

Why Four Gospels

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1. What is the Gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-8)?

2. Which books of the Bible are typically referred to as “The Gospels”? “The Synoptic Gospels”? Why?

3. Why would God give us four gospels with so many similarities and repeated information (cf. John 21:25)?

4. Think of the ways a good Christian husband might be viewed by four different groups:
 - a. By his neighbors
 - b. By his employees
 - c. By his wife
 - d. By religious groups

The Four Gospels — a Comparative View

Topics	The Synoptic Gospels			
	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Approx. Date of Writing	55-58 A.D.	55-65 A.D.	60-67 A.D.	65-70 A.D.
Probable Place of Writing	Syria Antioch or Palestine	Rome	Rome/Greece	Ephesus
Original Audience	Jews in Syria & Palestine	Gentiles in Rome	Gentiles	General Population of Asia Minor
View of Christ	King - Messiah 1:1; 2:1-6; 21:1-11; 28:18-20	Servant - Redeemer 2:1-22; 10:42-45 16:20	Perfect Man 1:26-36; 2:46-52; 4:1-13; 24:51	Son of God 1:1-18; 3:1-16; 7:46; 21:25
Perspective	Historical			Theological
Unique Material	Synopsis of Christ’s life with many similarities			92% unique
Geography	Concentrates on Galilean ministry			Concentrates on Judean Ministry
Discourse Material	Presented mostly in a public forum			Mostly private communion of Christ and disciples

5. If we were to look into the Old Testament we would see that God had always intended to reveal Christ as king, servant, man, and God. Consider the following references: regarding Christ as king (Ps. 2:6-12; 72:1-20; Is.9:6-7; 32:1; Jer.23:5; Zech.9:9; 14:9); regarding Christ as servant (Is. 42:1-7; 52:13-15; 53); regarding Christ as man (Gen.3:15; Is. 7:14-16; 9:6); regarding Christ as God (Isa.9:6; 40:3-5; 47:4; Jer.23:6).

Application

1. Which of the four gospels would you select as best suited for the following audiences:
 - a. Middle to upper class intellectuals, philosophers and seekers of truth?
 - b. Religious, prophetically oriented traditionalists?
 - c. Un-churched yet hungering to know God?
 - d. Blue collar, working class and minority groups?
2. Describe the picture of Christ you see in Matthew.
3. Describe the picture of Christ you see in Mark.
4. Describe the picture of Christ you see in Luke.
5. Describe the picture of Christ you see in John.
6. What should be our view of Jesus in order to live properly today and every day?
7. The example of the four gospels is God's gentle encouragement to understand our audience when presenting the good news of Christ. What would be a relevant way to present Jesus to our families and friends who . . .
 - a. claim to be autonomous?
 - b. glory in their own good works?
 - c. are suffering?
 - d. already sense a need for God or a redeemer?