I am grateful for Robert Picirilli’s treatment of my work on participles and for the opportunity to respond to his article, “Time and Order in the Circumstantial Participles of Mark and Luke” (in this journal, pp. 241-59) I was asked on previous occasions to assess the article for possible publication and note that Picirilli has included many, if not most, of my suggestions into the latest form of his article.

I wish first to observe several points of basic agreement and commonality between us. One of these is that Picirilli accepts that verbal aspect theory as put forward by me and a number of other scholars is essentially correct (p. 242)—although I would not want to subscribe to every implication that he wishes to draw on the basis of aspect theory. A second observation is that context is the determinative factor for temporal reference of participles (p. 244). A third is that the notion of temporal relation is not the only, and in many instances may not be the primary, category for understanding the participle (p. 242). A final point of agreement is that a time-based view of the participles is untenable (p. 242).

Nevertheless, despite these several agreements—and they are significant—there are still a number of problems worth noting. The first is that, in essence, Picirilli admits that the general tendency that I identified and discussed—that participles that precede their primary verb tend to be used to indicate antecedent action to that of the verb, and those that follow their primary verb tend to be used to indicate contemporaneous or subsequent action to that of the verb—is correct.\footnote{Picirilli notes this when he points out that, concerning present-tense participles, they \textit{tend} [his emphasis] to be (but are not always) contemporaneous with their primary verbs … and many follow those verbs, which would fit well with Porter’s view” (p. 248).\footnote{In the ellipsis, he states “regardless of order,” but his statistics indicate (p. 247) that approximately two-thirds of present-tense participles in Mark and Luke follow their primary verb.\footnote{Similarly, concerning the aorist-tense participle, Picirilli states that “Mark and Luke nearly always place aorist circumstantial participles before their primary verbs [according to Picirilli, approximately 95% of the time for each], whether they are antecedent to (more often) or contemporaneous with …}} You must have a subscription and be logged in to read the entire article. 

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