Gospels Introduction

(RVS Notes)

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Gospels

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Gospels Introduction

I. Social and Political Backgrounds

A period of silence of almost five hundred years divides the last book of the Old Testament from the first writings of the New Testament. The Jews were dominated by foreigners during this period, excluding the times of the Maccabees and their Hasmonean successors. A thumbnail sketch of these years is as follows:

A. Persian period (539-331 BC)—Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon and inaugurated a policy of allowing conquered peoples formerly sent into exile to return to their native lands.

1. Nehemiah and Ezra record Jewish returns to the Palestine—

- 537 under Zerubbabel;
- 458 under Ezra;
- 445 under Nehemiah

2. The Jews struggled to maintain their religious, national, and cultural identity in the years of Persian ascendancy. A mindset and culture described as "Second Temple Judaism" arose. This culture was a driving motivator for Jewish activity—

- Temple being rebuilt (Haggai; Zechariah)
- Walls of Jerusalem being rebuilt (Nehemiah);
- Insistence on rededication to Yahweh (Ezra; Malachi).

B. Grecian period (331-160s BC)—Alexander the Great conquered Persia and much more in a series of military campaigns from 334-323 B.C. Upon his early death, his empire was divided between four of his senior generals. Two of these originated dynasties that were particularly important to Jewish history:

1. Ptolemies (ruling from Egypt) dominated Palestine from 323 to 198 B.C. The most significant event in this period pertaining to the Jewish people was the translation of the Old Testament into Greek in 270 B.C. (called the Septuagint for the seventy scholars Ptolemy Philadelphus gathered in Alexandria to do the translation). When the gospel writers quote the Old Testament, they most frequently use the Septuagint.

2. Seleucids (ruling from Syria) dominated Palestine from 198 to 160s BC. They were avid promoters of the Greek culture and of the Hellenization of subdued peoples. The Jewish resistance to this culminated in a revolt led by the Maccabees against the Seleucid King Antiochus IV (Epiphanes).

C. Maccabean/Hasmonean period (160s-63 BC)—The Maccabees led a revolt against Seleucid rule. It was a long, drawn-out guerrilla war. Led by Mattathias (165 B.C.) and successively followed by his sons, Judas (164-161 B.C.), Jonathan (161-142 B.C.), and Simeon (142-134 B.C.), the revolt succeeded in throwing off Greek rule. The heirs of the Maccabees, the Hasmoneans, ruled as Jewish kings from the death of Simeon (143 B.C.) until the occupation of Palestine by the Roman general Pompey in 63 B.C. Hasmonean rule was ineffective, plagued by corruption, intrigue, and political dissension.

D. Roman period (63B.C.–70 A.D.)—The political ascendancy of Rome frames the entire New

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Testament (see emperor chart below). Their (and their Byzantine successors) rule of Palestine lasts until the 7th century of our era and ends with the Islamic conquest. For purposes of this brief overview, we will take the Roman political ascendancy up to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. In the first century, the Romans used a patchwork quilt of direct rule through their own procurators (see chart below) and indirect rule through client kings. From 63-37 B.C., they favored the successors of the Hasmonean rulers they replaced. After 37 B.C., their client kings came from the Herodian family (see chart below). The Herodians will figure into the history of the New Testament era in a significant way.

Roman Emperors (First Century):

Years of Reign	***Emperor***	***NT & Related Events***
27 BC – 14 AD	Augustus	Jesus born; ordered census taken (Lk 2:1)
14-37	Tiberius	Jesus' public ministry
37-41	Caligula	
41-54	Claudius	Expelled the Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2)
54-68	Nero	Great fire of Rome (64); official persecution of Christians at Rome; emperor Paul appeals to (Acts 25:10-12); Peter and Paul martyred
68-69	Year of the Four Emperors	Year of turmoil and civil war causing and following Nero's suicide
69-79	Vespasian	General in command of crushing the Jewish revolt (66-70); victor of the civil war (68-69)
79-81	Titus	Destroyer of Jerusalem
81-96	Domitian	First general persecution of Christians

Judean Procurators (Up to Fall of Jerusalem)

Years	***Procurator***	***NT & Related Events***
6-9	Coponius	
9-12	Ambivius	
12-15	Annius Rufus	
15-26	Valerius Gratus	

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26-36	Pontius Pilate	Crucifixion of Jesus (Mt 27; Mk 15; Lk 23; Jn 18-19)
36-37	Marcellus	
37-41	Marullus	
41-44	No procurator – Herod Agrippa I	Murderer of James, the brother of John (Acts 12:2); judged by God (Acts 12:19b-23)
44-46	Cuspius Fadus	
46-48	Tiberius Julius Alexander	
48-52	Ventidius Cumanus	
52-59	Antonius Felix	Paul was tried before him (Acts 24)
59-61	Porcius Festus	Paul was tried before him and appealed to Caesar (Nero) (Acts 24:27-26:32)
61-65	Albinus	
65-70	Gessius Florus	Procurator when Jews revolted; Jerusalem destroyed (70)

Herodian Dynasty:

First Generation	Herod the Great (37-4 BC) – King over all Palestine when Jesus was born (Mt 2:1-19; Lk 1:5)		
Second Generation	Herod Antipas (4 BC-39 AD) --Tetrarch of Galilee & Perea – See Mk 6:14-29; Lk 3:1; 13:31-35; 23:7-12; Beheaded John the Baptist	Archelaus (4 BC-6 AD) Ethnarch of Judea – See Mk 2:22	Herod Philip (4 BC-34 AD) Tetrarch of Iturea – See Lk 3:1
Third Generation	Herod Agrippa I (37-44) – King over all Palestine; killed James the brother of		

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	John (Acts 12:1-24)
Fourth Generation	Herod Agrippa II (48-70) – Tetrarch of Chalcis; Paul argued his case before him in Acts 25:13-26:32

II. Social Backgrounds of Second Temple Judaism

Second Temple Judaism is a term used to describe the polyglot Jewish religious and cultural experience from the initial rebuilding of the temple (516 B.C.) after the people's return from exile until the destruction of the rebuilt Herodian temple in 70 A.D. This corresponds to the inter-testamentary period between the completing of the Old Testament books and the beginning of the New Testament writing. This is the social, religious, and cultural setting in which Jesus lived and ministered.

A. Unifying factors—There were unifying factors in this rather diverse experience:

1. Monotheism/Jewish historical uniqueness—The exile cured the Jews of their religious syncretism and their fascination with idolatry. To be sure, there would be times of correction ahead, but the situation was never as dire as during the Divided Kingdom era (971 to 722 B.C.) and following (Judah from 721 to 586 B.C.). They were dedicated to the practice of the Law and had a high concept of their historical uniqueness as the covenant people of Yahweh.

2. Land/Kingdom—Their concern for their land flowed from their awareness of themselves as God's covenant people and from the reality of their dispersion. The Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12, 15, 17) had promised a distinctive reality—

- People—a physical posterity for Abraham.
- Place—a land in which to dwell.
- Presence of Yahweh with His people.
- Posterity of spirit—the Jews would be a blessing to the world.

The Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7) spoke of a ruler for the people in their land. The prophets in exile spoke of a new Davidic expectation, a perfect ruler would inaugurate a perfect rule over the people of the Covenant in a restored land of plenty. This notion of Messiah fueled Jewish expectations in the centuries between the Old and New Testaments and converged on the appearance of David's greater son. It is no accident that Matthew (addressed to a Jewish audience) begins his gospel with a genealogy that links Jesus to both Abraham and David.

3. Synagogue—While many Jews returned from exile to the land, the majority did not. The synagogue became the focal point of the Jewish experience outside the land. This differed from that of the temple in that its emphasis was on instruction in the Law and not on the temple's sacrificial practices. The teaching of various rabbis grew in importance over the course of Second Temple Judaism. Indeed, the synagogue experience will become the typical Jewish experience around the world after the fall of Jerusalem in 70.

4. Practice of the Law/Temple worship—This was central. The situation was far from perfect, as witnessed by Christ's indictment of current practice in cleansing the temple. But gone was the neglect of temple worship in favor of Baal worship or a hundred other idolatrous pretenders that characterized

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the late Kingdom era before the exile.

***B. Diversity of religious experience*—**A brief summary of the major Jewish groups and sects mentioned in the New Testament illustrates this reality:

***1. Essenes*—**An ascetic reform group active from the mid-2nd century B.C. until the fall of Jerusalem in 70. They initially formed in reaction to the low repute of the priesthood of the Sadducees. They lived in separate communities scattered throughout Judea, considered themselves the recipients of the prophetic promises to Israel, and rejected the corrupt temple worship of the day. They strictly observed the Sabbath, refrained from marriage, held all their property in common, and lived by a demanding routine consisting of ceremonial washings, daily prayer and meditation, and the systematic study of Torah. The Essenes were driven by End Times expectations. However, they expressed these expectations in pacifistic discipline, completely unlike the martial unrest fostered by the Sicarii (see below).

***2. Herodians*—**The Herodians were the supporters of Herod and his successors (see chart above). They accepted foreign rule and were very amenable to whatever group had the upper hand. They were wealthy, thoroughly secular, totally pragmatic, unprincipled, and political influential. In short, they were the political greasers of their day.

3. High Priests (Up to Fall of Jerusalem):

Years	***High Priest***
3 BC-6AD	Jeshua
6	Joazer
6-15	Annas
15-16	Ishmeal
16-17	Eleazar, son of Annas
17-18	Simon
18-36	Caiaphas, son-in-law of Annas
36-37	Jonathan, son of Annas
37-41	Theophilus, son of Annas
41-42	Simon Kantheras
42-43	Matthias, son of Annas

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43-44	Elioenai
44-47	Joseph
47-58	Ananias
58-60	Ishmael
60-62	Joseph Kabi
62-63	Ananus
62-63	Jesus
63-65	Jeshua
65-67	Matthias, son of Theophilus
67-70	Phinehas

4. ***Pharisees—***"Pharisee" is probably derived from the Hebrew stem that means "to be separated". They came from a reformed-minded party called the Hassidim that arose during the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C. The Pharisees surfaced as a distinct religious and political group about the time of the Maccabean revolt against Seleucid rule in the 160s B.C. They desired to separate themselves from pagan customs and influences and to proclaim and practice the Law of God.

A movement initially arising from among the common people, the Pharisees vigorously strove to remove the Jewish religion from the exclusive control of the priests. They were "law guys," conservative and orthodox Jews, much more theologically conservative than the priestly class. They strictly adhered to Torah, priding themselves on going beyond the mere letter of the Law. Many regulations were derived from the Torah to facilitate its practical daily application.

As to the Roman occupation, the Pharisees attempted to take a middle-of-the-road approach, rejecting the comfortable collaborationism of the Sadducees and Herodians as well as the confrontational tactics of the Zealots. They saw themselves as supporting the distinctive claims of the Jewish Law against the inroads of Roman authoritarianism without becoming overt rebels.

5. ***Sadducees—***"Sadducee" is a name derived from Zadok, the Jewish high priest in the time of David and Solomon, whose family came to control temple affairs. The Sadducees, at least initially, were sympathizers of the Zadokites. They emerged as a distinctive group around 200 B.C., composed of priests and Jewish aristocratic families. They dominated Jewish religious and political life under the Hasmoneans (143-63 B.C.) until the Romans under Pompey took over in 63 B.C. Even under the Romans, they were very influential and exercised a good deal of religious and political authority in and through the Sanhedrin.

The Sadducees were the religious liberals of their day. They denied the resurrection of the body, the afterlife, the existence of angels and other supernatural beings, and divine providence. They favored Greek culture and were consistently Roman supporters, eagerly uncovering and reporting any sign of

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insurrection against Rome. They were devoted to the ceremonial Law, the practice of which they completely controlled and from which they gained their influence and a good deal of their wealth. In short, they were the religious honchos of their time, well-versed in protecting the status quo that granted them their privileges and positions. Caiaphas' self-serving comment in John 11:49-50 succinctly summarized their religious and political attitudes and motives.

6. ***Samaritans*****—**The Samaritans were the descendants of the Jews who remained in the land after the fall of the northern kingdom and intermarried with local Canaanites and other foreigners were transplanted in the territory of the former northern kingdom. These were the people whose territory Jesus "had to go through" in John 4 which led to his famous discussion with the Samaritan woman at the well.

To understand Jewish-Samaritan animosity, a page of history is worth a volume of logic. After Assyria conquered the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C., they deported many Israelites from their land and resettled Samaria with captives from other countries. The Jews that remained in the land intermarried with the foreign transplants. Over time, these foreign people combined elements of their religious practice with the worship of Yahweh and Baal and developed a mongrel religion. After Judean Jews returned from the Babylonian exile around 536 B.C. and renewed their commitment to the Law, they discovered a complete rift between themselves and the Samaritans, politically, culturally, and religiously. In the time of Nehemiah (around 450 B.C.), the Samaritans opposed the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls, attempting to keep the Jews in a weak and vulnerable position. In Maccabean times (around 160 B.C.), the Samaritans made themselves particularly odious to the Jews by accepting the Hellenization of their religion and dedicating their temple on Mount Gerizim to Zeus Xenios.

In Jesus' day, a strong rivalry and hatred existed between the Jews and their northern cousins. Thoroughbred Jews regarded the Samaritans with contempt, political, cultural, and religious mutts. The Samaritans, for their part, had their fill of Jewish arrogance and assumed superiority. Why did Jesus have to go through Samaria? The reason is because the gospel transcends ethnic boundaries. The gift of God could not be buried under Jewish, or anyone else's cultural baggage.

7. ***Sanhedrin*****—**The Romans and their client kings allowed the Jews to handle many of their own religious and domestic matteThe high priest led a court of seventy members, mostly Pharisees and Sadducees.rs. As a result, local courts and organizations existed. Outranking them all was the Jewish Supreme Court, if you will, the Sanhedrin. This body met regularly in Jerusalem. The high priest presided over seventy other members of the court, who came largely from the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The New Testament refers to the Sanhedrin by that name and by such terms as "council," "chief priests and elders and scribes," "chief priests and rulers," or simply "rulers."

8. ***Sicarii*****—**"Sicarii" comes from the Greek word meaning dagger-men. They were an extreme group of the Zealots (see below) who were political assassins. They routinely stabbed those supportive of Rome whenever their intended victims ventured into vulnerable areas of the crowded streets of Jerusalem and other Judean towns. Their murderous activity intensified throughout the course of the first century. The Sicarii seized control and direction of the Jewish revolt against Rome in 66-73 that brought about the destruction of Jerusalem in 70. They ceased to be a group in a dramatic and tragic mass suicide (women and children included) just prior to the fall of Masada to the Romans in 73.

9. ***Zealots*****—**This group's religious zeal gave them their name. The Zealots were Jewish extremists, active from 30 B.C. to 70 A.D. They were uncompromising opponents of Roman rule and would not tolerate peace under the idolatrous pagans. They refused to pay taxes and terrorized their political opponents, both the Roman rulers and their Jewish sympathizers and collaborationists. The Sicarii (see above) were the most extreme of the Zealots.

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III. Literary Backgrounds

A. ***Unique genre—***The evangelists never call their accounts of Jesus' ministry by the term "gospel." In the New Testament, the gospel means "good news" (*euangelion*) and refers to the message about Jesus. Only towards the end of the first century and into the second century, was the term used to refer to the accounts of the four evangelists.

The Gospels are a unique literary genre. They are expanded biographical sermons, four different "snapshots" that tell the story of Jesus' life and teaching while chock full of Christian teaching and preaching. They concentrate on the years of our Lord's public ministry and focus on the uniqueness of His person and work. Their primary purpose is not merely to be informative, but to present the message of Jesus as Savior and Lord and call people to respond in faith.

B. ***Why written—***One might ask why the written gospels? The reasons are obvious upon reflection:

- Writing the message down became necessary due to the speed and extent of the growth of the church.
- There was the need to record the apostles' memory and reflection on the Lord's life and ministry before they passed from the scene.
- With Jesus' expected return delayed, Christians realized that they might be living in the present age for longer than they initially thought.
- With the spread of the Christian message came the challenge of inauthentic and distorting accounts making a written record vital.
- The need for authoritative factual data as the basis for on-going instruction.

C. ***Synoptic Gospels and John—***Matthew, Mark, and Luke have been called the synoptic gospels. "Synoptic" means "seeing together" and succinctly summarizes what the reader encounters at the very beginning of the New Testament. These three accounts of Jesus' life and teaching contain similar material and view their subject from a common perspective. Yet, they do differ in details, arrangement of material, and in their respective emphases.

The reasons for the great similarities and the significant differences have generated much discussion among New Testament scholars and Bible students through the years. This debate has focused on which gospel was written first and the sources the various writers relied on in writing. Theories have changed through the years, but the most popular current understanding is to see Mark as the first gospel written, with Matthew and Luke written at a later date, but relatively close in time. A good deal of the material in Mark is repeated in Matthew and Luke. There is also significant overlap of material in Matthew and Luke. This has caused scholars to postulate that the latter two gospels used Mark's account and also a common collection of the sayings of Jesus that circulated at the time, a mysterious source labeled "Q." "Q" comes from the German word meaning "source."

In addition, a comparison between the Synoptics and John yields interesting contrasts. See the following charts for these comparisons and contrasts:

Comparative Chart:

Gospels	***Matthew***	***Mark***	***Luke***	***John***

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Date	60s	Late 50s or early 60s	60s	Late 80s or early 90s
Place	Syrian Antioch or Palestine	Rome	Rome or Caesarea	Ephesus
Audience	Jews in Syria or Palestine	Pagan Romans	Theophilus types—Roman officials; cultured unbelievers	Second generation Christians and/or non-Christians
Focus on Christ	Messiah-King, Son of David	Servant of Yahweh	Son of Man; compassionate, ideal man	Son of God

Contrasts Between Synoptics and John:

Synoptics	**John**
Chiefly covers Galilean ministry	More coverage to Judean ministry
Kingdom emphasis	More emphasis on the person of Christ
Jesus as Son of David; Son of Man	Jesus as Son of God
Earthly story	Heavenly meaning
Gospels for those new in faith; first generation	Gospel of maturing church; subsequent generation
Jesus' sayings short, pithy (Matthew's five discourses an exception)	More long discourses of Jesus
Little commentary by evangelists	Much commentary by John
One Passover mentioned	Three, perhaps four, Passovers mentioned

***D. Critical studies*—**Until the 18th century, the Gospels and the entire New Testament were taken on their face as an accurate historical account of the life and teaching of Jesus and the progress of the early church. These books were believed to be written by the apostles and their associates in different locations during the first century. These notes reflect that viewpoint.

However, with the advent of the Enlightenment, a more skeptical spirit arose to the study of the New Testament and the Gospels in particular. The number and nature of the gospels raised literary and historical questions. Critical scholars discount the historical reliability of the gospel accounts. They do

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not tell us much at all about Jesus, but rather the teaching of the church about him (the *kerygma*, the Greek word for preaching). These scholars readily dispute accounts of the miraculous as well as any indication of predictive prophecy. They date the writing of the gospels late, well beyond the lifetimes of the apostles or their associates identified as the authors in traditional understanding.

The synoptic problem spawned a number of critical methodologies that attempt to get behind the existent text to its sources. These include form criticism, which focuses on the oral tradition that the writers allegedly relied on, source criticism, which speculates how different literary units were put together to make up the gospels, and redaction criticism, which tries to identify the writer's sources in order to see the distinctive literary and theological perspective he applies in shaping his sources. All these methodologies are extremely subjective.

The discounting of the historical reliability of the gospel accounts has led critical scholars to various quests for the historical Jesus. The result of these endeavors is extensive volumes of speculation and little agreement or insight into the Lord's life and teaching.

I mention this because it is common to view programs or attend lectures where this perspective is presented as the only one anyone with a brain could adopt. I politely dissent. However, the focus of our survey is the text of the gospels themselves. With this very brief overview, I will leave critical scholarship to its pursuits.

IV. Charts of Jesus' Miracles, Parables, and Post-Resurrection Appearances

A. Miracles of Jesus

Miracle	***Matthew***	***Mark***	***Luke***	***John***
Man with leprosy	8:2-4	1:40-42	5:12-13	
Roman centurion's servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
Peter's mother-in-law	8:14-15	1:30-31	4:38-39	
Two men from Gadara	8:28-34	5:1-15	8:27-35	
Paralyzed man	9:2-7	2:3-12	5:18-25	
Woman with bleeding	9:20-22	5:25-29	8:43-48	
Two blind men	9:27-31			
Mute, demon-possessed man	9:32-33			
Man with shriveled hand	12:10-13	3:1-5	6:6-10	
Blind, mute, demon-possessed man	12:22		11:14	
Canaanite woman's daughter	15:21-28	7:24-30		

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Boy with demon	17:14-18	9:17-29	9:38-43	
Two blind men (including Bartimaeus)	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
Deaf mute		7:31-37		
Possessed man in synagogue		1:23-26	4:33-35	
Blind man at Bethsaida		8:22-26		
Crippled woman			13:11-13	
Man with dropsy			14:1-4	
Ten men with leprosy			17:11-19	
High priest's servant			22:50-51	
Official's son at Capernaum				4:46-54
Sick man at pool of Bethesda				5:1-9
Man born blind				9:1-7
Calming with storm	8:23-27	4:37-41	8:22-25	
Walking on water	14:25	6:48-51		6:19-21
Feeding of 5,000	14:15-21	6:35-44	9:12-17	6:5-13
Feeding of 4,000	15:32-38	8:1-9		
Coin in a fish	17:24-27			
Fig tree withered	21:18-21	11:12-14, 20-25		
Large catch of fish			5:4-11	
Water turned into wine				2:1-11
Another large catch of fish				21:1-11
Raising Jairus' daughter	9:18-19, 23-25	5:22-24,38-42	8:41-42, 49-56	
Raising widow's son at Nain			7:11-15	
Raising Lazarus				11:1-44

B. Parables of Jesus

Parable	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Lamp under a bowl	5:14-15	4:21-22	
Wise & foolish	7:24-27		

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builders			
New cloth on an old garment	9:16	2:21	
New wine in old wineskins	9:17	2:22	
Sower and the soils	13:3-8, 18-23	4:3-8. 14-20	
Weeds	13:24-30, 36-43		
Mustard seed	13:31-32	4:30-32	
Yeast	13:33		
Hidden treasure	13:44		
Valuable pearl	13:45-46		
Net	13:47-50		
Owner of a house	13:52		
Lost sheep	18:12-14		
Unmerciful servant	18:23-34		
Workers in the vineyard	20:1-16		
Two sons	21:28-32		
Tenants	21:33-44	12:1-11	20:9-18
Wedding banquet	22:2-14		
Fig tree	22:32-35	13:28-29	21:29-31
Faithful and wise servant	24:45-51		12:42-48
Ten virgins	25:1-13		
Talents (minas)	25:14-30		19:12-27
Sheep and goats	25:31-46		
Growing seed		4:26-29	
Watchful servants		13:35-37	12:35-40
Moneylender			7:41-43
Good Samaritan			10:30-37
Friend in need			11:5-8
Rich fool			12:16-21
Unfruitful fig tree			13:6-9
Lowest seat at the			14:7-14

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feast			
Great banquet			14:16-24
Cost of discipleship			14:28-33
Lost coinC.			15:8-10
Prodigal son			15:11-32
Shrewd manager			16:1-8
Rich man and Lazarus			16:19-31
Master and servant			17:7-10
Persistent widow			18:2-8
Pharisee & tax collector			18:10-14

C. Post-Resurrection Appearances of Jesus

Appearance	**Time**	**Matt.**	**Mark**	**Luke**	**John**	**Acts**	**1 Cor.**
At the empty tomb outside Jerusalem	Easter morning	28:1-10	16:1-8	24:1-12	20:1-9		
To Mary Magdalene	Easter morning		16:9-11		20:11-18		
Emmaus Rd.	Easter midday			24:13-32			
Peter in Jerusalem	Easter			24:34			15:5
To 10 in Upper Room	Easter evening		16:14	24:36-43	20:19-25		
To 11 in Upper Room	One week after Easter				20:26-31		15:5
Fishing on the Sea of Galilee	One day at daybreak				21:1-23		
On Galilee mount	Unspecified	28:16-20	16:15-18				
To 500	Unspecified						15:6
To James	Unspecified						15:7
At Ascension at Mt. of Olives	40 days after Easter			24:44-49		1:3-8	

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Matthew—Presenting the King

***Introduction*—**Matthew stresses Jesus' fulfillment of the Law and of Messianic prophecy. Matthew has more Old Testament quotes and allusions than any other New Testament source (about 130 instances). That he was writing for a Jewish audience is clear by the emphasis on the Law and prophecy and by the many Jewish features, including typical Jewish designation for God ("Father in heaven"), frequent references to Jesus as the son of David (and thus the Messiah), and several direct references indicating that the Jews were the prime recipients of the gospel (10:5-6; 15:24). Matthew appeals to Jews by linking Jesus to Abraham and David in Jesus' genealogy. However, he also mentions four Gentile women in Jesus' ancestry and specifically includes Gentiles in the Great Commission in Matthew 28. Matthew is the only evangelist to explicitly mention the church (16:18; 18:17).

There is an on-going debate of what language in which Matthew originally wrote. We have only Greek copies of the gospel but some claim that it appears to have been translated from a Semitic (either Hebrew or Aramaic) original. The early church understood an ambiguous statement by the second century church father Papias to mean that Matthew was first written in Aramaic and composed in Palestine and later translated into Greek.

***Author and occasion*—**Attributions of authorship of the gospels is generally based on church tradition rather than on evidence in the text itself (since there is little to go on). Church tradition, dating to the second century, recognized the apostle Matthew as the author of the gospel bearing his name. The book was known early and accepted quickly. It was probably written around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 from somewhere in Palestine or in Syrian Antioch. With the rise of critical scholarship, Matthew's authorship has been questioned for a variety of reasons:

- Matthew nowhere claims to be the author (but none of the gospels identify their author);
- The material reflects a later period of church history (a very subjective claim);
- It utilizes a gospel written by one who was not an apostle (i.e. Mark) and this would have been highly unlikely;
- It doesn't have the "feel" of an eyewitness account;
- Some critics claim that Matthew is Q or Quelle, a German word meaning a source of content that critics postulate for the evangelists, and that the apostle's name was mistakenly attached to the account.

Matthew occupied the unpopular post of tax collector in Capernaum. As a publican he was thoroughly disliked by his fellow Jews. When the Lord Jesus called him to follow Him (see 9:9-13; Mk. 2:14; Luke 5:27-28), Matthew's immediate response probably meant that he had been stirred by the Lord's public ministry. He was chosen as one of the apostles (10:2-4; Mk. 3:13-16; Lk. 6:14-16; Acts 1:13). After being mentioned in Acts 1:13, Matthew disappears from the biblical account. His subsequent life's journey life is veiled in tradition. According to Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria, Matthew preached to the Jewish community in Judea, before taking the gospel to other countries. Ancient traditions are not in agreement as to which other countries these are, but almost all sources speak of his ministry in Ethiopia. Some traditions record that Matthew died a martyr's death when he rebuked the Ethiopian monarch for lusting after a Christian nun.

Matthew and the other Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke have been called the Synoptic Gospels. "Synoptic" means "seeing together" and succinctly summarizes what the reader encounters at the very beginning of the New Testament. These three accounts of Jesus' life and teaching contain similar material and view their subject from a common perspective. Yet, they do differ in detail, arrangement

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of material, and in their respective emphases. The reasons for the great similarities and the significant differences have generated much discussion among Bible students through the years. This debate has focused on which gospel was written first and the sources the various writers relied on in writing. Theories have changed through the years. The early church understood Matthew to be the first gospel written and Mark an abridgment of it. However, the most popular current understanding is to see Mark as the first gospel written, with Matthew and Luke written at later dates but close in time, enhancing Mark's account. A good deal of the material in Mark is repeated in Matthew and Luke. There is also significant overlap of material in Matthew and Luke. This has caused scholars to postulate that the latter two gospels used Mark's account and a common collection of the sayings of Jesus that circulated at the time, a mysterious source labeled "Q." "Q" comes from a German word meaning "source."

Guiding Concepts

***Kingdom emphasis*—**The Kingdom of God is coming into and transforming the kingdom of this world. The phrase "Kingdom of Heaven" is unique to Matthew. The Kingdom involves God reigning over the earth with a total restoration of life as God planned it. Matthew takes pains to show that Jesus really is King, fulfilling the various promises concerning Messiah. He speaks extensively of the ethics of this Kingdom (see Sermon on the Mount in Mt 5-7). The Kingdom is now and not yet (see Mt 24-25, the Olivet discourse).

Apocalyptic interest—Here Matthew develops the "not yet" aspect of the Kingdom. He has a strong apocalyptic interest. Matthew alone has the parables of the talents (25:14-30), the wise and foolish virgins (25:1-13), and the sheep and goats judgment (25:31-46).

***Treatment of the Law*—**Matthew has a nuanced understanding of Torah as evidence by the Sermon on the Mount (focusing on Torah on the heart) and in his fulfillment motifs throughout the gospel.

***Fulfillment motif*—**Virtually every circumstance surrounding the birth, life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus is seen as the fulfillment of prophecy (e.g. 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:53-54; 27:9). For example—

- Jesus fulfilled the activities of the Lord as predicted in Old Testament (1:21; 3:3-4; 11:5);
- Jesus as Messianic king (1:23; 2:6, 23; 3:17; 4:15-16; 21:5; 22:44; 26:64);
- Jesus as Servant of the Lord (3:17; 8:17; 11:512:18-21);
- Jesus as the Son of Man (24:30; 26:64; 28:18);
- Jesus as the climactic prophet (Mt 12:39-40; 13:13-15, 35; 17:5);
- Jesus as righteous sufferer (21:42; 27:34-36);
- Jesus as reversing Adam's curse (4:1ff);
- Jesus as ideal Israelite whose personal history recapitulated the national history of Israel (2:15, 18; 4:4, 7, 10).

***Teaching discourses*—**Matthew presents a comprehensive picture of Jesus' teaching ministry. In particular, he records five long and unbroken sections of the Lord's instruction. These five key discourses recall the five books of Moses. Jesus is revealed as the fulfillment of prophecy, the coming prophet who was like Moses (Dt 18:15).

- Sermon on the Mount (5:1-7:27);
- Instructions to the disciples (10:5-42);
- Parables of the Kingdom (13:1-52);
- Terms of discipleship (18:1-35);

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- Olivet discourse (24:1-25:46).

***Person and Work of Christ*—**This carries throughout the gospel in the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies relating to Messiah, in Jesus' ministry as prophet, priest, and king, in the attention given to the Cross and the nature of Jesus' substitutionary atonement. Jesus is presented as David's greater son.

***Birth narrative*—**Matthew and Luke both have birth narratives. Matthew relates the nativity from the standpoint of Joseph and his family line. Luke takes the vantage point of Mary's line.

***Summary Outline*—**Matthew was a skilled literary craftsman with many structural pointers making a consensus for the structure of the book an impossibility. A frequently proposed structure for Matthew turns on Matthew's five major discourses and links them to the surrounding narrative. Some have identified five so-called books in Matthew's structure as follows:

Preamble	1-2	
Book 1	3-7	3-4 narrative; 5-7 discourse -- discipleship
Book 2	8-10	8-9 narrative; 10 discourse – apostleship
Book 3	11-13	11-12 narrative; 13 discourse – hiding revelation
Book 4	14-18	14-17 narrative; 18 discourse – church administration
Book 5	19-25	19-22 narrative; 23-25 discourse – judgment
Epilogue	26-28	

Each of these discourses end with a formula statement found nowhere else in the book: "when Jesus had finished saying these things" or something very much like it (see 7:28-29; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1).

A more thematic approach follows:

Detailed Outline: Matthew—Presenting the King

I. The King Presented: Identity Established by Old Testament Prophetic Fulfillment (1:1—4:11)

A. Birth of the King (1:1-25)
1. Genealogy (1:1-17)
2. Birth of Jesus (1:18-25)

B. The King's early childhood: Identification with Israel in exile (2:1-23)
1. Magi's visit (2:1-12)
2. Flight to Egypt (2:13-15)
3. Herod slaughters the innocents (2:16-18)
4. Return to Nazareth (2:19-23)

C. The King's dedication and preparation: Identification with Israel in the wilderness (3:1-4:11)
1. Ministry of John the Baptist (3:1-12)
2. Baptism of Jesus (3:13-17)
3. Temptation in the wilderness (4:1-11)

II. The King's Identity Revealed: Kingdom of Heaven at Hand (4:12-16:20)

A. Disciples called; Public ministry begins (4:12-25)
1. Calling the first disciples (4:18-22)
2. Public ministry begins (4:23-25)

B. The King teaching with authority: Fulfillment of the Law (5:1-7:29)

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1. Righteousness: Its nature (5:1-48)
   a. Setting: On a mountain (5:1-2)
   b. Beatitudes; Righteous people's attributes and functions (5:3-16)
   c. Fulfilled law as internalized law (5:17-48)
   - Jesus' coming to fulfill the law (5:17-20)
   - Murder and anger (5:21-26)
   - Adultery and lust (5:27-32)
   - Vows and simple honesty (5:33-37)
   - Retaliation and non-resistance (5:38-42)
   - Loving your enemies (5:43-47)
   - Summary: Divine completion (5:48)
2. Righteousness: Its orientation (6:1-34)
   a. Rejection of hypocritical practice (6:1-18)
   - Alms (6:2-4)
   - Prayer (6:5-15)
   - Fasting (6:16-18)
   b. Treasure and physical necessities (6:19-34)
3. Righteousness: Its requirements (7:1-29)
   a. Judging others (7:1-6)
   b. Persistent prayer (7:7-12)
   c. Warnings mandating decision and commitment (7:13-27)
   d. Audience response (7:28-29)

C. The King acting: Authority revealed by his deeds (8:1-16:20)

1. Miracles attest to the King's authority (8:1-9:34)
   a. Healing a leper (8:1-4)
   b. Healing the centurion's servant (8:5-13)
   c. Healing Peter's mother-in-law and others (8:14-17)
   d. Cost of following Jesus (8:18-22)
   e. Jesus calms a storm at sea (8:23-27)
   f. Demoniacs healed (8:28-34)
   g. Healing a paralytic (9:1-8)
   h. Calling of Matthew; Eating with sinners (9:9-13)
   i. Fasting and the dawning of the Messianic age (9:14-17)
   j. Raising a Jewish leader's daughter; Healing a hemorrhaging woman (9:18-26)
   k. Healing the blind and mute (9:27-34)
2. The King's authority delegated to his disciples (9:35-11:1)
   a. Need for workers (9:35-38)
   b. Sending out the Twelve (10:1-42)
   - Disciples commissioned and sent out (10:1-4)
   - Instructions as to audience, message, and ministry (10:5-15)
   - Warning of opposition and persecution (10:16-31)
   - Costly discipleship (10:32-39)

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- Retaliation and non-resistance (5:38-42)
- Encouragement for a proper response (10:40-42)

3. The King's authority questioned and challenged (11:2-12:50)
   a. John the Baptist questions Jesus' identity (11:2-19)
   b. Unrepentant cities reproached (11:20-24)
   c. Jesus' invitation: Rest for the soul (11:25-30)
   d. Pharisees challenge Jesus' authority (12:1-45)
   - Lord of the Sabbath (12:1-14)
   - Jesus, the chosen servant (12:15-21)
   - Jesus and Beelzebub (12:22-37)
   - Pharisees seek signs: Sign of Jonah (12:38-45)

   e. Family doubts: True spiritual kinship (12:46-50)
4. The King's authority veiled: Parables of the Kingdom (13:1-52)
   a. Parable of the sower and the soils (13:1-23)
   b. Parable of the wheat and weeds (13:24-30, 36-43)
   c. Parables of the mustard seed and yeast (13:31-35)
   d. Parables of hidden treasure and expensive pearl (13:44-46)
   e. Parable of the net (13:47-50)
   f. Conclusion (13:51-53)
5. The King's authority rejected (13:54-14:12)
   a. Rejection at Nazareth; Prophet without honor (13:54-58)
   b. Representative rejection: Execution of John the Baptist (14:1-12)
6. The King's ministry in withdrawal; Warning against false teaching (14:13-16:12)
   a. Feeding of the five thousand (14:13-21)
   b. Walking on water (14:22-33)
   c. Gennesaret healings (14:34-36)
   d. Clean and unclean: Pharisaic regulations (15:1-20)
   e. Faith of a Canaanite woman (15:21-28)
   f. Feeding of the four thousand (15:29-39)
   g. Warning against the teaching of Jewish religious leaders (16:1-12)
7. The King's identity recognized: Peter's confession (16:13-20)

III. The King's Mission Unfolds: Kingdom Linked to His Death and Resurrection (16:21-28:20)

A. Cost of Kingdom citizenship: Taking up your cross (16:21-17:23)
1. First Passion prediction; Peter's rebuke; Requirements of discipleship (16:21-28)
2. Transfiguration: Glory revealed (17:1-13)
4. Healing a boy with seizures: Lesson in believing prayer (17:14-21)
5. Second Passion prediction (17:22-23)

B. Privileges and responsibilities of Kingdom citizenship (17:24-20:34)
1. Paying the Temple tax; claims of earthly authorities (17:24-27)
2. Greatness and relationships in the Kingdom (18:1-35)
   a. Humility: Principle of greatness (18:1-14)
   b. Discipline and reconciliation (18:15-20)
   c. Forgiveness; Parable of the unmerciful servant (18:21-35)
3. Human desires and concerns submitted to the King (19:1-20:16)

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a. Teaching on divorce (19:1-12)
b. Let the children come to me (19:13-15)
c. Earthly wealth: Query of the rich young man (19:16-26)
d. Kingdom rewards; Parable of the workers in the vineyard (19:27-20:16)

4. Greatness in the Kingdom revisited: Preference requested (20:17-34)
a. Third Passion prediction (20:17-19)
b. Preference in the kingdom requested (20:20-28)
c. Blind men at Jericho healed (20:29-34)

C. Entry into Jerusalem; Debates with and exposure of religious leaders (21:1-23:39)

1. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem (21:1-11)
2. Cleansing of the Temple (21:12-17)
3. Fig tree cursed (21:18-22)
4. Religious leaders challenge Jesus (21:23-27); Parables in reply (21:28-22:14)
a. Parable of the two sons (21:28-32)
a. Parable of the lawless tenants (21:33-46)
b. Parable of the marriage feast (22:1-14)
6. Debates with the religious leaders (22:15-46)
a. Paying taxes to Caesar: Pharisees answered (22:15-22)
b. Queries about resurrection: Sadducees answered (22:23-33)
c. Greatest commandment: Lawyers answered (22:34-40)
d. Messiah: David's on and David's Lord—Leaders baffled (22:41-46)
7. Religious leaders exposed and ejected (23:1-39)
a. Improper concept of leadership: Preeminence over service (23:1-12)
b. Woes on leaders: Righteousness and repentance (23:13-36)
c. Lament over Jerusalem (23:37-39)

D. Olivet discourse: Destruction of the Temple; Coming of the Son of Man; End of the age; Judgment (24:1-25:46)

1. Temple's destruction predicted: Query of the disciples (24:1-3)
2. Conditions of the age; Coming of the Son of Man; End of the age (24:4-35)
3. Day and hour unknown (24:36-44)
4. Watchfulness enjoined; Parables on alertness (24:45-25:30)
a. Wise and wicked servants contrasted (24:45-51)
b. Parable of wise and foolish bridesmaids (25:1-13)
c. Using the interim time: Parable of the talents (25:14-30)
5. Judgment of the King: Sheep and goats judged (25:31-46)

E. Passion, death, resurrection, and commission of the King (26:1-28:20)

1. Betrayal, Last Supper, Denials predicted; Agony in the Garden (26:1-46)
a. Plot to arrest Jesus (26:1-5, 14-16)
b. Jesus anointed for burial (26:6-13)
c. Last Supper (26:17-30)
d. Peter's denial predicted (26:31-35)
e. Agony in the Garden (26:36-46)
2. Jesus' betrayal and arrest (26:47-56)
3. Jesus' trials (26:57-27:26)
a. Ecclesiastical trial before the Sanhedrin (26:57-68; 27:1-2)
b. Peter's denials (26:69-75)

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   c. Judas' remorse and suicide (27:3-10)
   d. Judicial trial before Pilate (27:11-26)
4. Crucifixion and death of Jesus (27:27-56)
   a. Scourging and mocking by Roman soldiers (27:27-31)
   b. Crucifixion and death (27:32-56)
5. Jesus' burial (27:57-66)
   a. Joseph of Arimathea buries Jesus (27:57-61)
   b. Guard assigned to the tomb (26:62-66)
6. Jesus' Resurrection (28:1-15)
   a. Resurrection (28:1-10)
   b. Deception circulated (28:11-15)
7. Great Commission of the King (28:16-20)

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Mark—Son of Man: Come to Serve and to Give His Life as a Ransom for Many

***In general*—**Mark focuses on Jesus' activities more than on his teaching. His style is vividly forceful and descriptive, reflecting an eyewitness account (that of Peter). Mark has a strong emphasis on the miracles of Jesus, recording more miraculous events per verse than any other gospel. His account is a fast-moving narrative that quickly brings the reader to the central event of the gospel—the death and resurrection of Jesus. One of the book's distinctive words is *euthus* (translated immediately or straightway) which appears over forty times. This word appears more times in Mark than in the rest of the New Testament combined.

Mark is candid about the obtuseness of the disciples, the faux pas of Peter, and his own desertion of the Lord in the Garden. The focus on the passion of Christ is significant. Mark devotes six of his sixteen chapters to the last eight days of Jesus' life. The portrait of Jesus and the meaning of discipleship is at the center of his account. His purpose is essentially pastoral. The Roman Christians needed to hear the gospel again with a new emphasis on its implications for their lives amid a hostile environment. They needed a fresh glimpse of the nature of discipleship and what it meant to follow the Lord Jesus.

In some ways, Mark is an apology for the manner of the Lord's death (crucifixion was the Roman punishment for the worst of criminals). He presents Jesus as the Son of God worthy of belief despite (indeed, because) of the cross and issues a call to faithful discipleship. Christology and servant discipleship are the twin poles of his purpose.

***Author and recipients*—**Marks' gospel is anonymous. However, the testimony of the church fathers is unanimous that the gospel was written by John Mark, an associate of the apostle Peter. A quote from Papias from the second century is particularly relevant asserting that Mark recorded Peter's recollections and was striving for an accurate portrayal of the Lord Jesus rather than strictly chronological narrative. The internal evidence of the book supports this verdict. John Mark was familiar with the geography of Palestine, knew Aramaic, understood Jewish institutions and traditions, and expressed certain events so vividly as to be derived from eyewitness accounts of the apostolic inner circle.

John Mark was the son of a well-off family in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12-14) who figured prominently in the early church. Their home was an early Christian meeting place (Acts 12:12) and may have been the location of the Last Supper (Mk. 14:16). Mark was probably the young man who fled naked from the arrest of the Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mk. 14:50-52). He was a cousin of Barnabas (Col 4:10) and was in Antioch when the missionary journeys of Paul and Barnabas began. He accompanied Barnabas and Paul on the first missionary journey (Acts 13:5), abandoned the team at Perga, and returned home to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). That act of desertion earned him the displeasure of Paul and led to Paul and Barnabas splitting up at the time of the second missionary journey. Barnabas took Mark with him to the island of Cyprus while Paul and Silas journeyed through Syria and Cilicia and beyond (Acts 15:37-39). Mark and later collaborated so closely with Peter that the chief of the apostles called John Mark his "son" (1 Pt. 5:13). He was with Paul during the apostle's first Roman imprisonment (Col. 4:10; Phile. 23-24) in the early 60s. At the end of his days, Paul wrote to Timothy and requested him to come to him and bring Mark along "because he is helpful to me in my ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11).

Mark writes to a Roman audience. He omits things that would not be meaningful to Gentile audiences (Christ's genealogy, fulfilled prophecy, Mosaic law references, and various Jewish customs), he interprets Aramaic words (3:17; 5:41; 7:34; 15:22), and uses certain "Latinisms" in place of Greek

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equivalents.

Form critics have denied that John Mark was the author of this gospel. The form critical theory itself cannot really allow an eyewitness and a single hand to be the source of most, if not all, of the material found in a gospel. Form critics maintain that the stories about Jesus circulated orally for an extended period before written down and were shaped by the life experience (*sitz im leben*) of the early Christian community. The gospel writers were seen as essentially scissors and paste authors and the gospels were more products of the community than of the authors themselves. The gospels recorded more the history and life experience of the church than the life experience of the Lord Jesus. With the advent of redaction criticism, focusing on the contribution of the writers/editors, a third life experience was added to that of the church community and the Lord Jesus, that of the author himself.

Date and place of writing—Mark was probably written before 70, but early traditions disagree whether the gospel was penned before or after Peter's martyrdom in the mid-60s. The priority of Mark with respect to Luke pushes that date to the early 60s, since Luke-Acts seems to have been written in that timeframe. Given Mark's association with Peter and Peter's alleged presence in Rome long before his martyrdom there, Mark could well have been in Rome in the late 50s. Estimates place Mark's composition sometime between the late 50s to the mid-60s.

Critical scholars insist that the reference in Mark 13:14 clearly shows that Mark was written after 70. Of course, this assumes (common among critics) that predictive prophecy cannot happen. If one accepts predictive prophecy, then there are no compelling reasons why Mark could not have been written in the early dates suggested above.

Some have suggested a Galilean origin for the gospel, but most think that Mark probably wrote from Rome. The presence of John Mark with Peter in "Babylon" (see 1 Pt 5:13, probably code for Rome), Papias' testimony that Mark was Peter's interpreter, and the tradition that Peter was martyred at Rome all support the traditional understanding of the gospel's place of origin.

***Mark and the other Gospels*—**Matthew, Mark, and Luke have been called the Synoptic Gospels. "Synoptic" means "seeing together" and succinctly summarizes what the reader encounters at the very beginning of the New Testament. These three accounts of Jesus' life and teaching contain similar material and view their subject from a common perspective. Yet, they do differ in detail, arrangement of material, and in their respective emphases. The reasons for the great similarities and the significant differences have generated much discussion among New Testament scholars and Bible students through the years. This debate has focused on which gospel was written first and the sources the various writers relied on in writing. Theories have changed through the years, but the most popular current understanding is to see Mark as the first gospel written, with Matthew and Luke written at later dates, but close in time. A good deal of the material in Mark is repeated in Matthew and Luke. There is also significant overlap of material in Matthew and Luke. This has caused scholars to postulate that the latter two gospels used Mark's account and a common collection of the sayings of Jesus that circulated at the time, a mysterious source labeled "Q." "Q" comes from the German word meaning "source."

Literary dependence is the only way to explain the close relationship between the Synoptic Gospels. The priority of Mark theory, while not without problems, best accounts for the similarities between the Synoptics. The differences are due to a combination of the oral and written traditions which Matthew and Luke used independently in addition to their dependence on Mark.

***Place in biblical studies*—**Early Christian scholars largely overlooked Mark. It was not written by an apostle, was deemed rough and ungrammatical, and was seen as an abridgement of Matthew. The 19th century changed all that as modern Biblical scholars concluded that Mark was the first gospel written containing uninterpreted facts about the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus that Luke and Matthew

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expanded and interpreted.

Guiding Concepts:

***Divine Sonship and power*—**Mark highlights Jesus' power and authority over Satan and his brood (1:27; 3:19-20), over sin (2:1-12), over nature (4:35-41; 6:45-52), over disease (5:21-34), over death itself (5:35, 43), as Lord of the Sabbath (2:27-28; 3:1-6), over traditions (7:1-20), and over temple observance (11:15-18). Everyone and everything recognize Jesus' divinity, including John the Baptist, the demons, natural forces, the disciples, and the Father Himself. Everyone, that is, except the religious leaders. The supreme irony is that those who should have recognized Jesus right away, fail to do so at all.

***Servant ministry*—**John Mark highlights Jesus' servant ministry in his preaching and teaching and in his miraculous works. His life's focus was service and being a ransom for his people (Mk. 10:45). This is the distinctive heartbeat of Mark's gospel. Mark's reference to Jesus as the Son of Man aligns the Lord with Old Testament servant expectations. Jesus is indeed Lord, Messiah, and God, but the power and paradigm of His mission as the ransom for sin is encapsulated in this title. The church is to follow the Lord in these steps of service and resist claims to claims for greatness so endemic to our fallen humanity.

***Messianic secret*—**John Mark emphasizes Jesus' commands to those witnessing his power to remain silent as to his identity. Critical scholars even suggest that Jesus never claimed to be God or Messiah and Mark writes to cover up this failure and remove the embarrassment to Christian belief by inventing the so-called messianic secret. Why the secrecy?

- With exorcisms, Jesus did not want testimony by demons, even when that testimony was true.
- With healings, the people healed were commanded to silence to avoid publicity and relieve the pressure of the crowds on Jesus' ministry.
- To avoid being seen as the "miracle man."
- To avoid many of the current false notions of Messiah.
- The disciples were commanded to remain silent because they did not fully understand Jesus' identity and work yet. They would after His resurrection and would proclaim it to the ends of the earth.

Wilderness—The wilderness motif is present throughout Matthew and Luke, but is mainly found in Mark 1 and 6. The wilderness is understood—

- as a prelude to restoration.
- as linked to revelation.
- as a place of testing and dependence.
- as a time for repentance.

***Fear*—**Proper and false fear is a theme in the gospel as well. Note the following texts: 4:41; 5:15, 33, 36; 6:20, 50; 9:32; 10:32; 11:18, 32; 12:12; 16:8.

The text in Mark 16 leads to an important textual issue. Was 16:9-20 (the so-called longer ending) originally included in Mark's gospel? Most manuscripts include it but two of the earliest and best manuscripts do not. In addition, the testimony of Jerome and Eusebius, asserting that the best manuscripts available to them did not have the longer ending, makes 16:9-20 very problematic. It may be that Mark meant to end his gospel with 16:8, leaving it with a plain statement of the Resurrection and describing the state of reverential awe that that event inspired.

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Detailed Outline: Mark—Son of Man: Come to Serve and to Give His Life as a Ransom for Many

I. Preparing the Way (1:1-13)
A. John the Baptist's ministry (1:1-8)
B. Baptism and temptation of Jesus (1:9-13)

II. Early Galilean Ministry (1:14-3:6)
A. First disciples called (1:14-20)
B. Jesus' first Sabbath healings (1:21-34)
C. Leaving Capernaum (1:35-39)
D. Healing a leper (1:40-45)
E. Conflict with religious leaders (2:1-3:6)
1. Healing a paralytic (2:1-12)
2. Calling of Levi; Eating with sinners (2:13-17)
3. Questions about fasting (2:18-22)
4. Lord of the Sabbath (2:23-3:6)

III. Later Galilean Ministry (3:7-6:13)
A. Withdrawal to Lake Gennesaret (3:7-12)
B. Selection of the Twelve (3:13-19)
C. Jesus and Beelzebub; Jesus and family (3:20-35)
D. Parables of the kingdom (4:1-34)
1. Sower and the soils (4:1-20)
2. Lamp and the lampstand (3:21-25)
3. Growing seed (4:26-29)
4. Mustard seed (4:30-32)
5. Summary (4:33-34)
E. Triumph over hostile forces and diseases (4:35-5:43)
1. Calming a storm at sea (4:35-41)
2. Healing a demon-possessed man (5:1-20)
3. Raising Jairus' daughter and healing a woman with a hemorrhage (5:21-43)
F. Rejection at Nazareth: Prophet without honor (6:1-6a)
G. Sending out the Twelve (6:6b-13)

IV. Withdrawal from Galilee (6:14-8:30)
A. Death of John the Baptist (6:14-29)
B. Feeding the five thousand (6:30-44)
C. Walking on water; Gennesaret healings (6:45-56)
D. True and false defilement (7:1-23)
E. Syrophoenician woman's faith (7:24-30)
F. Healing a deaf-mute (7:31-37)
G. Feeding the four thousand (8:1-10)
H. Warning against the teaching of the Pharisees and the worldliness of the Herodians (8:11-21)
I. Healing a blind man at Bethsaida (8:22-26)
J. Peter's confession (8:27-30)

V. Journey to Jerusalem (8:31-10:52)
A. First Passion prediction (8:31-33)
B. Requirements of discipleship (8:34-9:1)

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C. Transfiguration (9:2-8)
D. Coming of Elijah (9:9-13)
E. Healing a demon-possessed boy (9:14-29)
F. Second Passion prediction (9:30-32)
G. Greatness in the kingdom (9:33-37)
H. Driving out demons in Jesus' name (9:38-42)
I. More requirements of discipleship (9:43-50)
J. Teaching on divorce (10:1-12)
K. Blessing the children (10:13-16)
L. Riches and the kingdom of God (10:17-31)
M. Third Passion prediction (10:32-34)
N. James and John: Greatness in the revisited (10:35-45)
O. Healing blind Bartimaeus (10:46-52)

VI. Jerusalem Ministry (11:1-13:37)
A. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem (11:1-11)
B. Unfruitful fig tree (11:12-14; 11:20-25)
C. Cleansing the Temple (11:15-19)
D. Jesus' authority challenged (11:27-30)
E. Parable of the tenants (12:1-12)
F. Paying taxes to Caesar (12:13-17)
G. Marriage and the resurrection (12:18-27)
H. Greatest commandment (12:28-34)
I. Messiah: David's son and David's Lord (12:35-37)
J. Warning against the teachers of the law (12:38-40)
K. Widow's offering (12:41-44)
L. Olivet discourse (13:1-37)
1. Fate of the Temple and signs of the end (13:1-8)
2. Persecution and witness of the disciples (13:9-13)
3. Abomination of desolation; flight enjoined (13:14-23)
4. Coming of the Son of Man (13:24-27)
5. Lesson of the fig tree (13:28-31)
6. Watchfulness enjoined (13:32-37)

VII. Passion and Resurrection (14:1-16:8 [or 16:20]
A. Plot to arrest Jesus (14:1-2, 10-11)
B. Anointing at Bethany (14:3-9)
C. Lord's Supper (14:12-26)
D. Peter's denials and disciples' desertion predicted (14:27-31)
E. Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (14:32-42)
F. Betrayal and arrest (14:43-52)
G. Jesus before the Sanhedrin (14:53-65)
H. Peter's denials (14:66-72)
I. Jesus before Pilate (15:1-15)
J. Jesus mocked and scourged (15:16-20)
K. Crucifixion and death (15:21-41)
L. Burial (15:42-47)
M. Resurrection (16:1-8)
N. Longer ending: Post-Resurrection appearances, commission, and Ascension (16:9-20)

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Luke—To Seek and Save the Lost

***Introduction*—**Luke explicitly states his methodology and purpose in Luke 1:1-4. He systematically gathered information, checked out the evidence, verified sources, did his own critical evaluation, and then made an orderly presentation. He gives his orderly account so that people can base their faith in Jesus on historical facts founded on firsthand testimony that can stand up under scrutiny.

Luke writes for a Gentile audience to establish the religious piety, moral purity, and political innocence of Jesus and His followers. He does not exhibit a narrow Jewish interest but has a broader interest in God's historical plan and in the continuity between Judaism and Christianity.

***Author and occasion*—** Luke and Acts were written by the same author. The common dedication to Theophilus (Lk. 1:3; Acts 1:1), the common interests and style of the books, and the obvious planned continuity between the books (Acts 1:1) have been the primary reasons for this conclusion. Authorship of Acts is established by the "we" sections of that book (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16) and from Luke's presence with Paul during his Roman imprisonment when Acts was written (2 Tim. 4:11). Of all Paul's companions, Luke is the only one likely to be present at those times. Luke's authorship of the gospel is deducted from his authorship of Acts. The Church fathers from Irenaeus (2nd century) to Eusebius (4th century) all point to Luke as the author of the gospel.

Critics challenge the traditional understanding on speculative grounds:

- Jesus' predictions of the fall of Jerusalem (Lk 19:43-44; 21:20-24) allegedly show that the book was written after 70. But all this really shows is how dogmatic the critics are in assuming the impossibility of predictive prophecy;
- Luke makes use of Mark and was written at around the same time as Matthew. Since the critics date those other two gospels late, then Luke must be late as well, too late in time for Luke to be the author;
- Luke allegedly reflects an "early Catholicism" which could not have been the case before the second century, beyond Luke's lifetime.

Luke was a well-educated Gentile, a doctor by vocation (Col 4:14), and a traveling companion of the apostle Paul. He was at home in the Greek language as evidenced by his polished writing style. Both Luke and Acts begin with a formal dedication as was common in Greco-Roman literary works. Luke was with Paul at the end of the apostle's life (2 Tim. 4:11). Tradition has it that Luke remained single all his life and died at the age of eighty-four.

Luke probably wrote the gospel bearing his name from either Caesarea or Rome in either the late 50s or early 60s. Greece (Achaia) and Alexandria also have been suggested as places of writing. He wrote Acts from Rome in the early to mid-60s.

Guiding Concepts:

***Comprehensive mission*—**I use comprehensive, rather than universal, so as not to confuse this point with universalism (that everyone will be saved). The gospel is a message intended for everyone, not just a select few. Jesus is not just the Jewish Messiah, but the Savior of the world (see Lk. 2:32, where Simeon describes the babe as a light to the Gentiles). Jesus has a clear sense of this mission from the very beginning (4:16-21).

***Historical focus*—**Luke gets it right, right down to the reigning rulers and their proper titles. Luke

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presents what we know concerning the birth of John the Baptist and the birth and early childhood of the Jesus. The travelogue section (9:51-19:27) is unique to Luke and supplements the picture we have of the historical details of Jesus' public ministry. Luke is also unique in recording a number of events in the early part of our Lord's life and after his resurrection (see Lk. 24, the road to Emmaus episode).

***Jesus' humanity and compassion*—**Jesus is portrayed as the ideal Son of Man. His humanity and compassion radiate from the pages of Luke. The gospel is full of His personal ministry to individuals as well as the masses. Luke records the dignity and respect Jesus accords to woman, to outcasts, to people at all levels of society. Jesus is a cosmopolitan Savior with broad sympathies for, and who mingles with, all kinds of people.

***Call to discipleship*—**Luke does not mince words about the cost of following Jesus. He details the priority of disciples (9:57-62), the training needed (10:1-24), as well as the demands made upon those who would follow Jesus (10:25-42).

***Ministry of the Holy Spirit*—**The work of the Holy Spirit appears throughout the gospel:

- John the Baptist is filled from his mother's womb (1:15).
- Holy Spirit's work in the miraculous birth of Jesus (1:35).
- Mary (1:41-42), Zacharias (1:67), and Simeon all speak filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit for testing (4:1) and ministry (4:14).
- Jesus rejoices in the Spirit when the seventy-two return from their labors (10:21).
- Disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit for ministry (24:29).

Luke continues this focus on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in Acts.

***Prayer*—**Luke portrays Jesus as a man of prayer:

- at His baptism (3:21).
- after ministering to the crowds (5:16).
- before choosing the Twelve (6:12).
- before Peter's confession (9:18).
- at the Transfiguration (9:28-29).
- after the mission of the 72 (10:21).
- before teaching the disciples to pray (11:1).
- in the Garden of Gathsemane (22:39-46).
- from the Cross (23:34, 46).

All these times are distinctive to Luke's gospel as are Luke two parables about the need for persistence in prayer in 11:5-13 and 18:1-8.

Detailed Outline: Luke—To Seek and Save the Lost

I. Preface; Preparation for Ministry (1:1-4:13)

A. Preface (1:1-4)

B. Birth and childhood narratives (1:5-2:52)

1. Birth of John the Baptist foretold (1:5-25)
2. Birth of Jesus foretold (1:26-38)
3. Mary's visit to Elizabeth (1:39-56)
4. Birth of John the Baptist (1:57-80)

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5. Birth of Jesus (2:1-20)
6. Presentation of Jesus in the temple (2:21-40)
7. Passover visit of Jesus to the temple (2:41-52)

C. Preparation for ministry (3:1-4:13)
1. Forerunner ministry of John the Baptist (3:1-20)
2. Baptism of Jesus (3:21-22)
3. Genealogy of Jesus (3:23-38)
4. Temptation in the wilderness (4:1-13)

II. Jesus' Ministry in Galilee (4:14-9:50)

A. Good news of the kingdom announced and initially proclaimed (4:14-44)
1. Announcement and rejection at Nazareth (4:14-30)
2. Initial healing and preaching ministry (4:31-44)

B. First disciples called (5:1-11)

C. Beginning of controversy with the Pharisees (5:12-6:11)
1. Healing a person with leprosy (5:12-16)
2. Healing a paralytic: Authority to forgive sins (5:17-26)
3. Calling Levi (5:27-32)
4. Questions about fasting (5:33-39)
5. Sabbath controversy with the Pharisees: Lord of the Sabbath (6:1-11)

D. Choosing the Twelve (6:12-16)

E. Sermon on the plain (6:17-49)
1. Blessings and woes (6:17-26)
2. Love for enemies (6:27-36)
3. Judging others (6:37-42)
4. A tree and its fruit (6:43-45)
5. Wise and foolish builders (6:46-49)

F. Compassion of the Messiah (7:1-17)
1. Faith of a centurion (7:1-10)
2. Raising a widow's son (7:11-17)

G. Jesus and John, the Baptist (7:18-35)

H. Jesus anointed by a sinful woman (7:36-50)

I. Jesus teaches in parables (8:1-21)
1. Women supporting Jesus (8:1-3)
2. Parable of the sower (8:4-15)
3. Parable of the lamp (8:16-18)
4. Jesus and his family (8:19-21)

J. Group of mighty works (8:22-56)
1. Calming the storm at sea (8:22-25)
2. Healing the Gerasene demoniac (8:26-39)
3. Healing a woman with a hemorrhage and Jairus' daughter (8:40-56)

K. Sending out the Twelve (9:1-9)
1. Sending out the Twelve (9:1-6)
2. Herod's perplexity (9:7-9)

L. Feeding the 5,000 (9:10-17)

M. Peter's confession; Cost of discipleship (9:18-27)

N. Transfiguration (9:28-36)

O. Down from the mountain (9:37-50)

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III. Jesus' Ministry While Journeying to Jerusalem (9:51-19:27)

A. Setting the course; Counting the cost (9:51-62)
   1. Samaritan village: Rebuking a violent course (9:51-56)
   2. Cost of discipleship (9:57-62)

B. Sending out the seventy (or seventy-two) (10:1-24)

C. Parable of the good Samaritan: On merciful love (10:25-37)

D. Martha and Mary: On service and devotion (10:38-42)

E. Teaching on prayer (11:1-13)

F. Controversy with the Pharisees and teachers of the law (11:14-54)
   1. Jesus and Beelzebub (11:14-28)
   2. Sign of Jonah; Lamp of the body (11:29-36)
   3. Woes on Pharisees and scribes (11:37-54)

G. Readiness for the coming crisis (12:1-13:9)
   1. Warnings and encouragement: Fearless confession (12:1-12)
   2. Parable of the rich fool (12:13-21)
   3. Anxiety over possessions (12:22-34)
   4. Readiness for the coming of the Son of Man (12:35-48)
   5. Divisions over Jesus (12:49-53)
   6. Interpreting the times (12:54-59)
   7. Repent or perish (13:1-9)

H. Crippled woman healed on Sabbath (13:10-17)

I. Parables and sayings of the kingdom (13:18-30)
   1. Parables of mustard seed and yeast (13:18-21)
   2. Entering the kingdom (13:22-30)

J. Lament over Jerusalem (13:31-35)

K. Jesus at table (14:1-24)
   1. Healing a man with dropsy (14:1-6)
   2. Concern for prominence (14:7-14)
   3. Parable of the great banquet (14:15-24)

L. Cost of discipleship (14:25-35)

M. Gospel for the lost (15:1-32)
   1. Parable of the lost sheep (15:1-7)
   2. Parable of the lost coin (15:8-10)
   3. Parable of the lost son (15:11-32)

N. Warnings about wealth (16:1-31)
   1. Parable of the shrewd steward (16:1-9)
   2. Faithful stewardship and lovers of money (16:10-18)
   3. Parable of rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31)

O. Discipleship in community: Sin, faith, and duty (17:1-10)

P. Ten people with leprosy healed (17:11-19)

Q. Coming of the Son of Man (17:20-37)

R. Characteristics of kingdom dwellers (18:1-30)
   1. Parable of the persistent widow (18:1-8)
   2. Pharisee and the tax collector (18:9-14)
   3. Jesus and the children (18:15-17)
   4. Rich young ruler (18:18-30)

S. Passion prediction (18:31-34)

T. Healing the blind beggar (18:35-43)

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U. Zacchaeus, the tax collector (19:1-10)
V. Parable of the ten minas (19:11-27)

IV. Passion Week: Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus (19:28-24:53)

A. Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem during Passover (19:28-21:38)
  1. Triumphant entry into Jerusalem (19:28-44)
    a. Entry into city (19:28-40)
    b. Lament over Jerusalem (19:41-44)
  2. Cleansing the temple (19:45-48)
  3. Teaching in the temple (20:1-21:4)
    a. Authority of Jesus questioned (20:1-8)
    b. Parable of the wicked tenants (20:9-19)
    c. Paying taxes to Caesar (20:20-26)
    d. Resurrection and marriage (20:27-40)
    e. Sonship of Messiah (20:41-47)
    f. Widow's offering (21:1-4)
  4. Destruction of the temple and the last things (21:5-38)
    a. Fate of the temple and signs of the end (21:5-11)
    b. Persecution of the disciples (21:12-19)
    c. Fall of Jerusalem, coming of the Son of Man (21:20-24)
    d. Certainty of, and preparation for, the end (21:29-36)
    e. Summary of Jesus' daily activities (21:37-38)

B. Death and burial of Jesus (22:1-23:56)
  1. Judas agrees to betray Jesus (22:1-6)
  2. Last Supper (22:7-38)
  3. Prayer and arrest of Jesus (22:39-53)
  4. Jewish trial (22:54-71)
  5. Roman trial (23:1-25)
  6. Crucifixion of Jesus (23:26-49)
  7. Burial of Jesus (23:50-56)

C. Resurrection, post-Resurrection appearances, and Ascension of Jesus (24:1-53)
  1. Discovery of empty tomb (24:1-12)
  2. Appearance to two disciples on road to Emmaus (24:13-35)
  3. Appearance to disciples in the upper room (24:36-49)
  4. Ascension of Jesus (24:50-53)

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John—Believe and Have Life

***Author and recipients*—**The author never identifies himself, but it is certain that was John, the beloved disciple. Evidence from the book itself points to John. The author was familiar with Jewish customs and opinions. He was a Palestinian Jew as demonstrated by his knowledge of the geography of the region (9:7; 11:18; 18:1). He was an eyewitness to the events he narrates (Jn 1:14; 19:35) and seems to have been acquainted with Jesus' public career from beginning to end. The author's identity must have been so well known to his contemporaries to make an obvious assertion of his authority unnecessary. It is noteworthy that in this gospel, which provides many personal insights into the disciples, John is not mentioned by name. Instead, he is simply known as a son of Zebedee.

Historical evidence is unequivocal in attributing the gospel to John. The church fathers from Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons (130-200), to Eusebius (265-340), the great church historian, all agree that John the apostle wrote the gospel. The theory that the gospel was the product of an unknown presbyter by the name of John is speculation that cannot be regarded as probable, let alone established.

John was the son of Zebedee (21:1) and Salome (Mt. 27:56; Mk. 15:40; Jn. 19:25). Since Salome was a sister of Jesus' mother Mary, Jesus and John were cousins. John possessed a passionate and volatile temperament. The Lord nicknamed John and his brother James as the "sons of thunder" (Mk. 3:17). Their father, Zebedee, was in the fishing business in Galilee and the two were among the Galileans who followed John the Baptist until they were called to follow the Lord. They later became his full-time disciples (Lk. 5:1-11) and were among the twelve selected to be His apostles (Lk. 6:12-16). After the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord, John was active in the ministry in and around Jerusalem (see Acts 3:1; 4:13; 8:14). Paul describes John, James, and Peter as the "pillars" of the church in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:9). Tradition records that John later went to Ephesus shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem and had a long and fruitful ministry in Asia Minor. The composite personality image of John that emerges from the New Testament is one of a man of courage, fervor, loyalty, spiritual perception, humility, and love.

***Date and occasion*—**The dates most often advocated for this gospel are sometime prior to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem or sometime in the late 80s or early 90s, near the end of the first century. Tradition and the weight of other evidence favors the later date and assigns Ephesus as the place of composition. Until recently, it was popular to propose a second century date for this book and thus undermine Johannine authorship. However, the discovery of the Rylands papyrus, containing a fragment of John 18:31-33 and 37-38, has overthrown this critical conjecture. This fragment dates to approximately 135 and a considerable period of time must have passed for the gospel to have been circulated and copied before it reached Egypt, where the papyrus was found.

The gospel was written at a time when the faith was under attack. Christians were persecuted in the reign of the Emperor Domitian (81-96). Indeed, tradition has it that John himself was imprisoned on the island of Patmos, where he wrote Revelation, near the end of Domitian's reign.

***Purpose*—**John states his purpose in unequivocal terms in John 20:31: "But these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name." John writes for both Jews and Gentiles and presents Jesus as the Son of God, worthy of belief. John draws primarily on events and discourses not found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke to prove to his readers that Jesus is God in the flesh, the eternal Word of God come to earth, born to die as God's substitutionary sacrifice for human sin. The human response elicited is faith in His person and work.

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Guiding Concepts:

***Belief*—**The word believe (*pisteuo*) and its various forms appears almost one hundred times in this gospel and is the major theme in the book. Belief is equated with receiving (1:12), following (1:40), drinking (3:13-14), responding (4:50-51), eating (6:57), accepting (6:60), worshipping (9:38), obeying (11:39-41), and committing (12:10-11). John chooses seven miracles (five of them unique to this gospel) to communicate truth about Jesus designed to invoke belief in Him. These "signs" include: (1) water changed to wine (2:1-11); (2) an official's son healed (4:46-54); (3) an invalid healed at the pool at Bethesda (5:1-5); (4) the feeding of the 5,000 (6:1-15); (5) walking on water (6:16-21); (6) a blind man healed (9:1-12); and (7) Lazarus raised from the dead (11:1-44).

***Christ's person*—**John's gospel emphasizes both the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ. He strongly asserts Christ's deity identifying the Word as God (1:1, 14), recording His declaration of oneness with the Father (10:30), His claims to eternal pre-existence (8:58), His being as the sum and essence of the Father's being (14:9), and His acknowledgement of Thomas' assertion of His deity (20:28-29). His humanity is also stressed. He was weary (4:6), thirsty (4:7), wistful (6:67), deeply sorrowful (11:35), appreciative (12:7), troubled (12:27), loving (13:1ff), and loyal and courageous (18:8).

Jesus makes use of a series of "I am" statements that shed light on His identity and what that means to the believer. He is the bread of life (6:35), the light of the world (8:12; 9:5), the date for the sheep (10:7), the good shepherd (10:11, 14), the resurrection and the life (11:25), the way, the truth, and the life (14:6), and the true vine (15:1, 5). Each of these statements teaches truth about the nature of the believer's union with his or her eternal Lord.

***Christ's work*—**The movement of the entire gospel points to Christ's cross and resurrection. John the Baptist introduces Jesus as the sacrificial "lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" (1:29). Jesus tells Nicodemus that "just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life" (3:14-15). He speaks of giving His flesh "for the life of the world" (6:51). His cross is seen as the death of the shepherd for the sheep (10:11), the sacrifice of one man for His nation (11:49-52), the triumph of the obedient Son who bequeaths His life, joy, peace, and Spirit to His own (14:1ff). The doctrine of the atonement is not stated so explicitly as in some of Paul's epistles, but it is unmistakably latent throughout John's gospel.

***Holy Spirit*—**John's gospel contains important teaching on the person and functions of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's intermediary relation between Christ and the believer and His functional relation to God, the believer, and the world are defined in Jesus' farewell discourse to the disciples (14:25-26; 15:26; 16:7-15). In that discourse, Jesus makes it clear that the heavenly Counselor is given in consequence of Jesus' death and exaltation.

***Jesus' personal ministry*—**A great deal of attention is given to Jesus' personal ministry with the disciples and other people. Andrew (1:40; 6:8), Peter (1:41-42; 6:67-69; 13:6-9, 36-38; 18:11; 21:15-22), Philip (1:43; 6:5; 12:21-22; 14:8-10), Nathaniel (1:47-51; 21:2), Thomas (11:16; 14:5-7; 20:24-29), and other followers received Jesus' personal counsel and attention during important stages in the growth of their faith. The Lord's powerful public discourses accompanied an intensive interpersonal ministry. Numerous personal interviews are distributed throughout the text illustrating the nature and consequence of belief (see interviews with Nicodemus (3:1-15), the Samaritan woman (4:1-26), a paralytic (5:1-15), a man blind from birth (9:1-38), Mary and Martha (11:17-37)). The Lord's intensely personal ministry did not shy away from conflict. John records interviews and exchanges with hostile people and/or groups to illustrate the nature of unbelief (see 2:18-20; 5:16-47; 6:41-59; 7:14-44; 8:31-59; 10:2-39).

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***Relation to Synoptic gospels*—**The Synoptic gospels are Matthew, Mark, and Luke, so-called because of the similarity in their accounts at various places. The term is derived from the Greek word *synoptikos*, meaning "to see together". John wrote independently of these other gospels, not because he did not know about them, but because he had a different purpose in writing and was addressing a different audience. Noting the differences between the Synoptics and John, someone has said that the Synoptics contain the fundamental facts and words of the Lord's ministry for the infant church which experience afterwards interprets, while John reviews the facts and words of Jesus' ministry in light of their interpretation for a maturing church. While this is accurate as far it goes, it is also true that John consciously attempts to supplement the Synoptics, emphasizing the Lord's Judean ministry, His personal ministry with individuals as well as His longer discourses, and largely omitting the parables and the theme of the kingdom of God. John thought the other gospel writers had covered these aspects of Jesus' life and teaching. John also supplements the others by making it clear that Jesus' public ministry lasted longer than a reading of the Synoptics might otherwise suggest. The Synoptics only mention the last Passover when Jesus died, but John mentions three, and perhaps four, Passovers during the Lord's public ministry.

Detailed Outline: John—Believe and Have Life

I. Prologue: Jesus as Explaining the Father (1:1-18)
- A. Nature and function of the Word (1:1-5)
- B. Witness of John the Baptist (1:6-8)
- C. Human reception of the Word (1:9-13)
- D. Incarnation of the Word (1:14-18)

II. Jesus' Revelation of God to the World (1:19-12:50)
- A. Initial witness and first disciples: Behold the Lamb of God (1:19-51)
  1. John the Baptist's testimony (1:19-34)
  2. First disciples called (1:35-51)
- B. Presentation of Jesus for consideration: Cana to Cana (2:1-4:54)
  1. In Cana of Galilee: Water into wine (2:1-11)
  2. In Judea (2:12-3:36)
     a. Jesus cleanses the temple in Jerusalem (2:13-25)
     b. Interview with Nicodemus (3:1-21)
     c. John the Baptist's final testimony (3:22-36)
  3. In Samaria (4:1-42)
     a. Departing to Samaria (4:1-4)
     b. Interview with woman at the well (4:5-26)
     c. Conversation with disciples on doing God's will (4:27-38)
     d. Witness among the Samaritans (4:39-42)
  4. Return to Cana: Nobleman's son healed at a distance (4:43-54)
- C. Continued revelation of the Father by the Son: Increasing controversy and conflict (5:1-11:53)
  1. At Jerusalem: Jesus' claims presented (5:1-47)
     a. Healing of paralytic on the Sabbath (5:1-15)
     b. Jesus claims equality with the Father (5:16-30)
     c. Witnesses to Christ (5:31-47)

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2. In Galilee: Jesus, the bread of life (6:1-71)
    a. 5,000 fed in the wilderness (6:1-15)
    b. Jesus walks on water (6:16-21)
    c. Bread of life discourse (6:22-71)
3. At Jerusalem for the feasts (7:1-10:39)
    a. Teaching at the Feast of Tabernacles (7:1-52)
    b. Jesus forgives an adulterous woman (7:53-8:11)
    c. Jesus, the light of the world (8:12-9:41)
    d. Jesus, the good shepherd (10:1-21)
    e. Feast of Dedication: Jesus' assertion of deity (10:22-42)
4. In Judea: Lazarus raised (11:1-53)
    a. Departure to Bethany delayed (11:1-16)
    b. Dialogues with Martha and Mary (11:17-37)
    c. Scene at the tomb: Lazarus raised (11:38-44)
    d. Reaction of Jewish authorities: Plot to kill Jesus (11:45-53)

D. Preparation for and prediction of Jesus' death (11:54-12:50)
1. Withdrawal to Ephraim (11:54-57)
2. Anointing for burial (12:1-11)
3. Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (12:12-19)
4. Greeks seek Jesus: Death prediction (12:20-36)
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