

GOSPELS



Matthew

Winged man: Jesus Christ's advent as a human being

- Numbers**
- 28 chapters
 - 1,071 verses
 - 18,346 words
 - Written between 80–90 CE

Background

Matthew presents Jesus through stories and teachings to people who knew and understood Jewish customs and religious texts.

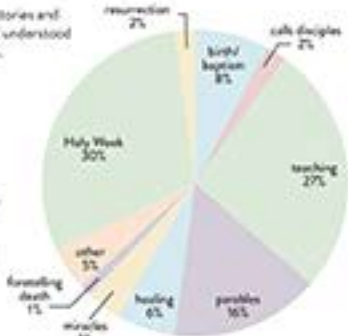
Important Verses
Matthew 1:18–25

How It Starts

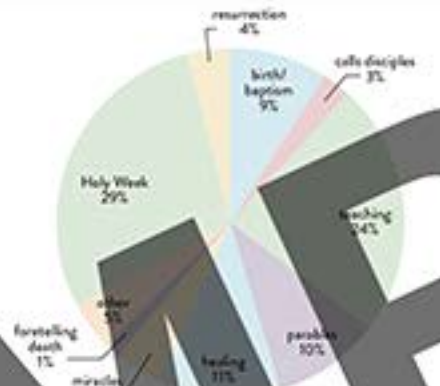
Jesus' genealogy links him to Abraham.

Unique to Gospel

Matthew is the only Gospel to use the word church. Jesus is called the "Son of God," "Messiah," "Teacher," and "Lord." The reign of God is set against the kingdom of this world or the kingdom of Satan.



What Is a Gospel?
From the Greek word euangelion, which means "good news," a Gospel is a written account of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The four Gospels are unique ways of sharing the same information.



Each Gospel includes common themes, stories, and events with different emphases. All four Gospels end with an account of Holy Week and Jesus' death and resurrection. The pie chart above shows the thematic distribution of the four Gospels combined.

The Synoptic (look-alike) Gospels:
Matthew, Mark, and Luke follow a similar structure and include common material.

Symbols of the Four Gospel Writers:
The symbols developed over centuries and are found in Christian art, icons, and frescoes. There are many layers and interpretations, but they initially indicated the beginning of each Gospel:
Matthew, winged man: points to the genealogy of Jesus
Mark, lion: references wilderness and wildness with the introduction of John the Baptist
Luke, ox: refers to the duties of Zechariah, a temple priest
John, eagle: indicates the soaring and lofty introduction to that Gospel



Luke

Ox: Jesus Christ's sacrificial and priestly ministry

- Numbers**
- 24 chapters
 - 1,351 verses
 - 19,482 words
 - Written between 80–110 CE

Background

Luke tells an orderly and measured account of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection to a group of people who were not familiar with the land and customs of Jesus.

Important Verses

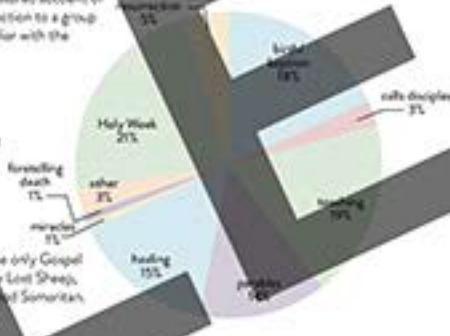
Luke 4:14–21
The birth of John the Baptist

How It Starts

The birth of John the Baptist

Unique to Gospel

Jesus is called the "son" and brings "salvation." Luke includes more stories about women and widows than the other Gospels. Luke is the only Gospel to include the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Prodigal Son, and the Good Samaritan.



Mark

Lion: Jesus Christ's leadership and royal power

- Numbers**
- 16 chapters
 - 678 verses
 - 11,304 words
 - Written between 60–70 CE

Background

Teachings, miracles, and stories are combined in a fast-paced narrative that takes Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem.

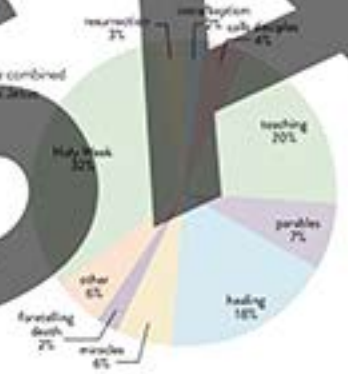
Important Verses
Mark 8:27–29

How It Starts

Jesus' baptism

Unique to Gospel

In Mark's story, John the Baptist huggers "ironically," Jesus tells people to "sell his own" about the miracles he performs. Jesus announces the "Kingdom of God" and defeats demons and diseases.



John

Eagle: the gift of the Spirit hovering over the church

- Numbers**
- 21 chapters
 - 879 verses
 - 15,635 words
 - Written between 90–110 CE

Background

In John, the story of Jesus begins at creation. He is the Word (Logos) in the flesh and describes himself with "I am" statements (the Old Testament name for God is YHWH, "I am"). Jesus Christ is one with God.

Important Verse

John 20:31

How It Starts

The beginning of creation

Unique to Gospel

John includes "I am" statements, miracles that are "signs," no parables, and Jesus washing the disciples' feet.

