

Introduction to the Gospels
Module



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Center for Catholic Education and Formation Archdiocese of Hartford

Leadership Formation for Teachers, Catechists, and Parish Ministers

Guide to the Gospels Learning Module

Contents

1. Create a Gospel
2. Introduction to the Gospels – Christopher McMahon
(Saint Mary’s Press)
3. Overview of the Gospel of Mark – The Bible Project
4. Overview of the Gospel of Matthew – The Bible Project
5. Overview of the Gospel of Luke – The Bible Project
6. Overview of the Gospel of John – The Bible Project
7. The Four Gospels at a Glance – Catholic Study Bible
8. Gospel Comparisons – Saint Mary’s Press
9. Gospel Portraits of Jesus – Catholic Study Bible
10. An Overview of the Four Gospels – Catholic Study Bible
11. The Miracles of Jesus – Catholic Study Bible
12. The Parables of Jesus – Catholic Study Bible
13. Gospel Reading Activities
 - A Bible Reading Method
 - Studying a Bible Text
 - Reading the Bible with Heart
 - Reflective Bible Reading
 - Lectio Divina
 - Visio Divina
14. Children’s Activities
15. Five Ways to Retell a Bible Story with Kids
16. Teaching the Gospels Online Resources

Create a Gospel

The following activity involves you in the process of writing a gospel (good news) for the people you teach—children, adolescents, or adults. You don't need to be a Bible expert, we'll provide you with the materials you need to do this activity. Write your responses for each step on paper or use your computer or tablet.

Step One. Describe Your Audience and the Questions They Are Asking

Each of the four Gospels was written for a particular audience with particular needs and questions. Begin writing your gospel by naming the audience for your gospel, i.e., the age group or life stage you teach or work with. Then identify the questions your audience might be asking about the life and teachings of Jesus, why his life and teachings are important for them, what it would mean if they became his followers, and other questions like this.

Step Two Describe What You Remember and Believe about Jesus

Think about what you know about the life and teachings of Jesus from the four Gospels that are particularly meaningful to you. These can be things Jesus did, things he taught, stories he told, and/or significant events in his life. Try to identify ten things you remember and belief about Jesus that are important to you.

Now review your list and circle the items that you think would be important to teach or share with your audience.

Step Three. Review What We Have Received from Other about Jesus

Review each of the following Gospel passages below. Read the ones that you are not familiar with. You can use your Bible to read the passages or go online to Bible Gateway at <https://www.biblegateway.com>. Type in the Bible passage you want to read and then select the New American Bible Revised Edition (NABRE) or New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (NRSVCE).

You might find it helpful to arrange the scriptural passages in a likely chronological order. You can do that by numbering each passage from 1 to 20.

Now review the twenty passages below and circle ten that you think are most important and would address the questions and needs of your audience.

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Mark 4:35-41 | Jesus calms a storm at sea |
| Mark 15:22-41 | Jesus is crucified |
| Mark 10:46-52 | Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus |
| Matthew 4:1-17 | Jesus is tempted in the desert |
| Matthew 5:13-16 | Light for the world, salt of the earth |
| Matthew 5:1-12 | The Beatitudes |
| Matthew 25:31-46 | Parable of the final judgment (goats and sheep) |
| Matthew 16:13-20 | Peter's declaration about Jesus |
| Luke 9:1-6 | Jesus sends out the disciples |
| Luke 10:25-37 | Parable of the Good Samaritan |
| Luke 5:1-11 | Call of the first disciples |
| Luke 11:1-13 | Jesus' teachings on prayer |
| Luke 6:27-36 | Love of enemies |
| Luke 22:14-20 | The Last Supper |
| Luke 7:18-23 | Jesus' ministry |
| John 6:1-14 | Feeding the 5000 |
| John 20:1-18 | Mary at the tomb |
| John 4:4-42 | Jesus and the Samaritan woman |
| John 8:2-10 | The woman caught in adultery |
| John 15:12-17 | Love one another as I love you |

Step Four: Write Your Gospel for Your Audience

Now it's time to create your own mini-gospel. Use the items that you circled from the list of what you remember and believe about Jesus, and the ten most important Gospel passages to construct a gospel for your audience. This will only be an outline of your gospel. Write your gospel outline in short sentences.

As you develop your outline keep in mind the following:

- What are the needs or hungers of your audience?
- What are the key things you want them to know and believe about Jesus?
- How can your gospel move people to faith in Jesus?

Save your gospel until Part 3 when we will reflect on what you did using the knowledge of how the four Gospels were developed.

Worksheet: Create a Gospel

Step One. Describe Your Audience and the Questions They Are Asking

Step Two Describe What You Remember and Believe about Jesus

Step Three. Review What We Have Received from Other about Jesus

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Mark 4:35-41 | Jesus calms a storm at sea |
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Step Four: Write Your Gospel for Your Audience

Introduction to the Gospels

The Gospel and the Gospels

The word *gospel* appears in many places in the New Testament, but always in a singular, never in a plural form. For the earliest Christians the word *gospel* (from the Greek *euangelion*) referred to the “good news” of what God had done in Jesus. The word *gospel* therefore is singular in all its seventy-six occurrences in the New Testament because it refers to this singular event and not to a written book as many contemporary readers might assume. It was not until the second century that Justin Martyr first used the plural form of the word to describe the narratives of Jesus’ life and ministry that circulated among the early Christians. Properly speaking, each of the four narratives is an account of the one Gospel, the “Good News” about Jesus Christ, and only in a secondary sense are they written documents named “Gospels.” The superscriptions “According to Matthew,” “According to Mark,” and so on, were added to manuscripts after the books themselves were in circulation.

Before we can engage in any serious study of the Gospels, we need to consider their literary genre. Although the other books in the New Testament adopted an already existing literary genre—usually a letter (e.g., Galatians), an epistle (e.g., James), or an apocalypse (Revelation)—many biblical scholars believe that the Gospels are best understood as unique creations that embody a distinctly new literary genre. This new genre can best be described as a highly stylized and heavily symbolic theological narrative of historical events in the life of an individual—Jesus of Nazareth (though Luke’s account of the Gospel also encompasses the life of the early Church in the Acts of the Apostles). Yet other scholars contend that while these narratives are in many ways unique, they also strongly resemble Hellenistic biographies of the same period. Whether or not the Gospel genre is utterly original, the response these narratives seek to evoke is unique—faith in Jesus (John 20:31).

The Formation of the Gospel Accounts

Based upon our brief description of the Gospel genre, the reader, or more precisely, the hearer of the Gospel accounts, did not think of these narratives simply as historical records. These texts certainly contain much historically reliable information about events in the life of Jesus and the early Church—a judgment widely accepted even by non-Christian scholars—yet the precise relationship of these books to the events they purport to narrate remains a point of disagreement. Some scholars argue that these books contain material created almost entirely by the early Church and thus bear little relationship to the events of Jesus’ life. Other scholars believe that these books faithfully preserve the memory of what Jesus said and did even though material created by the early Church has also been inserted in places. Both groups of experts generally agree that some material in the Gospels comes from Jesus himself, and some material reflects the concerns of the early Church. Distinguishing between these two types of material is part of New Testament study and is usually associated with what has come to be known as “historical Jesus research.” While some Christians find this area of study troubling, for Roman Catholics the distinction between the life and ministry of Jesus and the proclamation of the early Church has been affirmed by the teaching office of the Catholic Church. Such a distinction, however, in no way detracts from the more fundamental conviction that the Gospels are true to the message, mission, and identity of Jesus.

Since the early twentieth century, biblical scholars have wrestled with how the Gospel tradition was formed. In 1964, the Pontifical Biblical Commission, then a teaching office of the Vatican, outlined the Roman Catholic Church’s understanding of the development of the material in the Gospels (*Sancta*



Mater Ecclesia). This account, reaffirmed at Vatican Council II in the *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum, no. 19)*, states that the Gospels developed in three distinct yet interdependent stages. What follows is a summary of how New Testament scholarship generally views these three stages.

Stage 1: The early followers of Jesus witness his proclamation of the nearness of God's Kingdom by word (pronouncements and parables) and action (symbolic actions and miraculous signs). Jesus' own role in the coming Kingdom is central. Jesus challenges the contemporary boundaries of Judaism, including prohibitions against table fellowship with known sinners and outcasts. He also calls into question the function of the Temple and confronts the religious and political establishment.

Stage 2: The early followers of Jesus, almost all of whom had abandoned him at his hour of need, now proclaim him "Lord" and "Savior" in light of their experience of his Resurrection from the dead and the outpouring of the Spirit. Saul of Tarsus is converted to become a follower of Christ and embarks on a missionary career, leaving behind letters that he had written to various churches giving instructions on a wide variety of issues. Much of the apostolic preaching, or *kerygma*, contains little information about Jesus' life and ministry, though many remembrances of his pronouncements, miracles, and controversies are preserved in a variety of contexts by the early Christian Church.

Stage 3: The proclamation of Jesus' saving work begins to take on a more narrative structure and gives way to the formation of the written Gospel accounts. These narratives incorporate material from both of the previous stages; however, they build a distinct portrait of Christ for the contemporary Christian Church.

These three stages illustrate the movement of the Gospel from the Apostles' experience of Jesus to an oral proclamation of the Good News, and then to a literary proclamation as well. This process or movement was accompanied by the development of a theology that sought to integrate more closely the life of Jesus with the proclamation of his Resurrection.

Upon reading the first three canonical narratives about Jesus, commonly called the synoptic Gospels, the reader is struck by both the great number of verbal and structural similarities and by the uniqueness of many of the stories (the word *synoptic* means "seen together"). The precise nature and extent of the literary relationships among these texts has been an issue for centuries and is called "the synoptic problem." In the nineteenth century the long-accepted priority of Matthew fell under suspicion, and Scripture scholars like K. Lachmann began to argue for the priority of Mark over Matthew and Luke. These scholars believed that Matthew and Luke started with the Gospel of Mark, which Matthew and Luke revised and to which they added material. This theory helped to explain the material common to all three synoptic accounts, yet there remained the problem of the two-hundred-twenty verses shared only by Luke and Matthew. In an effort to account for these verses, C. Weisse erected the so-called two-source hypothesis. He posited the existence of a collection of sayings from Jesus that circulated in the early Church, and this source was eventually designated by the letter Q, an abbreviation for the German word *Quelle*, which means "source." According to the two-source hypothesis, Matthew and Luke had access to Q as well as Mark, when they composed their Gospels. While some scholars are skeptical about the existence of Q, the two-source hypothesis is generally the preferred solution to the synoptic problem.

The Q source is not the only hypothetical source posited by New Testament scholars. There is much material in the New Testament, the origins of which are difficult to determine. The fourth Gospel (John) stands apart from the synoptic Gospels as part of an early and unique tradition of Jesus' life and ministry, even though there are still some important points of contact with the synoptics (e.g., the cleansing of the Temple, walking on the sea, Jesus' entry into Jerusalem). This uniqueness has caused some to consider the material in John to be far removed from the life and ministry of Jesus, yet others (e.g., John Meier) have argued that some of the unique material in John may indeed go back to stage



1. But virtually all scholars agree that the vast majority of the material in the Gospel of John reflects the unique theology and concerns of the late first-century Christian Church. In addition to the fourth Gospel, scholars struggle to account for special material in Matthew and Luke that is not related to Mark or Q (this material is often designated with the letters M and L). Like the Johannine material, the special Matthean and Lucan material reflects each of these authors' theological tendencies.

Christology in the Gospels

As one reads through the Scriptures, it is apparent that images of God and understandings of how God works in the world have developed over the course of time. For the earliest Christians, all of whom were Jewish, the experience of Jesus both confirmed their prior experience of God but also challenged it. In the first century, Jewish men recited the *Shema* from Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (which begins “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone!”). While the *Shema* was an affirmation of Israel's fidelity to Yahweh and not primarily a statement of monotheism, the prayer certainly illustrates that the declaration “Jesus is God” (i.e., Yahweh) would have been a difficult statement for early Jews. The fullest articulation of the Son's divinity, though powerfully implied in Jesus' own activity and broadly alluded to in the New Testament, awaited theological developments that did not take place until the fourth century (the Council of Nicaea). However, it is within the pages of the New Testament that we begin to see the early Christians wrestle to find the precise language to articulate Jesus' relationship to God—a relationship made powerfully evident in the disciples' own experience of the Resurrection and the conversion it engendered within them. Their lives had been changed radically. They shifted from fleeing naked in the face of persecution (see Mark 14:50–52) to offering bold witness in the face of death for the sake of Christ—to whom the earliest Christians “sang songs as to a god” (Pliny, *Letters*, 10.96).

As the earliest Christians struggled to find the language to express the relationship between Jesus and God, they employed and reinterpreted biblical imagery and vocabulary to express their convictions about Jesus. Some of this vocabulary took the form of Christological titles (i.e., statements that were used to express faith in Jesus) or categories (i.e., a stock figure or image), including the following:

Lord. The Greek word *kurios* has a wide range of meanings, from “sir” (John 4:11) to Yahweh—the name of God—in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (the Septuagint). At the close of the Old Testament period the divine name “Yahweh” was never pronounced (except by the high priest on the Day of Atonement). Instead the word *Adonai* (the Hebrew equivalent of “Lord”) was pronounced. The title “Lord” was used to evoke the name of Israel's God, but it could function in other ways as well: (1) it was a way of referring to the glorified risen Christ, particularly with reference to Psalm 110:2; (2) it expressed the fact that this figure was due the same worship and honor as Yahweh (Philippians 2:11); and (3) it expressed Jesus' dominion over all of creation.

Messiah and Christ. The Aramaic word *messiah* simply means “anointed one”; it is translated into Greek as *christos*. It was customary in the ancient world to anoint people when they assumed important new positions in the community (i.e., king, priest, prophet). The title gradually became more associated with the king of Judah, though not exclusively. Following the Babylonian Exile (586–539 BC) it began to be used in conjunction with Israel's hope of future restoration and deliverance, particularly the deliverance of Israel from Gentile oppression. Yet, it is clear from the New Testament itself that Jesus subverted the political expectations many had associated with the term *messiah*. It is perhaps the novelty, or the scandal, of calling the crucified Jesus Messiah that made it difficult for so many to respond to his disciples' proclamation of faith.



Son of God. In the Old Testament the title “Son of God” is (1) a title given to angels (see Job 1:6); (2) a collective title for the people of Israel (see Exodus 4:22; Hosea 11:1); and (3) a title of adoption for the king (see Psalms 2:7). The dominant view in the Old Testament is that a “Son of God” was someone who had received a God-given task. In the prologue of John’s Gospel (see John 1:1–18) and in John 3:16, Jesus is also called “the Father’s only Son” (*monogenēs*), emphasizing the uniqueness of his relationship with the Father and signaling a fuller understanding of Jesus’ sonship as ontological—Jesus’ very nature is the same as that of the Father. In Mark 1:11 the word *son* is used to translate the Hebrew word for “servant” and thus provides a link between “Son of God” and another popular category for understanding Jesus, that is, that of “servant of God” in the servant songs found in Isaiah.

Son of Man. In Daniel 7:13, the “Son of Man” or “one like a Son of Man” (i.e., one who looks like a human being) is part of the heavenly court and helps to bring about the subjugation of the world and inaugurates the salvation of Israel (see also two Jewish apocalyptic works written around the time of Jesus, Enoch 46:1–4; 48:2–10; and 2 Esdras, chapter 13). The phrase, “Son of Man,” appears to be Jesus’ preferred self-designation since it is found in no early creedal formulae and only on his lips in the New Testament. Although this phrase is also used in Ezekiel when Yahweh addresses the prophet (3:17), in this context it simply differentiates the mortal prophet from the immortal and transcendent God (Yahweh) for whom he speaks.

These titles and categories, however, are not the only way the New Testament, and the Gospels in particular, express the religious significance of Jesus. The authors of the Gospels have selected specific narrative moments to express their convictions about Jesus. The late Raymond Brown called these literary scenes “christological moments.” They are scenes taken from the life and ministry of Jesus that become the means by which New Testament authors give expression to their convictions about Jesus—convictions informed by the experience of the Resurrection. One of the clearest examples of a Christological moment can be found in the opening chapters of two Gospel accounts—Matthew and Luke—where one finds two very different stories about the birth of Jesus. While some basic details of these stories may have some root in stage 1 (see above), neither of these stories are historical accounts of Jesus’ birth; rather, they offer portraits of Jesus as Davidic king (Matthew) and lowly, but universal, savior (Luke). Other examples of Christological moments include the Virginal Conception, Jesus’ Baptism, and the Transfiguration scenes. Each of these Christological moments clearly and artfully point to the conviction of the early Church that in Jesus no less than God was present, bringing about the redemption of the world distorted by sin. Some readers may get mired in the question: “Did this event really happen?” However, the purpose of the Gospel accounts is to proclaim what God has done in Jesus.

(This article, by Christopher McMahon, PhD, comes from *Saint Mary’s Press*[®] *College Study Bible* [Winona, MN: 2006], pages 1405–1409.)



AUTHOR: 

30-40 YEARS
of
ORAL TRADITION

Matthew
SEE 9:14-10:3

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
MATTHEW

Things to look for

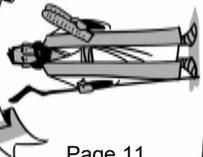
#1 LOOK UP OLD TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS (THERE ARE A LOT)

1. MESSIAH FROM THE LINE OF DAVID

2. NEW MOSES

3. GOD WITH US

#2 LOOK CLOSELY AT THE PEOPLE WHO ACCEPT JESUS
+ FAITH = TRANSFORMATION

NEW MOSES


CONNECT JESUS TO OLD TESTAMENT

1-3 HEBRAIC DAVID JESUS

4-7 ANNUALS GOD'S KINGDOM
SERMON ON THE MOUNT (9:9-13)
GOD'S KINGDOM: CONFIRM EAL, RESTORE GOD'S REIGN, CREATE A NEW FAMILY
HOW TO LIVE IN GODS KINGDOM: FULFIL THE TORAH, BEATS IN LOVE

8-10 JESUS BRINGS KINGDOM INTO PEOPLES LIVES
SENDING THE 12 (9:10-13) GREAT COMMISSION SEND REJECTION

11-13 RESPONSES TO JESUS
PARABLES IN COMMENTARY
THE KINGDOM IS THE MESSIAH!
JESUS IS THE MESSIAH!
IS HE THE MESSIAH?
HE IS NOT THE MESSIAH!

14-20 DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THE MESSIAH
THE WIFE OF THE KING (16:19-20) BY KING OF KING
SUFFERING SERVAUNT (16:21-23) SUFFERING SERVAUNT (16:21-23)
VICTORIOUS! DEFEATS PAGANS!
PARABLES IN COMMENTARY
HE IS JUDGED IN THEIR BEHALF

21-25 CLASH OF KINGDOMS
IMMANUEL GOD WITH US
COTAGE OF YOU PHARISES HYPOCRITES!
RECEIVING AUTHORITY
WHO TALKS IN COMPROMISED BELIEF IF HYPOCRISY
OFFERED
WORTH TO KILL JESUS

26-28 PASSOVER MEAL - NEW MEANING
RETURNS THE SPIRIT OF...
-RESUME PALE SARGENT
-WIFE OF ROSCOE LAMB =
THAT NOT BE RESEMBL
THE HAT BLASPHEMED FOR
SANHEDRIN (JEWISH LEADERS)
PIRATE
LET INNOCENT BUT LET HIM BE CAUCIFIED!
GREAT COMMISSION
JESUS IS KING OF THE WORLD
TELL THE GOSPEL TO ALL PEOPLE
THE END BEGINS WITH THE KINGDOM
BAPTIZED
IS LIKE THE TEACHERS
-Immanuel-

1 2 3 4 5 BOOKS OF MOSES (TORAH)

MOSES
- OUT OF EGYPT
- CROSS THE RED SEA
- LEADER FOR 40 YEARS
- RECEIVES LAW FROM MOUNTAIN

JESUS
- OUT OF EGYPT
- BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN RIVER
- LEADER FOR 40 YEARS
- RECEIVES LAW FROM MOUNTAIN

JESUS > MOSES
- DELIVER FROM SLAVERS
- GIVE NEW DIVINE TEACHING
- SAVE FROM SIN
- INITIATE A NEW COVENANT

created by the Bible Project

JOHN

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

AUTHOR: THE DISCIPLE JESUS LOVED
(644, 19:23; 19:33-37; 20:2)

JOHN, SON OF ZEBEDEE?
JOHN THE ELDER?

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK:
"SO THAT YOU MAY COME TO BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE MESSIAH, AND THAT BY BELIEVING, YOU MAY HAVE LIFE IN HIS NAME."
(20:31)

BASIC PATTERN IN THE STORIES IN 2-12
I AM!

JESUS PERFORMS A SIGN OR MAKES A CLAIM...
PEOPLE MISUNDERSTAND OR GET ANGRY

7th I AM
THE DREAD OF LIFE 0:35
THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD 8:12
THE GATE FOR THE SHEEP 10:7
THE GOOD SHEPHERD 10:11
THE RESURRECTION 11:25
THE WAY, TRUTH & LIFE 14:6
THE TRUE VINE 15:1

7th I AM
WATER INTO WINE ch.2
HEALING A SICK FOOT ch.1
HEALING A PARALYZED MAN ch.5
FEEDING THE 5,000 ch.6
HEALING A BLIND MAN ch.7
RAISING LAZARUS ch.11

7th I AM
4:20 6:20
8:24 8:28
9:50 13:19
18:5

Eye
Sign
GOD'S COVENANT NAME
(EXODUS 3:14; ISIAH 48:10; 48:19)

2-10 MIRACULOUS SIGNS & CONTROVERSIES

1 INTRODUCTION
1-10 IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD.
THE DIVINE LOGOS BECAME HUMAN (GENESIS 1)
GOD'S TABERNACLE GLORY (EXODUS 33:35)
THE ONE, TRUE GOD = FATHER & SON

2-4 FOUR JEWISH INSTITUTIONS
2a A WEDDING!
3 A RABBI
4 A SACRED JAR

5-10 FOUR JEWISH FEASIS
5 SABBATH
6 PASSOVER
7-10a TABERNACLES
10b HANUKKAH

11-12 RAISING LAZARUS
LAZARUS IS SICK!
JESUS CASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEEL & GIVES HIS GREAT COMMAND
13 JESUS CASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEEL & GIVES HIS GREAT COMMAND

13-17 JESUS' FINAL WORDS

14-17 JESUS' SPEECH & PRAYER
1 JESUS IS GOING AWAY SO HE CAN SEND "THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH" (J. 14:17)
2 THE ONE GOD CONSISTS OF THE LOVING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FATHER & THE SON
3 JESUS DISCIPLES ARE THOSE WHO ABIDE IN GOD'S LOVE
4 THE SPIRIT WILL EMPower JESUS FOLLOWERS TO CARRY ON HIS MISSION
5 JESUS PREDICTS OPPOSITION AS THEY HEAR ME...

21 EPILOGUE
THE CONTINUED MISSION OF JESUS' FOLLOWERS
A PICTURE OF DISCIPLESHIP
JESUS' FOLLOWERS ARE MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN THEY LISTEN FOR JESUS & SIMPLY OBEY HIS WORD.

7 TITLES:
THE FULLY HUMAN JESUS FROM NAZARETH IS THE MESSIANIC KING & TEACHER OF ISRAEL AND THE SON OF GOD WHO WILL DIE FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD.

THE LAMB OF GOD! (1:29)
SON OF GOD! (1:34)
RABBI! (1:38)
MESSIAH! (1:41)
JESUS OF NAZARETH! (1:44)
THE SON OF MAN. (1:49)
KING OF ISRAEL! (1:49)

18-20 JESUS' DEATH & RESURRECTION
18a JESUS' ARREST
18b-19 JESUS' CONFESSION
20 THE RESURRECTION

18-20 JESUS' DEATH & RESURRECTION
18a JESUS' ARREST
18b-19 JESUS' CONFESSION
20 THE RESURRECTION

18-20 JESUS' DEATH & RESURRECTION
18a JESUS' ARREST
18b-19 JESUS' CONFESSION
20 THE RESURRECTION

18-20 JESUS' DEATH & RESURRECTION
18a JESUS' ARREST
18b-19 JESUS' CONFESSION
20 THE RESURRECTION

created by BibleProject

The Four Gospels at a Glance

| Matthew | Mark | Luke | John |
|--|---|---|--|
| Date of Writing | | | |
| 70-90 A.D. | 65-70 A.D. | 70-90 A.D. | 90-100 A.D. |
| Place of Writing | | | |
| Antioch in Syria | Rome | Greece | Syria or Palestine |
| Target Audience | | | |
| Jewish Christians | Gentiles | Greeks | All Christians |
| Purpose for Writing | | | |
| To assert that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah who fulfills Israel's hopes and the words of the prophets | To present the person of Jesus through his actions and miracles | To give an orderly account of the ministry of Jesus so readers will rely on the Gospel to build their faith | To lead to faith in Jesus as God's son so those who believe will gain eternal life |
| Portrait of Jesus | | | |
| Promised Messiah | Suffering servant, hidden Messiah | Son of Man | Son of God/Word of God |
| Character of the Author | | | |
| Teacher/Catechist | Storyteller | Historian | Theologian |
| Major Emphasis | | | |
| Jesus' teachings | Jesus' actions | Jesus' humanity | Jesus' teachings |
| Themes | | | |
| Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy | The identity of Jesus | Salvation is a joyous surprise | The role of "signs" in building faith |
| Jesus identifies with the lowly | The importance of the cross | Salvation is offered to everyone | Dualistic struggle between forces of light and darkness |
| Jesus is the world's savior, not just Israel's | Discipleship | Jesus identifies with the lowly and respects and defends the dignity of all | Faith in Jesus necessary for eternal life |
| | | Mary is the first disciple | Jesus is the divine Son of God |

(From *The Catholic Study Bible – Personal Study Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press))

GOSPEL COMPARISONS

| | MARK | MATTHEW | LUKE | JOHN |
|------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Writer | Mark: A second generation Christian, possibly a follower of Peter; traditionally the John Mark of Acts | Matthew: An unknown Jewish Christian, traditionally the Apostle Matthew | Luke: A Gentile Christian, traditionally Luke the physician and Paul's traveling companion | John: The beloved disciple, the Apostle John, or his disciple |
| Date Written | AD 65-70 | AD 75-80 | AD 80-85 | AD 90-110 |
| Images of Christ | The suffering servant of God, Son of Man, Son of God, Messiah, and Lord | Teacher and prophet like Moses, Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, and Lord | Great healer, merciful, compassion for the poor, Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, and Lord | logos, word of God, Son of God, Son of Man, lamb of God, Redeemer, Messiah, and Lord |
| The Author's Community | A Gentile Christian community in Rome undergoing persecution | A Jewish Christian community in Antioch, Syria | Written to Theophilus (meaning "lover of God"), who possibly represents any Christian (Greece) | Community of Jews, Gentiles, and Samaritans of Ephesus in Turkey |
| Theological Themes | Jesus shows that the suffering in our lives can be a source of grace when united to the sufferings of Christ | Jesus teaches what it means to be a member of the Kingdom of heaven. He prepares his followers to continue his teaching and ministry. | Jesus heals long-standing divisions among people. He calls his followers to have a special compassion for those excluded from wealth and power. | Jesus is the divine Son of God, the image of God in flesh. Salvation is available for those who believe in Jesus and commit their lives to him. |
| Historical Situation | The Romans subdue armed Jewish rebellions. Christians experience persecution in Rome. | Written after Romans had destroyed all of Jerusalem, including the Temple of Herod | Written when the persecution of Jews and Christians was intensifying | Emperor Domitian deified himself and mandated that all people worship him. Jewish leaders banned Christians from the synagogues. |
| Caesars | Nero (AD 54-68) | Vespasian and Titus (AD 70-81) | Domitian (AD 81-96) | Domitian (AD 81-96), Nerva (AD 96-98), Trajan (AD 98-117) |

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Living in Christ Series

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Gospel Portraits of Jesus

Matthew paints Jesus as a lawgiver and Messiah, the great teacher of Israel. A convert to Christianity, Matthew traces Jesus' origins back into the history of Israel. He has great interest in showing that Jesus is the promised Messiah who fulfills Old Testament prophecy ("Son of David" and other messianic language is used throughout). His Jesus is a kind of catechist, teaching the law and preaching the Kingdom of God.

➤ Read Matthew 5:1-12, 17-19

Mark paints Jesus as the unrecognized (hidden), suffering Messiah. Though the shortest Gospel, Mark stresses Jesus' suffering: Jesus is the prophesied Messiah who comes not as a king, but as a *servant*. Mark is a storyteller who focuses more on what Jesus *did* than on what he *said*; he thus reveals Jesus as a man of power and decisive action. Because he is rejected by the Jews to whom he went first, Jesus expands his mission to the Gentiles. Through his many miracles, Jesus manifests his divine status as God's only son.

➤ Read Mark 8:31, 9:30-32, 10:32-34

Luke portrays Jesus as a man of mercy and compassion with a particular concern for the poor and outcast. His Jesus prays often, especially before important events. Though he is the son of God, Luke's Jesus is also fully human and his concern for all people makes him the universal Messiah. Luke aims at a clear, orderly and faith-affirming presentation of the words and deeds of Jesus. Wanting his readers to know the truth and reliability of the Gospel, he pays attention to historical detail. He stresses Christian prayer and the value of renunciation. He sees the fulfillment of prophecy in Jesus and thus stresses the fidelity of the God of Jesus. His Jesus shows a special interest in sinners, women, and family life. His Gospel expresses joy at the announcement of the "good news," makes his frequent use of the title "Son of Man," and reveals the active participation of the Spirit in the ministry of Jesus.

➤ Read Luke 7:18-23

John sees Jesus not as the suffering servant seen in the other Gospels. He is a noble and divine figure who is the Son of God and the Word of God. Even in the passion, John's Jesus is not a beaten, tormented victim. Instead he has stately bearing. He is peaceful, yet powerful, and fully in charge of his destiny. In John the eternal life that Jesus brings begins here in the present. Jesus is the unique son of God who is himself fully God. As such, he has existed forever, even before the world began. In John, Jesus' glory and power are revealed long before the resurrection. The miracles Jesus performs serve to inspire faith in him, for they reveal Jesus as a man of authority and love. For John, belief in Jesus is necessary for salvation.

➤ Read John 1:1-18

(From *The Catholic Study Bible – Personal Study Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press)

An Overview of the Four Gospels

| | Matthew | Mark | Luke | John |
|--|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| The Divinity of Jesus | | | | 1:1-5 |
| Birth of John the Baptist | | | 1:5-25 | |
| The Betrothal of the Virgin Mary | 1:18 | | 1:27 | |
| The Announcement of the Birth of Jesus | | | 1:26-38 | |
| Mary Visits Elizabeth | | | 1:39-56 | |
| Joseph's Dream | 1:20-25 | | | |
| The Birth of John the Baptist | | | 1:57-80 | |
| The Birth of Jesus | | | 2:1-7 | |
| The Visit by the Shepherds | | | 2:8-20 | |
| The Circumcision and Naming of Jesus | | | 2:21 | |
| The Presentation in the Temple | | | 2:22-29 | |
| The Genealogy of Jesus | 1:1-17 | | 3:23-38 | |
| The Visit of the Magi | 2:1-12 | | | |
| The Flight to Egypt | 2:13-15 | | | |
| The Massacre of the Infants | 2:16-18 | | | |
| The Return from Egypt | 2:19-23 | | 2:39 | |
| The Boy Jesus in the Temple | | | 2:41 | |
| With the Teachers in the Temple | | | 2:46-50 | |
| Youth of Jesus | | | 2:51 | |
| The Preaching of John the Baptist | 3:1-4 | 1:1-8 | 3:1-18 | 1:6-15 |
| Baptism by John | 3:6 | 1:5 | 3:21 | |
| First Testimony of the Baptist to Christ | 3:11-12 | 1:7-8 | | 1:29-34 |
| The Baptism of Jesus | 3:13-17 | 1:9-11 | 3:21-22 | |
| The Temptation of Jesus | 4:1-11 | 1:12-13 | 4:1-13 | |
| John the Baptist's Testimony to Himself | | | | 1:19-35 |
| The Call of the First Disciples | 4:18-22 | 1:16-20 | 5:1-11 | 1:37-51 |
| First Miracle at Cana | | | | 2:1-11 |
| Visit to Capernaum | | | | 2:12 |
| Cleansing of the Temple | 21:12-13 | 11:15-17 | 19:45-46 | 2:13-23 |
| Nicodemus | | | | 3:1-21 |
| The Final Witness of the Baptist | | | | 3:22-36 |
| The Samaritan Woman | | | | 4:1-42 |
| The Return to Galilee | | | | 4:43-45 |
| The Second Sign at Cana | | | | 4:46-54 |
| The Cure on a Sabbath | | | | 5:1-47 |
| Imprisonment of John the Baptist | 4:12 | 1:14-15 | | 3:24 |
| The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry | 4:12-17 | 1:14-15 | 4:14-15 | |
| The Rejection of Nazareth | 13:54-58 | 6:1-4 | 4:16-27 | |
| Jesus Preaches at Capernaum | 4:13-17 | | | |
| The Cure of a Demoniac | | 1:23-27 | 4:33-36 | |

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|--|----------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| The Cure of Peter's Mother-in-law | 8:14-15 | 1:29-31 | 4:38-39 | |
| Other Healings | 8:16-17 | 1:32-34 | 4:40-41 | |
| Circuit through Galilee | | 1:38-39 | 4:42-44 | |
| The Cleansing of a Leper | 8:1-4 | 1:40-45 | 5:12-18 | |
| Retirement for Solitary Prayer | | 1:45 | 5:16 | |
| The Healing of a Paralytic | 9:1-8 | 2:1-12 | 5:18-25 | |
| Call of Matthew | 9:9-17 | 2:13-22 | 5:27-39 | |
| Ministering to a Great Multitude | 4:23-25 | | 6:17-19 | |
| Picking Grain on the Sabbath | 12:1-8 | 2:23-28 | 6:1-5 | |
| The Man with the Withered Hand | 12:9-14 | 3:1-6 | 6:6-11 | |
| Retirement for Solitary Prayer | | | 6:12 | |
| The Mission of the Twelve | 10:1-4 | 3:13-19, 6:7-13 | 6:13-16, 9:1-6 | |
| The Sermon on the Mount | 5:1-12 | | 6:20-26 | |
| The Healing of the Centurion's Servant | 8:5-13 | | 7:1-10 | |
| The Raising of the Widow's Son | | | 7:11-17 | |
| The Messengers from John the Baptist | 11:2-19 | | 7:18-35 | |
| The Pardon of the Sinful Woman | | | 7:36-50 | |
| The Beatitudes | 5:2-12 | | 6:20-26 | |
| Galilean Women Follow Jesus | | | 8:1-3 | |
| Jesus and Beelzebul | 12:22-28 | 3:23-30 | 11:14-23 | |
| Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit | 12:31-32 | | | |
| The Return of the Unclean Spirit | 12:43-45 | | 11:24-26 | |
| The True Family of Jesus | 12:46-50 | 3:31-35 | 8:19-21 | |
| The Parable of the Sower | 13:1-9 | 4:1-9, 14-20 | 8:6-8, 11-15 | |
| The Parable of the Weeds among the Wheat | 13:24-30 | | | |
| The Parable of the Mustard Seed | 13:31-32 | 4:30-32 | 13:18-19 | |
| The Parable of the Yeast | 13:33 | | 13:20-21 | |
| The Parable of the Lamp | 5:15 | 4:21 | 8:16, 11:33 | |
| The Parable of the Buried Treasure | 13:44 | | | |
| The Parable of the Fine Pearl | 13:45-46 | | | |
| The Parable of the Thrown Net | 13:47-48 | | | |
| The Parable of the Storm at Sea | 8:24-27 | 4:37-41 | 8:23-25 | |
| The Healing of the Gergesene Demoniacs | 8:28-34 | 5:1-20 | 8:26-39 | |
| The Parable of the Bridegroom | 9:15 | | | |
| The Parable of the New Cloth | 9:16 | 2:21 | 5:36 | |
| The Parable of New Wine in Old Bottles | 9:17 | 2:22 | 5:37-38 | |
| Miracles: Jairus' Daughter and the Woman with a Hemorrhage | 9:18-26 | 5:22-43 | 8:41-56 | |
| The Healing of Two Blind Men | 9:27-31 | | | |
| The Healing of a Mute Person | 9:32-34 | | | |
| The Mission of the Twelve | 10:1-4 | 6:7-12 | 9:1-6 | |
| Herod's Opinion of Jesus | 14:1-12 | 6:14-29 | 9:7-9 | |

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|---|----------|---------|-------------------|---------|
| The Return of the Twelve and the Feeding of the Five Thousand | 14:13-21 | 6:31-44 | 9:10-17 | 6:1-14 |
| The Walking on the Water | 14:22-33 | 6:47-52 | | 6:16-21 |
| The Bread of Life Discourse | | | | 6:22-65 |
| Retirement for Solitary Prayer | 14:23 | 6:46 | | |
| The Tradition of the Elders | 15:1-20 | 7:1-23 | | |
| The Canaanite Woman's Faith | 15:24-29 | 7:24-30 | | |
| The Healing of Many People | 15:29-31 | | | |
| The Feeding of the Four Thousand | 15:32-39 | 8:1-9 | | |
| The Demand for a Sign: Weather | 16:1-4 | 8:11-13 | 12:54-56 | |
| The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees | 16:5-12 | 8:14-21 | | |
| Peter's Confession of Christ | 16:13-20 | 8:27-30 | 9:18-20 | |
| The First Prediction of the Passion | 16:21-23 | 8:31-38 | 9:22-27 | |
| The Transfiguration of Jesus | 17:1-8 | 9:2-8 | 9:28-36 | |
| The Healing of a Boy with a Demon | 17:14-21 | 9:14-25 | 9:37-43 | |
| The Second Prediction of the Passion | 17:22-23 | 9:30-32 | 9:43-45 | |
| Payment of the Temple Tax | 17:24-27 | | | |
| The Greatest in the Kingdom | 18:1-5 | 9:33-37 | 9:46-48 | |
| The Parable of the Lost Sheep | 18:10-14 | | 15:1-7 | |
| A Brother Who Sins | 18:15-20 | | 17:3-4 | |
| A Lesson on Self-denial | 18:18 | | | |
| The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant | 18:23-35 | | | |
| The Departure for Jerusalem | | | 9:51-52 | |
| The Jealousy of the Samaritans | | | 9:53 | |
| The Anger of James and John | | | 9:54-56 | |
| The Feast of Tabernacles | | | | 7:1-10 |
| The First Dialogue | | | | 7:14-31 |
| Officers Sent to Arrest Jesus | | | | 7:32-36 |
| The Woman Caught in Adultery | | | | 8:1-11 |
| The Light of the World | | | | 8:12-20 |
| Jesus Threatened with Stoning | | | | 8:59 |
| The Man Born Blind | | | | 9:1-41 |
| The Good Shepherd | | | | 10:1-21 |
| The Mission of the Seventy-two | | | 10:1-12 | |
| The Return of the Seventy-two | | | 10:17-20 | |
| The Parable of the Good Samaritan | | | 10:29-37 | |
| The Visit to Martha and Mary | | | 10:38-42 | |
| The Lord's Prayer | 6:9-13 | | 11:1-4 | |
| Jesus and Beelzebub | 12:22-45 | 3:23-30 | 11:14-23 | |
| The Demand for a Sign: Jonah | 12:38-42 | | 11:29-32 | |
| God's Providence to Birds and Flowers | 10:29-31 | | 12:6-7, 24, 27-28 | |
| The Parable of the Rich Fool | | | 12:16-20 | |
| A Call to Repentance | | | 13:1-5 | |

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|---|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree | | | 13:6-9 | |
| The Cure of the Crippled Woman on the Sabbath | | | 13:10-17 | |
| The Feast of Dedication | | | | 10:22-42 |
| The Attempt to Stone Jesus | | | | 10:31 |
| Jesus Retires across the Jordan | | | | 10:40 |
| Salvation and Rejection | 7:13-14; 21-23 | | 13:22-30 | |
| Herod's Desire to Kill Jesus | | | 13:31-33 | |
| The Healing of the Man with Dropsy | | | 14:1-6 | |
| The Parable of the Great Feast | 22:1-14 | | 14:15-24 | |
| The Parable of the Lost Sheep | 18:10-14 | | 15:1-7 | |
| The Parable of the Lost Coin | | | 15:8-10 | |
| The Parable of the Prodigal Son | | | 15:11-32 | |
| The Parable of the Dishonest Steward | | | 16:1-8 | |
| The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus | | | 16:19-31 | |
| The Rising of Lazarus | | | | 11:38-44 |
| The Return of Jesus to Bethany | | | | 11:11-16 |
| The Resurrection of Lazarus | | | | 11:38-44 |
| The Session of the Sanhedrin | | | | 11:45-54 |
| The Last Passover | | | | 11:55 |
| The Last Journey in Jerusalem | 19:1 | 10:1 | 17:11 | |
| The Cleansing of the Ten Lepers | | | 17:11-19 | |
| The Parable of the Persistent Widow | | | 18:1-8 | |
| The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector | | | 18:9-14 | |
| Marriage and Divorce | 19:1-12 | 10:1-12 | | |
| Blessing of the Children | 19:13-15 | 10:13-16 | 18:15-17 | |
| The Rich Young Man | 19:16-30 | 10:17-22 | 18:18-23 | |
| The Workers in the Vineyard | 20:1-16 | | | |
| The Third Prediction of the Passion | 20:17-19 | 10:32-34 | 18:31-34 | |
| The Request of James and John | 20:20-28 | 10:35-45 | | |
| The Healing of Two Blind Men | 20:29-34 | 10:46-52 | 18:35-43 | |
| Zacchaeus the Tax Collector | | | 19:1-10 | |
| The Parable of the Talents | 25:14-30 | | 10:11-27 | |
| The Supper in Simon's House | 26:6-13 | 14:3-9 | | 12:1-9 |
| Mary Anoints Jesus | 26:7-13 | 14:3-9 | 12:3-8 | |
| The Entry into Jerusalem | 21:1-11 | 11:1-10 | 19:29-44 | 12:12-19 |
| The Survey of the Temple | | 11:11 | | |
| The Cursing of the Fig Tree | 21:18-19 | 11:12-14 | | |
| The Cleansing of the Temple | 21:12-17 | 11:15-18 | | |
| The Lesson of the Fig Tree | 21:20-22 | 11:20-25 | | |
| The Authority of Jesus Questioned | 21:23-27 | 11:27-33 | 20:1-8 | |
| The Parable of the Two Sons | 21:28-32 | | | |
| The Parable of the Tenants | 21:33-46 | 12:1-12 | 20:9-19 | |

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| The Wedding Feast | 22:1-14 | | 14:15-24 | |
| Paying Taxes to the Emperor | 22:15-22 | 12:13-17 | 20:20-26 | |
| The Question about the Resurrection | 22:23-33 | 12:18-27 | 20:27-39 | |
| The Greatest Commandment | 22:34-40 | 12:28-34 | 11:25-28 | |
| The Question about David's Son | 22:41-46 | 12:35-37 | 20:41-44 | |
| Denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees | 23:1-33 | 12:38-40 | 11:37-54 | |
| The Poor Widow's Contribution | | 12:41-44 | 21:1-4 | |
| The Coming of Jesus' Hour | | | | 12:20-23 |
| The Destruction of the Temple Foretold | 24:1-2 | 13:1-3 | | |
| The Parable of the Ten Virgins | 25:1-13 | | 19:11-27 | |
| The Judgment of Nations | 25:31-46 | | | |
| The Conspiracy Against Jesus | 26:3-5 | 14:1-2 | 22:1-2 | |
| The Betrayal by Judas | 26:14-16 | 14:10-11 | 22:3-6 | 18:2-5 |
| Preparation of the Passover | 26:17-19 | 14:12-16 | 22:7-13 | |
| The Washing of the Disciples' Feet | | | | 13:1-17 |
| The Lord's Supper | 26:26 | 14:22 | 22:14 | |
| The Betrayal Foretold | 26:21 | 14:18 | 22:21 | 13:21 |
| The Giving of the Morsel | | | | 13:26-27 |
| The Departure of Judas | | | | 13:30 |
| Peter's Denial Predicted | 26:31-35 | 14:27-31 | 22:21-23 | 13:36 |
| Blessing the Cup | 26:27-28 | 14:23-24 | 22:17 | |
| Last Supper Discourses | | | | 14:1-14 |
| The Prayer of Jesus | | | | 17:1 |
| The Hymn | 26:30 | 14:26 | | |
| The Agony in the Garden | 26:36-44 | 14:32-42 | 22:39-46 | 18:1 |
| Jesus is Comforted by the Angel | | | 22:43-44 | |
| The Sleep of the Apostles | 26:40-45 | 14:37-41 | 22:45-46 | |
| The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus | 26:47-50 | 14:43-45 | 22:47 | 18:1-14 |
| Peter Smites Malchus | 26:51 | 14:47 | 22:50 | 18:10 |
| Jesus Heals the Ear of Malchus | | | 22:51 | |
| Jesus Forsaken by His Disciples | 26:56 | 14:50 | | |
| Jesus Led to Annas | | | | 18:12-13 |
| Jesus Before the Sanhedrin | 26:57 | 14:53 | 22:66 | |
| Peter Follows Jesus | 26:58 | 14:54 | 22:55 | 18:15 |
| The High Priest's Adjuration | 26:63 | 14:61 | 22:66 | |
| Jesus Condemned | 26:66-67 | 14:64-65 | 22:70-71 | |
| Peter's Denial of Jesus | 26:69-75 | 14:66-72 | 22:54-62 | 18:17-27 |
| Jesus before Pilate | 27:1 | 15:1 | 23:1 | 18:28 |
| The Death of Judas | 27:3 | | | |
| Pilate Comes out to the People | | | | 18:29 |
| Pilate Speaks to Jesus Privately | | | | 18:33 |
| Mockery by the Soldiers | 27:27 | 15:15 | 22:63-65 | 19:1 |
| Jesus Crowned with Thorns | 27:29 | 15:17 | | 19:2 |
| Jesus Exhibited by Pilate | | | | 19:5 |

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| Jesus Questioned by Pilate | 27:11 | 15:2 | 23:2 | |
| Jesus Sent by Pilate to Herod | | | 23:6-11 | |
| The Sentence of Death | 27:15 | 15:6 | 23:17 | 19:12-16 |
| Pilate Receives a Message from his Wife | 27:19 | | | |
| Pilate Washes his Hands | 27:24 | | | |
| Pilate Releases Barnabas | 27:26 | 15:15 | 23:25 | |
| Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified | 27:26 | 15:15 | 23:25 | 19:16 |
| The Way of the Cross | 27:32 | 15:21 | 23:26 | |
| The Crucifixion | 27:33-44 | 15:22-32 | 23:33-43 | 19:17-30 |
| The Death of Jesus | 27:45-56 | 5:33-41 | 23:44-49 | |
| The Burial of Jesus | 27:57-61 | 15:42-47 | 23:50-56 | 19:38-42 |
| The Guard at the Tomb | 27:62-66 | | | |
| The Resurrection of Jesus | 28:1-10 | 16:1-8 | 24:1-12 | 20:1-10 |
| The Report of the Guards | 28:11-15 | | | |
| The Appearance to Mary Magdalene | | 16:9 | | 20:14 |
| The Appearance to the Women Returning Home | 28:9 | | | |
| The Appearance to Two Disciples Going to Emmaus | | 16:12 | 24:13 | |
| The Appearance to Peter | | | 24:34 | |
| The Appearance to the Disciples in Jerusalem | | | 24:36 | 20:19 |
| The Appearance to the Eleven Apostles | | 16:14 | | |
| The Appearance to Thomas | | | | 20:27 |
| The Appearance to the Seven Disciples | | | | 21:1-22 |
| Jesus and Peter | | | | 21:15-19 |
| The Commissioning of the Disciples | 28:16-20 | 16:14 | | |
| The Ascension of Jesus | | 16:19-20 | 24:50-53 | |

(From *The Catholic Study Bible – Personal Study Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press)

The Miracles of Jesus

| Miracle | Matthew | Mark | Luke | John |
|---|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------|
| Healed a leper | 8:2-4 | 1:40-45 | 5:12-16 | |
| Healed a centurion's servant | 8:5-13 | | 7:1-10 | |
| Healed Peter's mother-in-law | 8:14-15 | 1:29-31 | 4:38-39 | |
| Healed the sick in the evening | 8:16-17 | 1:32-34 | 4:40-41 | |
| Stilled the storm | 8:23-27 | 4:35-41 | 8:22-25 | |
| Cast out demons, sent them into swine | 8:28-34 | 5:1-20 | 8:26-39 | |
| Healed a paralytic | 9:1-8 | 2:1-12 | 5:18-26 | |
| Raised Jairus' daughter | 9:18-19, 23-26 | 5:22-24, 35-43 | 8:40-42, 49-56 | |
| Healed a woman hemorrhaging | 9:20-22 | 5:25-34 | 8:43-48 | |
| Healed two blind men | 9:27-31 | | | |
| Healed a demon-possessed man | 9:32-33 | | | |
| Healed a man with a withered hand | 12:9-14 | 3:1-6 | 6:6-11 | |
| Healed a demon-possessed, blind, and mute man | 12:22 | | 11:14 | |
| Fed more than 5,000 people | 14:13-21 | 6:30-44 | 9:10-17 | 6:1-14 |
| Walked on the Sea of Galilee | 14:22-27 | 6:45-52 | | 6:16-21 |
| Enabled Peter to walk on water | 14:28-33 | | | |
| Healed the Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter | 15:21-28 | 7:24-30 | | |
| Fed more than 4,000 people | 15:32-39 | 8:1-10 | | |
| Healed an epileptic boy | 17:14-18 | 9:17 | 9:38-42 | |
| Sent Peter to find a coin | 17:24-27 | | | |
| Healed two blind men near Jericho | 20:29-34 | | | |
| Caused a fig tree to wither | 21:18-19 | 11:12-14, 20-21 | | |
| Returned from the dead | 28:1-10 | 16:1-14 | 24:1-43 | 20:1-29 |
| Cast out an unclean spirit | | 1:23-28 | 4:33-37 | |
| Healed a deaf mute | | 7:31-37 | | |
| Healed the blind man at Bethsaida | | 8:22-26 | | |
| Healed blind Bartimaeus | | 10:46-52 | 18:35-43 | |
| Escaped from a hostile crowd | | | 4:28-30 | |
| Caused a great catch of fish | | | 5:1-11 | |
| Raised a widow's son at Nain | | | 7:11-17 | |
| Healed an infirm, bent woman | | | 13:11-13 | |
| Healed a man with dropsy | | | 14:1-4 | |
| Healed ten lepers | | | 17:11-19 | |
| Healed Malchus' ear | | | 22:47-51 | 18:10 |
| Turned water into wine | | | | 2:1-11 |
| Healed a nobleman's son | | | | 4:46-54 |
| Healed an infirm man at Bethsaida | | | | 5:1-15 |
| Healed a man born blind | | | | 9:1-41 |
| Raised Lazarus | | | | 11:1-44 |
| Caused a second great catch of fish | | | | 21:1-14 |

(From *The Catholic Study Bible – Personal Study Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press)

The Parables of Jesus

| The Parables of Jesus Christ | Matthew | Mark | Luke |
|---|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Lamp Under a Basket | 5:14-16 | 4:21, 22 | 8:16,17; 11:33-36 |
| A Wise Man Builds on Rock | 7:24-27 | | 6:47-49 |
| Unshrunk (New) Cloth on an Old Garment | 9:16 | 2:21 | 5:36 |
| New Wine in Old Wineskins | 9:17 | 2:22 | 5:37, 38 |
| The Sower | 13:3-23 | 4:2-20 | 8:4-15 |
| The Tares (Weeds) | 13:24-30 | | |
| The Mustard Seed | 13:31, 32 | 4:30-32 | 13:18, 19 |
| The Yeast | 13:33 | | 13:20, 21 |
| The Hidden Treasure | 13:44 | | |
| The Pearl of Great Price | 13:45, 46 | | |
| The Dragnet | 13:47-50 | | |
| The Lost Sheep | 18:12-14 | | 15:3-7 |
| The Unforgiving Servant | 18:23-35 | | |
| The Laborers in the Vineyard | 20:1-16 | | |
| The Two Sons | 21:28-32 | | |
| The Wicked Vinedressers | 21:33-45 | 12:1-12 | 20:9-19 |
| The Wedding Feast | 22:2-14 | | |
| The Fig Tree | 24:32-44 | 13:28-32 | 21:29-33 |
| The Wise and Foolish Bridesmaids | 25:1-13 | | |
| The Talents | 25:14-30 | | |
| The Growing Seed | | 4:26-29 | |
| The Absent Householder | | 13:33-37 | |
| The Creditor and Two Debtors | | | 7:41-43 |
| The Good Samaritan | | | 10:30-37 |
| A Friend in Need | | | 11:5-13 |
| The Rich Fool | | | 12:16-21 |
| The Watchful Slaves | | | 12:35-40 |
| The Faithful Slave and the Unfaithful Slave | | | 12:42-48 |
| The Barren Fig Tree | | | 13:6-9 |
| The Great Dinner | | | 14:16-24 |
| Building a Tower and a King Making War | | | 14:25-35 |
| The Lost Coin | | | 15:8-10 |
| The Lost Son | | | 15:11-32 |
| The Dishonest Manager | | | 16:1-13 |
| The Rich Man and Lazarus | | | 16:19-31 |
| Unprofitable Slaves | | | 17:7-10 |
| The Persistent Widow | | | 18:1-8 |
| The Pharisee and the Tax Collector | | | 18:9-14 |
| The Ten Pounds | | | 19:11-27 |

(From *The Catholic Study Bible – Personal Study Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press)

Gospel Reading Activities

1. A Bible Reading Method
2. Studying a Bible Text
3. Reading the Bible with Heart
4. Reflective Bible Reading
5. Lectio Divina
6. Visio Divina

Children's Activities

A Bible Reading Method

Pray

Pray before reading, asking God to help you understand and receive his Word. Through Christ you are in the Father's holy presence. Approach him boldly, humbly and expectantly.

Read

Next, read slowly and carefully through the Bible passage. Sometimes, you'll want to read the passage more than once. You may also find it helpful to read the preceding or following passages to get the context. Take the time to read it as thoroughly as you can, expecting God to answer your prayer for understanding of his Word.

Reflect

Reflect on what you have read, waiting in openness, ready to obey God's Word to you. Think through the passage, asking yourself such questions as:

- ◆ What does this passage say? What is its main point?
- ◆ What does it reveal about God, or about me?
- ◆ What insight am I given into myself and into my life situation?
- ◆ What does God require of me now, in thought, word or action?

These questions will help you "dig deeper" into the meaning of the passage as you study and reflect. Many people find it helpful to write their answers in a journal or notebook. You may find it helpful to use a Study Bible to help you probe the deeper meaning.

Apply

The Bible's purpose is not only to give us information about God, but also to help us live in the proper relationship to God and others. Apply what God has taught you from today's reading to the circumstances of life – situations at work, home school, or church. Use what you have learned in order to become more like Jesus.

- ◆ How can God's Word apply to my life today: my situations at home, at work, school or church?

Pray

End your time as you began, in prayer. This time turn the things you have learned into prayers. Make your discoveries from the Bible the basis of your prayer time. Ask God to help you live out and apply what you learned that day.

Studying a Biblical Text

Bible Reading: Matthew 18:1-5

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, asking, "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?" So Jesus called a child to come and stand in front of them, and said, "I assure you that unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven. The greatest in the Kingdom of heaven is the one who humbles himself and becomes like this child. And whoever welcomes in my name one such child as this, welcomes me"

1. What is happening in the reading? Try this:

- ◆ Identify the characters by name.
- ◆ Identify the words and phrases that seem significant to you.
- ◆ Identify the emotions or feelings that are expressed by the characters.
- ◆ Identify the plot and theme of the reading.
- ◆ Consult a commentary that will help you discover if there are any important details that a 21st century reader would likely miss. For example, the word that Jesus would have used for child is synonymous with the word slave. Jesus is not instructing his followers to become childish; he is telling them to become humble, powerless and dependent. This childlike or slave-like disposition, not arrogance or selfish ambition, is the path to Christian greatness.

2. How is the happening in the reading present in today's world? Think about:

- ◆ Newspaper stories about murders that are committed for personal or financial gain
- ◆ Corrupt politicians who are more concerned about selfish desires than service
- ◆ Television programs that glorify selfish ambition at the expense of harmonious relationships
- ◆ An unbalanced competitive spirit that compels some people to cheat to get to the top

3. How is the happening in the reading present in my life? Examine this:

- ◆ What characters do I like/dislike in the reading?
- ◆ Why do I like particular characters?
- ◆ Why do I dislike particular characters?
- ◆ How do I see what I like and dislike in my own personality?
- ◆ How do I compete with others in my life?
- ◆ What is my definition of greatness?
- ◆ Am I willing to be dependent upon others? Why or why not?
- ◆ Am I willing to hand my life over to God in the way that a young child must be dependent upon a parent? Why or why not?

The critical task here is to discern how the Word of God that you discover in the Bible is also calling you and guiding you outside of the Bible in your daily life. When we develop an understanding of the Word of God in the Bible, we are then in a privileged position to seek out and follow Jesus, the living Word, with more confidence in our daily experiences. The Bible helps us to clarify in our minds the identity of Jesus so that we will recognize him when he presents himself to us in every moment of every day.

Reading the Bible with Heart

Select a Gospel story with lots of action (e.g., a parable or healing story) to “read with heart.” A few examples of Gospel stories are listed below. You can use your own Bible or access these passages online from Bible Gateway by typing the verse into the search. Go to <https://www.biblegateway.com>. Select the NRSV translation.

- ◆ The Young Jesus (Luke 2:41-50)
- ◆ Temptation in the Desert (Matthew 4:1-11)
- ◆ Calling of the First Disciples (Luke 5:1-11)
- ◆ Calming of the Storm (Mark 4:35-41)
- ◆ The Woman in Simon’s House (Luke 7:36-50)
- ◆ Jesus Instructs the Disciples (Mark 6:7-13)
- ◆ The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
- ◆ Miracle of Cana (John 2:1-12)
- ◆ “Who Do People Say I Am?” (Matthew 16:13-17)
- ◆ Curing of the Blind Man of Jericho (Luke 18:35-43)
- ◆ The Miracle of the Loaves (John 6:1-13)
- ◆ Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:1-11)
- ◆ Jesus and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)
- ◆ The Woman at the Well (John 4:5-42)
- ◆ The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)
- ◆ Raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-44)
- ◆ The Rich Young Man (Matthew 19:16-22)
- ◆ Driving Out the Money Changers (Mark 11:15-17)
- ◆ Washing the Apostles’ Feet (John 13:1-20)
- ◆ The Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39-46)
- ◆ The Crucifixion (Luke 23:33-49)
- ◆ The Disciples on the Way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)

Reflection

1. Read the Bible passage slowly.
2. Read it again and pay attention to any verses that draw their attention.
3. Identify an attention-grabbing verse that really settles in your heart.
4. Write that verse down on a piece of paper or file card or note, and carry it with you through the day or week.

Reflective Bible Reading

1. Choose a passage from Scripture, about five to ten verses in length. (See the list of “Scripture Passages by Topics” list if you need help.)
2. Choose a comfortable place where you will not be interrupted.
3. Light a candle, if possible. Take a few moments to get your body in harmony with your spirit.
4. Sometimes it helps to take a few deep breaths or stretch your body, then relax.
5. Acknowledge God’s presence with you. Ask God to send the Spirit to be with you and guide you in this time of reflection.
6. Read the passage you have chosen slowly, out loud, listening carefully to it. You might want to pause after a sentence or phrase.
7. Say the words or phrases that struck you.
8. Read the passage a second time, slowly and prayerfully.
9. Consider the message the passage might have for you: a challenge, an affirmation, or an insight. If you are doing this with others, you could invite them to share what comes to mind.
10. Read the passage a third time, slowly and prayerfully.
11. Pause for about ten minutes of silence and allow the Spirit to speak to you. If no words or thoughts come, just sit in the silence. Sometimes God touches us in ways we cannot know.
12. Following your quiet time, consider how the passage calls you to action. Is there something you need to do to make the Scripture alive for you here and now?
13. Close with a brief prayer of thanksgiving or praise to God for the gift of the Spirit.

Scripture Passages by Topic

(You can use your own Bible or access these passages online from Bible Gateway by typing the verse into the search. Go to <https://www.biblegateway.com>. Select NRSV version.)

Affliction: Romans 8:18–25, 35–39; Sirach 2:1–18; John 14:1–3; Matthew 11:28–30; Philippians 4:12–13; 2 Corinthians 1:3–7.

Anger: James 1:19–21; Ephesians 4:26; Proverbs 12:16; Sirach 30:24; Colossians 3:12–13; Psalm 37:7–8

Charity/Love: John 13:1–15, 15:9–13; Romans 12:9–21, 13:8–10; 1 Corinthians 13:1–13; 1 Peter 4:8–10; 1 John 3:11–20; 1 John 4:7–12, 18–21.

Confusion about God: Isaiah 55:8–9; James 1:13–14; 1 Peter 4:12–13; James 1:2–3; Luke 6:22–23; 2 Corinthians 12:7–10

Death: 1 Corinthians 15:19–22; John 11:1–44; Romans 5:12–15; Colossians 3:1–4.

Discouragement: Philippians 4:6–8; Psalm 138:7–8; John 14:1; John 14:27; Philippians 1:6; Psalm 94:18–19

Fear: John 4:18; 2 Timothy 1:6–7; Romans 8:15; Psalm 91:1–5; Proverbs 3:25–26; Isaiah 43:2; Sirach 34:14; Matthew 10:28

Forgiveness: Ezekiel 36:25–36; Matthew 18:15–18, 21–35; Luke 15:11–32.

Friendship: Sirach 6:5–17, 9:10–16, 13:1–13; Luke 10:25–37, 11:5–13; John 15:14–17, 20:11–18.

Happiness or Joyfulness: Psalm 4:8–9; Psalm 16:11; Psalm 34:6; Psalm 71:23; Isaiah 29:19; Acts 2:28; 3 John 1:4

Impatience: Romans 8:24–25; Psalm 37:7–8; Proverbs 25:15; Ephesians 4:1–3; James 5:8–10

Life: Isaiah 65:17–25; Genesis 1:1–2:4; John 15:4–7; Romans 6:3–11, Romans 20–23; Matthew 7:13–14; 1 John 5:9–13.

Loneliness: Psalm 25:16–17; Isaiah 41:10; Isaiah 41:13; John 14:18; Psalm 46:1; Psalm 73:23–24; Revelation 3:20

Marriage: Genesis 2:18–24; Deuteronomy 24:5; Isaiah 62:3–5; Matthew 19:3–11; 1 Corinthians 7:3–5; Ephesians 5:22–33.

Peace: Ezekiel 34:25–31; Isaiah 2:2–5; John 20:19–26; Luke 24:36–43; Philippians 4:4–7; 2 Timothy 2:20–26.

Physical Illness: Psalm 103:2–3; Jeremiah 30:17; James 5:14–15; Exodus 23:25; Sirach 31:22; Matthew 10:1

Sadness: Sirach 30:21–23; Matthew 5:4; 2 Corinthians 4:8–10; Ecclesiastes 7:3; Matthew 19:21–22; Isaiah 41:10; Proverbs 15:30

Temptation: Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 4:15–16; 1 Timothy 6:9; Psalm 119:9–11; James 1:13–14; Ephesians 6:10–11

Thankfulness: Tobit 12:6; Psalm 107; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Chronicles 16:34; Psalm 30:13; Psalm 105:1; Psalm 118; Daniel 3:89; 1 Corinthians 15:57; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Exodus 18:8–12; Psalm 111; John 11:41–42; Ephesians 1:3–6; Philippians 1:3–6.

Worry: Matthew 6:25; Matthew 6:34; 1 Peter 5:6–7; Philippians 4:18–19; Mark 13:11; Philippians 4:6

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is a contemplative way of reading the Bible. It dates back to the early centuries of the Christian Church and was established as a monastic practice by Benedict in the 6th century. It is a way of praying the Scriptures that leads us deeper into God's word. We slow down. We read a short passage more than once. We chew it over slowly and carefully. We savor it. Scripture begins to speak to us in a new way. It speaks to us personally, and aids that union we have with God through Christ.

Use the Lectio Divina experience to guide you into a prayer reflection on a Bible passage and imagining how you will live the passage in your daily life.

Select a Scripture passage that you would like to reflect upon and pray with. This may be a story from the Old Testament, a Psalm, a passage from the Prophets, a Gospel story or parable, or a passage from one of Paul's letters. You can also select the Gospel reading from Sunday worship.

1. **Read:** Read the Scripture passage slowly and purposefully. Reflect on it silently for a few minutes to pray with it and to ponder what it might be saying.
2. **Meditate:** Read it a second time followed by a few minutes of silence. Discover a word or two from the passage that is echoing in your heart or stands out for you in any way.
3. **Pray:** What do you want to communicate to God? What emotions do you want to express to God?
4. **Act:** Reflect on how God is challenging you through this Scripture passage. What is God calling me to do? What is the next step you need to take?

Scripture Passages for Lectio Divina

(You can use your own Bible or access these passages online from Bible Gateway by typing the verse into the search. Go to <https://www.biblegateway.com>. Select NRSV version.)

- ✦ The Young Jesus (Luke 2:41-50)
- ✦ Temptation in the Desert (Matthew 4:1-11)
- ✦ Calling of the First Disciples (Luke 5:1-11)
- ✦ Calming of the Storm (Mark 4:35-41)
- ✦ The Woman in Simon's House (Luke 7:36-50)
- ✦ Jesus Instructs the Disciples (Mark 6:7-13)
- ✦ The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
- ✦ Miracle of Cana (John 2:1-12)
- ✦ "Who Do People Say I Am?" (Matthew 16:13-17)
- ✦ Curing of the Blind Man of Jericho (Luke 18:35-43)
- ✦ The Miracle of the Loaves (John 6:1-13)
- ✦ Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:1-11)
- ✦ Jesus and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)
- ✦ The Woman at the Well (John 4:5-42)
- ✦ The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)
- ✦ Raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-44)
- ✦ The Rich Young Man (Matthew 19:16-22)
- ✦ Driving Out the Money Changers (Mark 11:15-17)
- ✦ Washing the Apostles' Feet (John 13:1-20)
- ✦ The Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39-46)
- ✦ The Crucifixion (Luke 23:33-49)
- ✦ The Disciples on the Way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)

Visio Divina

The practice of praying with visual images is called *visio divina* or divine seeing. It is adapted from the sixth-century Benedictine practice of Bible reading called *lectio divina*, using both the text and art to help the reader encounter the living Word of God. The rhythm of *visio divina* ignites the senses to “hear and see” the Word of God as one listens, meditates, and prays with the sacred text. Studying a text of Scripture and the illustration involves uncovering layers of meaning. When we have discovered the “voice” of the text, we can bring its images and lessons into the present and discern its significance for our life situations.

1. **Read:** Read the following Scripture passage from the Gospel of Mark. Listen with the “ear of your heart” for a word or short phrase that God has for you this day.

The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come. (Mark 4:26-29)

2. **Meditate:** What does the word or phrase you have chosen mean to you today?
3. **See:** Look at the image and let your eyes stay with the very first thing that you see. Keep your attention on that one part of the image that first catches your eye.



Photo by [Melissa Askew](#) on [Unsplash](#)

4. **Contemplate:** Breathe deeply and let yourself gaze at that part of the image for a minute or so. Now, let your eyes gaze at the whole image. Take your time and look at every part of it. See it all. Reflect on the image for a minute or so.
5. **Reflect:** What emotions does this image evoke in you? What does the image stir up in you, bring forth in you?
6. **Pray:** What do you want to pray for today?

Reading the Bible in My Family

When I grew up the Bible was a book my parents kept in the closet. It was very pretty with gold letters and glossy pictures. We didn't read it because my parents had never been taught how to read it and it was something that only priests or ministers read.

Today we've come to realize how important it is for everyone to read the Bible. Children, young people, adults—everyone who wants to be in relationship with Jesus needs to meet him in the Bible!

Where and when do you read or learn about the Bible? Check off ✓ all the places below that fit.

- 1. I read the Bible each morning when I wake up.
- 2. We read and talk about the Bible at school.
- 3. In our home we like to read the Bible as part of the grace for our supper meal.
- 4. We have a copy of the Bible in our car or van to read whenever we get a chance.
- 5. I read the Bible whenever I am trying to figure out what to do with a problem in my life.
- 6. We read the Bible together every night before we go to sleep.
- 7. We have a Bible in our living room and every now and then we pick it up and read it.
- 8. I have my own Bible and I use post-it notes or bookmarks to keep track of what I've read.
- 9. I hear the Bible read at church every Sunday.
- 10. I go to Vacation Bible School in the summer to learn more about the Bible.



Jesus Reads the Bible

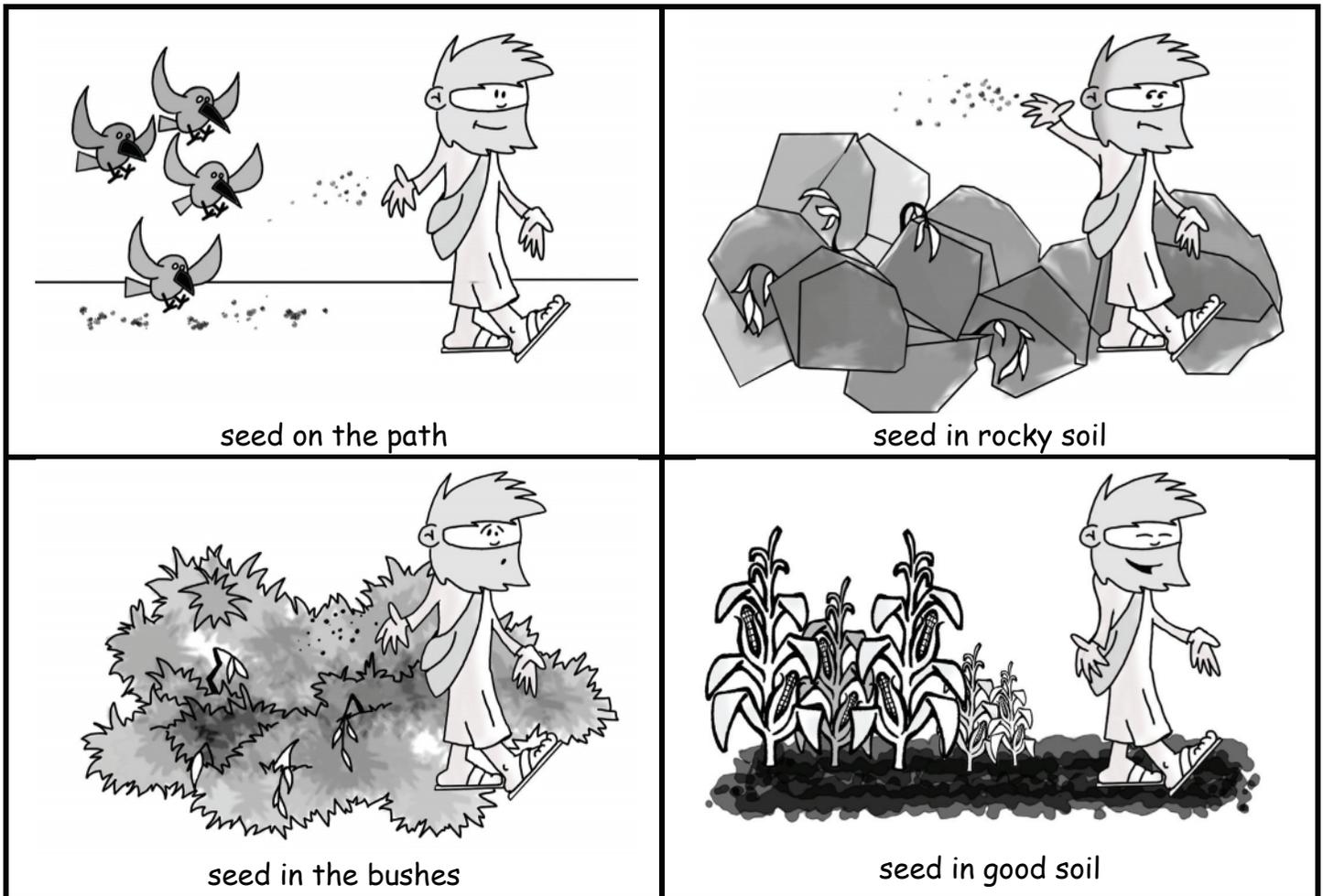
The Bible was an important part of Jesus' life. As a young Jewish boy Jesus would have attended classes to learn about the Bible. And it was part of his family's life.

The first time we hear about Jesus and the Bible is in the Gospel of Luke:

Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath he went as usual to the Synagogue. He stood up to read the scriptures and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor." (Luke 4:16-18)

Do you remember Jesus' parable of the Sower? If you don't remember, open your Bible and read Luke 8:4-8. In that story Jesus is trying to help his listeners see and understand that we need to open our hearts and minds to hear God's word in our lives.

What kind of soil are you? Circle the picture below that best describes how God's word is growing in your heart.



Reading the Bible

Do you have friends or cousins that you like a lot? Do you think you know them well? How did you get to know them? Did you hang out with them a lot, listen to their stories, and pay attention to what they liked and disliked?

One of the important ways that we get to know about God is to read the Bible. Reading the Bible helps us to build our relationship with Jesus and learn how to best love God and our neighbors. Reading the Bible and living the Bible work together—it's not enough just to read about how to live, we must live that way too!

Pretend that you have just been hired by a top advertising firm to create an advertisement to promote the reading of the Bible to your friends and family. The one condition is that you must create an acronym (see the example below) using the word "Scripture" as your advertisement.

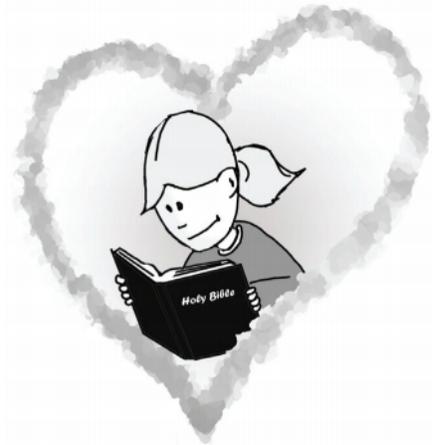
Here's an example of an advertising acronym for **LOVE**:

Life is empty without someone to share it with!

LOve is like oxygen, without it you can't survive!

Fore**V**er will God love us!

Everyone needs to feel loved and to give love



What words can you make from the letters in **SCRIPTURE** that would help convince your peers that reading the Bible is important?

S _____

C _____

R _____

I _____

P _____

T _____

U _____

R _____

E _____

Try It — Reading the Bible

The best way to begin reading the Bible, is to begin reading it! But where do you start? Grab your Bible, and try this Bible scavenger hunt! Find the Bible passage and answer the question.

Example: Gospel of Matthew (3:13): Where did John the Baptist baptize?
Answer: The River Jordan

1. Gospel of Luke (2:4): Where was Jesus born?

2. Gospel of John (2:9): What was one of Jesus' first miracles?

3. Gospel of John (11:3): Which friend of Jesus got sick and died?

4. Gospel of Mark (3:14): How many apostles did Jesus choose?

5. Gospel of Matthew (8:23): Jesus calms a what?

6. Gospel of Matthew (17:3): Who was Jesus talking to on the mountain when he was transfigured?

7. Gospel of Luke (9:10-17): How many people did Jesus feed?

8. Gospel of Luke (11:27-28): What is true happiness?

(Answers: 1) Luke 2:4 - Bethlehem, 2) John 2:9 - water to wine, 3) John 11:3 - Lazarus, 4) Mark 3:14 - 12,
5) Matthew 8:23 - a storm, 6) Mathew 17:3 - Moses and Elijah, 7) Luke 9:10-17 - 5000,
8) Luke 11:27-28 - those who hear the Word of God and obey it)

Try It — Reading Gospel Stories

Stories about Jesus' Life

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| ⊙ Birth of Jesus | Matthew 1:18 - 2:12 |
| ⊙ Baptism of Jesus | Mark 1:9-11 |
| ⊙ Peter's Declaration about Jesus | Luke 9:18-20 |
| ⊙ Transfiguration of Jesus | Mark 9:2-13 |
| ⊙ Judas' Betrayal of Jesus | Luke 22:1-53 |
| ⊙ The Last Supper | Mark 14:12-26 |
| ⊙ Jesus Washes his Disciples' Feet | John 13:1-17 |
| ⊙ The Crucifixion of Jesus | Luke 23:26-49 |
| ⊙ The Resurrection of Jesus | Matthew 28:1-10 |

Healings and Miracles of Jesus

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| ⊙ Feeding Five Thousand | Matthew 14:13-21 |
| ⊙ Walking on Water | Matthew 14:22-33 |
| ⊙ Healing the Paralytic | Mark 2:1-12 |
| ⊙ Healing blind Bartimaeus | Mark 10:46-52 |
| ⊙ Raising the Widow's Son | Luke 7:11-17 |
| ⊙ Healing an Epileptic Boy | Luke 9:38-42 |
| ⊙ Turning Water into Wine | John 2:1-11 |
| ⊙ Raising Lazarus | John 11:1-44 |

Stories and Teachings of Jesus

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ⊙ The Beatitudes | Matthew 5:1-12 |
| ⊙ The Treasure and Pearl | Matthew 13:44-46 |
| ⊙ Two or Three Gathered | Matthew 18:20 |
| ⊙ The Unforgiving Servant | Matthew 18:23-35 |
| ⊙ What You Do for the Least Important | Matthew 25: 31-46 |
| ⊙ Jesus and Children | Mark 10:13-16 |
| ⊙ The Greatest Commandment | Luke 10:25-28 |
| ⊙ The Good Samaritan | Luke 10:30-37 |
| ⊙ The Prodigal Son | Luke 15:11-32 |
| ⊙ The Rich Man and Lazarus | Luke 16:19-31 |
| ⊙ Persistent Widow | Luke 18:2-8 |
| ⊙ Jesus, the Bread of Life | John 6:25-59 |
| ⊙ The Good Shepherd | John 10:1-18 |
| ⊙ Vine and Branches | John 15:1-17 |

5 WAYS TO

RETELL A BIBLE STORY WITH KIDS

A great way for kids (and adults!) to remember God's story and to experience it more deeply is to retell it in ways that engage their head, heart, and hands.

Get inspired with these easy ideas for retelling a Bible story.

1 BUILD

Use building blocks or play dough to recreate scenes from the story. Work together or build scenes individually and then show and tell each other about what you've made.

2 DRAW

There are lots of ways to use art to tell stories: Have each person draw a picture of a different part of the story; then put the pictures together and tell the story again. Pick a word from the story and illustrate it. Make a cartoon strip. Sketch pictures of what you're imagining as the story or text is being read; then compare your thoughts.

3 SING

Make up a tune (or use one that's familiar), and turn the story into a song. Or look for a version of the story that's already been recorded, and learn it together. (We love the Bible story songs written and recorded by *Rain for Roots*.)

4 ACT

Use puppets (socks, dolls, or utensils will do!) or yourselves to act out the story. Consider taking photos of each scene and printing them as a book or comic strip. Another fun idea is to assign readers to read the dialog and/or assign sound effects to particular words, and to reread the story together.

5 WONDER

Ask open-ended questions that have no "right or wrong" answers. For example,

- **I wonder what . . .** (I wonder what Jonah thought about inside the fish . . . ?
I wonder what you would have thought about . . . ?)
- **I wonder how . . .** (I wonder how it felt to cross the Red Sea . . . ?
I wonder how this story makes you feel . . . ?)
- **I wonder who . . .** (I wonder who the shepherds told first about meeting baby Jesus . . . ?
I wonder who you would have run to tell . . . ?)
- **I wonder why . . .** (I wonder why Jesus told stories to people . . . ?
I wonder why we don't always do what God asks us to do . . . ?)

Teaching the Gospels Online Resources

Teaching the Gospels Articles

“Five Ways to Retell a Bible Story with Kids” in the Guide.

“Using Imaginative Retellings in Teaching the Bible.” Saint Mary’s Press.

<https://www.smp.org/resourcecenter/resource/2577/>

Resource Centers

The Bible Project

<https://bibleproject.com>

(The Bible Project creates videos, podcasts, articles, and classes to make the biblical story accessible to everyone, everywhere.)

Devotionals, Bible Stories, Bible Study – Kid’s Corner

<https://kidscorner.net>

New Testament Learning Stations (4 learning stations) – Loyola Press

<https://catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/2012/09/new-testament-learning-stations-ready>

Scripture Activities – Saint Mary’s Press Resource Center

(Hundreds of individual activities, articles, videos, and presentations – available for free)

<https://www.smp.org/resourcecenter/subject/Scripture/9/>

Collections of Bible Activities

Bible Activities for Kids (A Collection of Activities) – The Religion Teacher

<https://www.thereligionteacher.com/bible-activities>

Bible Activities and Articles – The Catechist

<https://www.catechist.com/category/lessons-and-activities/bible>

Children’s Bible Activities and Bible Stories – DLTk

<https://www.dltk-kids.com/bible/cv/index.htm>

Scripture Articles and Activities – Sadlier Religion

<https://www.sadlier.com/religion/blog/topic/rel-topic-scripture>

Sunday Readings

Sunday Connection – Loyola Press

(The Sunday Connection provides useful background and activities to better understand the upcoming Sunday's Scripture readings with activities for grades 1-3, 4-6, 7-8, and families.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/>

Catholic Gospel Coloring Pages and Worksheets for Sunday Mass—Catholic Mom

<https://www.catholicmom.com/sunday-mass-activities>

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina with Children – Sadlier Publishing

<https://www.sadlier.com/religion/blog/lectio-divina-guide-how-to-do-lectio-divina-and-visio-divina-with-kids-and-confirmation-candidates>

Lectio Divina – Loyola Press

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/prayer/personal-prayer-life/different-ways-to-pray/lectio-divina/>

Lectio Divina – U.S. Catholic Bishops

<https://catholic.bible>

“Lectio Divina: A Beginner’s Guide.” Elizabeth Manneh. Busted Halo, March 1, 2021

<https://bustedhalo.com/ministry-resources/lectio-divina-beginners-guide>

Lectio Divina – American Bible Society

<https://ministry.americanbible.org/catholic-ministries/lectio-divina-resources>

“The Value of Lectio Divina in Class.” Marlon de la Torre. *Catechist*

<https://www.catechist.com/value-lectio-divina-class/>

Prayer and Devotionals

Bible Devotionals – Kid’s Corner

<https://kidscorner.net/devotions>

Living Faith Daily Catholic Devotions – Creative Communications for the Parish

<https://www.livingfaith.com>

Praying with Scripture from Ignatian Spirituality

<https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-what-how-why-of-prayer/praying-with-scripture/>

Recommended Bibles and Books

Children's Story Bible

Jesus Storybook Bible. Sally Lloyd Jones. Zonderkidz, 2006.

<https://www.sallylloyd-jones.com/books/jesus-storybook-bible>

Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible. Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim, editors. Westminster/John Knox Press, 2018. (Ages 4-8 years old)

Catholic Bibles from Saint Mary's Press

<https://www.smp.org/category/bibles>

Children: *The Catholic Children's Bible*

Middle School: *Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics*

High School: *The Catholic Youth Bible*

Activity Books

The Catholic Children's Bible Coloring Book. Saint Mary's Press.

The Catholic Children's Bible: Leader Guide. Saint Mary's Press.

The Catholic Children's Bible: Activity Booklet. Saint Mary's Press.

The Catholic Children's Bible: Strategic Reading Resource. Saint Mary's Press.

Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics: Activity Booklet. Saint Mary's Press.

Breakthrough! The Bible for Young Catholics: Leader Guide. Saint Mary's Press.

The Catholic Youth Teacher Guide: Old Testament. Saint Mary's Press.

The Catholic Youth Teacher Guide: New Testament. Saint Mary's Press.