

In my previous post I argued that the quotations of the New Testament in the writings of the later church fathers can help both to establish the earliest form of the text and to determine when and where the text came to be changed in the process of its transmission. I indicated that I might give an example of how that works, and that's what this post is all about. I have taken a couple of paragraphs from my book [The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture](#) to illustrate the point. The passage I am discussing here is a very important one. It has to do with what the voice said from heaven at Jesus' baptism, as recorded in the Gospel of Luke.

In virtually all the Greek manuscripts of Luke - hundreds of them - the voice says "You are my beloved Son, in you I am well pleased." But in one - count them, one - manuscript of the early fifth century the voice instead says "You are my beloved Son, Today I have begotten you." (This reading is found in a manuscript familiar to textual scholars, known as "Codex Bezae.") Since this odd reading - which makes it sound as though God is making Jesus to be his son at this point of his career (and so is thought of as embracing what is called an "adoptionist" christology: God "adopted" Jesus as his son; Jesus wasn't \*originally\* his son, let alone a pre-existent divine being) - is found in only one Greek manuscript, historically most textual critics have not given it much thought, but assumed that it was simply the aberrant alteration of the text by this scribe. But in what I argue below, one should not be so sure. This alternative view is advanced largely on the grounds of the Patristic evidence that we have.

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