

Introduction to the Gospel Selected Scriptures

Introduction

I trust the series of sermons from the book of Proverbs and the related topical sermons have been helpful to your own walk with our Lord. I also trust it is your desire to be someone who is wise and joyously walk with God by striving to live by His commandments, and not someone progressing into foolishness or living in resignation. Last week's sermon was a good challenge toward that end. Pick up or download a copy if you were not here.

This morning we begin a new series of sermons on the life of Jesus Christ. I suspect this could take four years or more since it took four years to just preach through the gospel of Matthew back in the early 1990's. I was able to preach through the gospel of John in just over two years in 1999-2001, but this series will be examining all four gospels, so it will take longer. It would be easier to preach through just one of the gospel accounts, but it is my desire to give a fuller description of our Lord than would be presented by any one gospel. Each gospel account has a slightly different focus as we shall see in our study this morning, but instead of just concentrating on the emphasis given in just one of the gospels, I want to bring out aspects of Jesus' life from all of them. Because Luke presents the story of Jesus chronologically, I will be using that gospel account as the outline upon which I will expand with material from the other gospels. Since Robert L. Thomas and Stanley N. Gundry have correlated the passages of the various gospels in their book, *A Harmony of the Gospels*, (Harper & Row, 1978), I will be making extensive use of their work throughout this series.

Let us begin by taking a brief look at each of the gospels to make sure we understand the authorship and emphasis of each. This may seem somewhat academic, but we live in a time in which even basic truths are attacked, so it is important to have a firm foundation in knowing God's hand in directing the men who penned the words of the gospels.

Matthew

Author: We begin with the gospel according to Matthew and the first question is, who is the author? Prior to the middle of the 1800's that would not have been asked or simply answered, the Apostle Matthew. However with the rise of German Higher Criticism in the 19th century, the authorship of most books have been questioned, so there does need to be some defense given to it. Since then, not only has the authorship been questioned, but it has become popular among liberal Bible scholars to play guessing games about who wrote or said what in the Scriptures and especially the gospels. One of the extremes from this was the group that met semi-annually in the 1980's under the direction of Dr. Robert Funk to vote on the authenticity of specific sayings and parables attributed to Jesus. The culmination of their efforts was a Bible in which words they believed Jesus said are printed in red, those they think He might have said are pink, those that they think He may not have said are gray, and those they do not believe He said are black. They had very little in red. This may represent the more extreme end of things, but even conservative evangelical scholars have bought into the assumptions that have led to this travesty against truth by saying that the Gospel accounts of Matthew and Luke are based on the Gospel of Mark and some unknown source of traditions referred to as "Q" (for Quelle). The result of this is that Matthew is denied as the author of the Gospel of Matthew and instead it is attributed to some unknown editor or editors who compiled it from various sources.

We could spend a long time discussing just this issue, but that is not our purpose this morning. If someone is keenly interested in this subject, I would be happy to give you the pertinent articles. Let me just briefly mention four reasons why the apostle Matthew is the author of this gospel and that he does not rely on Mark and other sources for his information.

1) Liberal scholars developed the two source theory (and then the four source theory) and gave the gospel of Mark priority in the effort to solve what they call the "Synoptic Problem." It is based on the fact that there are agreements and differences between Matthew, Mark and Luke. However, this is only a problem if it is assumed that the agreements must come from one writer being dependent on the material from another writer. However, this solution does not even solve their supposed problem, for as Dr. Robert Thomas has shown, you can use their same methodology to make the case for either Matthew or Luke to be the original source for the others.

2) The title given to the first gospel account as well as the other Gospels are traced back to the earliest scripture manuscripts (Vaticanus, 4th Century) and to the earliest collections of apostolic writings and early church fathers (Irenaeus - 185AD). Christian Historian Eusebius (263-339 AD) indicates that Matthew was the first to write.

3) The wide spread usage of Matthew's gospel in the writings of the early church fathers (Ignatius, 110 AD; the Didache, 110 AD; The Epistle of Barnabas, 120 AD) also indicates an early writing and acceptance of the Apostle Matthew being the author. If the early church had no hesitation in attributing the book directly to Matthew, then neither should we.

4) It is ludicrous to think that an eye witness would rely on someone that was not an eyewitness in order to record what he himself experienced. That is one reason why those who give Mark priority will also deny Matthew was the actual writer of that Gospel account. Matthew wrote about events he was present at or learned from the other Apostles. It is possible that Mark could have been present at some of the events (see below), but he could not have been present at most of them. Like Luke, he would have to research what he wrote about by talking with eyewitnesses which could have included Matthew. Again, it is ludicrous to think Matthew would rely on either Mark or Luke to write about the things he had himself experienced.

The calling of Matthew (also called Levi) by Jesus to become one of His disciples is recorded in Matthew 9:9, Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:27-28. Matthew was a tax-gatherer and as such was hated by the people. Rome demanded a tax from every country they ruled over and high-ranking Romans would bid for the right to collect toll taxes from specified regions at a fixed rate for a fixed time. These were the *publicani* (publicans). They could keep whatever was above the amount Rome demanded. The publican in turn hired tax-gatherers to work for him under a similar arrangement. The tax-gatherer would keep any amount above what was demanded by the Publican he worked for. The tax-gatherers were usually citizens of the country being taxed and so they were hated as both extortioners and as traitors. The Jews ranked them with the lowest elements of society - sinners and prostitutes (Matthew 9:11; 21:31).

As Jesus was passing by the tax office in Capernum where Matthew was at, (usually a table by the side of the road where they collected the toll tax), He called to Matthew and told him to "*follow Me.*" Scripture says that Matthew rose, left everything behind and began following Jesus (Luke 5:27-28). Matthew was one of the twelve men that Jesus specifically called to follow him as His apostles (Matthew 10:2-4). The apostles were men set apart and then sent out by Jesus with His authority as ministers of God.

Time of Writing: The next question is, when was Matthew written? Liberals deny his authorship and also claim it was written in the second century or later. However, two factors give us a date range. The predictions in Matthew 24 of the destruction of Jerusalem which occurred in 70 A.D. are clearly prophetic, so Matthew wrote prior to this date. The use of the phrase "to (or until) this day" occurring in 27:8 & 28:15 indicates that he wrote sometime after the resurrection. Fifteen to twenty years would be sufficient for this phrase to be meaningfully used. The time range then is between 50 and 70 A.D., and if

Eusibius is accurate about Matthew being the first to write, then it was probably toward the earlier date of 50 A.D.

Audience: The next question is, to whom was Matthew writing? Each of the synoptic gospels was written to a particular audience. Matthew is writing to a Jewish readership. This is indicated by the assumption that occurs throughout the book that the reader is familiar with Jewish customs for they are not explained as they are in the other gospels. This fact also gives us insight into the theme and purpose Matthew.

Theme: Matthew documents that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the greater son of David that would rule upon His throne. Matthew also presents Jesus' kingdom program in its description, offer, rejection and promise for a future fulfillment.

Matthew begins by presenting the lineage of Jesus through Joseph as the son of David, the son of Abraham for it is through Joseph as His adoptive father that Jesus has the royal right to sit on David's throne. Matthew also traces the fulfillment of significant prophecies concerning the promised Messiah throughout the book. Jesus' conception is in fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 that by a divine miracle He would be born to a virgin and be Immanuel, God with us. In Matthew 2, the magi, the king makers from the east, had seen His star and arrived in Jerusalem looking for the new born king and were told He would have been born in Bethlehem in fulfillment of the prophecy of Micah 5:2. The prophecy of Hosea 11:1 is fulfilled by their flight to Egypt. In Matthew 3, John the Baptist is the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the herald that would precede and prepare the way for the Messiah. Jesus' identity is confirmed at His baptism when a voice from heaven proclaims, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.*" In Matthew 4, Jesus proves His sinless nature by overcoming the temptations of the devil, the last of which was the offer by the devil of the kingdoms of the world. Jesus then begins His public ministry by being baptized, calling His first disciples and preaching, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"

The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 is Jesus' explanation of the nature of His kingdom beginning with the character qualities of those that would be part of it for they have a righteousness that exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus taught with authority and refuted the twisted teachings of the scribes and the perverted practices of the Pharisees. He then spoke of the narrow gate and narrow road that lead to life while warning of false teachers. Those in His kingdom would walk in the wisdom of hearing and acting upon what Jesus taught.

Matthew 8 & 9 present Jesus' credentials of deity demonstrated by His healing of the sick, casting out demons and forgiving sins and raising the dead. The particular examples show the compassion of the Messiah to lepers, Gentiles and women, all of whom were considered outcasts or less worthy by the Jewish religious leaders. Jesus miracles were accomplished by physical action, direct command even from a distance and by the person's faith. In Matthew 10, Jesus proves His authority by calling disciples and sending them out with His message.

Matthew 11-16 reveals the opposition to the Messiah. John the Baptist is in jail and beginning to doubt, so Jesus has to remind him that the ancient Hebrew prophecies are being fulfilled. Jesus does great miracles, but the cities in which they are done do not repent. The Pharisees attribute one of Jesus' miracles to Beelzebul, the ruler of demons, resulting in Jesus condemning them and changing His preaching. Jesus begins to teach in parables specifically so that He could explain the mysteries of heaven to His followers while confusing those who were not His followers. Jesus continues to work miracles showing His power over nature to create food, walk on water and command the weather, but opposition continues to increase. John the Baptist is beheaded and the challenges by the Pharisees and Scribes become more intense.

In Matthew 16:13-20:34 the focus changes again as Jesus cultivates His disciples for what will lie ahead. There are commendations and rebukes as Jesus corrects and teaches them the necessary lessons to bring them to spiritual maturity. Jesus reveals His glory at His transfiguration (Matthew 17), but He still

has to rebuke their pride, teach them to be humble and forgiving, and that in His kingdom, the leaders are also servants.

Matthew 21-25 is the presentation of the Messiah to the nation seen in His triumphal entry, teaching in the Temple and refuting the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees. This is followed in Matthew 26 by Jesus establishing Communion at the last supper, the betrayal, arrest and trials culminating in Pilate's cowardly condemnation to crucify Jesus. Yet, even in all of this, Jesus' identity as Messiah was proved by His words, actions and the supernatural events that fulfilled the ancient prophecies. Jesus is buried and the tomb is secured, but that is to no avail, for Matthew 28 records Jesus fulfilling His promise and rising from the dead, showing Himself to His disciples and commissioning them to make disciples of all nations.

The Apostle Matthew presents Jesus as the promised Messiah, the savior, who fulfilled the ancient prophecies concerning His first coming, and by the power of His resurrection will fulfill the prophecies concerning His return. We are therefore to carry out the commission He has given us until He returns.

Mark

The Gospel according to Mark is the shortest of the four gospels. It is only 16 chapters containing 680 verses compared to 28 chapters and 1,137 verses for Matthew; 24 chapters and 1,151 verses for Luke and 21 chapters and 879 verses for John. One commentator entitled this the "*Go Gospel*" because it is short and to the point.

Author: The author is not specifically mentioned within the text of the gospel. All ancient tradition points it to be Mark, also known as John Mark. This tradition goes back to Papias at the end of the first century or beginning of the second. It is affirmed by the early church fathers including Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Jerome. All of them associate Mark with Peter in the production of this gospel account.

Mark is mentioned 10 times in the New Testament with five of those times as Mark, three as John Mark and twice as John. His mother's name was Mary and the family was of some wealth since they had a gated home that was large enough to hold the many Christians that had gathered there to pray for Peter while he was in prison (Acts 12:12). He was the cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10) who worked with Paul in Antioch and then went with them on the first missionary journey. Then, for some unknown reason, Mark left them when they had reached Perga (Acts 13:13). This caused a dispute between Paul and Barnabas at a later time when they had decided to go on a second missionary trip. Barnabas took John Mark with him and returned to Cyprus while Paul took Silas with him and returned through Syria to Cilicia, Lycaonia and then on west to Mysia and Europe. The conflict between John Mark and Paul was eventually resolved for he is mentioned Colossians 4:10 by Paul as being with him in Rome and that he would be going to Colossae. He is also mentioned by Paul in 2 Timothy 4:11 that Timothy was to bring Mark along with him for "*he is useful to me for service.*"

Since Mark's home was in Jerusalem and his family were early followers of Christ, then he may have been an eyewitness to a few of the events recorded in his gospel such as Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and His teaching in the Temple. He may have even been one of the five hundred brethren that saw Jesus after his resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:6). However, the vast majority of what he wrote had to be learned from someone else since he was not there. The tradition from the early church is that he wrote on the basis of his association with Peter.

Time of writing: According to Irenaeus in *Against Heresies*, Matthew wrote his gospel account while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome and after their deaths, "*Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also handed down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter.*" This would place this gospel in the mid to late 60's A.D. And because the prediction of Jerusalem's destruction in Mark 13 is still future, it is written before 70 A.D.

Audience: Even though Mark is the shortest gospel account, he does take the time to explain Jewish customs. He also takes the time to interpret Aramaic expressions into Greek. Neither of these would be needed for most Jewish readers and so it points to Mark writing to Gentiles and most likely Romans since that is his association during this period. In addition there are some phrases used by Mark that are Latin in origin which would also point to a Roman readership.

Theme: The theme of the Gospel according to Mark is stated in Mark 1:1, *“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”* Mark’s theme is the good news of Jesus Christ and not a biography of Jesus. This explains why it does not have a rigid chronology and states nothing about Jesus’ birth or genealogy. It also explains why a relatively large portion of the book is devoted to the last three weeks of Jesus’s life and particularly the last week. The key events of the gospel are Jesus’ death and resurrection. Mark skips over a lot of Jesus’ teachings on various subjects in order to concentrate on Jesus’ work in serving God and man in bringing about God’s plan of salvation. A key verse for this gospel is Mark 10:45, *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”*

The key sections of Mark are: The presentation of the Servant in chapters 1 & 2. Rising opposition to the Servant in chapters 2 - 8. Instructions from the Servant in chapters 8-10. The rejection of the Servant in chapters 11-15, and the Resurrection of the Servant in chapter 16.

Luke

Luke is the most thorough of the gospels in tracing the entire story of the life of Jesus. It is actually the longest book in the New Testament and so it is not surprising that it contains much material not found in Matthew or Mark.

Author: The agreement of the early church is that Luke, a Gentile doctor that accompanied Paul on his second and third missionary journeys, wrote this gospel account as well as the book of Acts. We are not told exactly where Luke and Paul meet, but by Acts 16:10, Luke is including himself in the narrative of Paul’s journey noting that after Paul had his vision of the man from Macedonia, *“immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.”* Luke continues as a faithful companion of Paul throughout the rest of his journeys.

Luke’s introduction to his gospel account gives us the needed clues as to his method of research and writing, when he wrote, to whom he wrote, and his purpose in writing. Luke 1:1–4, *“Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, ² just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, ³ it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; ⁴ so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.*

Luke is direct in stating that he is compiling a record of Jesus’ life from what he had received from eye witnesses and those that had served with Jesus. While Matthew and John were eyewitnesses to Jesus’ years of ministry and Mark may have seen some of Jesus’ ministry, Luke had not seen any of it and is relying on the testimony of those who had been present. Those witnesses could have easily included some of the apostles including Matthew and John. He may well have also interacted with Peter and John Mark. He could have gained the information about the period before Jesus birth from Mary, the mother of Jesus, as well as other personal stories from such people as Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Chuza and others.

Time of writing: Luke’s long association with Paul allowed him to meet many first hand witnesses of Jesus’ life and especially during the two years that Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea. The introduction Luke makes in Acts 1:1 indicates that Luke had already sent Theophilus his gospel account before sending him what had occurred among the apostles after Jesus’ ascension. Since Acts ends with Paul still in prison in Rome about 62 A.D., then the gospel account had to have been compiled prior to that

date. The majority of the early church fathers place Luke as being second after Matthew, but there are also a few that place Mark before Luke, so there is some discrepancy.

Audience: Luke is direct in Luke 1:3 that he is writing to a Greek friend named Theophilus to give him a better understanding of Jesus' life and ministry. It is an account that is written well for anyone that desires such an understanding.

Theme: Luke is also direct that his purpose was to make a careful investigation and then carefully write out in consecutive order an account of Jesus life. From that purpose, this gospel is an historical account that includes information not in the other gospels, but it is a history with a purpose in presenting Jesus as the perfect man who came to seek and save the lost. The key theme verse is Luke 19:10, "*For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.*"

Luke as a Gentile writing to a Gentile gives the most attention of the gospel accounts to Jesus' interaction with Gentiles as well as the poor, women and those entrapped in sin who were looked down upon by Jewish society. Jesus is the Savior of all people regardless of ethnic heritage, wealth, position, gender, or past sins. It is Luke that records Jesus' parables of the saving of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son, the prodigal welcomed home by the father.

John

Author: The author makes reference to himself in several passages giving clues as to his identity. He includes himself in the introduction as one of those who beheld the glory of the Word that had become flesh and dwelt among men (John 1:14). He is also a man who is adamant in his testimony that he had seen Jesus die on the cross and was present when the soldiers pierced His side so that blood and water poured out (John 19:35). He also identifies himself in John 21:20-24 as "*the disciple who Jesus loved*" who had "*leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, 'Lord, who is the one who betrays You?'*" (vs. 20). That same identification is used for the man that was at Jesus' crucifixion and to whom Jesus entrusted the care of His mother, Mary (John 19:26). He is also the disciple that ran with Peter to Jesus' tomb on the morning of His resurrection and saw that the tomb contained Jesus' grave clothes and he believed (John 20:2-8).

The consistent testimony of the early church is that this is John, the son of Zebedee. The story of Jesus calling him and his brother, James, to be His disciples is recorded in Matthew 4:18-22 and Mark 1:16-20. These two brothers, along with their friends, Peter and Andrew, had been fishermen on the Sea of Galilee until Jesus called them to follow Him and learn to be fishers of men.

James and John were rough and impetuous when Jesus called them, so much so that Jesus nicknamed them the "Sons of Thunder" (See Mark 3:17; Luke 9:54-56). They changed as they followed the Lord, and John, though still direct, became a compassionate and loving man as seen in the three epistles he wrote.

Some scholars have scoffed that a fisherman could have written such a gospel account and letters, but that assumes that fisherman were not only without education but also incapable of learning over the years of their life. It should not be underestimated what the Holy Spirit can do in the life of an individual and especially so when that individual is motivated and there is a lot of time.

Time of writing: There was plenty of time for John to have developed his writing skills since this was the last gospel account written in the late 80's or early 90's of the first century. John was exiled to the Island of Patmos from 90-95 A.D. when the Lord gave him his vision recorded in Revelation. The years prior to this and after were spent in Ephesus, so either of those places could have been the place of his writing this gospel.

Audience: Since John's epistles were written to particular people (2 & 3 John) and to the saints in general (1 John) at Ephesus, they may well have been the first to receive this gospel account. They were also facing the early development of the gnostic heresy which John's first epistle addresses, but which his gospel account also strongly refutes. However, John's purpose statement in John 20:31 shows that

there was also a much wider audience in mind. This gospel presupposes some knowledge of the earlier gospel accounts since he skips much material contained in them in order to concentrate on events and teachings of our Lord not covered in them as fitting his purpose.

Theme: John is direct in John 20:30-31 about his purpose, John 20:30–31, “*Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ 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 seeks to accomplish this by presenting Jesus as the eternal Son of God who became a man, lived a sinless life, died as the payment for sin, physically rose from the dead on the third day, and has called for people to believe in Him, love Him and serve Him. There are other sub-themes in the book, but everything points to this purpose. That is why John’s gospel is usually the one recommended to non-Christians to read first. The desire is that they would believe in Jesus Christ and find life in His name.

Conclusions

Each gospel is important in gaining a full understanding of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the promised Messiah who came in fulfillment of the ancient prophecies and will return to fulfill those that remain. He is the Son of God who came to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. He is the perfect Son of Man who came to seek and to save that which was lost. He is the eternal Word who became a man, dwelt among us, and offers salvation from sin to all who will believe in Him. He can do so because He lived a sinless life and was qualified to die as the substitute sacrifice for our sin on the cross of Calvary, and then rose from the dead proving His claims and promises are all true. We can live for Him in the present for He is with us always. We have a confident assurance for the future because He will return and take us to be with Him forever in Heaven.

It is my great hope that this study of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring those that do not yet believe to have faith in Him and draw those that do know Him even closer as we learn more of Him, His character and His attributes. It is also my great hope that this will cause each of us to walk better in the abundant life of righteousness that He provides as we learn His desires for us and commands to us.

Sermon Notes - 2/24/2013
Introduction to the Gospels - Selected Scriptures

Introduction

This will be an effort to present a full picture of the life of Jesus from all _____ gospel accounts _____ is the most chronological gospel, and so will be used as the base outline

Matthew

Author: The Apostle Matthew - not questioned until the mid-1800's

- 1) The two (or four) source theory _____ solve the "synoptic problem"
 - 2) Authorship by Matthew traces back to early manuscripts and apostolic fathers (_____ centuries)
 - 3) Matthew's gospel was used by early church fathers (_____ A.D.), so it is not of a late date
 - 4) An _____ would not rely on someone who was not there to tell what he had experienced himself
- Jesus called Matthew (A.K.A. _____) the tax-collector to follow Him (Matt. 9:9, Mk. 2:14 & Lk. 5:27-28)

Time of Writing: Before 70 A.D. and after 50 A.D.

Eusibius and other early church father say that Matthew was the first to write - closer to _____ A.D.

Audience: Matthew is writing to a _____ audience for he does not explain Jewish customs

Theme: Matthew documents Jesus as the promised _____ and presents His kingdom program

Matthew 1-4: Introduction to the King - fulfilled _____ in lineage, birth, herald. Confirmed by God

Matthew 5-7: Sermon on the Mount - the nature of Jesus' _____ and requirement to enter it

Matthew 8-10: The Messiah's credentials proven in _____ and calling disciples

Matthew 11-16: Rising opposition to the Messiah - Jesus begins to speak in _____

Matthew 16-20: Cultivation of the Messiah's Disciples - Jesus prepares His _____ for what will come

Matthew 21-25: The Messiah's Presentation - _____ entry, teaching in Temple, refuting the Jews

Matthew 26-27: Rejection of the Messiah - Last Supper, betrayal, arrest, trials, _____

Matthew 28: The Messiah's Confirmation - The _____ and the commissioning of His disciples

Mark - The shortest Gospel

Author: All early church traditions (Papias, Irenaeus, Clement, Origin, Jerome) point to _____

Mark is from a wealthy family in _____ (Acts 12:12) and the cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10)

Mark went on missionary journeys with _____ - and later became useful to Paul - & also Peter

Mark may have seen some of _____ ministry - & may have been one of the 500 to see Jesus (1 Cor. 15)

Time of writing: according to Irenaeus in *Against Heresies* - _____ A.D.

Audience: To Gentiles - probably _____ - Jewish customs and Aramaic expressions explained

Theme: Mark 1:1- the gospel of Jesus Christ, the _____

Mark 20:45 - Jesus came to _____ and give His life a ransom for many

Luke - The longest book in the New Testament

Author: Luke, a _____, associate of Paul's and writer of the book of Acts

By Acts 16:10, Luke is traveling with _____ and continues to do so through the rest of Paul's journeys

Luke 1:1-4. Luke is _____ a record of Jesus life from eyewitnesses and those who served with Him

Time of writing: Acts 1:1 - prior to completion of the book of Acts - Before _____ A.D.

Audience: Luke is writing to a _____ man named Theophilus

Theme: A history with a purpose in presenting Jesus - the _____ who came to seek & save the lost

Luke presents Jesus as the savior of _____ regardless of ethnicity, wealth, position, gender, or past

John

Author: References to author - John 1:14; 19:26, 35; 20:2-8; 21:20-14 "*the _____ who Jesus loved*"

Consistent testimony of the early church: The _____, the son of Zebedee, brother of James

James and John were rough and impetuous, but were _____ after becoming disciples of Jesus

John's education is unknown, but never underestimate what the _____ can do in a person's life

Time of writing: late _____ or early _____ (John writes Revelation while exiled on Patmos - 90-95 A.D.)

Audience: Ephesians probably the first to receive it - but to _____ that they might believe in Jesus

Earlier gospel accounts allow John to concentrate on _____ events and teachings for his gospel

Theme: - John 20:30-31 - so that people will _____ in Jesus, the Son of God, and have life in His name

The Gospel of John is often the _____ recommended to non-Christians so that they may believe

Conclusions

Each gospel in _____ in gaining a full understanding of our Lord Jesus Christ

Our goal is to draw _____ to Him and walk with Him in righteousness according to His commands

KIDS CORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help.

Young Children - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up later. 2) Count how many times the word "gospel" is said. Talk with your parents about the importance of the gospels. If you have not read one yet, start with John.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. How has the sermon series from Proverbs changed your life? Why do liberal scholars attack the authorship of Biblical books? Give four reasons that Matthew is the author and why he did not rely on the gospel of Mark to produce it. What was Matthew's occupation before following Jesus? Read the story of Jesus calling of Matthew. What would you have done if Jesus called you? Why do we believe that Matthew was the first gospel account written? To whom was Matthew writing? What is the theme of Matthew? Try to write a general outline according to that theme. Who is John Mark? What do we know of him from the Bible? Why do we believe he wrote the gospel of Mark? On what basis did he write it? Could Mark have seen Jesus? Explain. What possible interaction could Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have had with one another? Why do we date Mark in the mid 60's A.D.? To whom was Mark writing? What indicates this? What is the theme of Mark? What would be a key verse for Mark? Write a simple outline of Mark according to that theme. Who is Luke? What do we know of him from the Bible? Why do we believe he wrote the gospel of Luke? On what basis did he write it? Why do we believe Luke wrote before 62 A.D.? To whom was Luke writing? What is the theme of Luke? What would be a key verse for Luke? Write a simple outline of Luke according to that theme. How does John identify himself in his gospel? When did he write it? To whom was he writing? What is his theme? Write a simple outline according to that theme. Why do we often encourage people to read John first? Have you read it?