

# [Gospels of mathew, mark, luke and john: the new testament assignment](https://assignbuster.com/gospels-of-mathew-mark-luke-and-john-the-new-testament-assignment/)

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1Introduction The four New Testament (NT) gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke and John present four accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus. Bible scholars and historians assigned the gospel names and their authors as Matthew, Mark, Luke and John respectively. [1] The three gospels, of Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as the Synoptic gospels. [2] The aim of this paper is to discuss the main themes and focuses of each of canonical gospels and show how they relate to reveal a complete picture of Jesus’ life and work. 2The Gospels a) Matthew Matthew was one of the first twelve disciples.

It would appear that his intended audience were Jews, and he presented Jesus mainly as the King, the Son of David and the promised Messiah-King. He records Jesus’ genealogy showing Jesus is descendant from the royal line of David. In (1: 1), he also introduces Jesus as the Son of David. Matthew records more teaching concerning God’s kingdom, for example the entire Sermon on the Mount. The term “ Kingdom of Heaven” appears 33 times and “ Kingdom of God” 4 times. [3] Matthew’s gospel is listed first in the NT because it seems that it is bridging the OT and NT, ushering the Jewish reader from the familiar OT story to Jesus in the NT[4].

Matthew narrates the gospel to convince the Jewish audience of Jesus’ link with the Jewish history and Jesus’ fulfilment of OT prophesies. The gospel is recognised as the “ Teaching Gospel”. [5] When Jesus teaches, he demonstrates His authority as King over physical, psychological, spiritual diseases and even over elements created by God. (5: 17, 4: 24, 8: 1-17, 23-27) Jesus’ authority is recorded, (28: 18-20) ‘ All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth…. ‘ b) Mark Mark is the shortest of the gospels, the probable intended audience were gentiles specifically in Rome and he presents Jesus mainly as the Servant.

The gospel commences with Jesus as a grown up and does not record the birth and childhood and omits Jesus’ genealogy. He translates the Aramaic phrases for his audience and uses more Latin and less OT quotations suggesting that he wrote for non-Jewish who did not understand the Jewish language. [6] Mark concentrated on Jesus’ miraculous works and the gospel is also known as an “ action” gospel because the language he uses is action packed. He uses phrases and words such as “ immediately”, “ at once”, “ as soon as”, “ quickly” stressing his focus on action. 7] He writes with the aim of converting his audience by proving that Jesus is the Son of God, a Jesus of power and action. Marks’ audience faced persecution and martyrdom and so he also writes to strengthen them. He needed to tell them that Jesus had also suffered, and had triumphed over suffering and death. [8] c) Luke Luke was a doctor who got his information from many eye-witnesses. The book may have been commissioned by a non-Christian Roman official called Theophilus (1: 3, 4). Luke’s gospel also is a sequel to the book of Acts. This gospel is the longest of all NT books.

It bridges the events between Christ and the establishment of the church. [9] His genealogy traces Jesus’ roots back to Adam versus genealogy tracing back to the Jewish Abraham. [10] There appears to be evidence in Colossians 4: 10-14 that Luke was a gentile, therefore suggesting his audience may have been gentiles and the only gentile to have his writings canonised. He portrays Jesus as saviour by including more distinct healing miracles and parables than the other gospels. [11] Luke records more narrative of the events, and he alone records John the Baptist’s parentage and records the longest period.

Luke emphasises that salvation is for all and more of Jesus at prayer. [12] He may have wanted the gentiles to know that they had the same access to God and presents God’s grace as available to all. e) John Reading the NT gospels shows that the content and style between John and the Synoptic gospels is different. John lived to be older than any of the gospel writers, therefore it is possible he was aware of the Synoptic gospels and thus wanted to compliment rather than produce a similar account. John brings out the spiritual significance more than the other gospels. 13] ‘ There are more extended discourses in John and Jesus employs more rabbinical methods. ‘[14] John’s purpose of writing is found in John 20: 31, ‘ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. ‘ He wrote to show that God was for the whole world, (3: 16) and had worked through His chosen people, now was working by Word become man. The few miracles that he describes can only be attributed to God Himself. He stresses Jesus’ deity, (1: 1) Jesus is the Word, that is God who became man.

Jesus confirms this verse by many “ I am statements” for example: the bread of life, the light of the world. [15] These “ I am” statements had an important meaning as they were the words God used when He spoke to Moses from the burning bush showing and proving His divinity. (Exodus 3: 6). Throughout the gospel, he records the relationship of Father and Son. For example, those who hate the Son hate the Father, making it impossible to accept the Father if one is not a Christian (8: 28) and (15: 23). Some of these recordings may lead others to believe that the gospel was intended for the Jews. ) Common Ground All four gospels have recorded the witness of John the Baptist, the call and the instruction of the disciples, the feeding of the 5000, Peter’s confession of faith, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, his trial, condemnation and crucifixion, his resurrection from the dead on the third day, his resurrection appearances and his commissioning of his disciples among many others. [16] In addition there are numerous specific sayings which are common or appear in parallel form in all four gospels.

There is also material only found in either one or two or three of the Synoptic gospels. There is material that is unique to Matthew, to Mark, to Luke and to John. Most Bible scholars agree that Mark is the earliest gospel and that it was used as a source by Matthew and Luke,[17] Matthew and Luke also used another hypothetical source called “ Q”. [18] This priority of Mark would explain why the Synoptic gospels seem to share mostly the same view of their recorded events. g) Different Ground

Some of the major differences in John is that he did not record Jesus’ birth, wilderness test, transfiguration, parables as in the Synoptic gospels, the Lord’s supper and the agony in Gethsemane and he has more extended discourses. It could be that John used different sources or his knowledge and facts from his times as Jesus’ disciple. Some of the differences are caused by John concentrating on Jesus’ later ministry around Jerusalem during the temple feasts and the Synoptic gospels concentrate mainly on the earlier ministry in the north and around Galilee. 19] 3. Conclusion All four canonical gospels compliment one another, and present one and the same Person, Jesus the humanity’s redeemer. A Jewish audience in Matthew’s church would need to hear about how Jesus related to Judaism and a gentile in Mark or Luke’s church would want to hear the gospel presented in a way that addressed their lives and situations. When the writers were writing they had no idea their material would be used, included or arranged in the Bible as we know it.

Therefore we can conclude that the purpose of the gospels, their unique styles and their relationship was to give a complete picture of who Jesus is and to relay the message of redemption. The differences have probably since been instrumental in attracting a diverse group of Christians to the church and in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Bible in its entirety is God-inspired and God-breathed. The triune God was actively involved in the revelation of His truth to the apostles and prophets who wrote it down. (2Timothy 3: 16) Bibliography Bruce, F. F. , The New Testament Documents – Are they reliable? Grand rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 6th. edn. 1981). Drane, John, Inroducing the New Testament (Oxford, UK: Lion, 1999). Garrard, David J. , New Testament Survey (Garrard and Mattersey Hall, 2006). House, Wayne H. , Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981). McClaflin, Mike, Life of Christ (Springfield, Missouri: Global University, 3rd. edn. 2000). Milne, Bruce, The Message of John (London, UK: Inter-Varsity\_press, 1993). Radmarcher, Earl D. , Allen, Ronald B. & House, Wayne H. , (eds. ), Nelson’s NKJV Study Bible (Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles, 1997).

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