The Four Gospels:
Matthew Mark, Luke, and John

The Synoptic Gospels
Relationships between the Synoptic Gospels

MARK 76%

LUKE 41%
LUKE 35%
LUKE 23%

MATT. 45%
MATT. 25%
MATT. 20%

Unique to Mark 3%
Unique to Luke 18%
Double Tradition 41%
Unique to Matthew 10%
Mark and Luke 3%
Mark and Matthew 3%
The Four Gospels: Matthew

- Matthew is first book in NT, may not be written first.
- Records facts that form basis of our faith.
- Explains details revealed about Christ’s earthly life.
- “Good news”
  - Every valuable fact about Jesus learned \underline{ONLY} from the gospels!
The Four Gospels

- Events that paved the way for the spread of the gospel:
  - Career of Alexander the Great
  - Rise of the Roman Empire
  - Dispersion of the Jews
    - Greek gave the world unity of language.
    - Rome brought social order & roads for travel.
    - Scattering Jews undermined heathen religions
The Four Gospels

- Gospel was first preached in Jerusalem
- Preached in Greek
- Early Christians were scattered throughout the Roman world.
  - Inscription above the cross was in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages.
  - Testimony of Christ’s claims. He suffered to unite all nations into one family of God!
The Four Gospels

- In many ways, Matthew, Mark, and Luke are alike, while at the same time being unlike John.
- This is why Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called **synoptic** gospels.
- The synoptic gospels dwell on Jesus’ ministry in **Galilee**; John features the ministry in **Judea**.
The Four Gospels

• Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell us the detail of one of Jesus’ visits to Jerusalem—the one that ended with His crucifixion.
• John records the four Jerusalem visits prior to that last one.
  – First three: miracles, parables, addresses to the multitudes—more objective
  – Fourth: emphasizes spiritual meaning and is more subjective
The Four Gospels

• Each writer had a distinctive purpose in view.
  – Matt 1:1; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30,31
• Written gospel messages were preceded by the oral preaching of the messages.
• Each gospel was directed toward certain people groups
  – Matthew primarily to the Jews
  – Mark wrote from the Roman point of view
  – Luke addressed the Greeks
  – John is sometimes called the universal gospel.
The Four Gospels

• The Spirit’s superintending power is seen in selection of contents of each book – John 15:26; 2 Peter 1:20,21

• Use human personalities, experiences, and abilities with Divine guidance from the Holy Spirit

• Books begin with Jesus’ birth; conclude with His ascension.
Matthew – the Author

- Matthew was well-equipped for the task of writing to the Jews.
- A tax collector under Herod Antipas
- Knew Hebrew and Aramaic
- Name changed from Levi to Matthew
- Humble; referred to himself as a publican
- Recorded no incidents concerning himself—a humble and retiring position
Matthew – When Written

- First of the four gospels written
- The church would need such a history from pen of an apostle
- Predated destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24)
- Probably written between A.D. 45 and 50
Matthew – Purpose of His Gospel

• Link between Old and New Testaments.
• Beginning of NT appropriate time for Jewish reader.
• Gospel of Messiah—*the anointed one*
• Trace Christ’s genealogy to Abraham
Matthew – Purpose of His Gospel

• Two-fold purpose:
  – Connect message of OT with gospel
  – Demonstrate fulfillment of the OT prophecies through the coming of Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah-King
Matthew – Calls Attention to...

- Jesus as the Messiah, King
  - kingdom—57x
  - kingdom of heaven—33x
  - kingdom of God—5x
  - the King
  - Matthew 2:2; 21:5; 22:11; 25:34; 27:11, 37, 42
Matthew – Calls Attention to…

- Only Matthew traces genealogy to Abraham.
- Matthew gives the story of the visit of the Magi who brought gifts to the newborn King.
- Only Matthew refers to Jesus being born king of the Jews.
- Only Matthew cites the prophecy of the ruler coming out of Bethlehem.
- Only Matthew gives the Baptist’s message, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
Matthew – Calls Attention to...

- Christ’s kingship is asserted, confessed, & proven through fulfillment of prophecy.
  - Recognition of His person (Matt.16:13-18)
  - Pronouncement of His authority (Matt.28:18-20)
  - His claim that His teaching constituted law (Matt.7:24-29)
  - Contrast between human genealogy and miraculous birth (Matt.1)
Matthew – Calls Attention to…

• All in His line of descent were transient, but He is eternal. (Hebrews 7:23-25)
• All in His human lineage were sinful, but He lived without sin.
• They were earthly; He was heavenly (second Adam).
• They were Jews; He was God’s Son. (Jno.1:1-11; Heb.10:5; Phil.2:5-11)
Matthew – Gospel of Fulfillment

• Cites 40 proof passages from OT
  – Genesis 12:3; 2 Samuel 7:12

• Some of the prophetic fulfillments:
  – Mic 5:2-place of birth (2:1)
  – Isa 7:14-born of a virgin (1:18-23)
  – Jer 31:15-massacre of infants (2:16)
  – Hosea 11:1-flight into Egypt (2:14,15)
  – Zech 11:12-sold for 30 silver pieces (26:15)
Jesus, the Promised Messiah

- Refers to OT scriptures with which the Jews were familiar.
  - “that it might be fulfilled which was written in the prophets, saying..

- Contrasts Christianity with Pharisees’ concept of righteousness.

- Words **righteous** and **righteousness** occur more often in Matthew than in the other three gospels combined!
Matthew – Sermon on the Mount

- Sets forth spiritual principles of righteousness and the Kingdom of God.

- Jesus affirmed regard for law. (5:17)

- Demands standard of righteousness far above outward appearances of Pharisees. (5:20)

- God, the perfect example. (5:48)

- Christ’s authority - superior to the authority of Moses.
  - “But I say unto you…”
Matthew – Sermon on the Mount

• Differences in conformity; not just outward requirements—but requirements for the heart!
• Obedience a must (7:21-27)
• God’s judgment against the Jewish nation and impending destruction in retribution for unfaithfulness (24)
• Justice and righteousness part of God’s nature
Matthew – Contents and Character

• Introduction—(1:1—4:11)
  – The genealogy
  – Jesus’ birth and childhood
  – Preparatory work of John the Baptist
  – Jesus’ baptism
  – Temptations in the wilderness
Matthew – Contents and Character

• Jesus’ ministry—(4:12—16:21)
  – Galilee, the starting place
  – Jesus’ words and acts
  – Sermon on the Mount and ten miracles
  – Sermon to the twelve—call to apostleship
  – His teaching—seven consecutive parables
  – Human traditions make void the word of God.

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Matthew – Contents and Character

• “From this time forth”—(16:21—21)
  – Transfiguration (17:1-8)
  – Need for humility in the kingdom (18:15-20)
  – Open rejection from religious leaders
  – The rich young ruler (19:16-22)
  – Foretelling His suffering (20:26-28)
  – Triumphant entry into Jerusalem (21)
  – Rejection and unbelief (22)
Matthew – Contents and Character

• Conflict with leaders, and death ending in victory—(23:1—28:20)
  – Rebuking the hypocrites (23)
  – Foretelling Jerusalem’s destruction (24)
  – Parables-10 Virgins and Talents (25:1-30)
  – A glimpse into final judgment (25:31-46)
  – Plot to take His life and the betrayal (26)
  – Crucifixion (27)
  – Resurrection, ascension, and Great Commission (28)
Mark – Who was he?

- Cousin of Barnabas
- Companion of Paul and Peter
- Founded church in Alexandria
- Martyred by being dragged through streets of Alexandria
Mark – Why his Gospel?

• For the Romans
• Given as a narrative, rather than a collection of stories
• Remembered as Interpreter of Peter
• To show Jesus was a Saviour for more than the Jews
Mark – Outline

• Prologue – vs 1-13
• Galilean Ministry 1:14-8:30
• Road to the Cross 8:31-13:37
• The Passion 14:1-16:8
• The Commission 16:9-20