



Gospels

- The Gospels parallel the ancient genre called *bios*. A *bios* brought out the key events and teachings of a person.
- The Gospels are more than biographies of Jesus. They present Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament. They present Jesus as Savior and Lord.
- Keep the focus on Jesus.
- After reading and studying a Gospel account of the Lord Jesus we should know four things:
 - What Jesus did
 - What Jesus taught
 - Who Jesus is
 - What it means to be his disciple
- Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels.

Parables

One of the keys to properly understanding the parables is to know their purpose.

- Matthew 13:10-17
- Matthew 11:25-27

Avoid Allegorizing

- One of the dangers in reading parables is to focus too much on the details.
- In an allegory the main details of the story represent real-world realities.
- Origen gave this interpretation to the parable of the Good Samaritan.
 - Jerusalem represents heaven.
 - The man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho is Adam.
 - The thieves who attack the man are the devil and his demons.
 - The priest who passes by is the Law which is powerless to help.
 - The Levite represents the Prophets who cannot save the man.
 - The Good Samaritan is Christ.
 - The beast on which he places the man is the body of Christ.
 - The inn that housed the man is the church.



- The innkeeper represents the angel that is in charge of the church.
 - The two coins given to the innkeeper represent the knowledge of the Father and the Son.
 - The Samaritan's promise to return is the promise of the return of Christ.¹
- Luke 10:36-37

Parable Principles

Principles for reading parables:

1. Pay attention to the scope of the parable.
2. Look for the point of comparison.

Prodigal Son

- Luke 15:11-32
- What is the scope? Luke 15:1-2
 - The religious leaders were grumbling because Jesus was allowing tax collectors and sinners to draw near to him.
- What is the point of comparison?
 - The sinners and the tax collectors are acting like the younger son, but the religious leaders are acting like the older son.
- The one thing all parables have in common is they were all told by Jesus.

Miracles

- In the scope of the whole Bible we find that miracles occur infrequently and for specific purposes. Miracles are mainly grouped around four time periods and lasted for no more than a generation. Miracles happen
 - During the time of the Exodus with Moses and entry into the Promised Land with Joshua.
 - In the time of Elijah and Elisha when the people of God were threatened with false religion and surrounding enemies.
 - During Daniel's time when the people of God were in exile.
 - In the time of Jesus and the apostles.
- Three types of miracles in Acts 2:22
 - A mighty work of power – *dunamis* in Greek.

¹ Ferguson, *From the Mouth of God*, 114-115.



- A wonder – *teras* in Greek.
- A sign – *semeion* in Greek.
- Miracles are displayed for varying purposes. Miracles
 - Cause wonder and awe as they demonstrate the power of God;
 - Show God’s mercy to the weak and needy and God’s judgment on sin;
 - Confirm and authenticate those who institute new periods of divine activity and/or commissioned by God as those who bring a new stage of revelation;
 - Defend or advance God’s kingdom at significant times in history;
 - Provide brief glimpses of the way in which Satan and his works will be fully and finally overcome and the way mankind will be restored.
- The question is not, “How can I do what Jesus did?”, but “Who is the one who does these miracles?”.²
- The words of Jesus are confirmed by the works of Jesus.
- John 5:19; 14:10
- Matthew 26:53-54; 13:58
- John 9:1-7
- John 2:1-11
- Matthew 11:2-6
- Isaiah 29:19; 35:5-6; and 61:1

² Ibid., 120-123.