

New Testament 1 - Understanding the Gospels

“The Gospels are the heart of all the Scriptures...” CCC #125

Focus Questions: How did you find the experience of reading an entire Gospel at one sitting?

Thinking about the Gospels as a Literary Form

1. 3 stages of formation of the Gospels - CCC #126
2. Implications
 - a. What does it mean to say that the Gospels are more about what Jesus *meant* than what *happened* to Jesus?
 - b. What does it mean to say that the Gospels reflect *a resurrection viewpoint*?
 - c. What does it mean to say that the authors of the Gospels were *selective*? (cf. DV #19, John 20:30-31, John 21:25)
 - d. The Agony in the Garden and the Transfiguration are such important and meaningful events in the Jesus accounts, why would they be totally absent from John’s Gospel?
 - e. The kingdom of God according to one noted NT scholar “*is the heart and center of Jesus’ preaching*” and is referred to as “*the key image of the Gospel.*” What is the kingdom of God? Where is it? When can a person experience it? How is it related to our understanding of Church?

Gospel Profiles

1. Mark

- a. Community →
- b. Structure →
- c. Dominant image of Jesus →
- d. Discipleship →
- e. Distinctive Texts →
- f. Major Themes →

2. Matthew

- a. Community →
- b. Structure →
- c. Dominant image of Jesus →
- d. Discipleship →
- e. Distinctive Texts →
- f. Major Themes →

3. Luke

- a. Community →

- b. Structure →
- c. Dominant image of Jesus →

- d. Discipleship →

- e. Distinctive Texts →

- f. Major Themes →

4. John

- a. Community →

- b. Structure →

- c. Dominant image of Jesus →

- d. Discipleship →

- e. Distinctive Texts →

- f. Major Themes →

Assignment Question

Write a theological reflection on **one** of the following suggested passages from Matthew's Gospel: 2:1-12, 5:1-12, 6:25-34, 10:5-33, 14:22-33, 20:1-16

In your reflection, be sure to address these questions:

- a. What does this passage **mean**? (What does the author want to communicate?)
- b. What does this passage **mean to me**? (What message does God want **me** to take from this text?)
- c. What will it **cost me** to live it out? (Practically speaking, how can **I** move from insight to action with this message?)

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