) did you do this?
> No.
> So [ἀλλά], (slate is now clean) did you do this?
> Yes, that and more.

Through all of this, the rhetorical structure plus use of ἀλλά is used to by Jesus to confirm that John the Baptist was a prophet, and that what he prophesied was true: Jesus is the Christ. In previous context, Jesus dialogued with John's disciples, confirming John's suspicions (cf. Mt 11.2-3).

The questions and answers are a device to build suspense and make the revelation that John is, in fact, much more than a prophet and is greater than all of those born among women (Mt 11.11). The use of ἀλλά within that larger rhetorical device (as opposed to asyndeton or some other connective such as δέ) makes clear that these questions replace each other, drawing the reader's attention to one crucial point: John the Baptist is Elijah (Mt 11.13-14), announcing the advent of the Christ.

Mk 9.12-13[51] (‖ Mt 17.11-12)

> [12] And he said to them,
>> "Elijah • does come first to restore all things.
>> And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?
>> [13] But [ἀλλά] I tell you that • Elijah has come,
>> and they did to him
>>> whatever they pleased,
>>> as it is written of him." (Mk 9.12-13, ESV)

Many commentators translate μὲν in v. 12 as an intensifier (e.g. "indeed"[52]), but it instead provides a clue that a point-counterpoint set is in the text. Often the point-counterpoint set involves a μὲν .. δέ comparison,[53] but in this case the structure is more complex. There are two such sets in the text; with one building on the other. The first set is indicated by μὲν .. καί; the second involves that entire μὲν .. καί structure as the counterpoint and the ἀλλά clauses (through the end of v. 13) as the point.

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[50] Note that the ESV translates ἀλλά as a post-positive "then" in both Matthew and Luke. A more appropriate translation respective of the function of ἀλλά in these instances would likely be "so" prefixed to the question.

[51] This specific instance is not cited in either BDF or BDAG.

[52] H. B. Swete, *The Gospel According to St. Mark: The Greek Text with Introduction* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1898), 193. Here Swete offers "it is true".

[53] cf. Runge, *Introduction*, §1.1, "Point-Counterpoint Sets", also Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, §4.3.

The "son of man" content seems strange because it appears to be an interlude of sorts between the statements concerning Elijah. This difficulty is noted by many commentators and several different approaches are taken.[54] France, in his NIGTC volume, likely treats it best by noting the μὲν .. καὶ relationship:

> But the μὲν in the first clause alerts us that Jesus will not simply repeat what the scribes are saying, but will add his own distinctive angle to the teaching about Elijah. Instead of a further statement with δέ, however, the following clause takes the form of a rhetorical question, challenging the disciples to expand their mental horizon beyond what the scribes have taught.[55]

France also catches the further connection between verses 12 (μὲν .. καὶ) and 13 (ἀλλά):

> Verse 13 resolves this puzzle by establishing two important connections: first, that the prophecy of Elijah's return has already been fulfilled, so that the experiences of Jesus as Son of Man are part of the same sequence of events as the return of Elijah; second that (in contrast with the language of Mal. 4:5–6) the experience of 'Elijah' has been of rejection and ill-treatment (ἐποίησαν αὐτῷ ὅσα ἤθελον), which thus foreshadows what is to happen to the Son of Man.[56]

So what is the function of ἀλλά in v. 13? As has been mentioned before, ἀλλά is a marker of contrast and it also indicates correction or replacement of concepts. These are both evident in the state of Elijah's arrival. Verse 13 stipulates that, in fact, Elijah has come (correcting the question in v. 12 about Elijah's arrival) and further indicates that Elijah has suffered much, as the Messiah will suffer much. Again, France's comments are spot-on:

> The disciples' question concerned the scribal teaching about Elijah's return πρῶτον. Jesus has not only endorsed that teaching, but added that the expectation has already been fulfilled, and has linked the suffering and rejection of the returning Elijah with his own. As πρῶτον indicated, the coming of 'Elijah' prepares the way for the imminent fate of the Son of Man.[57]

The Matthean Parallel (Mt 17.11-12)

The parallel in Matthew arranges the same content somewhat differently. The "son of man" clause (v. 12b) is moved after the overall comparison. Additionally, the overall comparison uses μὲν .. δέ instead of the μὲν .. ἀλλά of Mark.

> [11] • He answered,
> " Elijah does come,
> and he will restore all things.
> [12] But [δέ] I tell you that Elijah has already come,
> and they did not recognize him,

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[54] One approach is to posit Aramaic influence, see Craig Evans' discussion of Maurice Casey's approach to this problem in Evans, WBC34b, 43. Another is to redact the text by moving the clause concerning "son of man" previous to the reference to Elijah; H.B. Swete discusses (and dimisses) this approach (Swete, *Mark*, 193).

[55] R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark : A Commentary on the Greek text* (NIGTC, Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2002), 358.

[56] France, *NIGTC Mark*, 358.

[57] France, *NIGTC Mark*, 360.

> but [ἀλλά] did to him whatever they pleased.
> So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands."

The comparison in Matthew is cleaner[58] than in Mark, but it is different due to using δέ as the primary point-counterpoint hinge instead of ἀλλά. As δέ is a marker of development,[59] Matthew's version uses Elijah's state of being already come as a step on the developmental path to his conclusion, that because Elijah has already come, Messiah must be on Earth and will suffer. The same ones that did not recognize John the Baptist as Elijah and therefore persecuted him will also not recognize Jesus as Messiah, and will therefore persecute Jesus as well. What happened to John (persecution and death) will also happen to "the Son of Man".

Mk 9.21-22[60]

> [21] And Jesus asked his father,
>   "How long has • this been happening to him?"
> And he said,
>   "From childhood.
>   [22] And it has • often cast him into fire and into water,
>   to destroy him.
>   But [ἀλλά] if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." (Mk 9.21-22, ESV)

BDF classify this instance in §448(3), again noting collocation with a command or request.[61] As before, while the observation is true it does not take into account the items that ἀλλά conjoins.

The words attributed to the boy's father in vv. 21-22 function as a point-counterpoint set with ἀλλά functioning as a hinge. The counterpoint includes the words of the father previous to ἀλλά; the point is the clause following.

In the counterpoint, answering Jesus' question to him, the father describes the extent of the situation: he's afraid the demon will kill his son. In the point, vv. 21-22, the father somewhat skeptically (after the disciples' failure) asks Jesus to exercise compassion by trumping the power of the demon and restoring his son. Verses 23-27 tell the rest of the story, that Jesus indeed has such power and that he exercised it to banish the demon from the boy.

The elements of contrast and correction are subtle in this example, but present. The contrast has to do with power. In the counterpoint, the power of the demon is described; the boy is subject to this power. In the point, the father appeals to Jesus to overpower the demon. As the following verses make plain, Jesus does indeed have the power, and acts accordingly. Thus the point, with its request for Jesus to trump the power of the demon, displays correction.

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[58] France, *NIGTC Mark*, 358 notes that in Mark "the sequence of clauses is clumsy", but Matthew's is a " 'tidied-up' parallel".

[59] Heckert, *Discourse Features*, 37-57.

[60] This particular portion has no direct synoptic parallel.

[61] BDF §448(3).

Mk 11.31-32[62] (|| Mt 21.25-26 || Lu 20.5-7)

> [31] And they discussed it with one another, saying,
>> "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say,
>>> 'Why then did you not believe him?'
>> [32] But [ἀλλά] shall we say, 'From man'?"—
> they were afraid of the people,
> for they all held that John really
>> was a prophet. (Mk 11.31-32, ESV)

In this instance, ἀλλά stands between two conditional clauses, the second of which is incomplete; a point-counterpoint set is not present. Jesus has just responded to a question posed by the scribes and chief priests (v. 28) with a counter-question (vv. 29-30). Verses 31 and 32 portray the debate behind the response to Jesus in v. 33.

Based on Jesus' question in v. 30, "Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?", only two answers are possible, "from heaven" or "from man". The structure of vv. 31-32 presents these alternatives, showing neither alternative is viable for the present context which includes a large crowd. Jesus is relying on the disparity of opinion on this very question between the crowd and the scribes and chief priests, as France indicates: "The effectiveness of Jesus' ploy depends on his being aware of popular feeling on the subject, which it would be unwise of [the scribes and chief priests] to flout in this public place."[63]

In this instance, ἀλλά is the hinge between two non-viable options. Recall the contention that ἀλλά is a marker of contrast; here the contrast is implicit between the possible answers "from heaven" or "from man". Also recall that the use of ἀλλά involves correction or replacement of concepts between juxtaposed items. Here the first answer, "from heaven" is presented and dismissed using a conditional statement. Then, after ἀλλά, a second answer is presented, replacing the first. This answer is equally untenable, so much so that the apodosis of the conditional statement is not even filled. On this incomplete conditional statement, France notes:

> The four words that remain, ἀλλὰ εἴπωμεν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων, can be construed either as the beginning of a second conditional clause matching ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ in v. 31, but with the ἐάν left unexpressed, or as a further deliberative question, 'But shall we say "From men"?', or even as a tentative decision on their part, 'But let us say "From men" ', which is then aborted by their recognition of the diplomatic gaffe that would involve. While the general sense is clear, the syntax is awkward, and the decision on how to punctuate the aposiopesis after ἀνθρώπων is a matter of taste.[64]

Neither "from heaven" nor "from men" is an appropriate answer in the current context, with a large and disagreeable crowd present. The use of ἀλλά between the conditional statements heightens the contrast between the available options and also, in conjunction with the conditional statements, shows that the scribes and chief priests have no available recourse and therefore must answer, "We do not know" (v. 33).

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[62] This specific instance is not cited in either BDF or BDAG.

[63] France, *NIGTC Mark*, 455. See also Evans, *WBC43B*, 207.

[64] France, *NIGTC Mark*, 455.

The Matthean and Lukan Parallels

Matthew and Luke each record this event as well, though they use δέ between the conditional statements, and they provide an answer to the second conditional statement.

And they discussed it among themselves, saying,	[5] And they discussed it with one another, saying,
"If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us,	"If we say, 'From heaven,'
'Why then did you not believe him?'	he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?'
[26] But [δέ] if we say, 'From man,'	[6] But [δέ] if we say, 'From man,'
we are afraid of the crowd,	all the people will stone us to death,
for they all hold that John was a prophet."	for they are convinced that John was a prophet."
(Mt 21.25b-26, ESV)	(Lu 20.5-6, ESV)

As can be seen from the text, the Matthean and Lukan instances are very similar; and both are very similar to the Markan instance. So what difference does the use of δέ in Matthew and Luke make?

The difference is subtle but appreciable. In Matthew and Luke, the use of δέ marks development of argument; the scribes and chief priests are working through the alternatives to see which is most feasible to use in response to Jesus' counterquestion. Contrast is present by virtue of the options, but it is not heightened. In Mark, however, the "from man" alternative is out of the question as a response before the dialogue even begins due to the role of the crowd; thus the conditional need not even be completed. In other words, the contrast between the options is heightened in Mark's version of the story; ἀλλά marks and reinforces this heightened contrast in comparison to the accounts in Matthew and Luke.

Mk 14.27-28[65] (|| Mt 26.31-32)

[27] And Jesus said to them,
"You will all fall away, for it is written,
'I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered.'
[28] But [ἀλλά] after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." (Mk 14.27-28, ESV)

This episode takes place just after the meal in the upper room. Jesus has predicted his betrayal and alluded to his death. Verse 27 shifts the scene to the Mount of Olives and Jesus instructs his disciples that they will all "fall away", citing Zech 13.7. After the citation, ἀλλά is used to transition a statement about where Jesus will be after he is raised from the dead.

On its surface, the two statements—a point-counterpoint set with "you will fall away" as counterpoint and "after I am raised up …" as the point—seem unrelated. However, the use of ἀλλά shows that Jesus is really instructing his disciples what to do after he has been raised from the dead. They will fall away and scatter during the trial and crucifixion, but Jesus gives them the information they need to reassemble after the resurrection. The use of ἀλλά as the hinge between counterpoint and point marks and heightens the contrast between being scattered at the crucifixion and being regathered in Galilee after the resurrection. It also offers a correction to the scattering by giving the disciples the means to regather in Galilee after the resurrection.

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[65] This specific instance is not cited in either BDF or BDAG.

The Matthean Parallel

> [31] Then Jesus said to them,
>> "You will all fall away because of me this night.
>> For it is written,
>>> 'I will strike the shepherd,
>>> and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'
> [32] But [δέ] after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." (Mt 26.31-32, ESV)

Matthew has a few differences. First, τότε is used to introduce the words of Jesus, not καὶ.[66] Second, Matthew specifies the time of the falling away, it is "this night". Third, the quotation formula in v. 31 uses γάρ; Mark uses ὅτι to introduce the whole thing as a subordinate clause. Fourth, Matthew adds "the flock" to qualify "sheep". Fifth and most notably, Matthew uses δέ where Mark uses ἀλλά.

According to Heckert,[67] γάρ is best described as a marker of strengthening or confirmation. In Matthew, the quotation is used to strengthen Jesus' assertion that the disciples will fall away that night. The following statement with Jesus going before them into Galilee, conjoined using δέ in Matthew, is a further development of Jesus' point. In Matthew; by the use of τοτε as a conjunction, the addition of "this night", the use of γάρ to strengthen and confirm Jesus' assertion regarding falling away, and the developmental use of δέ, one can see a more temporal flow in Matthew's presentation of the episode. While the disciples will fall away at the trail and through the crucifixion, they also know that Jesus will be awaiting them in Galilee, to gather them together again.

Mark, by his use of point-counterpoint set with ἀλλά as its hinge presents the scattering and instructions concerning regathering as less of a progression and more of a change of state.

Lu 6.24-27a[68]

> [24] "But woe to you who are rich,
>> for you have received your consolation.
> [25] "Woe to you who are full now,
>> for you shall be hungry.
> "Woe to you who laugh now,
>> for you shall mourn and weep.
> [26] "Woe to you, when all people speak well of you,
> for so their fathers did to the false prophets.
> [27] "But [ἀλλά] I say to you who hear,
>> Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, (Lu 6.24-27, ESV)

Listing of a verse range for this instance is difficult because the ἀλλά in v. 27 functions at the paragraph/pericope level, and the section it points to is actually tied to the previous section.[69] The entire

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[66] On the use of τότε as a sentence conjunction, see Stephanie Black, *Sentence Conjunctions in the Gospel of Matthew: Narrative Discourse* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 2002), 218-253.

[67] Heckert, *Discourse Features*, 36.

[68] This specific instance is not cited in either BDF or BDAG.

[69] According to Runge *LDGNT*, v. 24a and v. 27a are the paragraph level counterpoint and point, respectively.

content involves three pericopes according to Aland.[70] These include the Lukan version of the Beatitudes (Lu 6.20b-23), the exclusively Lukan material of the Woes (Lu 6.24-26) which provide negative contrast to the Beatitudes, and further teaching on loving one's enemies (Lu 6.27-36). The stark contrast between the Beatitudes and the Woes is indicated and reinforced by the use of πλήν[71] at the start of v. 27 in combination with the pairs of opposites listed in the two sections (poor vs. rich; full vs. hungry; laugh vs. mourn; acceptance vs. rejection). The progression has been from blessing to woe with πλην serving as the hinge between contrasted pericopes.

The next section, commencing with v. 27, begins with ἀλλά. Instead of marking contrast with a preceding clause, this instance of ἀλλά functions at the paragraph level marking contrast with the preceding section.[72] Jesus' address began with a series of blessings and was followed with a directly contrasting series of woes. This section is a response to the woes, providing the avenue of correction to those who were described by the woes.

Lu 11.39-44[73]

> [39] And the Lord said to him,
>> "Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish,
>> but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.
>> [40] You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also?
>> [41] But [πλην] give as alms those things that are within,
>> and behold, everything is clean for you.
>> [42] "But [ἀλλά] woe to you Pharisees!
>>> For you tithe mint and rue and every herb,
>>> and neglect justice and the love of God.
>>> • These you ought to have done,
>>> without neglecting the others.
>> [43] Woe to you Pharisees!
>>> For you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.
>> [44] Woe to you!
>>> For you are like unmarked graves,
>>> and people walk over them without knowing it." (Lu 11.39-44, ESV)

In this section, ἀλλά stands immediately previous to the list of woes. The implicit contrast is between what the Pharisees should do and what they actually do. The section begins with Jesus bringing to light the darkened interior state of the Pharisees; they wash but they do not cleanse what really needs cleansing. The conjunction πλήν is used in this comparison (v. 41), establishing the course of action the Pharisees should already be doing, giving as alms "those things that are within". The following statement affirms that if the things within are given as alms, everything will be clean.

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[70] Aland §78, Lu 6.20b-23; §79, Lu 6.24-26; §80, Lu 6.27-36

[71] BDAG, πλήν 1b (p. 826), cf. LSJM πλήν B III 2 (p. 1419).

[72] Cf. Denniston, *Greek Particles*, cited above.

[73] This specific instance is not cited in either BDF or BDAG.

The shift in v. 42 (ἀλλά) is immediate and the contrast between "behold" (ἰδού) and "woe" (οὐαί) is sharp. The Pharisees do not "give as alms those things that are within" so they are not clean. This is the reason for the woe. Instead of everything being clean, nothing is clean. Though they tithe as specified by the law (which is good) they have only done the minimum possible. The element of correction is essentially "instead of doing this, you've done these things".

Lu 16.20-21

> ²⁰ And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus,
>   covered with sores,
>   ²¹ who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table.
> Moreover [ἀλλά], even the dogs came and licked his sores. (Lu 16.20-21, ESV)

BDF cites this instance in §448(6), which notes that ἀλλὰ καὶ may be "used to introduce a point in an emphatic way"; BDAG has no explicit citation of this verse. The traditional understanding of the use of ἀλλά in this verse is that it is emphatic, as the ESV translation displays with "Moreover", providing more emphasis by translating the following καὶ as "even".

However, attributing an emphatic sense to this instance of ἀλλά does not necessarily help one to understand or even notice the contrast in the passage. The parallelism between verses 19 and 20-21a is crucial to understanding the use of ἀλλά in this instance. Here are verses 19 and 20-21a:

¹⁹ "There was a rich man	²⁰ And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus,
who was clothed in purple and fine linen	covered with sores,
and who feasted sumptuously every	²¹ who desired to be fed with what fell
day.	from the rich man's table.

Each of the participants is introduced. The rich man[74] is further described as finely clothed and as well fed. Lazarus, conversely, is introduced as poor (contrast in wealth), as covered with sores (contrast in clothing), and in lack of food (contrast in hunger). The rich man has all of his basic needs met; Lazarus has none of his needs met.

Into this setting comes the statement with ἀλλά: "Moreover [ἀλλά], even the dogs came and licked his sores." This is an even further contrast in Lazarus' state in comparison with the rich man. Lazarus is not simply sick, poor and in want of food; he is so bad off that dogs lick his sores. The previous parallel assertions function nicely to contrast the despair of Lazarus' state with the rich man; this final statement corrects the previous assertions about Lazarus' state, setting the scene for the rest of the story. This sharpening of Lazarus' state is picked up by some commentators:[75]

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[74] Interestingly, without a name; leading us to believe that Lazarus is the focus of the story. See Robert A. Dooley and Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Analyzing Discourse: A Manual of Basic Concepts* (Dallas: SIL International, 2001), §17.2, (pp. 119-124).

[75] Note that following commentators understand the dogs differently (the first two that the dogs are wild and unclean, the third that the dogs are dogs of the rich man's house who eat table scraps as well). Despite the difference in understanding the dogs, the function of the ἀλλά statement to sharpen the understanding of Lazarus' state is common.

"Nay, even the dogs." This shows his want and his helplessness. Not only was his hunger unsatisfied, but even the dogs came and increased his misery. He was scantily clad, and his sores were not bound up; and he was unable to drive away the unclean dogs when they came to lick them.[76]

This mention of the dogs clustering round him does not suggest any contrast between the pitying animals and pitiless men, but simply adds additional colour to the picture of the utter helplessness of the diseased sufferer; there he lay, and as he lay, the rough homeless dogs would lick his unbandaged wounds as they passed on the forage.[77]

Instead of a servant coming with the fallen scraps, the dogs come from having consumed the scraps and continue their meal with the juices that ooze from the afflicted man's sores.[78]

In this instance, the non-negative ἀλλά context establishes the boundary of Lazarus' helplessness, showing that he is not simply an opposite of the rich man but is instead the epitome of helplessness.

Lu 24.21-22[79]

> [21] But we had hoped
>   that he was the one to redeem Israel.
> Yes [ἀλλά], and besides all this, it is now the third day
>   since these things happened.
> [22] Moreover [ἀλλά γε καὶ], some women of our company amazed us.
>   They were at the tomb early in the morning, (Lu 24.21-22, ESV)

Notable in v. 21 is the collocation ἀλλά γε καὶ.[80] This is followed by ἀλλά καὶ in v. 22. Of this progression, Blass writes that it is "introducing an accessory idea in an emphatic way".[81] BDF also classify both instances as emphatic.[82] Robertson, in his *Word Pictures* notes concerning these instances:

> **Yea and beside all this** (ἀλλά γε καὶ σὺν πᾶσιν τούτοις [*alla ge kai sun pāsin toutois*]). Particles pile up to express their emotions. **Yea** (ἀλλά [*alla*] here affirmative, as in verse 22, not adversative) at least (γε [*ge*]) also (καὶ [*kai*]) together with all these things (σὺν πᾶσιν τούτοις [*sun pāsin toutois*]).[83]

Yet even though in his *Word Pictures* Robertson labels the instances "affirmative", in his grammar he notes "[ἀλλά in Lu 24.21] is climacteric, not contradictory".[84] The use of "climacteric" is telling; the word

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[76] A. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Luke* (ICC; London: T&T Clark International, 1896), 392.

[77] H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *St Luke Vol. II* (Pulpit Commentary: Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2004), 66.

[78] J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34* (WBC 35B; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 829.

[79] Note that NA27 and UBS4 locate the boundary between v. 22 and v. 23 differently. The NA27 boundary is followed above.

[80] Margaret E. Thrall, *Greek Particles in the New Testament: Linguistic and Exegetical Studies* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1962)*,* 11-15, treats this collocation specifically but she unfortunately focuses on whether the primary collocation is ἀλλά γε or ἀλλά καὶ, finally landing on ἀλλά καὶ (after four pages of deliberation) as "progressive" with γε inserted for even more emphasis: "… the γε which separates the two particles that form the basic group will serve to give added emphasis. The reason for its insertion between ἀλλά and καὶ may possibly be that Luke uses the combination καὶ γε elsewhere and so would have thought it misleading here to add the γε after καὶ." (Thrall, *Greek Particles*, 15).

[81] Friedrich Blass, *Grammar of New Testament Greek* (trans. H. St.J. Thackeray; New York: MacMillan, 1905), 268.

[82] BDF §448(6).

[83] Robertson, *Word Pictures,* Lu 24.21.

means "a major turning point or critical stage"[85] So even though Roberston labels the usage affirmative, he sees something larger going on in the context.

BDAG file these instances in sense 3, "before independent clauses, to indicate that the preceding is to be regarded as a settled matter, thus forming a transition to something new".[86] BDAG rightly consider both elements of the conjoined structure but classifies the function of both instances of ἀλλά as simply transitory, moving from old information to new information.

These instances are equally and more consistently explainable if ἀλλά marks contrast and indicates replacement or correction. This is, functionally, a counterpoint (v. 21a) followed by two consecutive points introduced by ἀλλά (v. 21b and v. 22a).

The counterpoint sets the scene by stating the hope that Jesus was the Messiah, the redeemer of Israel. He had prophesied that something would happen on the third day after his death. Yet the initial point (the first ἀλλά) states that it was now the third day after his death, and nothing had happened. This corrects the counterpoint; perhaps Jesus wasn't the Messiah because nothing had happened.

Into this nascent doubt comes the next point: "But some of the women in our company amazed us …". This corrects the previous doubt of Jesus being the Christ. The whole structure is essentially a rhetorical feint followed by a jab: "We'd hoped he was the Messiah, but even now it's the third day since he was tried and crucified … but the women among us amazed us!" By casting doubt using the first ἀλλά,[87] the content following the second ἀλλά is placed in even more prominence.

Other Selected Examples of ἀλλά

Examination of non-negative ἀλλά occurring in the synoptic gospels has been enlightening, but has not addressed some of the less typical instances of ἀλλά in the New Testament. These instances include 1Co 6.11; 2Co 7.11 and Php 3.4b-8a.

1Co 6.11[88]

> [11] And such were some of you.
> But [ἀλλά] you were washed,
> • [ἀλλά] you were sanctified,
> • [ἀλλά] you were justified
>   in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
>   and by the Spirit of our God. (1Co 6.11, ESV)

BDF classify these instances in §448(2) but focus on how a negative can be inserted in a translation to smooth the Greek out into something that fits the general template implied by §448(2), which includes a negator: "Moreover, without a negative preceding or following: 1Co 6.11 … where 'but you are so no

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[84] Robertson, *Grammar,* XXI.V.1(a)(iv), (p. 1185).

[85] *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.* (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

[86] BDAG, p. 45.

[87] Along with the intensifier γε.

[88] BDAG does not cite this instance.

longer' may be easily supplied, followed by 'on the contrary …'."[89] The relationship between the two clauses is rightly recognized, but the focus is on providing an English translation, not on understanding the function of ἀλλά in the Greek text.

In this instance, the counterpoint is the first line; the point includes the last three lines. Key to understanding the contrast and the correction/replacement indicated by ἀλλά is the pronoun reference in the counterpoint referring to the list of unrighteous types of people in verses 9-10. The contrast, then, is between the unrighteous (those who will not inherit the kingdom of God) and those Paul is addressing, who are no longer of that group.

The counterpoint establishes that some of those Paul is addressing were formerly counted among those who would not inherit the kingdom. Each instance of ἀλλά is a separate point, uniquely responding to the common counterpoint. Each point uniquely corrects the counterpoint; they do not correct or replace each other in a sequential or continuative manner. Instead of continuing on as unrighteous (vv. 9-10), those to whom Paul writes were washed. Instead of continuing on as unrighteous, they were sanctified. Instead of continuing on as unrighteous, they were justified.

This is very important to Paul's argument because verses 9-10 list some groups/classes of people (the unrighteous) that will *not* inherit the kingdom of God. This description of the list is given both at its start and end; it must be important. Paul's point is that those he is addressing used to be in these groups, therefore they used to be outside of the group that would inherit the kingdom of God. But no more—they have been washed, they have been sanctified, and they have been justified. Their disqualification was removed, and they are now inheritors of the kingdom.

2Co 7.11

> [11] For see what earnestness • this godly grief has produced in you,
>> but also [ἀλλά] what eagerness to clear yourselves,
>> [ἀλλά] what indignation,
>> [ἀλλά] what fear,
>> [ἀλλά] what longing,
>> [ἀλλά] what zeal,
>> [ἀλλά] what punishment!
> At every point you have proved yourselves • innocent in the matter. (2Co 7.11, ESV)

These instances of ἀλλά are specifically treated by virtually every New Testament Greek grammar and lexicon because they appear to be an exception to the "adversative" sense that most see as primary. Robertson calls it "copulative"; Blass supplies this instance as an example of ἀλλά and its "force of introducing an accessory idea";[90] BDF §448(6) note this instance as "introduc[ing] an additional point in an emphatic way";[91] Porter notes this instance is "emphatic";[92] Louw and Nida provide article LN89.96 with 2Co 7.11 as its sole example, noting "a marker of a series of coordinate relations which are

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[89] BDF §448(2). The first ellipsis is added, ellipsing Greek text, the second ellipsis is in the text itself.

[90] Blass, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, §77.13-14 (pp. 267-270).

[91] BDF §448(6).

[92] Porter, *Idioms* 12, 2.1 (p. 205)

contrastive with a previously identified event or state";[93] BDAG label it as "rhetorically ascensive";[94] EDNT describe ἀλλά in 2Co 7.11 as "rhetorical intensification" with "terms juxtaposed for intensification".[95]

Several different sources describe this verse in several different ways; and there can be no denying that each source is reporting something valid and helpful in the text. But these sources have confused the rhetoric of Paul's wording with the grammatical function of ἀλλά in this rhetorical context. Because ἀλλά repeats[96] does not mean it is simply copulative or emphatic. As LN89.96 note for this specific instance, each item is in contrast with "a previously identified event or state", identified in the first line of the verse. These instances of ἀλλά, when examined for grammatical function within the discourse, act fairly much like every other ἀλλά in the Greek New Testament.

Each successive ἀλλά introduces a separate thread of contrast in the overall comparison. The entire verse has one verb, κατεργάζομαι, "bring about", which was also used in verse 10. The object of the verb is σπουδή, "diligence". The function of each ἀλλά is to provide contrast between "diligence" (an accusative singular noun) with each item introduced by ἀλλά, each of which are also accusative singular nouns (some masculine, some feminine). The initial statement in verse 10 sets the scene; godly grief produces repentance while worldly grief produces death. Paul's contention in verse 10 is that the Corinthians have experienced godly grief (leading to repentance), not worldly grief (leading to death). Verse 11 is his evidence of the Corinthians' experience of godly grief.

Paul shows this by contrasting the diligence or earnestness produced by godly grief with other effects. Each is a separate contrast, relying on the verb of the primary clause (κατεργάζομαι, "bring about"). Diligence is contrasted with eagerness to clear oneself, with indignation, with fear, with longing, with zeal, and with punishment. Each of these instances of contrast are important to Paul's overall argument. Recall 2Co 7.8, where Paul notes his letter grieved the Corinthians, but only for a little while because their response to the godly grief they experienced was repentance. This repentance drove them to change their action and clear their names. While some may see progress of action in the nouns used in verse 11, such progression is rhetorically significant and not necessarily a component of the use of ἀλλά. The rhetorical progression would be there whether ἀλλά was used or not. The contribution of ἀλλά is in highlighting each of these actions in contrast to simply being "eager" to bring about the clearing of their names. Instead, they proceeded in action to clear their names after coming to repentance. This is the correction aspect indicated in each of the ἀλλά instances. Paul's conclusion, that they have proven themselves innocent in this matter, shows they have experienced godly grief, repented, corrected themselves, and have been forgiven.

Php 3.4b-8a

> [4b] If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more:
> > [5] circumcised on the eighth day,
> > of the people of Israel,

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[93] Louw & Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon,* 1:789.

[94] BDAG, ἀλλά 4b, p. 45.

[95] EDNT 1:61.

[96] See Homer, *Iliad* 1.22-25 for another example of consecutively-occurring ἀλλά statements.

> of the tribe of Benjamin,
> a Hebrew of Hebrews;
> as to the law, a Pharisee;
> ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church;
> as to righteousness under the law, • blameless.
> ⁷ But [ἀλλά] whatever gain I had, • I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.
> ⁸ Indeed [ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ], I count everything as loss
> because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. (Php 3.4b-8a, ESV)

BDF do not classify the instance in v. 7. They classify the instance in v. 8 in §448(6), the same section includes reference to 2Co 7.11 (see above). BDAG similarly do not classify v. 7; v. 8 is classified in sense 3, as a transition, similar to the classification of Lu 24.21-22 (see above).

In this passage, there are two instances of ἀλλά (the first word of verse 7 and the first word of verse 8). Each are essentially separate points in response to the counterpoint of vv. 4b-6, much like the structure of both 1Co 6.11 and 2Co 7.11. The contrast between the counterpoint and each point is between what could contribute externally to Paul's sense of worth, and the item he really values. The repetition reinforces the point: worth is found in Christ, and nowhere else.

For Php 3.8, BDF also refer to discussion of μὲν οὖν in §450(4), which sheds much light on this instance:

> Μὲν οὖν is used in classical in replies either *to heighten or correct* (with compound force, see Smyth §2901*a, b*), and always in such a way that another word precedes the μέν (as elsewhere).[97]

The collocation of ἀλλά with μενοῦνγε in Php 3.8 provides several discourse cues to the reader regarding the correction in v. 8a, as well as the expansion of that correction in the following context.

CONCLUSION

This paper has proposed and applied two guidelines regarding ἀλλά to instances occurring in non-negative contexts with the goal of providing a basic method for examining instances of ἀλλά in the New Testament and other early Christian literature. These two guidelines are:

- ἀλλά involves the joining of two things for the purpose of contrasting them.
- ἀλλά involves correction or replacement.

The association of these elements with the presence of ἀλλά was confirmed through the examination of several grammars, monographs and articles. Several instances, including all non-negative instances in the synoptic Gospels, were examined to determine which items are conjoined, how contrast between the items is made evident, and if correction or replacement is present. In each examined instance, ἀλλά indicated the presence of varying degrees of contrast. An element of correction or replacement was also identified in each instance.

Further, the importance of the contrast and correction/replacement in each passage (as opposed to deriving senses to assist in translation to English) was discussed and shown to be relevant for understanding the discourse function of ἀλλά and, therefore, helpful in the process of exegesis. These guidelines, then, appear to be reliable and helpful for the examination of passages that use ἀλλά.

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[97] BDF §450(4), emphasis added

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