

# Summer in the Word: New Testament

## Gospels & Acts

6.18.20



# GOSPELS

But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:31)



# Gospels

## Genre

- Gospel: An eyewitness narrative account of the life and ministry of Jesus
- Three Horizons - the gospels are literary documents that:
  - impart Historical Truth
  - with Theological Perspective
  - and Pastoral Direction





# Gospels

## Authors

- Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- Formal title - i.e. “The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to **Mark**”
- Evangelist: a proclaimer or herald of good news



# Gospels

## Why were the gospels written? Why are there four accounts?

- Life of the early church (house churches)
  - **Acts 2:42** They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.
  - Early church proclamation ("KERYGMA") and oral teaching by the apostles
- A need for trustworthy written records of Jesus' words and deeds as gospel spread to more cities and as eyewitnesses passed away
  - Written to specific Christian communities in the 1st century





# Gospels

How did the gospels come to be?

Passion Preaching (“Kerygma”)

MARK

Teaching

JOHN

MATTHEW

Narrative

LUKE

Interpretation



# Gospels

## Synoptic Gospels vs. Fourth Gospel

- Synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke
  - a common point of view
  - chronological outline of Jesus' life and public ministry
    - 1. Preparation: calling of John the Baptist, Jesus' baptism & temptation
    - 2. Ministry in Galilee
    - 3. Journey to Judea and ministry in and around Judea
    - 4. Final week in Jerusalem, death, resurrection, appearance to disciples



# Gospels

## Synoptic Gospels vs. Fourth Gospel

- **Synoptics - Commonalities:**
  - Sequence of events
  - Structure of telling the event, and vocabulary (healing of the paralytic, introducing John the Baptist)
- **Synoptics - Differences:**
  - Material that is peculiar to each of the synoptics (genealogy of Matthew and Luke, telling of Jesus' birth - angel appeared to Joseph in Matthew, angel appeared to Mary in Luke)
  - Differences in parallel accounts: the account of Jesus' temptations





# Gospels

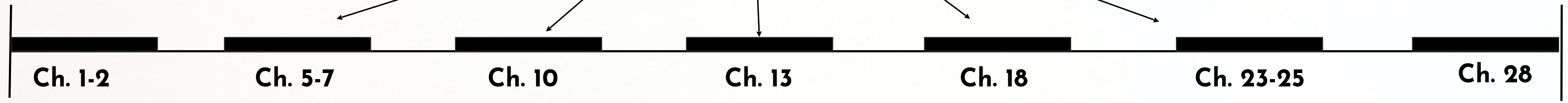
## Synoptic Gospels vs. Fourth Gospel

- No infancy story or genealogy of Jesus
- Begins instead with a prologue about the pre-existent Son of God (Word)
- Instead of starting with Galilean ministry, movement between Galilee and Judea
- Highlights 7 signs of Jesus, beginning with miracle of wine at Cana, and includes long speeches by Jesus to teach about the significance of His work



# Matthew

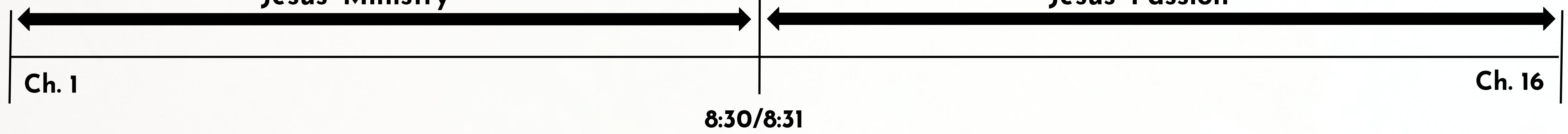
## Five Main Sermons of Jesus



# Mark

## Jesus' Ministry

## Jesus' Passion



# Luke

## Parallel to Mark

## Q & L

## Mark & L

## Resurrection

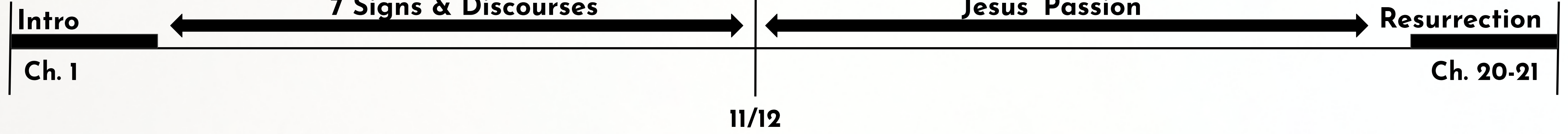


# John

## 7 Signs & Discourses

## Jesus' Passion

## Resurrection



# Frequently Seen Characters and Locations

- Pharisees - “separated ones”
- Scribes and Lawyers - teachers of the Law
- Synagogue - local center of worship for the reading of God’s Word
- Temple - place where priests served, place of worship/offering
- Sinners, Prostitutes, Lepers - socially ostracized by religious leaders
  - Tax Collectors - Jewish descent, despised by Jews





# Historical & Social Background of Jesus' Time

What is the social/historical/cultural backdrop of the gospels?

- Purity Code

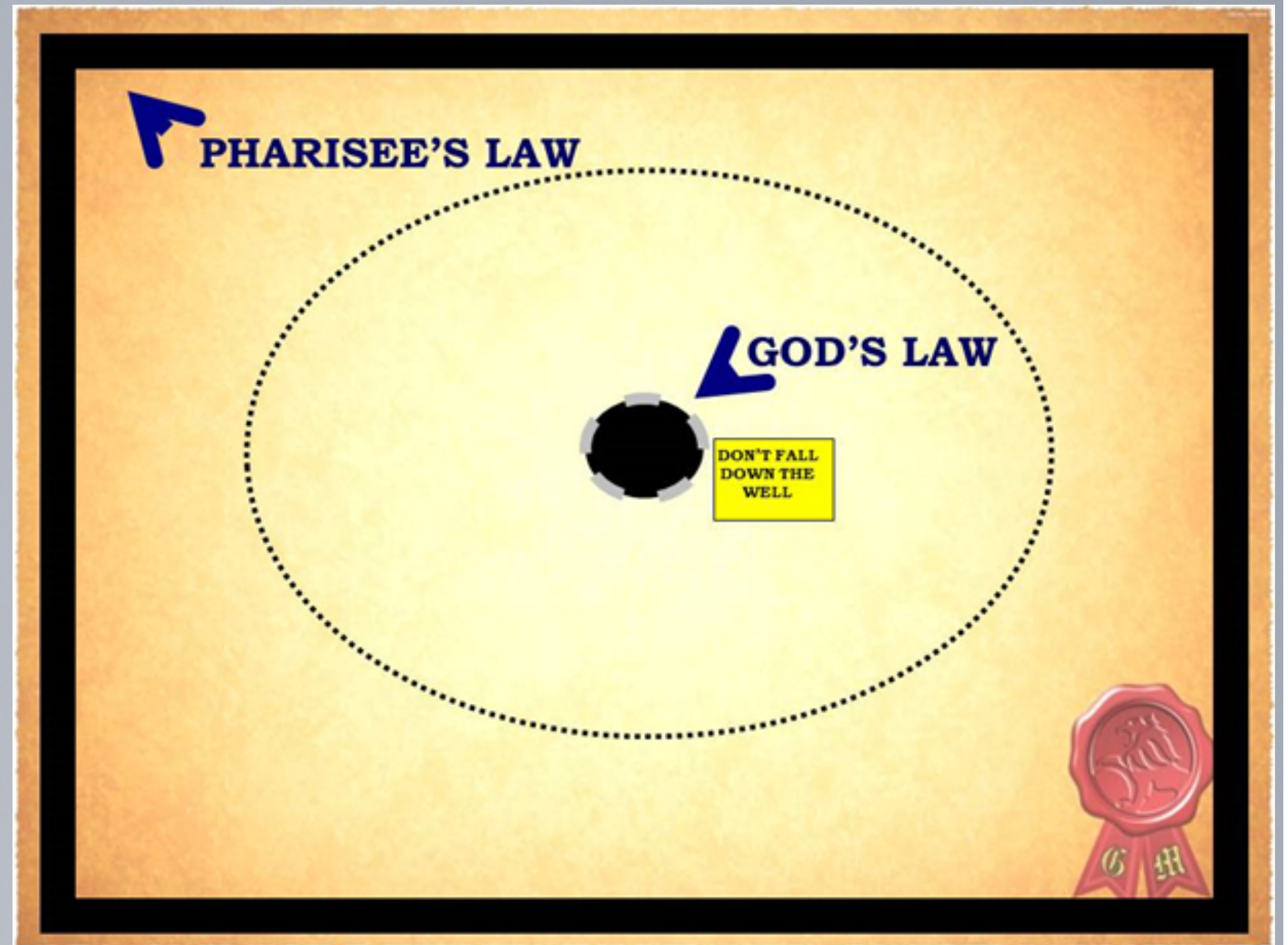
- **Luke 15:1-2** Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."
- **Matthew 9:12-13** It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick... for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

- Fence Around the Law



# Fence around the Law

**Matthew 23:23** “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.”





# JESUS' MAIN MESSAGE

“The time is fulfilled, and **the kingdom of God is at hand**; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:15)





# Jesus' Main Message

## Old Testament Promises - Israel's Hope

- A. The Judgement of Israel's Enemies - Joel 3:2, 12:13
- B. The Return of the Exiles - Micah 4:6-8
- C. The Renewal of the Land - Amos 9:13-15
- D. The Rebuilding of the Temple - Ezekiel 43:1-7
- E. The Coming of the Messiah "The Anointed One" - Ezekiel 27:21-25
- F. The Establishment of a New Covenant - Jeremiah 31:31-34
- G. The Outpouring of the Spirit - Joel 2:28-29
- H. The Healing and Purification of the People - Jeremiah 33:6-8; Isaiah 62:1-3
- I. The Inclusion of the Nations in the Blessings of the Kingdom - Zech. 8:20-23



# Jesus' Main Message

## Israel's Condition During Jesus' Time

- Vassal state under Roman rule
- Longed to preserve Jewish identity: Temple, Torah, and Sabbath
- Awaited the coming of the Messiah



# Jesus' Main Message

## Jewish Expectation of the Kingdom

1. The Two Ages

2. Imminent, At Once, Immediately

**Matthew 3:12** His winnowing fork is his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn, and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

**Matthew 11:2-6** Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples **3** and said to Him, "**Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?**" **4** Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: **5** *the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.* **6** And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me."

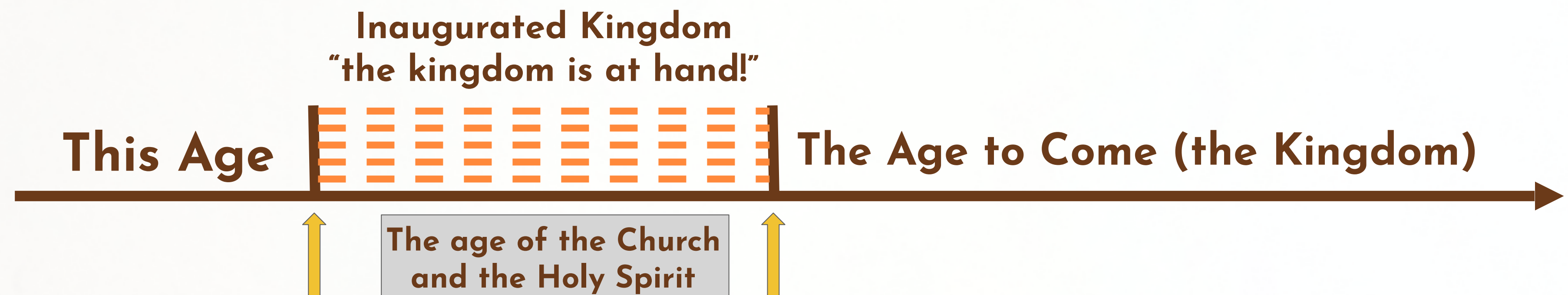




# Jesus' Main Message

## The Kingdom of God is at Hand

- “at hand” or “has come near”
- the kingdom has “finished arriving”
- Jesus is the inaugurator of the kingdom of God

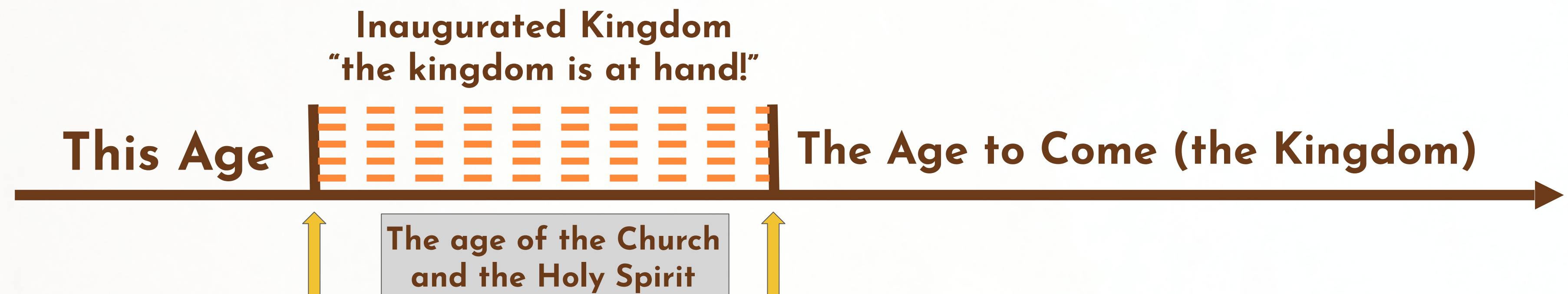


# Jesus' Main Message

## The Kingdom of God is at Hand

- The Presence of the Kingdom

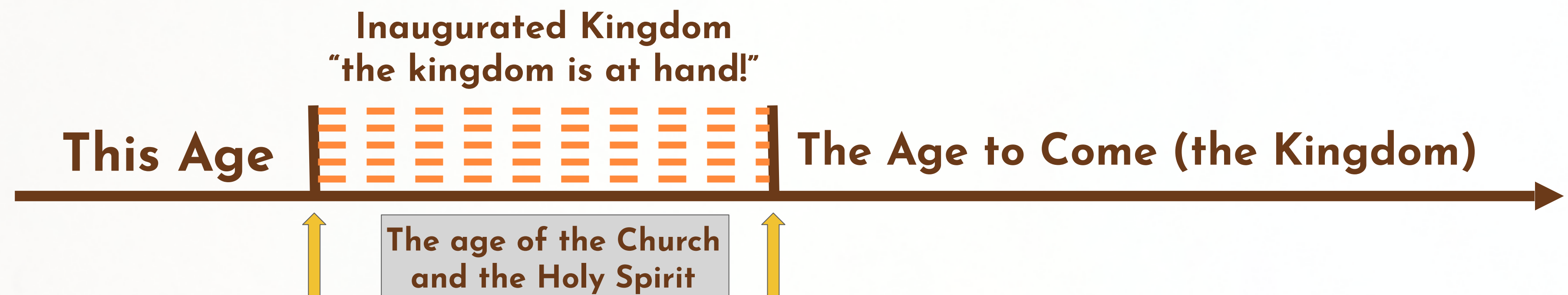
- **Mark 2:18-20** vs. 19 says "And Jesus said to them, "While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they?"
- **Matthew 11:4-6** vs. 5 says "Go and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."



# Jesus' Main Message

## The Kingdom of God is at Hand

- The Final Delay of the Kingdom
  - Matthew 13:24-30 (vs. 36-42) The parable of the wheat and the tares
  - Matthew 13:31-33 The parable of the mustard seed and the leaven
- The Unsurprising Point
- The Surprising Manner of the Kingdom





# UNIQUENESS OF EACH GOSPEL



# Uniqueness of Each Gospel

## Matthew

- Formerly a tax collector, also named Levi; one of the 12 disciples
- Matthew's structure reflects his skill with numbers.
- Written to Christians who were formerly Jews
- Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of David.
- The **church** is mentioned in Matthew's gospel (Mt. 16:18)
- Discipleship to Jesus means to be an example with a commission.



# Uniqueness of Each Gospel

## Mark

- John Mark
- Peter's interpreter and secretary
- Vivid narrative style reflects Peter's lively preaching
- Mark highlights Jesus as the authoritative and mighty Son of God, and the Suffering Servant
  - The Messianic Secret
  - Discipleship to Jesus means to be a servant (Mark 10:45); servanthood is the path to greatness





# Uniqueness of Each Gospel

## Luke

- Traveling companion of Paul, a Gentile, a doctor
- Emphasis on 1) the inclusion of Gentiles and 2) the work of the Holy Spirit
- Jesus did his ministry as 100% man who relied on the Holy Spirit.  
Jesus is the Savior of all humanity (genealogy traces back to Adam)
  - Includes the last journey before Jerusalem, where Jesus ministers in Perea, gives many parables not included in other gospels (i.e. parable of the lost coin, sheep, and son)
  - Discipleship to Jesus means to be followers of the costly Way



# Uniqueness of Each Gospel

## John

- Son of Zebedee, mother of Jesus was given to John at the cross
- John's unique experience of Jesus
- Special encounters with Jesus
- 7 Signs and Discourses
- "I AM" statements
- Jesus is the WORD of GOD, the full expression of God. He makes God known to us.
- Discipleship to Jesus means to be marked by Jesus.



# Uniqueness of Each Gospel

## John - Jesus' 7 Signs

1. Turning Water into Wine ([John 2:1-11](#))
2. Cleansing the Temple ([John 2:12-17](#))
3. Healing the Nobleman's Son ([John 4:46-54](#))
4. Healing the Lame Man ([John 5:1-15](#))
5. Feeding the Multitude ([John 6:1-15](#))
6. Healing the Blind Man ([John 9](#))
7. Raising Lazarus ([John 11](#))





# Uniqueness of Each Gospel

## John - I AM statements

1. "I am the bread of life" 6:35
2. "I am the light of the world" 8:12
3. "I am the door" 10:7
4. "I am the good shepherd" 10:11
5. "I am the resurrection and the life" 11:25
6. "I am the way, the truth, and the life" 14:6"



# Implications for Discipleship Today

Luke 6:40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.

Reading the Gospels will feed our **ongoing journey** of learning how to be a disciple of Jesus.

- Grace of the Servant
- Demand of the Kingdom
- Followers with a Commission





# ACTS

“And the word of God kept growing, and the number of the disciples kept multiplying greatly...” (Acts 6:7)





# ACTS

## Sequel to Gospel of Luke

- Gospel of Luke: all the Jesus began to teach and do
- Acts: How the early believers continued the work of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit



# ACTS

## General Structure of Acts

- Chapters 1-8: Pentecost Event, Peter
  - **Stephen (Acts 6-7)**
  - **Philip (Acts 8)**
    - 8:4-5 Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word. Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them.
  - Chapters 9-12: Paul's Conversion, Peter to the Gentiles
    - 11:19 So those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch...
  - Chapters 13-28: Paul



# ACTS

## Emphasis in Acts

- **1) Expansion of God's work of salvation from Jews to Gentiles**
  - **Cornelius' household - Acts 11:11, 18** Now the apostles and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that Gentiles also had received the word of God... Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.
    - **Acts 11:19-26 What happened at Antioch?**
      - Antioch is reached due to scattering of believers after persecution
      - Non-Jews became believers
      - Barnabas and Paul taught the Antioch church ("first called Christians")





# ACTS

## Emphasis in Acts

- **2) Expansion of God's work of salvation through church planting**
  - **Acts 13:2** While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."



# ACTS

## The Ending of Acts

- Ending seems abrupt
- Paul imprisoned in Rome
- The unfinished task of worldwide evangelism



# Question for Discussion

- 1) Knowing the uniqueness of each gospel, **which of the four gospels** do you feel led to read in this season for your personal Bible study and/or devotional/prayer time? Share why.
- 2) What is **one question** you have about discipleship that you hope to find an answer through reading the gospels and Acts?

