

Gospel of Matthew

Jesus the King and His Kingdom

Main Focus: Jesus as the promised Messiah and His teachings on the Kingdom of Heaven

Icebreaker:

If you could sit down with any historical figure and ask one question, who would it be and why?

Summary of the Gospel of Matthew

Jesus as the Messiah and King of the Jews

Matthew presents Jesus as the **promised Messiah**, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, and the rightful **King of Israel**. He writes primarily to a **Jewish audience**, emphasizing Jesus' **genealogy, teachings, and kingdom authority**. The Gospel is structured around **five major discourses**, including the **Sermon on the Mount** (Matthew 5-7).

Key Points:

- **Jesus' genealogy** traces Him back to Abraham and David (Matthew 1:1-17).
- **Fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy** is a major theme.
- **Jesus teaches about the Kingdom of Heaven** through parables and direct teachings.
- **The Great Commission** (Matthew 28:18-20) commands His followers to make disciples of all nations.

Summary Verse: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” (Matthew 5:17)

Scripture Reading:

- Matthew 5:1-12 (The Beatitudes)
- Matthew 28:18-20 (The Great Commission)

Discussion Questions & Answers:

1. **How does Matthew emphasize Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy?**
 - Matthew frequently quotes the Old Testament (e.g., Matthew 1:22-23, 2:5-6).
 - He traces Jesus' lineage back to **Abraham and David** to show He is the rightful King (Matthew 1:1-17).
2. **What do the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) teach us about the values of the Kingdom?**
 - The Beatitudes show that God's kingdom values **humility, mercy, righteousness, and peacemaking** rather than worldly power and status.
3. **How does Jesus' authority as King shape our understanding of discipleship?**
 - Jesus calls for **complete surrender** and trust in Him (Matthew 16:24-26).
 - The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) shows that discipleship involves **teaching, baptizing, and obeying** His commands.

Gospel of Matthew – Jesus as the Messianic King

Theological Discussion:

- **Fulfillment of Prophecy** → Matthew repeatedly states, “*This happened to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet*” (e.g., Matthew 1:22, 2:15, 4:14).
- **Jesus and the Law** → Matthew 5:17 says Jesus did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it. How does Jesus **transform the Old Testament Law** into a message of grace?
- **The Kingdom of Heaven** → Unique to Matthew, this phrase appears over **30 times**. How does Jesus’ teaching on the Kingdom challenge earthly power structures?

Application Points:

- ✓ **Trust in God’s Plan** → Just as Jesus fulfilled prophecy, we can trust that God is working in our lives even when we don’t understand.
- ✓ **Kingdom Living** → The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) show the values of God’s Kingdom (humility, mercy, righteousness). How do we live out these values daily?
- ✓ **The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)** → How can we be intentional about making disciples?

Closing Reflection & Prayer

Pray that God will help us live out the Kingdom values in our daily lives.

Gospel of Mark

Jesus, the Servant and Savior

Main Focus: Jesus' mission to serve and suffer for our salvation

Icebreaker:

What is the most urgent situation you've ever been in? How did you respond?

Summary of the Gospel of Mark

Jesus as the Suffering Servant and Son of God

Mark's Gospel is the **shortest and most action-packed**, focusing on **what Jesus did** rather than long teachings. Written for a **Roman audience**, it portrays Jesus as the **Servant-King**, showing His **miracles, power, and ultimate sacrifice** on the cross. The word "**immediately**" appears frequently, emphasizing urgency.

Key Points:

- **Begins with Jesus' ministry (no birth narrative)** (Mark 1:1).
- **Miracles and actions** dominate the narrative.
- **The turning point:** Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ (Mark 8:29).
- **Jesus predicts His death three times**, leading to His crucifixion and resurrection.

Summary Verse: "*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*" (Mark 10:45)

Scripture Reading:

- Mark 1:35-39 (Jesus' priority in prayer and preaching)
- Mark 8:27-38 (Peter's confession and Jesus' call to discipleship)

Discussion Questions & Answers:

1. **How does Mark's fast-paced style impact your understanding of Jesus' ministry?**

- The word “**immediately**” appears over 40 times, showing Jesus’ urgency.
 - Mark emphasizes **action over long teachings**, making the Gospel direct and powerful.
2. **What do Jesus’ miracles reveal about His identity?**
- They confirm His **authority over nature, sickness, demons, and even death** (Mark 4:39, Mark 5:41).
 - They show **compassion** (Mark 1:41) and **power** (Mark 2:5-12).
3. **How does Mark emphasize the suffering and sacrifice of Jesus?**
- Mark 10:45: “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.”
 - Mark highlights Jesus’ **arrest, rejection, and suffering** as central to His mission.

Gospel of Mark – Jesus as the Suffering Servant

Theological Discussion:

- **Jesus' Authority vs. His Servanthood** → Jesus performs **powerful miracles** yet chooses to suffer. How does Mark reconcile Jesus' **divine power** with His **humility and suffering**?
- **The Cost of Discipleship** → In Mark 8:34, Jesus says, “*Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.*” What does this mean for believers today?
- **Messianic Secret** → Jesus often tells people not to reveal His identity after miracles (Mark 1:34, 8:30). Why does Jesus conceal His identity until the cross?

Application Points:

- ✓ **Serving Others** → If Jesus, the Son of God, came to serve, how should that shape our mindset in work, family, and ministry?
- ✓ **Facing Suffering** → Following Jesus means **self-denial**. What does taking up our cross look like in modern life?
- ✓ **Urgency of the Gospel** → Mark's fast-paced storytelling reflects an urgent call to action. How can we be more intentional about sharing the Gospel?

Closing Reflection & Prayer

Pray for a heart that serves others like Jesus did.

Gospel of Luke

Jesus, the Savior for All

Main Focus: Jesus' compassion for all people, especially the marginalized

Icebreaker:

Share a time when someone showed you **unexpected kindness**.

Summary of the Gospel of Luke

Jesus as the Savior of All People

Luke, a **historian and physician**, writes a **detailed and orderly account** of Jesus' life, emphasizing His **compassion for the outcasts**—Gentiles, women, the poor, and sinners. It is the **longest Gospel**, written for a **Greek audience** and dedicated to **Theophilus** (Luke 1:1-4).

Key Points:

- **Luke includes Jesus' birth narrative** with details about Mary, the angels, and the shepherds (Luke 2).
- **Jesus ministers to the marginalized**—Zacchaeus, the Samaritan, and the poor.
- **Parables unique to Luke include** the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) and the Prodigal Son (Luke 15).
- **The role of the Holy Spirit** is emphasized.
- **Luke provides a detailed resurrection account** and Jesus' ascension (Luke 24).

Summary Verse: *“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”* (Luke 19:10)

Scripture Reading:

- Luke 4:16-21 (Jesus' mission statement)
- Luke 15:11-32 (The Prodigal Son)

Discussion Questions & Answers:

1. **How does Luke emphasize Jesus' mission to the poor and outcasts?**
 - Jesus announces His mission to the poor, the blind, and the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19).
 - He interacts with tax collectors (Zacchaeus - Luke 19:1-10), sinners, women, and Samaritans.
2. **What role does the Holy Spirit play in Luke's Gospel?**
 - The Holy Spirit is present at Jesus' birth (Luke 1:35), baptism (Luke 3:22), and ministry (Luke 4:1,14).
 - Jesus promises the Holy Spirit will empower His followers (Luke 24:49).
3. **What do Jesus' parables (such as the Prodigal Son) teach about God's character?**
 - The Prodigal Son shows God's grace and readiness to forgive.
 - Many parables highlight God's joy in seeking the lost (Luke 15:7,10,32).

Gospel of Luke – Jesus as the Savior of All

Theological Discussion:

- **Jesus' Ministry to the Marginalized** → Luke 4:18-19 describes Jesus' mission: "*to proclaim good news to the poor... set the oppressed free.*" How does this challenge **elitism in religion**?

- **The Holy Spirit in Luke** → From Jesus' birth to His baptism and ministry, Luke highlights the Holy Spirit's role. How does this foreshadow the coming of the Spirit in Acts?
- **Salvation & Repentance** → The **Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)** and **Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)** show how Jesus welcomes sinners. How does this redefine **repentance**?

Application Points:

- ✓ **Compassion for the Outcasts** → Who are the "outcasts" in our society, and how can we extend Christ's love to them?
- ✓ **Listening to the Holy Spirit** → How can we cultivate **spiritual sensitivity** to the Holy Spirit's guidance in daily life?
- ✓ **Living a Repentant Life** → True repentance leads to transformation. How do we ensure our repentance is **genuine and lasting**?

Closing Reflection & Prayer

Thank God for His love and grace, and pray for **compassion toward others**.

Gospel of John

Jesus, the Son of God

Main Focus: The divinity of Christ and the importance of faith in Him

Icebreaker:

If you could ask Jesus one question face-to-face, what would it be?

Summary of the Gospel of John

Jesus as the Son of God

John's Gospel is **deeply theological** and different from the Synoptic Gospels. It focuses on Jesus' **divine nature** and **His relationship with God the Father**.

Written for a **universal audience**, John highlights **belief, eternal life, and Jesus as the Word made flesh**.

Key Points:

- **Begins with Jesus' eternal nature:** *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* (John 1:1).
- **Contains seven "I AM" statements** revealing Jesus' divine identity (e.g., *"I am the Bread of Life,"* John 6:35).
- **Focuses on Jesus' miracles ("signs")** to prove His divinity.
- **Includes deep conversations**, such as Nicodemus (John 3) and the Samaritan woman (John 4).
- **John records Jesus' high priestly prayer (John 17)** and His resurrection appearances in detail.

Summary Verse: *"But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."* (John 20:31)

Each Gospel presents a **unique perspective** on Jesus' life and mission:

- **Matthew** → Jesus as King
- **Mark** → Jesus as Servant
- **Luke** → Jesus as Savior
- **John** → Jesus as the Son of God

Scripture Reading:

- John 1:1-14 (Jesus as the Word)
- John 14:6-7 (Jesus as the Way, Truth, and Life)

Discussion Questions & Answers:

1. **How does John's Gospel emphasize Jesus as fully God and fully man?**
 - John 1:1-14 shows that **Jesus is the eternal Word, God in the flesh.**
 - His miracles (John 2:1-11, John 11:43-44) prove His divine authority.
2. **What do the "I AM" statements reveal about Jesus' character?**
 - **"I am the Bread of Life"** (John 6:35) → Jesus sustains our souls.
 - **"I am the Light of the World"** (John 8:12) → Jesus brings truth.
 - **"I am the Good Shepherd"** (John 10:11) → Jesus lays down His life for us.
3. **How does John define what it means to believe in Jesus?**
 - **John 3:16:** Faith in Jesus brings **eternal life.**
 - **John 20:31:** "These are written so that you may believe...and have life in His name."
 - True belief is **not just knowledge but trust and surrender.**
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Gospel of John – Jesus as the Son of God

Theological Discussion:

- **Jesus as the Word (John 1:1-14)** → The Word was **with God and was God**. What does this tell us about **Jesus' divine and human nature**?
- **The "I AM" Statements** → Jesus declares His identity using **God's name (Exodus 3:14)**:
 - "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:35) → How does Jesus satisfy spiritual hunger?
 - "I am the Good Shepherd" (John 10:11) → How does Jesus lead His followers?
 - "I am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25) → What does this mean for believers facing death?
- **Belief & Eternal Life** → John 3:16 is the foundation of Christian faith. How does **faith in Jesus** provide security and hope?

Application Points:

- ✓ **Deepening Our Faith** → John emphasizes **belief** (the word appears **98 times**). How can we strengthen our **daily trust in Christ**?
- ✓ **Seeing Jesus Clearly** → Many **missed** Jesus' identity. Are there areas in our lives where we fail to see Him working?
- ✓ **Living with Eternal Perspective** → If we truly believe in **eternal life**, how should that change our priorities?

Closing Reflection & Prayer

Ask God for deeper faith and a heart that reflects Jesus' truth and love.

Final Discussion Questions :

1. Which Gospel speaks to you the most, and why?
2. How does Jesus' identity in each Gospel shape our view of Him today?
3. How do we apply the Great Commission in our everyday lives?
4. What obstacles prevent us from fully embracing the message of the Gospels?
5. How do we balance faith in Jesus' divinity (John) with following His example of servanthood (Mark)?

Comparison Chart: The Four Gospels

Gospel	Main Theme	Audience	Focus	Key Verse	Unique Features
Matthew	Jesus as the Messianic King	Jews	Fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, Kingdom of Heaven	Matthew 5:17 – <i>“I have not come to abolish [the Law], but to fulfill them.”</i>	Genealogy from Abraham, Sermon on the Mount, Great Commission
Mark	Jesus as the Suffering Servant	Romans	Jesus’ actions, miracles, and service	Mark 10:45 – <i>“The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.”</i>	Fast-paced, uses “immediately” often, shortest Gospel
Luke	Jesus as the Savior for All	Greeks & Gentiles	Jesus’ compassion for outcasts, humanity of Christ	Luke 19:10 – <i>“The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”</i>	Longest Gospel, detailed birth narrative, unique parables
John	Jesus as the Son of God	Universal	Jesus’ divinity, eternal life through faith	John 20:31 – <i>“These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.”</i>	Seven "I AM" statements, deep theology, no parables

Study Questions & Answers: The Four Gospels

1. What is the primary focus of each Gospel?

- **Matthew** → Jesus as the promised **Messianic King**, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies.
- **Mark** → Jesus as the **Servant and Savior**, emphasizing His **actions and miracles**.
- **Luke** → Jesus as the **Savior of all people**, highlighting His **compassion**.
- **John** → Jesus as the **Son of God**, stressing **belief and eternal life**.

2. Why does Matthew emphasize Old Testament prophecy?

- Matthew was writing primarily to **Jewish readers** who valued Scripture.
- He wanted to prove that Jesus was the **fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets**.

3. Why is Mark’s Gospel fast-paced and action-driven?

- Mark wrote for a **Roman audience**, who valued **efficiency and power**.

- His Gospel shows Jesus **immediately moving from one event to another**, highlighting His **authority and mission**.

4. How does Luke's Gospel emphasize Jesus' compassion?

- Luke includes **stories of Jesus helping the poor, sinners, and outcasts** (e.g., Zacchaeus, the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan).
- He highlights **women in Jesus' ministry** (e.g., Mary, Elizabeth, the sinful woman in Luke 7).
- He portrays Jesus as the **Savior of all people**, not just the Jews.

5. How does John's Gospel differ from the other three?

- John focuses on **Jesus' divinity** rather than a historical account of His ministry.
- He includes **deep conversations** (Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman) rather than many parables.
- He structures his Gospel around **seven miracles ("signs")** and **seven "I AM" statements**.

6. What are some of the unique features of each Gospel?

- **Matthew** → Includes the **Sermon on the Mount**, genealogy from Abraham, and the **Great Commission**.
- **Mark** → Shortest Gospel, focuses on **Jesus' miracles and suffering**.
- **Luke** → Includes **unique parables** (Prodigal Son, Good Samaritan), detailed **Christmas story**, and emphasis on **prayer & the Holy Spirit**.
- **John** → No parables, emphasizes **belief**, begins with Jesus as the **eternal Word (John 1:1-14)**.

7. How does each Gospel end, and what is its main message in the conclusion?

- **Matthew** → Ends with the **Great Commission** (Matthew 28:18-20) → Jesus commands His followers to **make disciples of all nations**.
- **Mark** → Ends with the **resurrection and the call to share the Gospel** (Mark 16:15-16).
- **Luke** → Ends with Jesus' **ascension and the promise of the Holy Spirit** (Luke 24:50-53).
- **John** → Ends by affirming that **everything written is to inspire belief in Jesus as the Son of God** (John 20:31).