



World Christian Fellowship

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Why 4 Gospels?

We have looked at how to read all the four gospels and now this message we will look why there are four gospels.

There Four different audiences
There are four different Purposes
There are four different portraits
There are four different emphasis.

It is not four Gospels but its ONE!

There is no one definitive biography of Jesus Christ in existence, but rather four separate and complementary accounts.

Why?

Because a picture, or portrait, is more complete when viewed from several different angles.

The biography of an important person is not really complete unless we have accounts from various perspectives.

Different persons would see things from a different viewpoint and thus give us a little different slant on his life. Similarly, each of the four Gospel writers looks at Jesus from his own distinct angle. The four Gospels are not biographies in the modern sense.

A large portion of Jesus' life is skipped over, and all four Gospels give a significant amount of their writing to His passion week (Mark 11-16 covers the week leading to the cross and resurrection).

1. Matthew

Matthew, writing to the Jews, was interested in establishing Jesus' Messiahship and the regal rights of Jesus as King of the Jews. In doing so he traced the genealogy of Jesus back to David and Abraham (1:1).

He set forth Christ as the Redeemer-King, the Servant-King of Israel, the Messiah promised to the forefathers. The inscription "**Behold, your king**" (**Zechariah 9:9**) could be written over Matthew's Gospel.

2. Mark

Mark, writing to the Romans, was interested in capturing those shots of Jesus that showed Him as a man of action and the servant of the Lord.

Consequently, we have no genealogy in Mark's Gospel; after all, who is interested in the lineage of a servant?

What Mark had his eye on was the activity of Jesus. This would appeal to a practical Roman citizen. Over Mark's Gospel the inscription might read "**Behold, My Servant**" (Isaiah 42:1; and Zechariah 3:8).

3. Luke

Luke was writing primarily to a Greek or Hellenistic audience and focused on Jesus' humanity. Consequently, Luke traced Christ's genealogy all the way back to Adam (Luke 3:23-38).

Throughout his account, Luke pictured the Son of man as a Kinsman-Redeemer to the whole human race, as one who was willing to save men of every nation. Over his Gospel we might inscribe "**Behold, a man**" (Zechariah 6:12).

4. John

John wrote to the world and in a sense a timeless, universal audience. More than the other writers, he stressed the deity of Christ and His unique relationship with the Father.

Over his Gospel the words "**Behold, your God**" (Isaiah 35:4) could be written in letters of gold.

Four Gospels identify with four living creatures:

Revelation 4:7, *The first living creature was like a lion, the second like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.*

Matthew corresponds with the face of a lion:

The King of Israel. The lion is the king among beasts.

Mark corresponds with the face of a calf (ox):

The servant leader. The ox is known as an animal of service and sacrifice.

This points to Jesus taking the form of a servant.

Luke corresponds with the face of a man:

The Son of Man. This corresponds with Jesus' humanity.

John corresponds with the face of the eagle:

The Son of God. The eagle soars highest among birds.

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Writer	Jew	Roman	Greek	Jew
Profession	Tax collector	Missionary	Doctor	Fisherman
Audience	Jews	Romans	Greeks	World
Portrayed	King	Servant	Man	God
Key verse	16:16	10:45	19:10	20:31
Tone	Prophetic	Practical	Historical	Theological
Genealogy	Abraham	No	Adam	No
OT Quote	53	36	25	20
Feature	5 Discourse	Miracles	Parables	Signs
No of Chapters	28	16	24	21
No of Verses	1,071	678	1,151	879
Unique material	42%	7%	59%	92%
Theme	Christ is KING	Suffering Servant	Salvation for ALL	Deity Eternal Life

Some Basic Presuppositions Concerning Gospels

1. They are historical and not mythological accounts.
2. They are inspired by God and written by men. Therefore, they are:
 - a) Inerrant in the original document
2 Timothy 3:16
 - b) Inspired verbally and plenary.
Matthew 5:17-18; 2 Peter 1:21
3. Because they are written by men, the style, content, etc. will vary, but all of it will be true.
4. The Gospels are more than thematic biographical studies. They are Gospels. (The Gospels are not biographies in the modern sense.)
5. Portions may be condensed and summarized and not exhaustive accounts. (The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5–7)
6. The Gospels are more concerned about Christ's death than His life (over 1/3 deal with the final week of His life).

Conclusion:

Why Should We Trust the Gospels?

Luke 1:1-4,

1. The writers Examined the Evidence 1:1

- a) There were many sources
- b) The events were sure

2. The writers Interviewed Eyewitnesses 1:2

- a) The witnesses spoke of what they saw
- b) The witnesses spoke as servants of the Word

3. They wrote with Exactness 1:3-4

- a) They wrote striving for accuracy 1:3
- b) They wrote seeking our certainty 1:4

Let me conclude with this verse:

**Isaiah 33:17, *Your eyes will see the King in His beauty;
They will see the land that is very far off.***