

## Lesson 123

# The Gospel Truth

Each Gospel account shares unique aspects about Jesus.

# Studying God's Word

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Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

### Introduction

Refer to the Seven C's of History Poster. The Bible gives us the true history of the world. The Seven C's help us remember that history, starting with Creation and ending with the Consummation. Briefly review the events from the poster.

Slide #3

Slide #4

Refer to Lesson 121 Theme Poster. We learned that the people waited a long time for the Messiah—the Savior whom God first promised to send in the garden of Eden. In the meantime, throughout the Old Testament God gave his people prophecies about the Savior and pictures of what he would do when he came. Then the New Testament tells the exciting news that Jesus Christ, the Messiah, has come!

Refer to Lesson 122 Theme Poster. We know that we can trust the New Testament because its writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit. The disciples were eyewitnesses of Jesus' life, like the Apostle John, who saw Jesus' miracles and heard his teaching. God preserved the New Testament writings through people who copied and shared the books with others. We use all those manuscript copies—thousands of them—to know the original message of people who walked and talked with Jesus!

Today we are going to take a quick look at each of the four Gospels. The word gospel means "good news." These four books each tell of the good news of Jesus. You might think since they all talk about Jesus, they must all be the same. But these Gospels were written (with the help of the Holy Spirit) by four different men. We'll see today that they are not exactly alike. And that was God's plan. Each writer wrote about Jesus—who he was and how he lived—in a unique way and included different events.

Have copies of At the Fair instructions and cue cards ready.

To help us understand this, I need four volunteers to read some parts. We'll see how four different people can be part of the same event yet describe it differently. As the volunteers describe a day at the fair, pay attention to what is similar and what is different. Follow the At the Fair Instructions.

The four accounts of the day at the fair were different. But that doesn't mean the people were lying or that the event didn't happen. It made it seem even more real because they each emphasized, or showed more excitement for, different things according to what caught their interest or how they felt about

the activities. That's what we expect when different people give their own point of view on the same events.

It is the same with the four Gospels. Four different men wrote these accounts, and they each told what they thought was important about Jesus' life. These differences in each Gospel show they are true. They don't contradict, or disagree with, each other, but they emphasize and focus on different things Jesus said and did. God gave us four Gospels so that when we read all of them, we find out everything he wanted us to know about Jesus' life!

## Matthew

Pass out the Scripture Sheets and Class Notes.

Let's start with the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew was a Jewish tax collector before Jesus called him to be a disciple. He probably had his fellow Jews in mind when he wrote his Gospel. Matthew knew that they were waiting for their Messiah to come and that he would be a Jew from the family of David.

Slide #5

Slide #6

Matthew starts his Gospel with a genealogy. Does anyone remember what that is? Allow discussion.

Genealogy: a list of a person's ancestors—the family they came from  
Genealogy is a big word for the study of a family. A genealogy can go back a few years, or hundreds or thousands of years, and it names people who were part of a particular family, such as the parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and so on.

Matthew 1:1

Look at your Scripture Sheets. The verses we will be reading today are printed there. Will someone read Matthew 1:1 for us? Choose a reader.  
Who is this genealogy about? Jesus.

Matthew wanted to show his readers something important about Jesus' family.

What two men are mentioned as part of Jesus' family? David and Abraham.

That's right. Circle "son of David" and "son of Abraham" in Matthew 1:1. Have students circle the names. These names were very special to the Jews. They showed that Jesus is the eternal King and Messiah who had been promised in the Old Testament to both Abraham and King David.

Slide #7

Matthew 9:27

Who will read Matthew 9:27? We are going to jump to a day when two blind men were crying out to Jesus as he passed by them. Notice what they call Jesus in this verse. Assign a reader.

What did these two blind men call Jesus as they cried out to him?  
Son of David.

Yes. Remember, the Jews knew that the title Son of David would mean the promised Messiah and eternal King. Circle "Son of David" in Matthew 9:27 on your sheets. Have students circle the name.

If you look through the Gospel of Matthew, you can see that he often writes about people using the title Son of David.

And what did we say that name meant to the Jews? When they heard someone called the Son of David, who did they think it was? The Messiah whom God had promised—the eternal King.

Slide #8

Slide #9

Right! Let's put that in our Class Notes. Will someone read #1 about the purpose of Matthew's Gospel? Assign a reader. Messiah, King.

How about #2? What title is often used for Jesus in the book of Matthew? Assign a reader. Son of David.

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. God promised David in the Old Testament that his kingdom would be established forever through someone who would be a part of his family—a part of his genealogy. Throughout his Gospel, Matthew points out that Jesus is the Son of David because the Jews knew that title meant he was the Messiah and the eternal King whom God had promised.

## Mark

### Slide #10

Now let's look at the Gospel of Mark. Mark was not one of the 12 disciples (apostles), but he was a friend of the Apostle Peter—one of Jesus' very close friends. God used Mark to write this Gospel and show something else about Jesus. Let's find out what that was.

Mark 10:45

We can read about it in Mark 10:45. Choose a reader.

Why did Jesus come to earth? What two reasons are given here? To serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Can you imagine it? God, the Son of Man and the King of kings, became fully human and came to earth to serve others—not to be served himself. Underline the word "serve." Have students underline the word.

What does it mean that Jesus came to give his life as a ransom? Allow discussion.

Ransom: a payment made to free a person who is kidnapped, imprisoned, or enslaved

A ransom is something you pay in order to free a person who's been kidnapped or put in prison or who is a slave.

Slide #11

Slide #12

Slide #13

Before a person can be set free, a ransom must be paid. We are all born as slaves to sin, but the only ransom God could accept for the forgiveness of our sin was the blood of a perfect man. So, Jesus came to die on the cross to pay a ransom for sinners—that's us! The payment Jesus had to make was his very own life!

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. That is why Jesus came to earth, so he could serve sinners and suffer for them by dying on the cross. He was a perfect, suffering servant who died to offer eternal life to all who would turn away from their sins and put their trust in him.

Will someone read #3 on the Class Notes for us? What word is missing? Assign a reader. Servant. Have students complete #3.

Slide #14

Slide #15

Mark 6:34

Let's read the next verse on the Scripture Sheet: Mark 6:34. Look for a key word that tells what Jesus thought of the people he came to serve. Choose readers.

There is a word used to describe how Jesus felt toward the crowd. What is it? Compassion.

Underline the word "compassion" in the verse. Have students underline the word.

What is compassion? Allow discussion.

Compassion: sympathy, kindness, concern, or care for others  
Compassion is sympathy, kindness, concern, or care for others.  
Compassion is showing tenderness and love to other people.

Jesus loved people and wanted to help them. God wanted Mark to tell readers that Jesus cared about people and had compassion toward them. He taught them, healed them, and fed them. But he didn't just meet people's physical needs by healing and helping; he also came to solve our spiritual need to have our sins forgiven.

Slide #16

How will you complete #4 on your Class Notes? Who will read that for us? Assign a reader. Compassion.

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus is shown to be a compassionate, suffering servant who loved people and was willing to die so that everyone who believes in him could be saved.

## Luke

Let's look at the next Gospel, Luke. Luke was not a Jew; he was a Gentile and friend of the Apostle Paul. He was also a physician—a doctor. What did Luke tell us about Jesus?

## Luke 19:10

### Slide #17

Let's start with Luke 19:10. This verse makes Luke's purpose very clear. Will someone read that for us? Choose a reader.  
What is Jesus called in this verse? The Son of Man.

Circle the name "Son of Man" in Luke 19:10. Have students circle Son of Man. Luke often called Jesus the Son of Man. It means that, though Jesus was fully God, he was also fully man. He came to earth humbly, as a human.

And why did Jesus come? To seek and to save the lost.  
Who are the lost in this verse? Allow answers.

The lost are sinners—people like you and me!

### Slide #18

### Slide #19

### Luke 5:32

Let's read what Jesus said about why he came in Luke 5:32. Choose a reader.

Why did Jesus come, to call sinners to what? To call sinners to repentance. Underline the word "repentance." Who can tell me what Jesus meant by repentance? Allow discussion.

Repentance: turning away from sin

Repentance means turning away from sin. It means we are truly sorry for our sins, and we turn away from them so we don't sin anymore. Why would sinners want to repent and stop sinning?

Think of someone you care about, a family member or friend, for example. Would you want to do something on purpose to hurt them? That wouldn't be very loving, would it?

Sinners who truly repent are sorry for their sins because they understand that God is holy. Who will read the definition of holy from the Attributes of God Poster? Choose a reader. Holy: cannot sin and hates all sin.

If you love God, and you know God hates sin, would you hurt him on purpose by doing the things he hates? Of course not. When people repent of their sins, it's because they love God, and they want to please him by being obedient.

### Slide #20

### Slide #21

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. Luke tells us that Jesus is the Son of Man—he was fully man AND fully God. He came to seek and to save those who are lost in sin. He came to call sinners to turn away from their sins in repentance. This is the message of Luke's Gospel.

Someone read #5 on the Class Notes. What words are missing? Assign a reader. Seek, save.

And #6? What title did Luke use for Jesus? Assign a reader. Son of Man.

## John

### Slide #22

Now we are ready to look at the last Gospel—John! John was a Jewish fisherman when Jesus called him to be one of the 12 disciples. John was a close friend of Jesus.

John 20:31

We'll start with John 20:31. Someone read that for us. Assign a reader.

What did John want us to believe about Jesus? Who was Jesus? Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Christ is the Greek word for Messiah. Then John called Jesus the Son of God. This does not mean that Jesus is God's son like boys are sons to their dads. No. This means that Jesus is God in human form. John wanted his readers to know that Jesus is God! Circle "Son of God" in John 20:31. Have students circle Son of God.

What does believing in Jesus Christ give sinners? Look at the end of the verse. Life in his name.

John knew that Jesus Christ IS the Son of God and that only he can give eternal, or everlasting, life. John wanted his readers to know this and believe it.

### Slide #23

### Slide #24

### Slide #25

John 17:3

John said this again. Someone read John 17:3. Choose a reader.

What is eternal life according to this verse? Who do believers need to know? The only true God and Jesus Christ.

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. John really wanted his readers to believe in Jesus. He knew that was the only way sinners could have eternal life with Jesus in heaven. Circle the word "God" in that verse. Have students circle the word.

Now go to #7 on your Class Notes. Will someone read that? What is the title John used for Jesus? Assign a reader. Christ.

And #8? Will someone read that? Assign a reader. Son of God.

John knew that Jesus is God and that he is the only way for us to have eternal life. John wanted his readers to know Jesus—to believe in him and to know that God sent him to save sinners.

## Application

Today we compared the four Gospels. The authors of each one wrote the truth of Jesus' life. But each Gospel is different from the others. Each Gospel shows us something special about Jesus. And by looking at all of the Gospels together, we see Jesus in a more complete way!

### Slide #26

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Matthew wanted his readers to know that Jesus is the Messiah and the eternal King God promised in the Old Testament. Mark wrote that Jesus was a servant who suffered death on the cross so sinners could be saved. Luke showed that Jesus came to seek and save the lost. John wrote so that his readers would know that Jesus is the Son of God. John knew that sinners can have eternal life with God in heaven forever only through Jesus Christ, and he wanted his readers to believe in Jesus.

Together, the Gospels show us a more complete picture of Jesus. Jesus was everything the Gospel writers wrote about . . . and more. If you read all the Gospels, you will know a lot about Jesus' life.

But there is more to it. Knowing about someone is different than knowing them, isn't it? Do you know about Abraham Lincoln, or do you know him personally? Allow discussion. Know about.

The men who wrote the Gospels didn't want us to just know about Jesus. They wanted us to know Jesus. The Gospels were written so that we would understand that there is a way to be saved from the punishment we deserve for our sin. When Jesus died, he took the punishment for sinners to give eternal life to all who will believe.

Do you know Jesus the way the Gospel writers wanted you to know him? Everyone who believes in the Jesus of the Bible (that he really lived, died, and rose again), and everyone who is sorry for sinning and turns away from sin, will be saved. That's the beginning of knowing Jesus as a child of God, and that's the message of the Gospels.

## **Lesson Review**

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.



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