

# Introduction to the Gospels

JIM DALRYMPLE • 5 SESSIONS

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OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE



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## Introduction

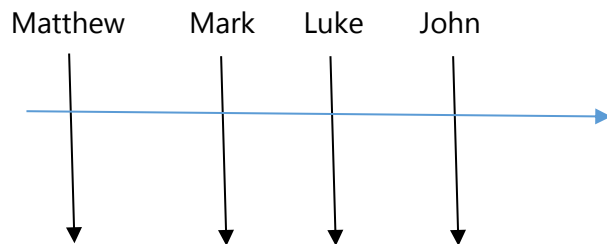


**Have you ever driven through a familiar neighborhood only to see a something for the very first time?**

### 4 Gospel Accounts / One Jesus (cf. Mark Strauss)

- Multiple witness attestation
- Cohesive and Distinctive
  - Cohesive history, purpose, and theology
  - Distinctive style, audience, and theological accents

### Vertical & Horizontal Analysis



### Exercises:

1. **Read** each gospel narrative looking for unique themes and style
2. **Compare:** Matthew 3:3 // Mark 1:3 // Luke 3:4 // John 1:23
3. **Compare:** Matthew 1:1-17 // Luke 3:21-37
4. **Compare:** Matthew 20:29 // Mark 10:46 // Luke 18:35-43
5. **Compare:** Matthew 28:1-10 // Mark 16:1-8 // Luke 24:1-10 // John 20:1-8

### Jesus invites us to:

- "Come and see"
- "Follow me"
- "Sit at my feet"
- "Abide"
- "Pick up your cross"
- "Go and make disciples"

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## The Gospel According to Matthew

### 1. **Inclusio:**

- 1:1
  - Son of David=*authority*
  - Son of Abraham=bless the *nations*.
- 28:18-20
  - All *authority*
  - Make disciples of all *nations*.
  -

### 2. **“Messianic King”** — [Kingdom of Heaven = 33 / Kingdom of God = 4]. Matthew’s genealogy turns on the number 14 (David’s name). F.F. Bruce said that Matthew was about the *king* and the *kingdom*.

- **“Son of David”** — 9xs in Mathew. 8 unique uses [3 in Mk; 3 in Lk]. Blomberg mentions that those who use this phrase to address Jesus are “consistently the powerless ones” in the narrative (pg. 146).
- **“Fulfilled” (πληρώω)** — 15x in MT // 10x as the formula “This was to fulfill”
- **OT References** — includes 65 OT references; 21 are from Isaiah alone.

### 3. **Conflict with Jewish Leaders** — Shepherd/Sheep (see Ezekiel 34) **Conflict with Roman Leaders**

### 4. **New Moses.**

- Infancy miracles, massacre of babies, out of Egypt, wilderness preparation before ministry, teaching from a mountain, grumbling.
- **5 Blocks of Teaching/Narrative** (5-7; 10; 13; 18; 23-25)
  - Each end with the phrase:  
***“When Jesus had finished saying these things.”***  
[7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1 (26:1 adds “all these things”)]
- **Law/Righteousness** — major theme in comparison to other gospels.
- **Mountains are featured more Prominently in Matthew:**
  - 1) Temptation Mountain Mt 4:8

|     |                                   |             |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| 2)  | Teaching Mountain                 | Mt 5-7      |
| 3)  | Praying Mountain                  | Mt 14:23    |
| 4)  | Healing Mountain                  | Mt 15:29    |
| 5)  | Transfiguration Mountain          | Mt 17:1     |
| 6)  | Removing Mountains                | Mt 17:19-20 |
| 7)  | Seeking the Lost in the Mountains | Mt 18:12    |
| 8)  | Removing Mountains                | Mt 21:21    |
| 9)  | Olive Mountain                    | Mt 24:3     |
| 10) | Flee to the Mountains             | Mt 24:15-17 |
| 11) | Betrayal Mountain                 | Mt 26:30-31 |
| 12) | Commission Mountain               | Mt 28:16-20 |

5. **Jesus as the embodiment of Wisdom (OT Wisdom is from God)**

In Mt -- the words σοφία (wisdom), σοφός (wise), and φρόνιμος (wise/prudent) appear more times in Matthew than in the other gospels combined.

- **Jonathan Pennington** – *Jesus the Great Philosopher*

True teaching on how to live the fulfilled life (not just spiritual life)

Mt 12:42                      One greater than Solomon is here

Mt 7:24                      Build your life on the Rock of his teaching

6. **Money** - Matthew includes unique texts:

- Temple tax in 17:24-27 and the
- Unforgiving servant in 18:23-15
- He also uses a wide variety of economic terms

7. **Inclusio:**

- 1:23 Immanuel
- 28:20 I am with you always...

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## The Gospel According to Mark

1. **Opening word** □ “Beginning” (ἀρχή13).
  - Creation theme opens the book (beginning, Spirit over the water, temptation, etc.)
2. **No Birth Narrative**
3. **Fast-Paced Action**
  - **“Immediately”** (εὐθύς) [42x in Mk; 6-Mt; 3-Lk; 3-Jn] — Mark moves at a fast pace only slowing down at the Passion narrative (this word does not occur after 15:1).
  - **Favorite conjunction** is “and” (καί).
  - **Limited discourse** in comparison to other gospels, he keeps the action moving. Mark Strauss compared it to an “on-the-spot news report” (pf. 172).
  - Use of **“Historic Present”** verbs that heighten the urgency of the narrative [151x in Mk; 93-Mt; 11-Lk].
  - **Shortest account**, but often with more details in shared narratives than other synoptic gospels (*e.g.*, wild animals 1:13; grass 6:39; Jesus sleeping on a cushion 4:38).
4. **ID Questions:**
  - 1:27      What is this? A new teaching—and with authority...
  - 2:7      Who can forgive sins but God alone?
  - 2:16      Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?
  - 4:41      Who is this? Even the wind and waves obey him!
  - 6:2      What’s this wisdom that has been given him?
  - 7:5      Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders...?
5. **Authority**
6. **Outline:** Two-part structure that hinges upon Peter’s Confession in 8:29 (Craig Blomberg, 131):

|                  |                   |                                        |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>1:1-8:30</b>  | <b>Successes</b>  | ☑M. Strauss = Authoritative Son of God |
| <b>8:31-16:8</b> | <b>Sufferings</b> | ☐M. Strauss = The Suffering Servant    |
7. **Thematic groupings** (see Strauss 174):
  - ch 1      Authority Stories
  - ch 2      Sabbath Controversies
  - ch 4      Kingdom Parables
  - ch 6-8      Boats & Bread Stories
  - ch 7      Unclean Stories

- ch 7-8                      Miracles and Parables for Discipleship (Deaf/Blind)
- ch 10                      Cruciform Life
- ch 11-12                  Controversy/Tests/Traps

8. **Inclusio** ("bookending"):

- **Son of God**
  - 1:1                      "Son of God"
  - 1:10                    "You are my son"
  - 9:7                     "This is my Son...Listen to Him"
  - 15:39                  "Surely...son of God!"
- **Torn**
  - 1:10                    "Heaven torn open"
  - 15:38                  "The curtain in the temple was torn..."

9. **"Messianic Secret"** — Jesus is always telling others to be silent and at the end (short ending), no one is "telling" but instead are afraid.

- Jesus often **withdraws/retreats**
- **No Post-Resurrection Narrative** (Depending on what you do with the textual variant in Mark 16:9-20).

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## The Gospel According to Luke

### 1. Luke's Purpose (Inclusio):

- 1:1-4 "Orderly account...So that you might know with certainty..." (ἐπιγνώως).
- 24:31 "And their eyes were opened, and they recognized (ἐπιγινώσκω) him."

### 2. Luke-Acts:

- **Theophilus:** May have been benefactor of the Luke-Acts writing project.
- **Historical anchors** (names of rulers, census, etc.)
- **Holy Spirit** Birth narratives with the Holy Spirit playing a prominent role in both
- **Prayer**
- **Geographic Chiastic Structure** (see Blomberg, 161):
  - LUKE: Rome→Galilee of the Gentiles→Samaria→Judea→Jerusalem
  - ACTS: Jerusalem→Judea→Samaria→World of the Gentiles→Rome
  - The resurrection and ascension form a narrative overlap between Luke-Acts.
    1. May indicate why Luke leaves out Galilean resurrection appearances and other geographic material that does not fit into his structure.

### 3. Gentile inclusion

examples:

- 3:38 Luke's genealogy goes all the back to Adam
- 3:6 Longer quotation of Isaiah 40:3-5 compared to // in Mt & Mk 1:3
- 4:14-30 Jesus' reading of Isaiah 61 in Nazareth

### 4. Focus on outsiders & reversal:

- Gentiles
- Tax collectors [Pharisee and the publican (18:9-14); Zacchaeus (19:1-10)]
- Poor
- Prostitutes
- Foreigners
- Samaritans
- Women

### 5. Banquets/Meals/Tables — Luke includes 10 scenes of table fellowship and is the only one to mention the Pharisee's accusation that Jesus "eats with sinners" (three times—5:29; 15:1; 19:7).

### 6. Parables (28/40 total parables appear in Luke, 18 unique to Luke).

### 7. Emphasis on **Savior/Salvation** (8 times in Luke, 9 in Acts, 0 in other Synoptics).

- **"I must be" (δεῖ)** — key theme in Luke-Acts often in connection to Jesus' mission.
  - 4:43                    **"I must** preach the good news..."
  - 9:22                    "The Son of Man **must** suffer many things..."
  - 13:33                   "I **must** go on my way..."
  - 17:25                   "But first he **must** suffer..."
  - 19:5                    "Come down, for I **must** stay at your house today..."
  - 22:37                   "Scripture **must** be fulfilled in me..."
  - 24:7                    "The Son of Man **must** be delivered into the hands..."
  - 24:26                   "Was it not **necessary** that the Christ should suffer..."
  - Acts 1:16              "The Scripture **had to** be fulfilled..."
  - Acts 5:29              "We **must** obey God rather than men..."
  - Acts 9:16              "I will show him how **much** he [Paul] must suffer..."



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## The Gospel According to John

1. **Purpose:** John 20:30–31
  - “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe [101x] that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”
2. **Prologue Themes:**
  - “In the beginning was the Word...” (Creation/New Creation) (Wisdom)
  - Jesus = God
3. **John assumes his audience was familiar with the Synoptics (Intertextuality)**
4. **Witnesses to Jesus**

(A.E. Harvey called John a prophetic “lawsuit” where the reader is called upon to render a verdict).

  - John the Baptist
  - Woman in Samaria
  - Miracles/Signs
  - The Father
  - Scriptures
  - Moses
  - Holy Spirit
  - John (The Beloved)
5. **Contrasting Encounters with Jesus**
  - Nicodemus & Samaritan Woman (ch. 3-4)
  - Blind man & Pharisees (ch. 9)
  - Judas & Mary of Bethany (ch. 12)
6. **Dualisms & Dual meanings**
  - Light/darkness, life/death, above/below, spirit/flesh, truth/false, etc.
  - Water, bread, birth, temple
7. **Jesus is Fulfillment of Jewish Festivals (Thematic Unit in 5-8):**
  - Sabbath (ch. 5)
  - Passover (I am the Bread - ch. 6)
  - Tabernacles (Living water / I am the Ligh - ch 7-8)
  - Dedication (Hanukkah - ch. 10)

- **3 Passovers** (2:13; 6:4; 12:10) John 5:1 may allude to a fourth Passover.  
     Jesus = Passover Bread (ch. 6)  
     Jesus = Passover Lamb (ch. 1; 19:36)

8. **Seven major discourses** closely related to 7 signs.

- The New Birth (ch. 3)
- The Water of Life (ch. 4)
- The Divine Son (ch. 5)
- The Bread of Life (ch. 6)
- The Life-Giving Spirit (ch. 7)
- The Light of the World (ch. 8)
- The Good Shepherd (ch. 10)

9. **Seven signs (σημεῖον):**

- Water to wine (ch. 2)
- Nobleman's son (ch. 4)
- Lame man at Bethesda pool (ch. 5)
- Feeding 5,000 (ch. 6)
- Walking on Water (ch. 6)
- Man born blind at pool of Siloam(ch. 9)
- Lazarus (ch. 11)
- Resurrection (ch. 20)
- Great Catch of Fish (ch. 21)

10. **Seven "I am" statements**

- Bread of Life (6:35)
- Light of the World (8:12)
- The Gate (10:7)
- The Good Shepherd (10:11)
- The Resurrection & The Life (11:25)
- The Way, the Truth and the Life (14:6)
- The Vine - (15:5)

11. Other significant **"I Am" sayings** (echoing Ex. 3:14):

- "I am, do not be afraid." (6:20)
- "...before Abraham was, I am." (8:58)
- "...that you may believe I am he..." (13:19)
- "I am...they fell backward..." (18:5-6)

12. **Jesus' divine & human attributes**

- Creator (1:1)
- Sovereignty ("my hour" [ῥα] 2:4; 7:6 [καὶρὸς]; 7:30; 8:20 □ 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1)
- Knowledge (2:24-25; 18:4)

- Notice what theologians call Jesus' ontological equality but functional subordination during his earthy ministry (e.g., 5:19; 8:28; 12:49)
- Tired from travel (e.g., 4:6)
  - Note: This same word speaks to the hour/time still coming for the disciples. The implication being that Jesus is still sovereign in their hour/time (4:23; 5:25; 16:2-32).



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