CHAPTER TWO

THE SAYINGS THAT OCCUR MORE THAN ONCE

Any hypothesis that attempts to explain the nature of the source or sources from which Justin Martyr drew his sayings of Jesus must confront the difficulties presented by those sayings which occur in Justin’s writings more than once, often with different words. If a thesis cannot account for these variations within Justin’s own writings, then it cannot successfully account for his divergences from the canonical gospels.

What appear to be duplicate versions of the same saying in Justin’s writings may actually prove on careful examination to be quotations of the same saying from two different sources or quotations of the saying from the same source, which Justin himself chose to alter according to his own context or special need. But before it is possible to offer a comprehensive theory to account for the entire scope of the source or sources of Justin’s sayings of Jesus, it is necessary first to examine separately each saying or group of sayings to try to determine its separate history of transmission until the time it reached the form found in Justin’s Apology or Dialogue.

I. Apology 15:13 and Dialogue 96:3a

Apol. 15:13

Γίνεσθε δὲ χρηστοὶ
kai oiktirmones,
ως kai o pathr umon

χρηστός ἔστι
kai oiktirmon,
kai τὸν ἡλικον αὐτοῦ
ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ ἀρματωλούς
kai δικαίους
kai ponnrouz.

Dial. 96:3a

Γίνεσθε ἁρτοὶ
kai oiktirmones,
ως kai o pathr umon
ὁ οὐράνιος.

Apology 15:13 and Dialogue 96:3a seem to be, at least in part, parallel

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1 Unless otherwise specified, all quotations from Justin’s Apology and Dialogue are from the edition of Edgar J. Goodspeed, Die ältesten Apologeten (Göttingen, 1914).
versions of the same saying, the only differences between the two passages being (1) the presence of δὲ in Apol. 15:13, (2) the presence of ὁ οὐφάνιος in Dial. 96:3a, and (3) the obvious fact that Dial. 96:3a quotes only half as much as Apol. 15:13. Dial. 96:3a and Apol. 15:13 have no exact parallels in the canonical gospels; therefore, a comparison of these passages with their closest parallels in the gospels and in the patristic literature is necessary in order to determine whether or not the two sayings are actually dependent upon one source or upon two different sources.

Dial. 96:3a  Mt. 5:45, 48  Lk. 6:36
Γίνεσθε ὁπως γένησθε
χρηστοὶ καὶ
οἴκτιρμονες,
ὡς καὶ
ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν
tοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν
ὁ οὐφάνιος.
toῦ ἐν οὐφανοῖς,
οίκτιρμοιν ἔστιν.

δι τὸν ἡμίον
αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει
ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ
ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει
ἐπὶ δικαίους
καὶ ἄδικους
48 Ἐσεσθε οὖν
ὑμεῖς τέλειοι
ὡς ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν
ὁ οὐφάνιος
tέλειος ἔστιν.

There are texts of Luke that can explain the reading of Dial. 96:3a: (1) the word χρηστος appears in Lk. 6:35 and may thereby have found its way into the text of Dial. 96:3a in combination with οἴκτιρμονες; and (2) several manuscripts of Lk. 6:36 have ὁ οὐφάνιος after ὁ πατὴρ

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1 It will be shown later that this δὲ in Apol. 15:13 was not in Justin's source but that it was rather one of the devices by which Justin combined several citations (see below, p. 97).


3 So too Baldus, p. 96 and Wright, p. 50.

4 Sinaiticus (non item * nec) 13. 69. al. Aeth.