

## STUDY THE BIBLE 14 (STB 14) "THE GOSPELS"

These are **Matthew, Mark, Luke** and **John**.

**The first three** are similar, as they tell more of the **history** of the physical life of Christ on earth.

**John** also tells of Christ's life on earth, plus more of the **mystery** as the Son of God from heaven.

Matthew (1:1-17) and Luke (3:23-38) outline the physical generations with Matthew starting at Abraham and

**Matthew** traces Christ's beginning back to **Abraham**. **Luke** traces the beginning of Jesus Christ back to **Adam**. **John** traces the beginning of Jesus Christ back to eternity past - before Adam (Genesis 1:1).

As has been said, John reveals more of the **mystery** of Christ from heaven while Matthew, Mark and Luke speak more of the physical **history** and earthly events of Christ here on earth.

Matthew is written about 37AD, with Mark and Luke around the late 58-61 and John after that.

Matthew, pre-dates Paul, and dwells more on Christ's plans to set up the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Mark and Luke, having spent 20 or so years with Paul, speak of the kingdom of God.

Matthew 37AD	Mark 58-61AD	Luke 58-61+AD	John 61-65AD
Pre-dates Paul. Speaks of the <b>kingdom of heaven</b>	Having spent 15 years with Paul, speak of the <b>kingdom of God</b>		
Similar accounts of the <b>history</b> of Christ on earth as a man, the Son of man. Being God manifest in the flesh			More of the <b>mystery</b> of Christ as the Son of God.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GOSPELS

By far, these four books are the most important in the Bible.

They are more important than the rest of the Bible put together.

They are more important than all the rest of the books in the world put together. Why? We can afford to be without the knowledge of everything else, but not without the knowledge of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### WHY FOUR GOSPELS?

If four books are written about the one person, then this man must be of superlative and extreme importance – excelling all others. As it has been said "If you are wanting to buy an authentic Oriental rug, there must be a missed stitch, an imperfection or an irregularity in it somewhere." If the rug is perfect in all aspects, it has been **manufactured** in a factory by machines, where no mistakes are possible.

Now do the gospels appear to have **mistakes** in them? Do they appear to **disagree** with each other? Do they **appear** to be inconsistent with each other? Yes, they do, but closer examination reveal that this is not the case. There are **no mistakes**, they **do not disagree** with each other and are **entirely in harmony**.

Put it this way, if before a **judge** in the civil courts, **four witnesses** appear with exactly the same story, and **all agreeing** with each other down to the **last detail**, then the judge will throw the case out of court. Why? He knows that the witnesses are lying and have colluded (got together) and **manufactured** their evidence, to win their case.

You see, only the genuine truth has apparent inconsistencies and irregularities (mistakes and errors), like the Oriental rug. An example is a car crash that is seen by four different witnesses. All will tell the truth as they see it, and must have different accounts, but when pieced together, are all about the crash.

Imposters and liars guard against the appearance of differences.

So as we question the four witnesses, that is, the four gospels, and piece their evidence together, we will find there are no errors or discrepancies between their stories, that will make up the one truth.

It is only the thread of truth, weaving throughout the various stories and their apparent inconsistencies, that can reconcile them (bring them together).

### THE WRITERS

Matthew a tax collector. Luke a doctor. John a fisherman. Mark unknown. All knew of each other, and were familiar with the writings of each.

### MATTHEW - Jesus the Messiah

Matthew's special emphasis is that of **Christ the Messiah** as foretold by the **Old Testament prophets**.

He **quotes** from the **Old Testament** repeatedly. He has the **Jewish readers** particularly in mind.

He frequently uses the term "**kingdom of heaven**" and is commonly called "the gospel of the kingdom".

While generally following a timely order, the material is also grouped by subjects. Jesus' discourses (speeches) are given full treatment, especially the Sermon on the Mount, his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, and the end of the world,

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### MARK - Jesus the miracle worker

The special emphasis of Mark is the **miracle working power of Jesus** in demonstrating (showing) that he is God. Mark leaves out Jesus' sermons and messages and discourses. Mark tells what Jesus **did** rather than what he said. Mark of the **kingdom of God**.

Mark has Gentile readers in mind, particularly the Romans and their idea of government and power.

### LUKE - Jesus the son of man

Luke's special emphasis is the humanity of Jesus with his kindness toward the **weak**, the **suffering** and the **outcast**. Luke would appeal to the Greeks and their idea of the **universal** man in picturing the perfection of Jesus as the **ideal** man, being thoughtful, cultured and wise. Luke speaks of the **kingdom of God**.

### JOHN - Jesus is God in human form

The special emphasis of John is Jesus is God in the flesh, with emphasis on Jesus' speeches, discourses and messages. It's an emphasis on what he said rather than what he did. **All the gospels are for all people**.

John is the most hated of all the gospels. A lot of heresies and sects had quickly sprung up after Jesus had risen bodily from the dead. They were trying to downgrade, discredit and deny the fact that Jesus was God. John, Jesus' favourite disciple, writes strongly to refute these heresies.

There is nothing new with the modern day cults of JW's, SDA's, Mormons, Christadelphians and so on as they are just a re-hash of the first century sects outlined below.

John is also written to refute the Buddhists, Hindus, New Agers, the Roman Catholics and many others. This is why in the Mormon 'bible' and other corrupt translations, it says "...the Word was a God." (John 1:1).

COMPARING THE FOUR GOSPELS				
	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Pre-existence of Jesus				1:1-3
Jesus birth & childhood	1,2		1,2	
John the Baptist	3:1-12	1:1-8	3:1-20	1:6-42
Jesus' baptism	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:1-20	
Jesus' temptation	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	
Miracle - wedding at Cana				2:1-11
<b>Judea</b> ministry (8 months)				2:13 - 4:3
Visits Samaria				4:4-42
<b>Galilee</b> ministry (2 years)	4:12 - 19:1	1:14 - 10:1	4:14 - 9:51	4:43-54; 6:1-7:1
Visits Jerusalem				5:1-47
<b>Perea</b> ministry (4 months)	19, 20	10	9:51 - 19:28	7:2 - 11:57
The last week	21 - 27	11 - 15	19:29 - 24:1	12 - 19
After the resurrection	28	16	24	20 - 21

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "THE GOSPELS" AND "THE GOSPEL"

The **four gospels** provide a **description of a man** and the **events** surrounding him, to prove that he was "... Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs ... Acts 2:22, and to show that **he was the gospel** of the perfect Passover Lamb with perfect blood.

The **gospel is the good news** that at last, all men, can have **eternal peace** with God. As the scriptures say *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:14.*

### THE GOSPEL IN MINIATURE IS FOUND IN John 3:16

<b>For God</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>lover of men</b>
<b>so loved</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>degree</b>
<b>the world</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>number</b>
<b>that he gave</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>act</b>
<b>his only begotten Son</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>gift</b>
<b>that whosoever</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>invitation</b>
<b>believeth</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>simplicity</b>
<b>in him</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>person</b>
<b>should not perish</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>deliverance</b>
<b>but</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>difference</b>
<b>have</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>certainty</b>
<b>everlasting life</b>	<b>The greatest</b>	<b>possession</b>

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