

## THE FOCUS OF THE FOUR GOSPELS

*Among the four Gospels, which are the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven, I have learned by tradition that the first was written by Matthew, who was once a publican, but afterwards an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and it was prepared for the converts from Judaism, and published in the Hebrew language. The second was that of Mark, who composed it under Peter's guidance. ... The third, the Gospel which was praised by Paul, was that of Luke, written for gentile converts. Last of all, there is that of John.*

Bishop Eusebius quoting Origen (185-253/54), head of the Catholic Catechetical School in Alexandria, Egypt, *Church History*, 6.25.4

<b>Gospel</b>	<b>Matthew</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Luke</b>	<b>John</b>
<b>Audience</b>	Jews	Romans	Hellenists	Greco-Romans
<b>Focus</b>	Jesus is the Messianic King of the promised Davidic Kingdom who fulfills the Old Testament prophesies and covenants.	Jesus is the authoritative Son of God, and He is God's triumphant envoy who has come to suffer and die in order to claim victory over sin and death.	Jesus is the perfect Son of Man, the Messiah prophesied by the prophets, who has come to save and to minister to people of all nations through the power of God the Holy Spirit.	Jesus Christ is the fully divine Son of God who existed before Creation. He is the true Lamb of sacrifice through whom we receive the gift of eternal life.
<b>Some key Scripture passages unique to each Gospel</b>	Mathew 1:1; 16:16-18; 18:18; 28:18-20	Mark 1:1; 8:28-30; 10:45; 16:15-16	Luke 2:34; 11:9-10; 24:25-27, 44-47	John 1:1; 1:29; 3:3-5; 6:53-56; 20:22-23 21:15-19
<b>Some key words</b>	Kingdom of Heaven; fulfilled	Kingdom of God; immediately /now	Kingdom of God; Son of Man	Word of God; only begotten Son; believe; eternal life
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## Handout 2: The Gospel of Matthew Introduction

The five-part narrative-discourse sections are framed by a prologue and an epilogue, making a seven-part division of the Gospel:

- I. Prologue: Birth and Infancy of Jesus (1:1-2:23)
- II. Narrative: Preparations for the Galilean Ministry (3:1-4:25) and First Discourse: The Sermon on the Mount (5:1-7:29)
- III. Narrative: Ten Miracle Stories (8:1-10:4) and Second Discourse: The Missionary Sermon (10:5-11:1)
- IV. Narrative: Diverse responses to Jesus' teachings and actions (11:2-12:50) and Third Discourse: The Parables of the Kingdom (13:1-53)
- V. Narrative: More responses to Jesus' teachings and actions (13:54-17:27) and Fourth Discourse: Sermon on the Life of the Community (18:1-19:1)
- VI. Narrative: Final Journey to Jerusalem (19:2-23:39) and Fifth Discourse: The Eschatological Sermon (24:1-26:2)
- VII. Epilogue: The Passion and Resurrection of the Messiah (26:3-28:20)

There is also a discernable pattern in the use of other repeated phrases. For example, the phrase "From that time on Jesus began," found in 4:17 and 16:21, divides the Gospel into three sections:

- Section I in 1:1-4:16 identifies the person of Jesus of Nazareth.
- Section II in 4:17-16:20 is the proclamation of Jesus' ministry.
- Section III in 16:21-28:20 tells of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

Other scholars have suggested the whole Gospel is laid out in a chiasmic pattern, but scholars have not been able to agree on the divisions. Chiasmus was a popular literary device used by Biblical and ancient secular writers. Scholar C. H. Lohr suggests a reverse chiasmic outline that alternates between narrative and discourse with the hinge of the chiasm being the parables of the kingdom:

- A. Birth and beginnings (chapters 1-4): Narrative
  - B. Blessings, entering the kingdom (chapters 5-7): Discourse
  - C. Authority and invitation (chapters 8-9): Narrative
  - D. Mission Discourse (chapter 10): Discourse
  - E. Rejection by Jesus' generation (chapters 11-12): Narrative
  - X. Parables of the kingdom (chapter 13): Discourse
  - E. Acknowledgment by Jesus' disciples (chapters 14-17): Narrative
  - D. Community Discourse (chapter 18): Discourse
  - C. Authority and invitation (chapters 19-22): Narrative
  - B. Woes, coming of the kingdom (chapters 23-25): Discourse
  - A. Death and rebirth (chapters 26-28): Narrative
- (revised from an outline in *The International Critical Commentary: Matthew*, page 60)

## SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW

Biblical Period	# 11 Jesus the Messiah						
Focus	The coming of the King and the announcement of His Kingdom			The rejection of the King and His final victory			
Covenant	The Sinai Covenant → New Covenant in Christ						
Scripture	1:1-----3:1-----8:1-----11:2-----13:53-----19:2-----26:3-----28:20						
Division of the Text	Prologue: birth & infancy of Jesus	Narrative and discourse #1	Narrative & discourse #2	Narrative & discourse #3	Narrative & discourse #4	Narrative & discourse #5	Epilogue: crucifixion & resurrection of the Messiah
Topic	The King arrives and the Kingdom is proclaimed				Preparing the Apostles and disciples		The King suffers but is victorious
	Chronological		Thematic			Chronological	
Location	Bethlehem and Nazareth	J u d e a	Galilee			Judea	
Time	c. 3/2 BC – 30 AD						

### TIME LINE BC – AD

World Empire: Roman Empire

<b>31BC</b>	<b>3/2BC</b>	<b>14AD</b>	<b>28AD</b>	<b>30AD</b>
Julius Caesar's g. nephew defeats Marc Antony and Cleopatra VII at the Battle of Actium. Octavian became Caesar Augustus 28BC, the first Roman Emperor. It is the end of the Roman Republic and the beginning of the Roman Empire.	Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem in the Roman Province of Judea	death of Caesar Augustus/ Reign of Tiberius Caesar	beginning of Jesus' ministry. Jesus is 30 yrs old	Crucifixion Resurrection Ascension 2 <sup>nd</sup> Great Pentecost=Birth of the New Covenant Church

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