

# THE FOUR GOSPELS

## **The book of Matthew (Levi)**

Author: Matthew

Formerly a tax collector

One of the 12 disciples

Written around 60-65 AD

Purpose: To prove that Jesus is the Messiah “anointed one”, the eternal King

Written specifically to Jews, emphasizes the fulfillment of prophecy

Uses a lot of OT references.

Begins with the genealogy of Jesus

## **The book of Mark**

Author: John Mark, cousin of Barnabas

Not one of the 12 disciples, but traveled with Paul on his missionary journeys

Written around 55-65 AD

Purpose: To present the person, work and teachings of Jesus

Written to the christians in Rome

The book of Mark may have been written before the other three because the others quote heavily from Mark. Mark records more miracles than the other gospel books.

Begins with the preaching of John the Baptizer

With the common language and excellent transportation and communication systems, ideas in Rome could rapidly spread to the far reaches of the empire

## **The book of Luke**

Author: Luke, a doctor, a Greek, gentile christian, only known gentile author in the NT

Not one of the 12, but a close companion of Paul

Written around 60 AD

Purpose: To present an accurate account of the life of Christ and present Christ as the perfect human and Savior

Written to Theophilus and to gentiles in general

More parables than the other gospels

## **The book of John**

Author: John the apostle, a son of Zebedee, brother of James, called the “Sons of Thunder”

One of the 12

Written around 85-90 AD, after the destruction of Jerusalem and before his exile to the isle of Patmos

Purpose: To prove conclusively that Jesus is the Son of God and that all who

believe in Him will have eternal life  
Written to new christians and those seeking  
Begins with the beginning “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

## THE FOUR GOSPELS

The four gospels are four perspectives on Jesus the Christ. Each one stands alone to send a complete message. But when they are blended together... harmonized more is revealed. Assembled into a chronological account we find 250 events detailed in the four books. Some are found in only one of the books others are found in several and a few are found in all four books.

Why is it god to study the harmony of the gospels and not rely on just each as a stand-alone text? There are many that seek to discredit the Bible. They seek to find mistakes, contradictions or lies in the text. I have copies of some of the information out on the internet. I found 70 sites with the phrase Bible contradictions. A few were refuting and explaining perceived contradictions. Most were denouncing the Bible because of a list of contradictions.

## WHY FOUR GOSPELS INSTEAD OF ONE?

We're going to start class by playing a **MEMORY GAME**...

PUT TRAY WITH **30 OBJECTS** IN MIDDLE OF TABLE; HAVE CLASS LOOK AT TRAY FOR **1 MINUTE**.

REMOVE TRAY & GIVE THEM PAPER TO **WRITE DOWN WHAT THEY REMEMBER**.  
**READ LIST OF OBJECTS**; HAVE THEM CHECK OFF THE ONES THEY WROTE DOWN.

Did everyone see the same thing...the yellow tray with 30 objects? (YES)

Did everyone *write down* the same thing? (NO)

It's the same with the 4 gospel accounts. The writers saw or were told the same things, but some of the things they wrote down were different. Why? Because each writer had a different perspective...a different way of looking at things because different things were important to them.

Here's another way to think of it...

Say you guys were standing outside before class and a Ford Mustang pulled up. The door opens and a girl you've never seen gets out. She's wearing really pretty clothes and she's carrying a pair of ice skates and a clarinet. Ian and Jason would probably notice the car. Allie might notice her clothes. Miranda—the skates, and Rachel—the clarinet. You all would have seen the same thing, but different things are important to you, so you would have noticed different things.

Now, say you all come into class and I ask, "Did you guys see anyone new outside?" Ian and Jason would say, "*I saw someone in a Mustang.*" Allie might say, "*I saw a new girl who is so stylish!*" Miranda would answer, "*I just saw this cool girl with ice skates!*" While Rachel would say, "*The new girl you're looking for plays a clarinet.*"

You've all given me different answers, but you are all correct.

It's the same with the 4 gospel accounts. There are many people who seek to show the Bible to be false. They look for mistakes, contradictions or lies in the text. They denounce the Bible because of *contradictions* in the 4 gospels. But they're not contradictions...they're just different perspectives written by different people. Are these so-called contradictions proof the Bible is false? (NO)

## HAND OUT THE OUTLINES

What does the word **GOSPEL** mean?

(GOOD NEWS OF JESUS' LIFE, MINISTRY, DEATH & RESURRECTION)

Which books of the Bible are considered *the gospels*?

(MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE & JOHN)

Four different men wrote to different groups of people, so they show different perspectives. If you put details in the four books into a chronological account, you find **250 events** (and you just had to remember 30 things from the tray!). Some events are found in only one of the books; others are found in several; and a few are found in all four books.

Have you ever heard the phrase **HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS**? What is harmony? (PLEASING COMBINATION OF ELEMENTS TO MAKE A WHOLE)

When you take all that's taught about Jesus from these 4 different books and put them together, you have a more complete picture. Each one stands alone to send a complete message. But when they are blended together... harmonized... more is revealed.

**READ LK. 1:1-4**

**GO TO THE FOUR GOSPELS OUTLINE**

## THE FOUR GOSPELS

Define **GOSPEL** - **GOOD NEWS OF JESUS' LIFE, MINISTRY, DEATH & RESURRECTION**

GOSPEL BOOK:	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
<b>ABOUT THE AUTHOR:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Levi"</li> <li>- Jewish</li> <li>- an <b>apostle</b></li> <li>- tax collector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "John Mark"</li> <li>- Jewish</li> <li>- NOT 1 of 12 apostles</li> <li>- cousin of Barnabas</li> <li>- <b>traveled w/ Paul</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "beloved physician"</li> <li>- Gentile (Greek) Christian</li> <li>- NOT 1 of 12 apostles</li> <li>- <b>companion of Paul's</b></li> <li>- doctor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "disciple Jesus loved"</li> <li>- "Sons of Thunder"</li> <li>- Jewish</li> <li>- an <b>apostle</b></li> <li>- fisherman</li> <li>- son of Zebedee; brother of James</li> </ul>
<b>WRITTEN:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- specifically to <b>JEWS</b></li> <li>- probably <b>58-68 A.D.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to <b>GENTILE CHRISTIANS in Rome</b> (explains Jewish customs in detail for those not familiar w/ them)</li> <li>- between <b>55-65 A.D.</b> (<b>FIRST</b> of the 4 gospels)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- specifically to <b>THEOPHILUS</b></li> <li>- in general to <b>GENTILES (Greeks)</b> (relates events to world history, i.e., Caesar's census - audience interested in political situation)</li> <li>- about <b>60 A.D.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to <b>NEW CHRISTIANS</b> (Jews &amp; Gentiles)</li> <li>- probably <b>80-90 A.D.</b> (after destruction of Jerusalem; <b>LAST</b> of the 4 gospels)</li> </ul>
<b>NOTEWORTHY:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- begins w/ <b>genealogy</b> (shows that Jesus was descendant of Abraham &amp; of David – important to Jews)</li> <li>- lot of Old Testament references</li> <li>- emphasized fulfillment of <b>prophecy</b></li> <li>- Jesus: King, Messiah</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- begins with preaching of John the Baptist (not mention Jesus' birth; Roman Xians more interested in messenger announcing Jesus - like important official)</li> <li>- <b>more miracles</b> than the other four</li> <li>- fast-paced <b>ACTION!</b> (uses "immediately" a lot)</li> <li>- over 1/3 of book about last week of Jesus' life</li> <li>- shortest gospel</li> <li>- Jesus: Servant of God</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- begins with birth of John the Baptist</li> <li>- <b>more parables</b> than the other four</li> <li>- longest gospel (and longest book in N.T.)</li> <li>- notes Jesus' high regard for women (Mary, Elizabeth, Anna, Joanna, widow of Nain)</li> <li>- Jesus: Son of Man</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- begins with: "In the beginning was the Word..." (not mention Jesus' birth - show Jesus is eternal)</li> <li>- <b>VERY DIFFERENT THAN OTHER 3</b></li> <li>- <b>NO parables</b></li> <li>- Jesus: Son of God</li> </ul>

<p><b>ONLY FOUND IN THIS GOSPEL:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- visit of wise men</li> <li>- escape to Egypt</li> <li>- death of Judas</li> <li>- dream of Pilate's wife</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- story of growing seed</li> <li>- Jesus heals blind man at Bethsaida</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- events from Jesus' childhood</li> <li>- John in prison</li> <li>- miraculous catch of fish</li> <li>- Zacchaeus</li> <li>- trial before Herod</li> <li>- some of Jesus' last words from cross</li> </ul>	<p><b>- MANY DIFFERENCES</b> (VERY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER 3)</p>
<p><b>COMPARE PASSAGES:</b></p>	<p><b>MT. 26:36-46</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Gethsemane"</li> <li>- "took with Him Peter &amp; the 2 sons of Zebedee"</li> <li>- "fell on His face"</li> <li>- found disciples sleeping 3 times</li> </ul>	<p><b>MK. 14:32-42</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Gethsemane"</li> <li>- "took Peter, James, and John"</li> <li>- "fell on the ground"</li> <li>- found disciples sleeping 3 times</li> <li>- addresses God as "Abba"</li> </ul>	<p><b>LK. 22:39-46</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Mount of Olives"</li> <li>- "His disciples (not mentioned by name) also followed Him"</li> <li>- "knelt down"</li> <li>- found disciples sleeping 1 time</li> <li>- angel strengthened Him</li> <li>- sweat like drops of blood fell to ground</li> </ul>	<p><b>JN. 18:1</b></p> <p>"When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with <i>His disciples</i> over the Brook Kidron, where there was <i>a garden</i>, which He and His disciples entered."</p>

# THE FOUR GOSPELS

Define **GOSPEL** -

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<b>NOTEWORTHY:</b>				
<b>ONLY FOUND IN THIS GOSPEL:</b>				
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