

## 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 promised to send back 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 gives the exciting message that the Messiah has come!

Refer to Lesson 122 Theme Poster. We know that we can trust the New Testament because its writing was inspired by the Holy Spirit. The disciples were eyewitnesses of Jesus' life. They traveled with him, talked with him, learned from him, and saw his miracles. 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. Because these four books were written by four different men, they are not the same. And that was God's plan. Each writer wrote about Jesus—who he was and how he lived—with a unique purpose and focus.

Have copies of the Retelling an Accident Skit ready along with props.

To help us understand this, I need three volunteers to act out a skit. We'll see how several people can witness the same event yet describe it differently. It's a modern-day example of what it is like to hear about the same thing from several different sources. Pay attention to what is similar and what is different. Choose three students and follow the directions in the skit to set the scene. Have students perform the skit. When finished, continue with the lesson.

From what three sources did Jason learn about the car accident? TV (newscaster), newspaper, and a friend.

Each source gave a different location for the accident. The Newscaster said it happened near Taco Town, the newspaper said it happened on Third Street, and the Friend said the accident was by the mall.

Which one was right? They all were; some gave a familiar landmark (Taco Town, mall) while another gave the street name.

What things were the same in the different sources? Allow discussion. SUV rolled, several cars involved, two girls stuck inside, the jaws of life.

Even though all the accounts were told in a different way based on what the witnesses saw, there were enough details that were similar, so Jason knew they were describing the same accident.

Each source gave some different details from the others. What were some differences between the TV Newscaster, the newspaper, and the Friend? Allow discussion. The Newscaster didn't mention names or that the children were taken to the hospital. The newspaper said the accident was on Third Street, someone called 911, the mother was panicked, and the airbags deployed. The Friend knew the names of the family in the SUV and that Jamie was in the hospital. The Friend didn't mention the dog.

The three accounts of the accident were different. But that doesn't mean the people were lying or that the event didn't happen. It made the event seem even more real because witnesses saw and reported things differently. 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 the accounts, and they each told what they thought was important about Jesus' life. The differences in the themes of the Gospels show they are true. They don't contradict each other; they emphasize different things Jesus said and did. God gave us four Gospels so that when we read 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 tax collector before Jesus called him to be a disciple. Matthew 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.

Matthew 1:1

### Slide #5

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. What kind of writing does Matthew 1:1 say it starts with? A genealogy.

### Slide #6

### Slide #7

What is a genealogy? Allow discussion.

Genealogy: the study of who is part of a family

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 tells who was part of a family, such as the parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc.

Matthew starts off by telling his readers that this is a genealogy.

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 was the eternal King and Messiah who had been promised in the Old Testament to both Abraham and King David.

Slide #8

Slide #9

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 refer to the promised Messiah and eternal King. Circle "Son of David" in Matthew 9:27 on your sheets. Have students circle the name.

Matthew 21:9

Let's move on to Matthew 21:9. You will see that people again were crying out to Jesus. Listen to what they were calling him. Assign a reader.

What did they call Jesus? The Son of David.

Circle the name "Son of David" in Matthew 21:9. Have students circle the name.

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 eternal King—the Messiah God had promised.

Slide #10

Slide #11

Take a look at your Class Notes. Will someone read #1 about the purpose of Matthew's Gospel? Assign a reader. Messiah, King.

How about #2? What title is 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. Matthew called Jesus the Son of David many times throughout his Gospel because the Jews knew that title meant he was the Messiah and the eternal King whom God had promised.

**Mark**Slide #12Slide #13

Now let's look at the Gospel of Mark. Mark was a friend of the Apostle Peter, and Peter was 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? 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 imprisoned or enslaved. Before a person can be set free, a ransom must be paid. We are born enslaved to sin, but the only ransom acceptable to God 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!

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. The payment Jesus had to make was his very own life! That is why Jesus came to earth, so he could suffer for and serve sinners. 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.

Slide #14Slide #15

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

Slide #16Slide #17

Mark 6:34, 8:2

Let's read the next two verses on the Scripture Sheets: Mark 6:34 and 8:2. Look for a word that is used in both verses. Choose readers.

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

Underline the word "compassion" in both those verses. Have students underline the words.

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; he came to solve our spiritual need to have our sins forgiven and to be restored by God.

### Slide #18

How will you complete #4 on your Class Notes? Who can 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**

### Slide #19

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

Luke 19:10

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. 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. Have students circle Son of Man.

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 #20

### Slide #21

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 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 in sorrow or shame. It means we are sorry for our sins, and we don't want to sin anymore.

Why would sinners want to turn away from their sins and be sorry for them? Allow discussion.

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.

Sin is an offense to God. People turn away from their sins because they love God, and they want to please him. They want to be obedient to God.

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 the lost. He came to call sinners to turn away from their sins in repentance. This is the message of Luke's Gospel.

Slide #22

Slide #23

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 #24

Now we are ready to look at the last Gospel—John! John was a fisherman when Jesus called him to be a disciple. 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. It means that Jesus is God in human form. Circle "Son of God" in John 20:31. John wanted his readers to know that Jesus is God! 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 life. John wanted his readers to know this and believe it.

Slide #25

Slide #26

Slide #27

## 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.

Circle the word "God" in that verse. Have students circle the word.

Show the Lesson Theme Poster. John wanted his readers to believe in Jesus. John knew that was the only way sinners could have eternal life in heaven.

Now go to #7 on your Class Notes. Will someone read that? What is the title John used for Jesus? Assign a reader. Son of God.  
And #8? Will someone read that? Assign a reader. God.

## Application

### Slide #28

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Today we compared the four Gospels. The authors wrote the truth of Jesus' life. But each Gospel is different from the others. Each Gospel shows us something special about Jesus.

Matthew started with a genealogy and called Jesus the Son of David. He wanted his readers to know that Jesus is the Messiah and the eternal King God promised in the Old Testament.

Mark showed a compassionate Jesus who loved people and wanted to help them. Mark also wrote that Jesus was a servant who suffered death on the cross to save sinners.

Luke showed that Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, was fully human. Jesus came to call sinners like you and me to repentance. He came to earth 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 through Jesus Christ alone, and he wanted his readers to believe in Jesus.

Together, the Gospels show us a more complete picture of Jesus. 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. The men who wrote the Gospels didn't want us to just know about Jesus. They wanted us to know Jesus and know 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. His death provides new life to everyone 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, and everyone who turns away from sin, will be saved. That's the message that the Holy Spirit reveals to



readers through the Gospels, and that's the beginning of a personal relationship with Jesus as a child of God.

## Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

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