

# *The Life of Christ*

*Sponsored by:  
The Christadelphians*

*Learn to Read the Bible  
Effectively  
Life of Christ Seminar  
Week 1 - Waiting for the Messiah*

# SECTION 1

## A Nation in Darkness

Before we begin a study in the New Testament and the life of Jesus Christ, we should consider the background and conditions at the time of His birth, the setting in which the Gospels were written, and His ministry began.

Four hundred years had gone by since God's voice was heard in the land of Israel through the prophet Malachi. As the prophet Micah had previously anticipated, about 300 years prior to Malachi, the time of the prophets had come to an end.

**Micah 3:6 – “Therefore, it will be a night for you - without vision and darkness for you - without divination. The sun will go down on the prophets and the day will become dark over them.”**

As was declared in Proverbs 39:18 – **“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”**

God was silent, and Israel was perishing.

During the 400 years between the close of the Old Testament and the coming of Christ, several important events occurred.

- 1. The Greeks under Alexander the Great and his successors ruled the world for a time.**
- 2. Under the Maccabees (which means the “Hammer”) the Jews revolted and attempted to break away from the rule of the Greeks.**
- 3. The Roman Empire succeeded the Greek, and ruled the known world when Christ was born.**
- 4. The Jewish Synagogue, the Sanhedrin, and Sects such as the Pharisees and Sadducees developed.**

All these events and developments set the stage for the birth and the ministry of Jesus Christ, and for the birth and early growth of His Church.

### **A Bible Echo**

The condition of God's people in the land of Israel, living in the darkness of sin, with no direct word from God's prophets, is a Bible echo taking us back to the beginning:

**Genesis 1:2 “And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep.”** Just as darkness prevailed in the earth in those early days, awaiting the Spirit of God to provide the light that would be separate from the darkness, Israel awaited

the activity of God to bring about the birth of the Son (Sun) of Righteousness, who would bring light and glory to a dark and sinful world.

### **The Failure of Mankind**

For 4,000 years, men had struggled, unsuccessfully, against sin. All had “sinned and come short of the glory of God” (**Romans 3:23**).

Time, and time again, Israel had forgotten the message that God had provided under conditions of suffering and affliction that came upon them as a result of their sinfulness and turning from His way.

A pattern was established that echoes throughout the record of history. They would begin to forget about God in times of blessing and bounty, and return to their sinful behaviour.

As a result, they would enter a period of affliction at the hands of their enemies. From the depths of their oppression, they would realize their sinfulness, and cry out to God, seeking His deliverance. In response to their appeal, and their repentance, He would send a saviour.

The book of Judges clearly demonstrates this pattern, describing 6 such cycles in chapters 3 through 16. The record of the history of God’s people consistently follows this sequence, as they fail, again, and again, finally turning to God as their only hope.

### **Salvation Only Through God and His Son**

Thinking about the despair into which the people of Israel had fallen during the time between the book of Malachi, and the birth of Jesus, we turn to the words of **Isaiah 59**. The prediction of God recorded through this mighty prophet, anticipate these 400 years of darkness. We read of the people’s vain longing for deliverance and peace:

*Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us. Verses 9-11*

We see the sinful conditions and denial of the Lord that lay at the base of their misery:

*For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them; In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. Verses 12-15*

Humanity could not provide the deliverer needed to release them from their enslavement to sin so, God Himself promised to undertake the work of salvation. **He** would provide a Saviour.

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*And he [God] saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him... And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever. Verses 16-21*

### **In Bondage to the Nations**

Like all history, the times before the advent of Jesus Christ had left their mark upon the Jewish nation. Following the Babylonian captivity, after the Babylonian Empire had been overthrown by the Medes and the Persians, the people went back to Israel to rebuild the temple. Although allowed to do this, they were still under Persian rule.

As had been prophesied by Daniel, from the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2), Persia was then overthrown by Greece. Under their rule the people of Israel were subject to intense suffering, which had been only partly relieved by the exploits of the Maccabees.

The Maccabees were a family of Jews who resisted the authority of Antiochus Epiphanes and his successors, who had completely conquered Jerusalem and strove to introduce idolatrous worship into the temple.

After this, however, Rome's iron rule penetrated the East and bound the land and its people. Israel groaned under the rule of Rome and longed for a deliverer. Unknowingly, they were also in bondage to sin, but the time was coming for their awakening and deliverance, as had been prophesied many times in the Old Testament. A thorough reading of the book of Malachi, the last prophet recorded in the Old Testament, offers a wonderful summary of God's love for His nation, opposed by the sinfulness of the people, ending with the hope and promise of future redemption.

This final message of judgement is directed to a people plagued with corrupt priests, wicked practices, and a false sense of security. Malachi probes deeply into their problems of hypocrisy, infidelity, mixed marriages, divorce, false worship, and arrogance.

*For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.*

*But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.*

*And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.*

*Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.*

*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. Malachi 4*

**Judaism and Greek Culture**

Of the three powers who ruled over them, the Jews were most influenced by Greek culture, or “Hellenism.” This was the result of a process of systematic Hellenization, or the spreading of Greek culture, which began with Alexander the Great.

It is for this reason that the Hebrew writings, or the Old Testament, were translated into Greek. This was completed more than 150 years before the time of Christ. The synagogues found in Palestine give evidence that Hellenistic culture was accepted to a surprising extent. Greek mythology provided the subject matter for many of the decorations in the synagogues, although Jews resisted the actual idolatry of the Greeks in regard to worship. But they did adopt some of the Greek mysticism which finds its way into the dialogue recorded in the Gospels between Jesus and the religious leaders of His time.

It is against this background and under these conditions that we examine the Life of Jesus Christ.

**LESSONS FOR US**

Without the word of God, and acceptance of His Son, Jesus Christ, exerting an influence on our lives, we, too, live in darkness and are subject to the influences of the world around us.

As we look to the example of Israel, learn from the lesson that they failed to see. As a memory aid, think of the sequence of the “five S” in our lives:

<b>Sin</b>	<b>Realize your sins</b>
<b>Suffering</b>	<b>Remember that death &amp; suffering are the result of sin</b>
<b>Seeking God</b>	<b>Turn to God in repentance</b>
<b>Salvation</b>	<b>Believe in His mercy and grace for those who seek Him</b>
<b>Saviour</b>	<b>Accept His Son, as your deliverer, your Saviour.</b>

## SECTION 2

### Leaders of the Land

During Jesus Christ's life and ministry, His greatest opposition came from the leaders and authorities in the land, especially from the religious groups from within His own people, the Jews.

As God's Holy people, their worship had deteriorated. The priesthood was in the hands of the Hellenistic Sadducees, who said that ..."there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit" (Acts 23:8). To support their idea that there was no life possible other than that of the current mortal state, and keep the profits flowing into their treasury through the offerings made under the sacrificial code, they accepted as authoritative, only Genesis to Deuteronomy. The priesthood was dominated by them. Thus, it was in the hands of people who, by precept and performance were materialistic, and practically atheists.

The Pharisees, on the other hand, accepted the law, the Psalms, and the prophets. They regarded the Oral Law, consisting of the decisions and judgments of learned Scribes, or Lawyers, as of equal (if not greater) authority than the written law. This made the Pharisees the natural allies of the Scribes, and directly opposed to the Sadducees. They tended to hold the letter of the law, and altogether miss its spirit. They were also materialistic. This sprang from their inability to offer God more than lip service and ritual. The concept of deep inward contrition and repentance was lost to them.

These were the main religious forces during the lifetime of Christ in first century Israel. Other, less influential groups existed among the Jews, however, such as the Essenes, the Herodians and the Zealots. People from each of these groups met Jesus at some point!

Among many in these groups, except for the Sadducees, the Hellenistic influence led to an acceptance of Greek myths, including the belief in an immortal soul.

Religious activity centered in, around, and through, the temple, the synagogues, and the Sanhedrin. The exception to this is the Essenes, who lived apart, unable to affect the mass of society and the political groups. The Essenes, although referred to in most commentaries relative to first century Israel, are not actually mentioned in the Bible.

Without the pure, complete, and active word of God in their lives, the general population of Israel, led by religious leaders who had corrupted and lost the true meaning behind the word of God, had truly become like lost sheep. The Shepherds were not shepherding!

Oppressed by the conditions under which they lived, and without an active, true hope in God on a personal basis, they had lost sight of personal redemption and repentance. The people hope and longed only for the peace and materialistic strength of an Israel returned to a national state of political power – free of their Roman occupiers!

Although, there were some who longed for the coming of the Messiah based on personal salvation, the majority thought only in terms of political relief and power, believing this was the only way for them to have peace.

Do we not see an echo of this today? Particularly in the nation of Israel, and generally, among the nations of the world as we stand at the door of Christ's second coming?

As an aid to gaining an insight into the opposition, jealousy, and hatred, that our Lord Jesus Christ encountered during His ministry, ultimately leading to His rejection and death, it is worthwhile to consider and understand these religious and political groups, movements and individuals who dominated the daily life of the Jews in the first century.

These names are common in the New Testament, but which were entirely unknown in the Old Testament, having developed during the 400 dark years between the Testaments.

Recognition of these elements will especially help in understanding the significance and meaning underlining the dialogue between Jesus Christ and those to whom He tried to present the Good News of God's Word.

### **Jewish Groups and Movements**

#### **PHARISEES:**

About 200 years before the birth of Christ, the Scribes, who were faithful to the law, re-instituted by Ezra, began to actively oppose the Greek philosophical trend among the people. Early in the 2nd century B.C., this group was called the Hasidim. (God's loyal ones). As time progressed, they grew in influence and power, and appeared under a new name, Pharisee, "the separated ones." This name first appears before the revolt of the Maccabees.

The Pharisees protested the abandonment of certain traditions of the Mosaic Law and Rabbinical teaching. Their fervent opposition to anything non-Jewish was a factor in preserving the doctrines and practices of the Jewish nation's way of life under Gentile state rule.

By the first century, they were a powerful influence among the people in general, and although they were properly condemned by Christ, they had performed an important function in preserving the Law for the Jewish people. They were bitter enemies of the Sadducees. Scribes and some Priests could be found in their group.

There were dedicated enemies of Jesus numbered among the Pharisees, because they were not only able to appreciate the impact His teachings had on their interpretation of the Law, they also recognized the threat He represented to the status quo – especially as it related to their power over and control of the people.

It is important to note that some sincere and devoted followers of Christ came from among the Pharisees, such as Paul, Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea. The record in the Acts of the Apostles notes that Pharisees were numbered among the early Christians in Jerusalem. Once they accepted the teachings of Christ and rejected their own traditions of men, they were able to clearly see the true teaching of the Old Testament.

**SADDUCEES:**

This group constituted priestly aristocracy. Under Herod and the Romans, they held the predominate place in the Sanhedrin. They had little in common with the people, but were politically acceptable to Herod and the Roman rulers.

They were noted as conservatives and were constantly in conflict with the Pharisees on religious and political grounds. This is an important point to remember in relationship to the death of Christ, as we will see in the Gospel record later in this study.

It is also interesting to note that these natural enemies (Sadducees & Pharisees) worked together when they had a common enemy – Jesus!

**SCRIBES:**

The activities of the Scribes came into prominence following the time of Ezra. This is really the name of an occupation, rather than a position of authority or membership in a particular group. (See Matt. 7:29). Originally, they were looked upon as the experts in the exposition of the Law of Moses. They had tremendous prestige among the common people and were consulted in all religious matters.

Originally the Scribes were drawn from the Priests, but later, were accepted from all the educated classes. The Scribes' education generally started at a very young age and continued through Rabbinical Schools. At the age of 30, a Scribe would be qualified to teach as a Rabbi in the Synagogue. They were sometimes called lawyers of religious law and people gave them recognition and respect in public places. Jerusalem was the center of great Rabbinical Schools of philosophy.

Scribes could read and write, and therefore, they were in demand as teachers and secretaries. Since Scribes had different employers, or no fixed employers, they had various sympathies. Because the Scriptures were so important to the Jews, the Scribes were often to be found in leadership positions.

**PRIESTS:**

Priests were also a professional class, (Mark 11:18; 14:10) who had official duties in the temple. The High Priest was also head of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. Under Roman rule, the High Priest was appointed by the Roman Governor.

**SYNAGOGUE:**

The word 'synagogue' means congregation, and just like the word "church" (Greek ecclesia), it refers to the people more than the building. Synagogues probably had their origin during the exile in Babylon when worship according to temple ritual was impossible. It developed into a place of prayer and instruction in the Scriptures, serving a three-fold purpose - worship, education, and the government of the civil life of the community.

Every city, town and village had a Synagogue and a connecting school, where children were taught the traditions of their people and the principles of the Law of Moses.

It was the gathering place for the community on the Feast Days and the Sabbath. (See for example, Acts 15:21).

**HERODIANS:**

This was a Jewish political party that saw Herod as the last hope of retaining a Jewish National Government. They believed that co-operation with Rome was the most practical way to maintain a Jewish identity.

**ESSENES:**

These were the purists; devoted Old Testament scholars, living a semi-monastic life in the wilderness communities. The famous Dead Sea Scrolls are a part of their records. The Essenes were looking for the coming Messiah. They hated the apostate priesthood, and despised the hypocrisy of their times. They believed in full immersion for baptism and went through a daily purification ritual.

Although this sect is not actually mentioned in the Bible, it most certainly had its effect on some people in the area. It is conjecture in some commentaries that John the Baptist might have been a member of their community. There is no Biblical evidence to support this conjecture, although he did emerge from the wilderness area of Judea, where they were most strongly represented. This, and his insistence upon a baptism of repentance are at the root of such speculation.

**ZEALOTS:**

The Zealots, (see Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13) were armed resistors who fought against foreign rule and taxation. They were not a single organization, but, rather, the name could refer to any group or band who resisted the Roman domination. Opponents of the Zealots simply called them, "bandits." According to Josephus, the Zealots were the leaders in the defense of the temple in Jerusalem when it was destroyed by Rome in A.D. 70.

**SICARII:**

The Sicarri, or "assassins," (Acts 21:38) engaged in a particular kind of armed resistance. Using daggers, (Sicarri, in Latin) concealed in their clothing, they assassinated their enemies in crowded places, and then ran away before they could be apprehended.

**Political Leaders****The Herodian Dynasty:**

Since there was more than one King Herod, confusion sometimes exists regarding their identities when we read of them. Herod was the family name of several rulers appointed by Rome to serve as Provincial Governors of Palestine, and the surrounding regions during New Testament times.

This family, although of Idumean origin, (Edom - descendants of Esau) and thus alien by race, was Jewish by faith.

The first Herod, known as Herod the Great, was the ruler of Palestine, appointed by Rome in the days of the Roman Emperor, Caesar Augustus, at the time Jesus was born in Bethlehem. (Matt. 2:1; Luke 3:1). All the other different Herods mentioned in the New Testament were the sons or grandsons of this Herod.

Herod the Great (ruled 37 B.C to 4 B.C.), was known as a master builder, organizer, and developer, although his policies were considered cruel and ruthless by the Jewish people. His most notable achievement was the re-furbishing of the temple in Jerusalem, a project that required almost 50 years. In the Gospel record, we find the astonishment of Jesus’ Apostles when He replied to their boasts regarding this great structure with a prophecy of its complete destruction. Herod also re-built and enlarged the City of Caesarea into a port city on the Mediterranean Sea. This city served as the Roman Provincial Capital for Palestine during the New Testament era. The magnificent aqueducts that he built in this city are still visible today.

Herod the Great is also responsible for the massacre of the male children in Bethlehem in his efforts to destroy the child Jesus. (Matt. 2:16)

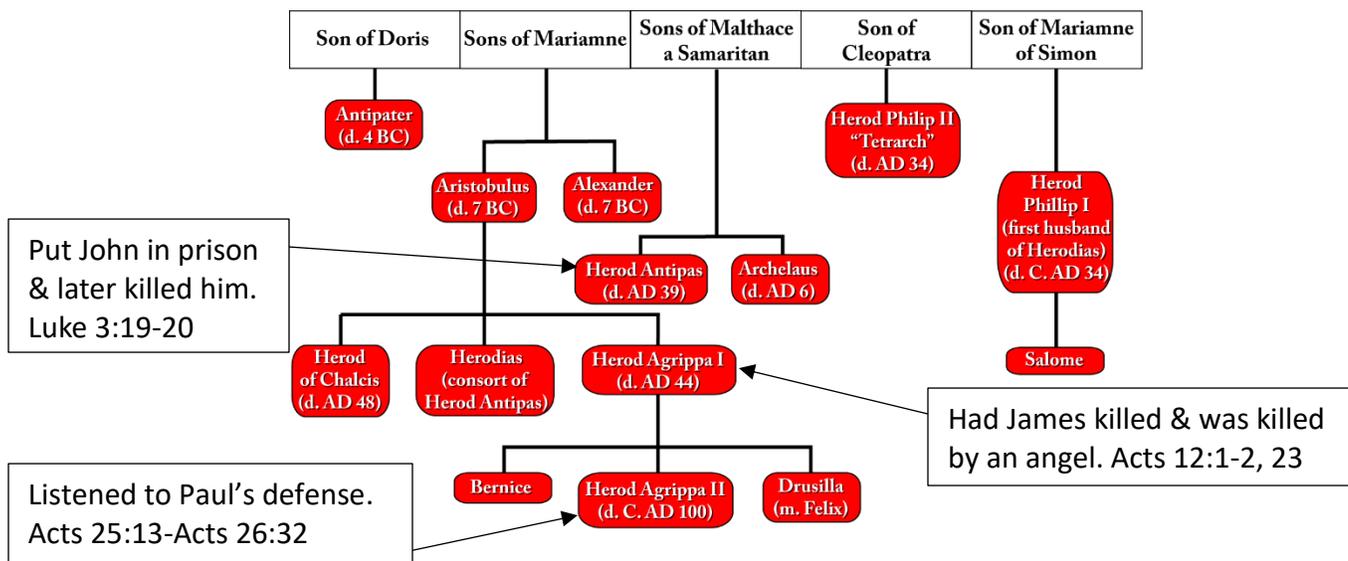
Herod’s son Antipas, succeeded him as Roman Governor of Galilee and Perea (Matt. 14:1). Antipas was responsible for the imprisonment and death of John the Baptist (Luke 3:19, 20; Matt. 14:1-12).

Herod the Great’s grandson, Agrippa, was named ruler over all of Palestine by the Roman Emperor Caligula. Agrippa is known as a persecutor of early Christians. He had James put to death and he had Peter arrested. Because of his cruelty and blasphemy, Agrippa was slain by an Angel of the Lord. (Acts 12)

In A.D. 50, Agrippa’s son, known as Agrippa 2, was made ruler of the territory of the King of Chalcis. Later, he was given Abilene, Trachonitis, Acra, and parts of Galilee and Perea. The only reference to this Herod in the New Testament occurs in Acts 25:13 through Acts 26:32, which deals with Paul’s imprisonment in Caesarea. Agrippa listened to Paul’s defense, but had no power to set him free, since he had appealed to Caesar.

The other two Herods mentioned in the New Testament are Herod Archelaus (Matt. 2:22) and Herod Philip (Luke 3:1). Both rulers were sons of Herod the Great. They ruled parts of the territory previously administered by their father.

*Herod the Great*  
(d. 4 BC)



**Roman Emperors and Appointed Rulers of Palestine**

Augustus Caesar was the Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus' birth and Tiberius Caesar was emperor at His death. Probably the most infamous Roman ruler appointed in Palestine, associated with the death of Christ, is Pontius Pilate who ruled Judea from A.D. 26 to 36.

**The Influence of these Groups in the Gospel**

As we follow Jesus' life through the Gospel, the significance of these groups and individuals will become apparent, especially the part they played in his rejection and death. It may be necessary to refer to this section later when you read of the challenges they present to Christ, and His response to them. This will help to explain why they challenged him in the way they did, and why Jesus responded as he did. There was always a message from Jesus that was more than met the eye – a hidden underlying message that addressed their root problem or issue. As a Bible reading tip, we should always look for this message, rather than simply taking the words at face value.

**LESSON FOR US**

The people of Jesus' day failed to recognize Him and His manifestation as God's true Son and Messiah because they followed the corrupted teachings of false religious leaders. Therefore, they did not see or follow Christ's direction toward the purity, and the principles of His Word. Jesus did not fit their pattern or expectation of "Messiah" because it was not founded on Truth.

We must beware of falling prey to fables of men presented to us as the Word of God.

It is our personal responsibility to seek the Truth of His Way in His Word.

***2nd Tim. 4:1 to 4 – "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, by His appearing and His kingdom: to preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.***

***For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths."***

***1 Thess: 5:21 "But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is true;"***

## SECTION 3

### The Four Gospels

The Four Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John - tell us about the life of Jesus. Yet they are not true biographies. They say little about Jesus' family background, youth, and nothing about His physical appearance. They concentrate almost totally on the years of Jesus' ministry. Even here, they do not give enough information to re-construct the history of those years. Rather, attention is focused on the person of Jesus and His teaching, and all four Gospels climax with Jesus' death and resurrection, and the events associated with them.

The Gospel writer John concludes his record with the words:

**“and there were also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books which were written.” (John 21:25)**

Even more so, a study of the life of Christ in 8 weeks can but begin to scratch the surface of His ministry. Hopefully, at the conclusion of these 8 weeks, however, we will all gain insight into a personal approach to effectively reading the Gospel record and seeking a personal understanding of our Saviour and His teachings.

We will endeavour to follow His story from His birth until, at the age of 30, John baptizes Him, and His public life begins. We shall then watch Him grapple with sin for three and a half years until His crucifixion, death, and burial. We will stand before His empty tomb and hear the Angels proclaim: **“He is risen!”**

Finally, we shall go to the Mount of Olives, when He ascends to His Father in heaven, and listen to the echo of the Angels proclaiming His second advent. (Acts 1:11)

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the “Synoptic Gospels.” The term “Synoptic” means that they view the life of Jesus from a common perspective. After introducing Jesus in different ways, depending on their purpose, they record the ministry of John the Baptist, the baptism and temptation of Jesus, His ministries in Galilee and in Judea. They include His final week in Jerusalem, His death and resurrection. In these 3 records, Jesus characteristically refers to Himself as the Son of Man, and He proclaims the Kingdom of God. Despite the similarities in these 3 accounts, they do vary in what material they include and in the arrangement of specific events. Furthermore, each Gospel was written to emphasize certain aspects of Jesus' person and works.

Matthew emphasizes that Jesus is the true Messiah and the object of Old Testament prophecy and expectation. Mark’s fast-moving account was written to appeal to Roman Christians, and Luke’s Gospel was addressed to a cultured Gentile, personified in the Greeks, and stresses Jesus’ concern for all kinds of people.

The Gospel of John differs in several ways. It tells more about Jesus’ early ministry in Judea. He also records long discourses by Jesus instead of the shorter sayings typical of the other 3 accounts. In John, Jesus refers to Himself as God’s Son and speaks of salvation as eternal life. In addition to this, John includes more reflection on the meaning of Jesus’ life and death. There are no parables recorded in the Gospel of John, but there are stories that are considered allegories, not parables.

**Four Gospels**

Much has been written about the reason for four Gospels. The following is presented as a suggestion as to how the 4 Gospels each portray a unique feature of Jesus’ life:

<b>Book/Author</b>	<b>Matthew</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Luke</b>	<b>John</b>
<b>Portrays Jesus as:</b>	Preacher	Man of Power	Master Teacher	Person
<b>Written to:</b>	Jews	Romans	Greeks	All Men
<b>Outstanding Feature:</b>	Sermons	Miracles	Parables	Personal Associations
<b>Arrangement of Material:</b>	Topical	Chronological	Chronological	Topical
<b>Spoken by Christ:</b>	60%	42%	50%	50%
<b>Old Testament Quotations:</b>	53	36	25	20
<b>Old Testament Allusions:</b>	76	27	42	105
<b>Unique Material:</b>	42%	7%	59%	92%
<b>Focus on the Death, Burial, &amp; Resurrection:</b>	29%	38%	25%	38%
<b>Theme:</b>	Jesus the Messiah King	Jesus the Suffering Servant	Jesus the Reedmer of All Men	Jesus the Son of God
<b>Key Verses:</b>	16:13-20	8:31; 10:33-34	19:10	20:30-31

**Miracles and Parables in the Gospels**

Although we will endeavour to provide some examples regarding effective reading of the miracles and parables of Jesus, we will certainly not be able to cover most of them during this eight-week course. Here are two charts that summarize all of them:

**37 Miracles of Jesus in Chronological Order**

37 Miracles of Jesus					
#	Miracle	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
1	Jesus Turns Water into Wine at the Wedding in Cana				2:1-11
2	Jesus Heals an Official's Son at Capernaum in Galilee				4:43-54
3	Jesus Drives Out an Evil Spirit From a Man in Capernaum		1:21-27	4:31-36	
4	Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law Sick With Fever	8:14-15	1:29-31	4:38-39	
5	Jesus Heals Many Sick and Oppressed at Evening	8:16-17	1:32-34	4:40-41	
6	First Miraculous Catch of Fish on the Lake of Gennesaret			5:1-11	
7	Jesus Cleanses a Man With Leprosy	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-14	
8	Jesus Heals a Centurion's Paralyzed Servant in Capernaum	8:5-13		7:1-10	
9	Jesus Heals a Paralytic Who Was Let Down From the Roof	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
10	Jesus Heals a Man's Withered Hand on the Sabbath	12:9-14	3:1-6	6:6-11	
11	Jesus Raises a Widow's Son From the Dead in Nain			7:11-17	
12	Jesus Calms a Storm on the Sea	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
13	Jesus Casts Demons into a Herd of Pigs	8:28-33	5:1-20	8:26-39	
14	Jesus Heals a Woman in the Crowd With an Issue of Blood	9:20-22	5:25-34	8:42-48	
15	Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter Back to Life	9:18, 23-26	5:21-24, 35-43	8:40-42, 49-56	
16	Jesus Heals Two Blind Men	9:27-31			
17	Jesus Heals a Man Who Was Unable to Speak	9:32-34			
18	Jesus Heals an Invalid at Bethesda				5:1-15
19	Jesus Feeds 5,000 Plus Women and Children	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-15
20	Jesus Walks on Water	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:16-21
21	Jesus Heals Many Sick in Gennesaret as They Touch His Garment	14:34-36	6:53-56		
22	Jesus Heals a Gentile Woman's Demon-Possessed Daughter	15:21-28	7:24-30		
23	Jesus Heals a Deaf and Dumb Man		7:31-37		
24	Jesus Feeds 4,000 Plus Women and Children	15:32-39	8:1-13		
25	Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida		8:22-26		
26	Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind by Spitting in His Eyes				9:1-12
27	Jesus Heals a Boy With an Unclean Spirit	17:14-20	9:14-29	9:37-43	
28	Miraculous Temple Tax in a Fish's Mouth	17:24-27			
29	Jesus Heals a Blind, Mute Demoniac	12:22-23		11:14-23	
30	Jesus Heals a Woman Who Had Been Crippled for 18 Years			13:10-17	
31	Jesus Heals a Man With Dropsy on the Sabbath			14:1-6	
32	Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers on the Way to Jerusalem			17:11-19	
33	Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead in Bethany				11:1-45
34	Jesus Restores Sight to Bartimaeus in Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
35	Jesus Withers the Fig Tree on the Road From Bethany	21:18-22	11:12-14		
36	Jesus Heals a Servant's Severed Ear While He Is Being Arrested			22:50-51	
37	The Second Miraculous Catch of Fish at the Sea of Tiberias				21:4-11

Parables of Jesus in Chronological Order				
	Parable	Matthew	Mark	Luke
1	New cloth on an old coat	9:16	2:21	5:36
2	New wine in old wineskins	9:17	2:22	5:37-38
3	Lamp on a stand (also see #6)	5:14-15		
4	Wise and foolish builders	7:24-27		6:47-49
5	Moneylender forgives unequal debts			7:41-43
6	Lamp on a stand (2 <sup>nd</sup> time, see #3)		4:21-22	8:16, 11:33
7	Rich man foolishly builds bigger barns			12:16-21
8	Servants must remain watchful (also see #44)			12:35-40
9	Wise and foolish servants (also see #42)			12:42-48
10	Unfruitful fig tree			13:6-9
11	Sower and four types of soil	13:3-8, 18-23	4:3-8, 14-20	8:5-8, 11-15
12	Weeds among good plants (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:24-30, 36-43		
13	Growing seed (Kingdom of Heaven)		4:26-29	
14	Mustard seed (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
15	Yeast (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:33		13:20-21
16	Hidden treasure (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:44		
17	Valuable pearl (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:45-46		
18	Fishing net (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:47-50		
19	Owner of a house (Kingdom of Heaven)	13:52		
20	Lost sheep (sheep as children, also see #29)	18:12-14		
21	The sheep, gate, and shepherd	( John 10:1-5, 7-18 )		
22	Master and his servant			17:7-10
23	Unmerciful servant (Kingdom of Heaven)	18:23-34		
24	Good Samaritan			10:30-37
25	Friend in need			11:5-8
26	Lowest seat at the feast			14:7-14
27	Invitation to a great banquet			14:16-24
28	Cost of discipleship			14:28-33
29	Lost sheep (sheep as sinners, also see #20)			15:4-7
30	Lost coin			15:8-10
31	Lost (prodigal) son			15:11-32
32	Shrewd manager			16:1-8
33	Rich man and Lazarus			16:19-31
34	Workers in the vineyard, early and late	20:1-16		
35	Persistent widow and crooked judge			18:2-8
36	Pharisee and tax collector			18:10-14
37	King's ten servants given minas (also see #45)			19:12-27
38	Two sons, one obeys one does not	21:28-32		
39	Wicked tenants	21:33-44	12:1-11	20:9-18
40	Invitation to a wedding banquet	22:2-14		
41	Signs of the future from a fig tree	24:32-35	13:28-29	21:29-31
42	Wise and foolish servants (2 <sup>nd</sup> time, see #9)	24:45-51		
43	Wise and foolish virgins	25:1-13		
44	Servants must remain watchful (2 <sup>nd</sup> time, see #8)		13:35-37	
45	Three servants given talents (also see #37)	25:14-30		
46	Sheep and goats will be separated	25:31-46		

## Study Tips

1. When considering the miracles or the parables recorded in each of the Gospels, look to the settings in which they have been positioned in the individual records. Remember that the writers do not always present them in the chronological order in which they were given. Often, they are grouped to present an overall message that they are emphasizing from Christ's ministry.
2. For the same reason, investigate the surrounding verses to determine to whom Jesus is speaking, or what people are present as witnesses to these miracles or to His teaching. Are representatives of specific groups, such as the Pharisees or Sadducees, present at that time?
3. Consider the position taken by the groups to whom He is talking. As an example, are they Disciples, Pharisees, Sadducees, Romans, etc? This will quite often reveal a specific bias when questions are presented to Him, and, certainly offer a guide to the terms of reference from within which He is presenting His message.
4. When considering the message to be derived from a specific miracle or parable, always find out whether it appears in more than one Gospel. If so, read each account, putting them together in order to provide the full message.
5. As always, use the cross-references provided in your Bibles relating to these accounts as they frequently throw additional light on the teaching being presented.
6. Look for Bible echoes, or fore-shadows, in these references, which might provide additional understanding.

## Workshop Exercises

1. What was written above Jesus when he was crucified?  
Start in Mark 15:26. What does he record?  
Then find the other Gospel accounts (it's in all four Gospels) to determine the full message the Pilate had written about Jesus.  
Why do you think the Gospel writers 'differ' on this? Suggest a reason.
2. Consider the miracle recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke, the "**Healing the hemorrhaging woman**" We first encounter this in Matthew 9:20-22

If we read only this account, we can perceive it simply as another miracle of Christ, demonstrating that He was, indeed, the Son of God. He provides evidence of this by manifesting the power of God given to Him in order to heal. In His loving mercy, in response to the woman's faith, He made her well. This, in itself, is an encouraging lesson.

But, like all His miracles, it was performed under a particular set of circumstances, for particular people, and for specific reasons, and under the conditions involved, provided a message. It was to serve as a lesson to all those who witnessed it. It was recorded to provide a message for all those who receive the Gospel Word throughout the centuries. As readers of the Gospel, we seek that message, to give us greater understanding of Jesus and the hope that we have, through, and in Him.

Consider the details of the miracle from each of the 3 accounts (Matt. 9:20; Mark 5:25; Luke 8:40), looking at them in the setting of the surrounding verses. Look also at any relevant Old Testament 'echoes' that help to give a fuller picture of the woman's condition (for example Lev. 15:25).

Then try to find New Testament passages that may relate to our state without Christ, and how we can see ourselves pictured by this woman and her healing by Jesus! (For example, Romans 6:23)

Summarize your findings, and describe how looking at each Gospel account helps to bring a fuller picture of what happened, and what the lesson is for us today.

## **LESSON FOR US**

Each of us must always remember the purpose for which Jesus' life was recorded. This should be the object of our reading and study. If, through our Lord's help, we do learn to read the Bible effectively, we will find the truth that is presented in His Word.

In the opening remarks of his Gospel, Luke states:

*... "many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us... So that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught." Luke 1:1,4*