

Overview of the Four Gospels

writer	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
readers	Predominantly Jewish	Probably persecuted Christians in Rome	“Most excellent Theophilus” (1:3) – a Gentile. First of two volumes (Luke - Acts)	Gentiles Non-Christians
purpose	To prove that Jesus is the Messiah, the eternal King.	To portray Jesus as the Servant and Redeemer. “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.	So that Theophilus might know the truth about Jesus and the early church (1:1-4)	That readers may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing they may have life in His name. (20:31)
themes	Jesus is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets. Jesus has authority.	Miracles demonstrate the power and compassion of Jesus. Glory comes only through suffering and service.	Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (19:10) God’s special concern for outcasts: gentiles, Samaritans, tax collectors and sinners, and women.	Jesus is the source of life (“I am” statements) Importance of belief
structure	Narrative mixed with 5 main sections of teaching (ch. 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 23-25) that close with variations on: “when Jesus had finished these words.”	Ch 1-8: Works of power Ch 9-16: Rejection & suffering	Loosely organized around geography: Ch 1-2: Infancy Ch 3-9:50: In Galilee Ch 9:51-18:34: Journey to Jerusalem Ch 18:35-24: Death and resurrection	Ch 1: Jesus is God among us Ch 2 – 12:50: Jesus reveals himself in signs and teachings Ch 13-20:31 The final Passover – Jesus dies for the sins of the world Ch 21: Epilogue