

# The Four Gospels Testify About Jesus

Understand how the four Gospels are alike and how they differ

**Anchor command.** “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” *Acts 1:8*

**Anchor story.** Jesus’ prayer of submission at Gethsemane (one of the few events recorded by all four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). *Matthew 26: 36-47*

**Anchor verse.** “You are witnesses of these things.” *Luke 24:48*

**Learning goal.** Discern the different emphases on the life of Christ, of each of the four Gospels.

**Growth goal.** Greater understanding and appreciation of what Jesus taught and did on earth.

**Skill goal.** Find events and teachings of Jesus easily in the different Gospels.

**Outcome goal.** Believers have a well-rounded view of Christ’s life and death on earth.

Holy Father, you have testified to us about your Son, Jesus, and given to us the four Gospels. Give us grace to know them, to obey them and to teach them to others.

## Basic Study

**Learn from the story of Christ’s prayer of submission in Gethsemane, *Matthew 26: 36-47.***

- How did Jesus feel in his soul when he entered the garden of Gethsemane? 36-38
- What was Jesus request to his father? (The word “cup” referred to his death) 39
- What were his disciples doing when they should have been watching? 40-41
- How many times did he pray that same prayer? 42-44
- what people were approaching while Jesus prayed? 45-47



*Before his arrest, Jesus prayed while his disciples slept.*

### During the week...

- Discuss with your co-workers who the four Gospel authors were, and how their writings are alike and how they differ.
- Visit the homes of believers and unbelievers, and explain that the four Gospels present true stories from people who knew Jesus
- Urge the believers to read through one of the Gospels.

### During worship...

- **Explain** how the four Gospels are true history, very different from other religious books that tell stories about false gods or about somebody's dreams.
- Let **four believers** represent Mark, Matthew, Luke and John. They introduce themselves and explain facts about them:

**Mark:** "I am Mark. I left with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary trip, but I grew fearful and went back. Paul was angry for a long time, but finally forgave me and asked for my help."

**Matthew:** "I am the apostle Matthew, also called Levi. I collected taxes for the Romans, which made the Jews angry with me. I had a lot of very bad friends until I followed Jesus."

**Luke:** "I am Dr. Luke, a physician. Like most Greeks, I love to reflect on Jesus' teaching. I accompanied Paul on several missionary journeys. I saw the Holy Spirit transform people of different countries as we told them about Jesus and gathered them into new congregations."

**John:** "I am John, the first disciple to arrive at Jesus' empty tomb. I am the only apostle that did not die as a martyr. God let me reach old age, although in exile, to write messages from Jesus."

- Ask the **children** to present what they have prepared.
- **Memorize** together John 8:31-32.

### Advanced Study



Matthew



Mark



Luke



John

#### 1. Background of the four Gospels

- Find from Luke 1:1-4 where the Gospels came from.
- Since ancient times the testimony of several witnesses is stronger than that of one. According to the Law given by Moses, a legal trial required two or three witnesses.
- The Holy Spirit has given to us four witnesses to the Life and teachings of Jesus: Mark, Matthew, Luke and John, the compilers and writers of the four Gospels.
- Each of the four Gospel writers lived while Jesus was on earth. Three of them knew him well, and Luke investigated the facts about Jesus (Luke 1:1-3). Thus, the four gospels are 'eye-witness' accounts, the strongest kind.

- All four writers included in their Gospel some of the same accounts about Jesus, and each one adds things that the others left out. Yet all agree; the four Gospels form a single true story.
- Later, other religions tried to change the stories about Jesus, but we can trust the original four Gospels.

**2. Learn the name and main personality traits of each of the four Gospel authors:**

**Mark**

- Mark was a young man when Jesus was crucified.
- He was from a Jewish family, saw Jesus, and knew the Apostle Peter well.
- He later served with the Apostle Paul. He probably wrote his Gospel earlier than the others did theirs.
- It is the shortest Gospel and mostly recounts the actions and activities that Jesus performed. People from Rome valued power and especially liked to read Mark's Gospel.

**Matthew**

- Matthew was a serious Jew and customs tax-collector until Jesus told him, "Follow Me."
- He used some parts of Mark's Gospel and included more accounts that he knew personally.
- He related a lot of events and details about Jesus that Jewish people understood well.

**Luke**

- Luke, a non-Jewish medical doctor, became a believer after Jesus died and rose.
- He travelled with the Apostle Paul. While Paul was in prison in Judea, Luke travelled there and investigated eye-witness accounts about Jesus.
- Luke described many details about Jesus and the people whom he met, showing that he listened carefully to the eye-witnesses whom he interviewed in Judea.
- Luke included many historical and medical facts that appeal to non-Jewish readers.

**John**

- John had been a follower of John the Baptist until he met Jesus and become one of his most devoted followers.
- John lived a long life. Before he died, he wrote his Gospel to supply accounts that the other Gospels had left out.
- He recorded many of Jesus' long talks that Christians of every background enjoy reading.

**3. Together, the four Gospels deal with the main events from the life of Jesus, along with many of his teachings, commandments and promises.**

- All of the gospels recount how Jesus was crucified and buried, and how he rose to life and appeared to many witnesses.
- Reading and telling accounts from the four Gospels is the most effective way that we can evangelise others.

**4. Plan with your co-workers additional activities for the coming week.**

- Have the believers **tell** aloud how accounts from the Gospels have helped them.
- To introduce the **Lord's Supper**, read Matthew 27:27-31. Explain that Jesus' suffering was the penalty for our sins. He suffered and died for us. We remember this every time we celebrate the Lord's Supper.
- Those who **teach children** should read study #37 for children.