

THE DISTINCTIVES OF THE GOSPELS

Matthew

Mark

AUTHOR	Matthew or Levi, one of the Twelve, a Jew who worked as a Roman tax collector, Conversion: MT 9:9 (Cf Luke 5:27ff).	John Mark, son of Mary of Jerusalem, in whose house Jesus celebrated the Lord's Supper.
THEME	Repentance and obedience to Jesus, the messianic king!	Jesus - the conquering and suffering Servant of God!
PURPOSE	To call the Jews to repentance and obedience to Jesus their promised Messiah.	To instruct new believers in the origin of the Christian faith.
READERS	Written to Jews, hence a lot of reference to the Old Testament and fulfilled prophecies.	Written to Roman Christians, in particular new converts - hence his emphasis on Jesus as a man of action and in particular the Servant of God. (Many early Christians were servants or slaves) Mark defines Jewish terms and customs for his readers.
ARRANGEMENT	Matthew is structured around Jesus' teaching: organized topically in five collections of discourses. There are Six sections formed, divided by the phrase: "when Jesus had finished saying these things..." (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1)	Mark moves quickly from action to action, using a biographical outline. His book is full of events and activity, and any discourse is confined to dialogue. Mark lets Jesus' deeds and words explain themselves.
STYLE	Matthew uses "extreme" examples and statements to make his points. He often speaks in striking contrasts. He organizes his material in groups of 3, 5 and 7. All through the Gospel is a Stern tone of Judgment. Matthew may have been written in Aramaic first, and then translated into Greek.	Mark gives a Vivid accounting - brief, and nearly all paralleled by the other two Synoptic Gospels but sometimes he notes details often left out of the other Synoptics.
SOURCES	Eyewitness accounts	Primarily Peter, with whom he was associated (1 Peter 5:13); however he started the first Missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas, his uncle; and may have been the young man who lost his clothes in Mark 14:51.
KEY WORDS	"fulfilled", "Kingdom" (50), "Kingdom of Heaven" (30), "King"	"Immediately", "Gospel", "Faith"
GOSPEL STATEMENTS	Matt 28:19ff; 11:28	Mark 1:14
MIRACLES	Two miracles are found only in Matthew. One refers to tax money! (17:24ff)	Mark records 19 miracles showing the supernatural power of the Lord over disease, nature, demons and death.

LUKE

JOHN

AUTHOR	Luke, a Greek Physician and companion of Paul on his second and third journeys, during his Palestinian imprisonment and on the trip to Rome.	John, one of the original twelve disciples, referred to as "the one Jesus loved", and the only Gospel author who was an eyewitness of the beginnings of Jesus' ministry and the crucifixion of Jesus.
THEME	The full and absolute forgiving grace of God revealed in the incarnate Savior.	Jesus revealed as the Divine Son of God
PURPOSE	To make more certain the faith of Theophilus, a Greek Christian through an orderly account of the events of Jesus ministry.	To bring men everywhere into faith in Jesus Christ.
READERS	To Greek Christians. He uses classical Greek conventions and style and a rich vocabulary and sometimes substitutes Greek names for Hebrew ones.	To all men (the world) lost and needing New Birth and Salvation.
ARRANGEMENT	Luke follows Mark's basic outline, but adds a substantial amount of material. (About half of the Gospel is unique to Luke.) He has the most complete nativity narratives and his account of Jesus' Perea ministry covers 8 chapters unparalleled in MT and MK.	John is full of encounters of Jesus with people. His narrative focuses on Jesus in Jerusalem, and in particular His attendance at the major Jewish feasts (which give us a Chronology of Jesus' ministry). Except for certain key events, John omits the Galilean and Withdrawal ministries. Half of the book is devoted to the last week.
STYLE	Luke is warm and devotional, including hymns and prayers. He refers to Jesus' emotions and has more reference to women than the others. There is also significant reference to Jesus' ministry to the poor, the lowly and the outcast.	John was written in simple Greek, with a somewhat limited vocabulary. It is quite distinct from the others in style being much deeper and spiritual in tone. It emphasizes believing in the Gospel as the way to Eternal life.
SOURCES	Paul and apparently interviews with many eyewitnesses - for example, Elizabeth and Mary, the Centurion at the cross, etc. Luke testifies his Gospel is well researched and verified. (Luke 1:1-4)	Eyewitness account, though John always downplays his own presence, referring to himself through out the narrative in the third person as "the Disciple Jesus loved."
KEY WORDS	"Son of Man", "Lost", "Forgive", "Savior", "Salvation"	"Eternal life", "Son of God", "I AM" statements, "Believe"
GOSPEL STATEMENTS	Luke 24:45-48; 5:32; 19:10	John 3:16; 20:31
MIRACLES	Luke records an number of miracles not recorded by the others.	John records eight miracles, six of which are unique to his Gospel. He states that many things Jesus did were not recorded (21:25).

Gospel Comparisons

2/3 of Mark is in Matthew. Only 31 verses of Mark are not in Luke or Matthew. 1/3 of Luke is in Mark.
There are 200 verses in both Matthew and Luke, but not Mark. Substantial portions of Matthew are unique to it.