

Bible Overview – The Four Gospels

There are three synoptic gospels (similar): Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They are similar in that they cover the life, ministry, teachings, miracles, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Each synoptic gospel has unique features and materials (miracles, parables, discourses, names, and places) that enrich our entire understanding of the man Jesus Christ.

John's Gospel is different from the other three yet does not depart from the ministry and message of Jesus contained in the synoptic gospels. John presents Jesus as the pre-existent one, the eternal Son of God, the word made flesh, and the "great I AM" of the burning bush from Exodus. There are no parables, only seven miracles, seven "I AM" statements and a ministry focus on Jerusalem and the Jewish leaders. The discourses of John (Chapters 13-17) are one of the greatest passages of scripture ever penned.

The Design of the Gospels

| | Matthew | Mark | Luke | John |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Jesus Presented As: | Messiah | Servant | Son of Man | Eternal Son of God |
| Genealogy | Abraham | No | Adam | Son of God |
| What Jesus | Said | Did | Felt | Was |
| To the | Jews | Romans | Greeks | Church |
| 1 st Miracle | Leper | Demon | Demonexpelled | Water to wine. |
| End with | Resurrection | Ascension | Spirit to Come | He will return. |
| Face | Lion | Ox | Man | Eagle |
| Style | Groupings | Snapshots | Narrative | Mystical |

Gospel of Matthew – Jesus as the Lion of Judah

Matthew has 93 quotations from the Old Testament declaring that "what was spoken by the Lord through the prophets must be fulfilled" (Note Matthew 8:17-18).

Also, Matthew repeatedly portrays Jesus as the Son of David with special emphasis on the Kingdom of God being manifest in and through the message and ministry of Jesus.

Outline of Matthew

- Chapters 1-4 Genealogy, Baptism, Temptation
- Chapters 5- 7 Sermon on the Mount
- Chapters 8-10 Ten Miracles

- Chapters 11-18 Ten Rejections
- Chapters 19-25 Presented as King and Messiah of Israel
 - Chapter 24 – Olivet Discourse regarding the End of Days
 - Chapter 25 – Great White Throne of Judgment
- Chapters 26-27 Crucifixion
- Chapter 28 Resurrection
 - The Great Commission

Seven Kingdom Parables

- Sower and the four soils
- The Wheat and the Tares
- The Mustard Seed
- Woman and the Leaven
- The Treasure in the Field
- The Pearl of Great Price
- The Dragnet

Three Major Discourses:

- The Sermon on the Mount – Chapters 5-7; the Constitution of the Kingdom
- The Olivet Discourse – Chapters 24-25
- The Kingdom Parables – Chapter 13

Nuggets

- The Beatitudes
- Turn the Other Cheek and Love Your Enemies
- Adultery and Murder redefined.
- The Lord's Prayer
- The Golden Rule
- The Narrow Gate
- The Two Foundations
- Ask, Seek, Knock
- Peter Walks on Water
- The Confession of Peter (You are the Christ)
- Peter's Denial of Jesus (three times)
- The Great Commission

The Gospel of Mark

- Nephew of Barnabas
- First referenced in Acts 12 going on the first missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas.
- No genealogy
- No birth narrative

- Eyewitness accounts (names, times, locations, etc.)
- The word “immediately” has been used 41 times.
- Longer than Matthew without the discourses.
- Considered Peter’s scribe and basically the gospel of “Peter.”
- Primary focus on Gentiles to explain the faith.
- Jesus is presented as the “Son of God” and the “Suffering Servant.”
- Concise, factual, matter of fact, describing what Jesus DID.
- Most of the Mark is contained in Matthew and Luke.
- Chapter 13 is apocalyptic (End Times)
- The end of Chapter 16 is unique: vs 15-20

The Gospel of Luke

- He was a Gentile.
- Mentioned only three times in the NT.”
- Was not an eyewitness.
- Was called the “beloved physician.
- Used more medical terms in his Gospel than Hippocrates (father of medicine).
- Has the highest form of literary Greek in the NT.
- Extremely accurate historian.
- Researchers have yet to find one historical inaccuracy in Luke writings (including Acts).
- His genealogy starts with ADAM – Jesus as the Son of Man.
- His purpose was to “seek and save the lost” – Jesus as savior for humanity (Not only Jews).
- Luke expresses Jesus’ compassion more so than the other.
- Luke expresses Jesus’ humanity.
- Luke’s gospel is clearly “universal” – for all of us. (Jew/Gentile; male/female; slave/free).
- He travelled with Paul on 2nd Missionary Journey.
- Was shipwrecked with Paul.
- Was with Paul in Rome.
- Luke also wrote the Book of Acts – the only Historical book of the NT.

Unique to Luke

- 20 miracles (6 unique to Luke gospel, not in the others).
- 23 Parables (18 unique to Luke).
 - Most famous – The Good Samaritan (Luke 10); The Prodigal Son (Luke 15)
- Detailed narratives of the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus.
 - Elizabeth and Zechariah
 - Gabriel’s visit with Mary – Five Declarations regarding Jesus.
 - He will be great.
 - He will be called the Son of the Most High God.
 - He will be given the throne of His father David.
 - He will reign over the House of Jacob forever.

- His Kingdom will never end.
 - The Magnificat
 - Born in Bethlehem/manger.
 - Simeon – Jesus presented in the temple.
- Only commentary on Jesus as a young person (age 12).
- The Triumphal Entry (Luke 19)
- Apocalyptic Message (Luke 21)
- The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24)
- The Promise of the Father (Luke 24)

The Gospel of John

- The beloved disciple (only two people are called beloved in scripture, Daniel is the other).
- John focus on Jesus' ministry in Judah (Jerusalem)
- The synoptics focus on His ministry in Galilee.
- John has three Passovers (three-year ministry).
- The synoptics only record the one prior to His crucifixion.
- John begins with Jesus as the LOGOS, the eternal Son of God who became flesh.
- His prologue is unique in all of scripture (John 1:1-14).
- John states his purpose for writing this gospel in John 20:30-31.
 - *Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*
- There are no parables in John.
- There are only 8 miracles – called signs.
- The seven “I AM” statements:
 - I AM the bread of life (John 6)
 - I AM the light of the world (John 8)
 - I AM the Door of the Sheep (John 10)
 - I AM the Good Shepherd (John 10)
 - I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11)
 - I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14)
 - I AM the True Vine (John 15).

Unique to John

- Turning Water into Wine – John 2
- You Must be Born Again – John 3
- John 3:16 – one of the most famous verses in the bible.
- The Woman at the Well – John 4
- The Woman Caught in Adultery – John 8
- Raising Lazarus from the Dead – John 11
- The Discourses; Chapters 13-17
 - Chapter 13 – foot washing

- Chapter 14
 - My Father's house.
 - Ministry after I am gone.
 - The Role of the Holy Spirit.
 - God's Peace.
- Chapter 15
 - Vine and Branches.
 - Jesus calls us His friends.
 - Hated by the world.
 - Persecuted by the world.
- Chapter 16
 - The promise of the Holy Spirit
 - The work of the Holy Spirit
 - Convict the world of sin, righteous, judgment.
 - Lead us and guide us to all truth.
 - Reveal what is to come.
- Chapter 17- the High Priestly Prayer of Jesus on our Behalf.
- Chapter 20 – The Upper Room – the Holy Spirit, Doubting Thomas.
- Chapter 21 – Jesus on the shore of Galilee, restoration of Peter.

Conclusion: John 21: 24-24

This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

²⁵ *Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.*