

# INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

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- ❖ The 4 Canonical Books (2 sessions)
- ❖ Acts & Pauline Epistles (3 sessions)
- ❖ Catholic Epistles, letters & Revelation (1 session)

# 1- The Gospel

There are only 4 Canonical Books

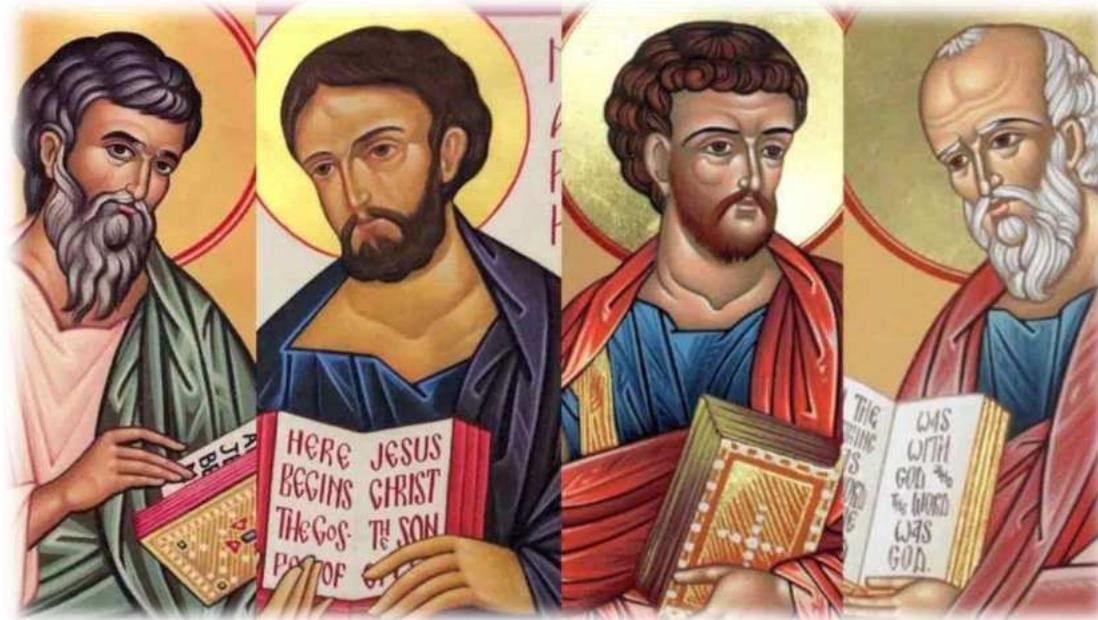
## Canonical Book means:

Scriptural Book that the Church recognizes and accepts as a Book inspired by the Holy Spirit.

**'Canon' means: Rule, or Base, or Law, or Origin.**

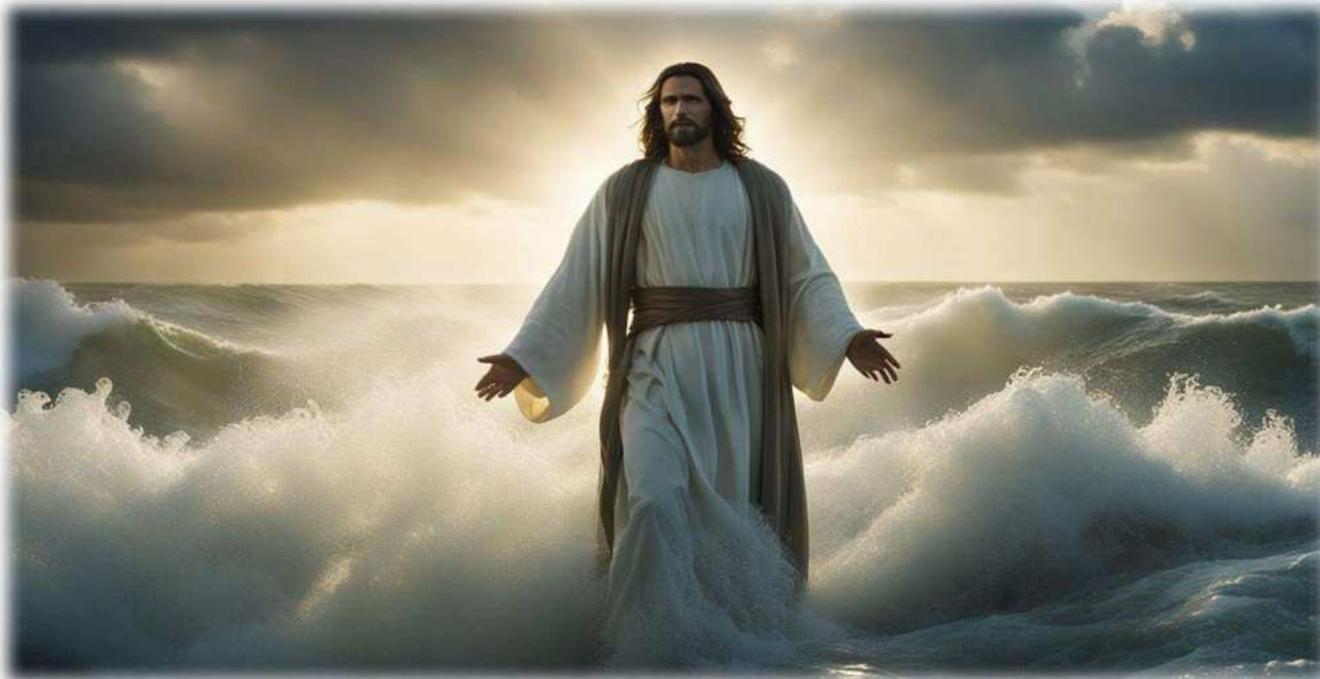
The Church uses canonical Scriptures as rules of behavior and law of spiritual life.

In the N.T. it indicates the teachings proposed as the rule of faith and behavior.



## 2- One Gospel or four?

- ❖ Divine inspiration offered ONE Gospel, **“the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ”** through 4 Evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These evangelists reveal 4 sides of one Gospel; each one is portrayed from a different angle. **It is like the one pearl that each author describes from his point of view.**
- ❖ These 4 sides are none but a foursome true picture of the person of Christ and His ministry. We can say: **A statue is better than a picture**, as it can be viewed from all angles. The same for the foursome picture of Christ, witnessed by 4 Evangelists, that enables the viewer to enjoy its beauty from all points of view.
- ❖ The Person of our Lord is like a vast ocean, the 4 Books are like floodlights shining on this unique Person.



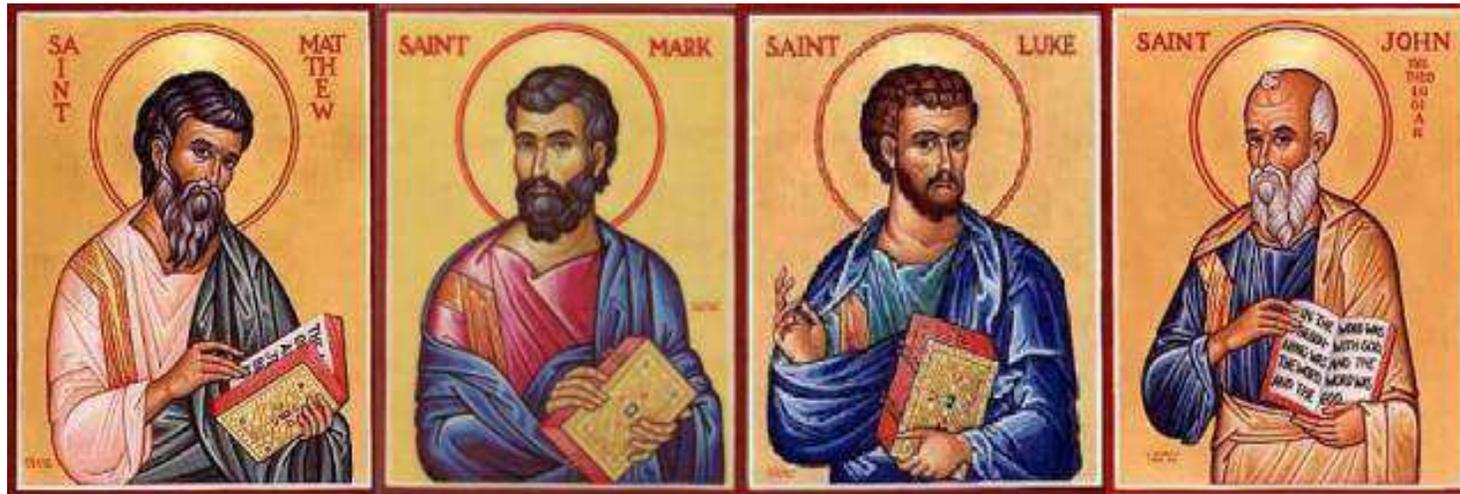
### 3-Why only 4 Books why not more?

#### A. 4 Books address the 4 potential categories of people at the time

Matthew wrote to the Jews, Mark wrote to the Romans, Luke wrote to the Greek, John wrote to Christians

#### B. 4 Books presented 4 attributes of Christ the Word of God

The full human (Matthew), The Powerful (Mark), The Redeemer (Luke), The full God (John)



### Why not 1 Book = 1 Gospel?

1. If it was only 1 book, it would be easy to claim falsification – but 4 different writers, at different times, in different locations, writing in different languages the same message – impossible to claim deception.
2. One book was never going to be enough to capture the life, work & teaching of Christ. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers, **He reminded them, guided them, and stopped them** from making errors, but **He never dictated**. The perspective of each one was important to the intended recipients.

# The Church relates the 4 canonical books to the 4 incorporeal creatures

Ezekiel saw in his revelation (Ezekiel 1: 10)

The same is depicted from the Revelation to St John

**“And around the throne, were four living creatures .....**

**The first living creature was like a lion,**

**the second living creature like a calf,**

**the third living creature had a face like a man,**

**and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle” (Rev 4)**



**The 4 living creatures with the 4 faces were symbols to the 4 Books, representing 4 aspects of Christ**

**Face of a lion:** Symbolizes the Gospel by **St Mark**, which presents **Christ the mighty, the Lion of the tribe of Judah**

**Face of a Man:** Symbolizes the Gospel by **St Matthew** which presents **Christ the Son of man & anointed King** descendent of the King David.

**Face of an Ox:** Symbolizes the Gospel by **St Luke** which presents **Christ The Redeemer , an offering & sacrifice.**

**Face of an Eagle:** Symbolizes the Gospel by **St John**. Which presents Christ **the full God.**



**St Ambrose of Milan**

“Our Lord Jesus Christ is portrayed in the four Gospels by symbols of the four incorporeal living creatures....

**He is Man**, for He is born of Mary.

**He is Lion**, for He is mighty.

**He is Ox**, for He is the sacrificial Lamb.

And **He is Eagle**, for He is the resurrection.”

Gospel according to	Living creature	Opening	Christ is	Points to
Matthew	Man	Genealogy of Christ	Man King	Incarnation
Mark	Lion	Voice crying in the wilderness	Mighty	Resurrection
Luke	Ox	Sacrifices	Sacrificial lamb	Redemption
John	Eagle	In the beginning was the Word	Divine	Ascension

# The Church relates the 4 canonical books to to the 4 main Covenants / Promises

The 4 main Covenants (Promises of God) between God and man.

- **1<sup>st</sup> Covenant:** With: Noah Sign: The rainbow (**Genesis 6: 17-18 & Gen 9:9-15**)
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Covenant:** With Abraham Sign: The circumcision (**Gen 17:9-11**)
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Covenant:** With Moses Sign: The Law (**Exodus 34**)
- **4<sup>th</sup> (New) Covenant :** Son of God with Us Sign: The Blood on the Cross - Remission of Sins (**Matt 26**)



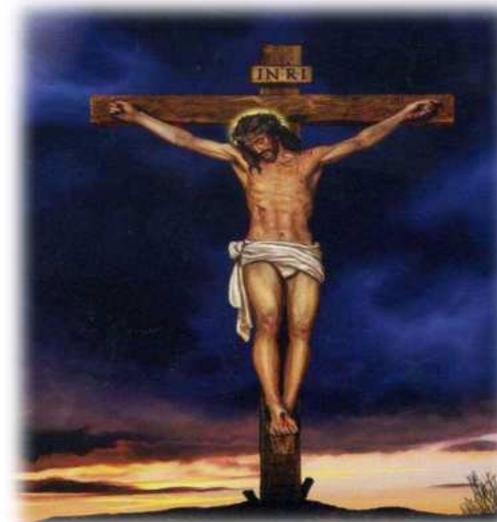
*Covenant of Abraham*

“I myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth to destroy from under heaven all flesh... But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark.” Gen 6

“This is my covenant which you shall keep, between me and you and your descendants after you: every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.” (Gen 17: 9-11)



Then the covenant was renewed. The Lord told Moses to cut two tables of stone like the first and He would write the words on them that were on the first tablets (Gen 34:1). Joshua said “Take up the Ark of the Covenant and cross over before the people.” (Joshua 3: 6)



On the night of the Last Supper, Jesus officiated this New Covenant with His disciples, saying: “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt 26:28).

## 4- Proper title to the Gospel:

- ❖ There are many titles given to the Gospels. The shortest “The Gospel According to Matthew/Mark...” These titles go back to an old age. The Church accepted these titles since they refer to the author.
- ❖ The expressions ‘κατά Ματθαίον’ etc., has been misused in its meaning and its translation to other languages. It was wrongly translated to refer to the pronoun. For example, ‘**The Gospel of Matthew**’. This wrong translation leads to the impression that there is more than one Gospel, but in fact there is only one Gospel written by more than one person. The proper translation to the title of the Gospel should be:  
“The Gospel written by St Matthew” or  
“The Gospel according to St Matthew” or  
“The Gospel by St. Matthew”.

- ❖ Using proper titles lead to the correct understanding:

1. That there is one Gospel, and more than one author.
2. That even though 4 Evangelists wrote the Gospel, it is one book with four faces.

In other words, the word of God was recorded in 4 texts, and the word ‘**according to**’ refers to the face its author gave it.



## 5-Why must we study the evidence of the Canonicity (Authenticity) of the Gospel?

Heretics throughout history tried to slip into the Scriptures fake books and gave them **Gospel titles** in order to mislead the believers

To prove the Canonicity of the 4 Gospels we use External & Internal evidences:

### External evidence:

**Testimony of the Church tradition and of the Fathers of the Church.**

### Internal evidence:

**Evidence derived from the text itself**

1. The Gospel according to the Hebrews.	8. <b>The Gospel according to Philip.</b>	16. <b>The Gospel according to Bartholomew.</b>
2. The Gospel according to the Twelve.	9. <b>The Gospel according to James.</b>	17. The Gospel according to Judah Iscariot.
3. The Gospel according to the Egyptians.	10. <b>The Gospel according to Nicodemus.</b>	18. <b>The Gospel according to Andrew.</b>
4. <b>The Gospel according to Peter.</b>	11. The Gospel of the birth of the Virgin Mary.	19. The Gospel according to James, the son of Zebedee.
5. The Gospel according to Matthias.	12. The Gospel of the infancy of the Savior.	20. The eternal Gospel.
6. The Gospel according to Mary.	13. The Gospel of the history of Joseph.	21. In the middle ages a fake book appeared with the title, " <b>The Gospel according to Barnabas</b> "
7. The Gospel according to Zechariahs, father of John the Baptist.	14. <b>The Gospel according to Thomas.</b>	
	15. The Gospel according to Basil.	

# **I- External evidence of the canonicity of the 4 Books:** **Testimony of the Church tradition and the Fathers of the Church.**



1. **The Apostolic fathers** (The disciples to the Apostles) In their writings They referred only to verses from the 4 Gospels in their writings
2. **The Syrian Translation 'Bishtio'**: Included only the 4 Books, dated to the middle of the 2nd century
3. **Affidavit of Muratori (Muratorian fragment) (published in 1740):**

An important affidavit asserting the canonicity of the Scriptural Books. Antonio Muratori (Italian antiquity scientist & historian) translated it from a manuscript that was kept by St. Ambrose dated 150-170AD.

The affidavit has a NT heading and lists: **The 4 Gospels and all the other Epistles except Hebrews, the 2 Epistles of St Peter, the Epistle of St James, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Epistle of John.**



4. **Testimony of the scholar Tertullian (160-220 AD) - father of Latin Christianity:**  
In his book '**Against Marcion the Heretic**' that accepted only Gospel according to Luke (after editing it!!) **Tertullian fearlessly defended the canonicity of the 4 Books**

# I- External evidence of the canonicity of the 4 Books:

## 5. Testimony of the scholar Tatian:

Assyrian theologian who lived in the **2<sup>nd</sup> century** and is a **disciple of St. Justin the Martyr**.

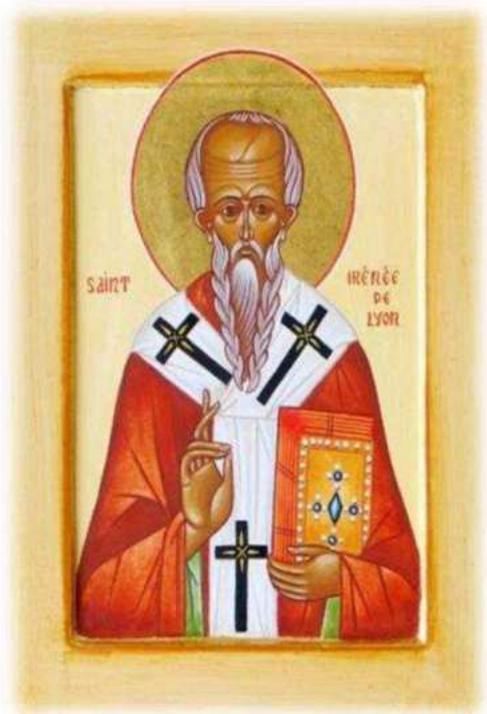
He produced a book titled '**Diatessaron**' or '**The Quartette**'.

It combines the 4 Gospels into one and depicts the similarities among them.

**The Quartette** demonstrates two points:

- A. There is 1 Gospel written in 4 Books.
- B. The 4 Books are tied up to each other in perfect unity.

**Eusebius of Caesarea, the renowned historian, references the Diatessaron in his writings.**



## 6. Testimony of St Irenaeus: Disciple of Polycarp (St John's disciple).

In his book "Against Heresies" he wrote a chapter called:

**"Evidence to the existence of no more or less than four Gospels"**.

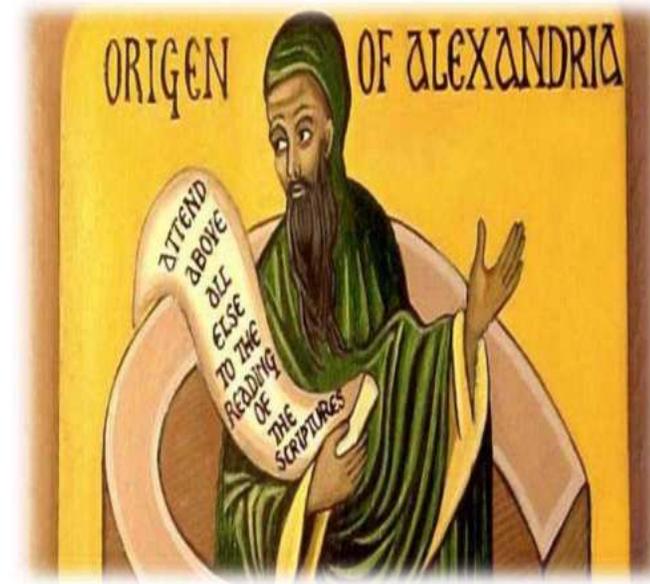
- I. He called the 4 Books '**the Gospel with 4 faces**' link to the Cherubs Ezekeil's vision David the prophet said **"You who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!"** (Ps 8) the cherub has 4 faces representing the economy of salvation exerted in the Son of God
- II. Also linking them to the 4 corners of the earth saying: Since the Gospel is the pillar and ground of the church (1Tim 3), and the spirit of life, it was befit that the Church should have four pillars to enjoy incorruption from all sides.

# I- External evidence of the canonicity of the 4 Gospels: Testimony of the Church tradition and of the Fathers of the Church.

## 7. Testimony of the Scholar Origen:

In his 1<sup>st</sup> book about the Gospel of St. Matthew, he writes

“Among the 4 Gospels, **and these are the 4 undisputable Gospels in the Church of God under heaven...** I know from tradition that the 1<sup>st</sup> Gospel was written by Matthew who wrote it for the Jews in Hebrew. Mark wrote the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gospel according to instructions from Peter... Luke wrote the 3<sup>rd</sup> Gospel and Paul edited it; it addressed the Gentiles. John wrote the last Gospel.”



## 8. Testimony of Eusebius of Caesarea (the father of Church history): Lived in the **4<sup>th</sup> century**.

In his book '**History of the Church**', he stressed that there are **only 4 Canonical Books**. He wrote:

“Matthew began preaching to Hebrews; he wrote his Gospel in his native tongue (Aramaic). Then, Mark & Luke published their Gospels. John, relied entirely in his preaching on the spoken word, finally took to writing because the 3 Gospels which were in circulation came into his hands. He accepted & confirmed their accuracy, but noted they lacked the description of what Christ did at the start of His mission...(Before John the Baptist imprisonment) Therefore, John recorded in his Gospel the period which the 3 evangelists passed over.”

## II- Internal Evidence to the Canonicity (Truthfulness) of the four books

### A- Sources from which the Evangelists obtained the material of the Gospel

#### 1- The Holy Spirit

The Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Spirit, Who worked through the Evangelists by: Directing, Guiding, Preventing them from making errors, and Showing them the facts God wants to convey.

All without eliminating their personality, Each kept his style that was influenced by his education and culture.



+ “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things, and bring your remembrance all things that I said to you.” John 14: 26

+ “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Tim 3:16-17

+ “No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:20-21

## II- Internal Evidence to the Canonicity (truthfulness) of the four books, From the material of the Gospel:

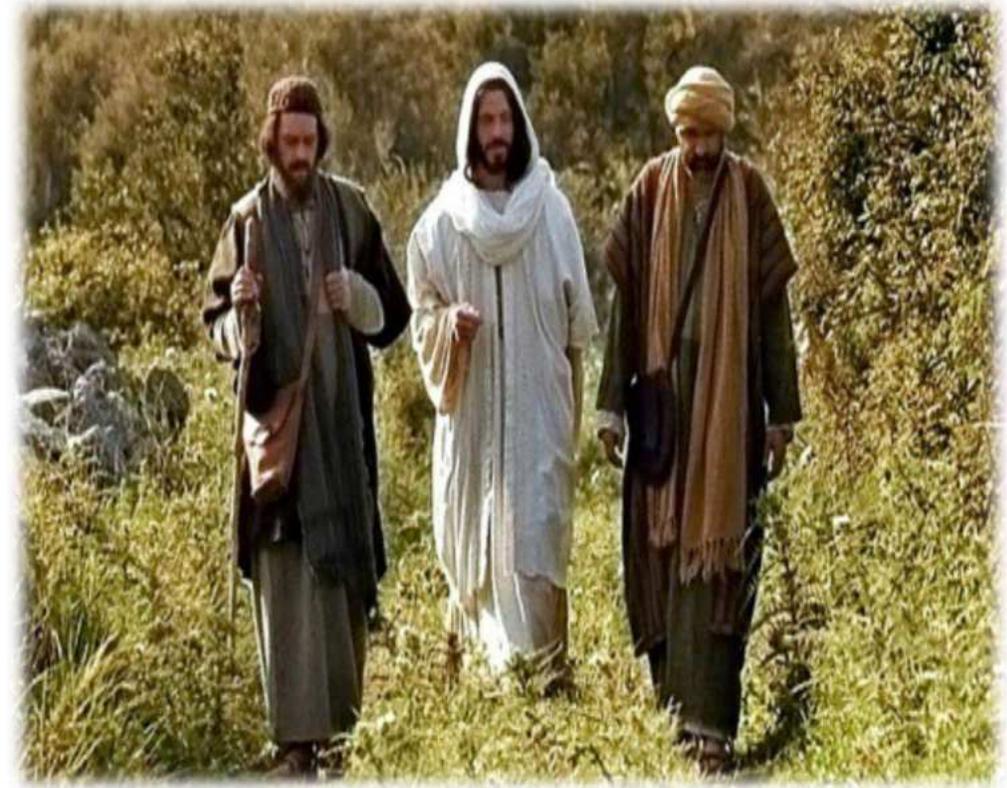
### A- Sources from which the Evangelists obtained their material of the Gospels

#### 2- The Lord Himself:

After His Resurrection He **remained with the Disciples 40 days** explaining to them the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Ex: He spent a day with the two disciples from Emmaus

“They asked each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road **and opened the Scriptures to us?**” Luke 24:32



The Lord could have been a source of many facts the Disciples could not see!

## II- Internal Evidence to the Canonicity (truthfulness) of the four books:

### B- Credibility of the four Evangelists

#### 3- Personal knowledge & relationship – Credibility of the writers

- **Matthew & John** were two of the 12 Apostles. **They had 1<sup>st</sup> hand knowledge** of the events they recorded.
- **Mark:** One of the 70 Apostles, a relative of Barnabas and close companion of St Peter. He accompanied Paul & Peter in their evangelizing trips. His house was the 1<sup>st</sup> Church where Christ celebrated Passover and instituted the Eucharist. It was the Upper Room where the Holy Spirit descended on the Disciples.
- **Luke** Close disciple of St Paul, obtained his information from eyewitnesses. He was known to be thorough & never documented information before confirming its accuracy. In Luke 1 he writes, **“just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having understanding of all things from the very first...”** (Luke 1: 1)

Luke was in Judea during St Paul imprisonment (58-60 AD), As St Mary also was in Palestine, he obtained from her unique information surrounding the birth of Christ (Annunciation, Nativity, her visit to Elizabeth).

### III- Other Evidence to the Canonicity (truthfulness) of the four books

1. The four Evangelists wrote from different places at different times.  
How would they then tell the same stories in order to deceive people?
2. They named personalities and towns; history confirms such personalities & events that they are related to. When the Gospels were published, many of these personalities were alive. If what was written is untrue it could have been denied or fought but it was not.
3. If the Evangelists were imposters intended to deceive, they would not present Christ as a weak Man that gets crucified & buried! Christ was ridiculed, born in a manger, and did not have a place to rest His head!
4. The Apostles recorded **their own shameful behavior** :
  - Peter's denials, their cowardliness & escape in Gethsemane, Juda's betrayal.
  - They record the Lord admonishing them for their lack of understanding & faith.
  - They highlighted their fear & hopelessness after the crucifixion.

If these events were untrue, it would not suit them to fabricate!

They also recorded their modest & shameful professions before being called to the Discipleship, such as tax collector, fishermen, etc.

# Discrepancies / Contradictions - between the 4 books



The 4 witnesses wrote about 1 God Jesus Christ, He is the incarnate Son of God in all of them, the Son of man in all of them, born of the virgin, taught, performed miracles was crucified, died, was buried, arose from the dead and ascended to heaven in all 4 books

There are no discrepancies or contradictions - the 3 synoptic books complement each other to give a **complete picture**

**The reason people mistakenly think of contradiction is because either**

## 1- Different events:

“And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!” So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him.” Matt 28:9-10

“Jesus said to her, **“Do not cling to Me,** for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’” John 20:17



# Discrepancies / Contradictions - between the 4 books

2- Different perspectives: Witnesses will describe the same event in different ways, it doesn't mean they are giving a conflicting account – just different.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John *tried to prevent Him*, saying, “I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?” But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit *it to be so now*, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matt 3:13-17

It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Mark 1:9-11



When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.” Luke 3:21-23

And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.” John 1:32-34

## 6- What is the meaning of the word Gospel?

Gospel in Greek is (**Evangelio** Ευαγγέλιο) Eu means Good/Joyful αγγέλιο means message  
So it means (the good message) or (the good tidings);

Which is: **God sent His only begotten Son into the world to save the believers**

The word Gospel appeared 72 times in the NT, 54 in St Paul's Epistles,  
to indicate the good news of salvation.



The word 'Gospel' also appeared in the following expressions, (replace Gospel with Good news) such as:

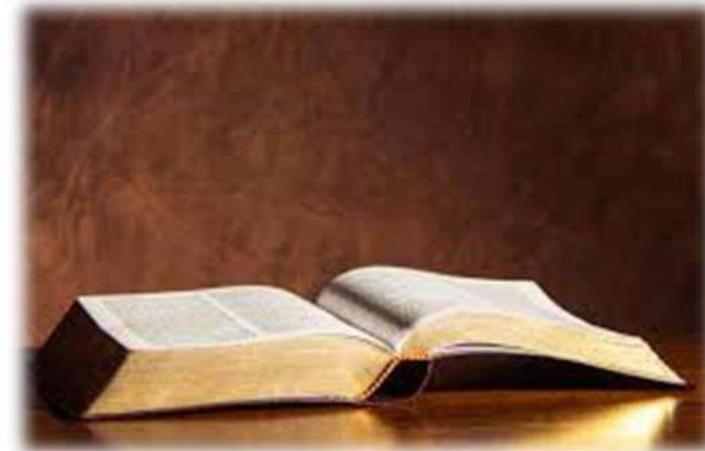
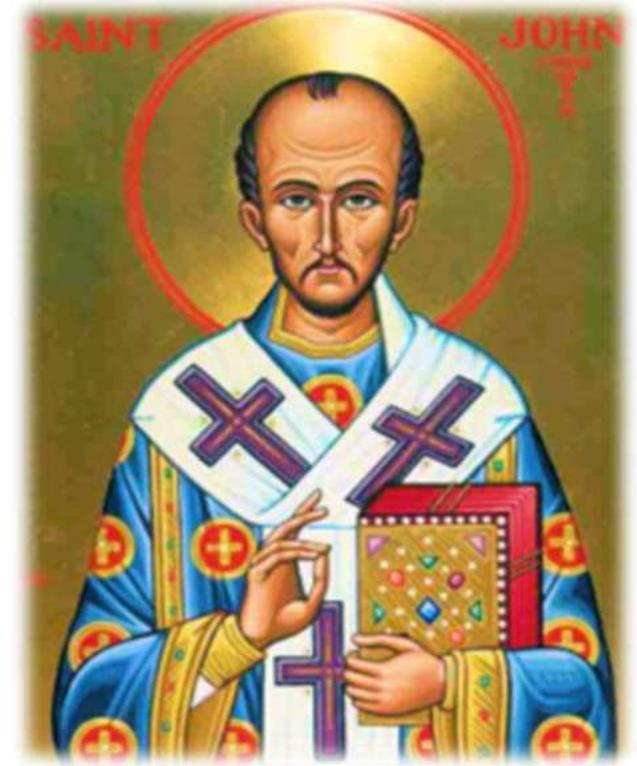
1. "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle, separated to **the Gospel of God.**" Rom1:1  
**God Himself is the good tiding.**
2. " The beginning of the **gospel of Jesus Christ,** the Son of God. " in Mark 1:1
3. "lest the light of the **gospel of the glory of Christ,** who is the image of God, should shine on them" 2 Cor 4
4. **Christ Himself** evangelized this gospel, as in Mark 1:14, "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the **gospel of the kingdom of God,** and saying, 'the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel."
5. "Having shod your feet with the preparation of **the gospel of peace.**" Ephesians 6:15
6. "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, **the gospel of your salvation**" Eph 1: 13

# What is the Ευαγγέλιο (Good News) (Gospel)?

Saint John Chrysostom comments on the meaning of the word 'Gospel' as 'good tidings' saying "It is Adoption, Inheritance of the kingdom of heaven, and Relation with the Son of God who came to deliver this message to all: To the enemies, the lost, and the sitting in darkness & shadow of death. Is there anything that equals this good news?

**God came on earth; man went to heaven.**

Our nature was reconciled with God, the devil was ashamed, and demons ran away, death was defeated, paradise was opened, the curse was abolished, and the road was cleared from sin. Wrong was removed, justice was restored, and the word of righteousness was seeded in all places and flourished. Angels visited earth regularly, and hope in bright eternity increased abundantly



## 7- Was it necessary to have a written Gospel?

At the beginning The 'Gospel' was not intended to be written book. Evidence in the Lord saying "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" Mark 16 The Church survived 20y+ after Pentecost without a written Gospel.

- A. Donald Guthrie: "Verbal tradition had its important role in the Church. Written tradition was born **not to replace the verbal one, but to supplement & complete it**. The Gospel keeps the tradition intact **without deviation & interprets its meanings**. The Church recognizes ONE Gospel whether by verbal or written tradition"
- B. The Evangelists relied on verbal teachings. But when the believers started to inquire about **the Person of Christ**, the Gospel was needed to satisfy their inquiries.
- C. When the believers worshiped, they used OT passages with prophecies about Christ. But they needed documents describing His life Lord, teaching, miracles, His death and resurrection, to **verify the fulfillment** of the prophecies and **lead them to Christian worship**.

The first Church embraced the written Gospel as evidence to the verbal Gospel. They used the 4 books as Apostolic references revealing the life of the Lord & His salvation, supporting them in their testimonies to the Lord, and **the written Gospel played a major role in their liturgical worship**.

## 8- What is the nature of the Gospel? historic Book? No

❖ **First:** They are not a complete record of the life, work or teaching of Christ.

Many facts known to the Disciples are **not recorded**. “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His Disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20: 30-31)

He also wrote “And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” (John 21: 25)

❖ **Second:** Very little was mentioned of the first 30ys of the Lord’s life, except those relatively short segments about His and His visit to Jerusalem with His parents at the age of twelve?

❖ **Third:** Nothing was said about the 40 days Christ spent with the disciples after His resurrection “**being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God?**” (Acts 1:3)

Therefore, **the Gospel is not a biography of the Jesus Christ, but is greater than history**. Offering us the Person of Christ so that we accept Him, live by Him & in Him, and partake in His suffering & in His glory. This is why the Gospel concentrates on a short period of His life. The events of the Last week of His life constitutes around 1/3 of the Gospel according to Mark, and slightly less than 1/3 of the other Gospels.

**The Gospel’s goal is not to put in chronological order the events surrounding the life of Christ, but to witness in many ways to One truth, the infallible word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit.**

## 9- Who is the Gospel written for?

It is not limited to Jews. All get to know God, enjoy the union with Him, and receive the eternal inheritance.

St Paul said regarding this subject:

“That the gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.” (Ephesians 3: 6)

**For all people – Jesus Christ was clear:**

“And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations”

Mark 13: 10

“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16: 15

“And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe”

Acts 15:7

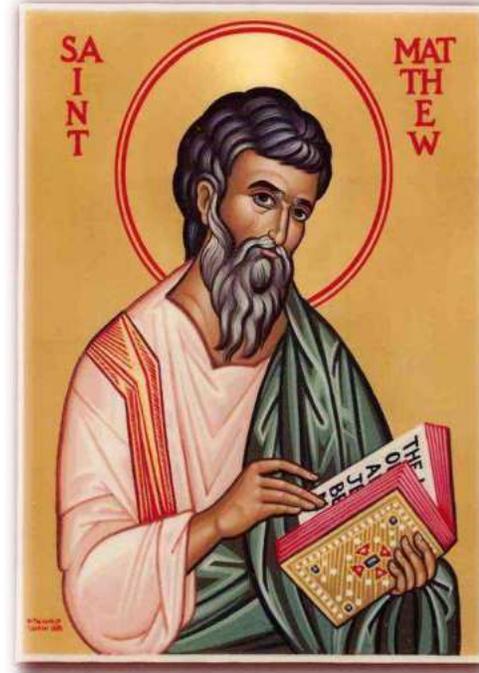


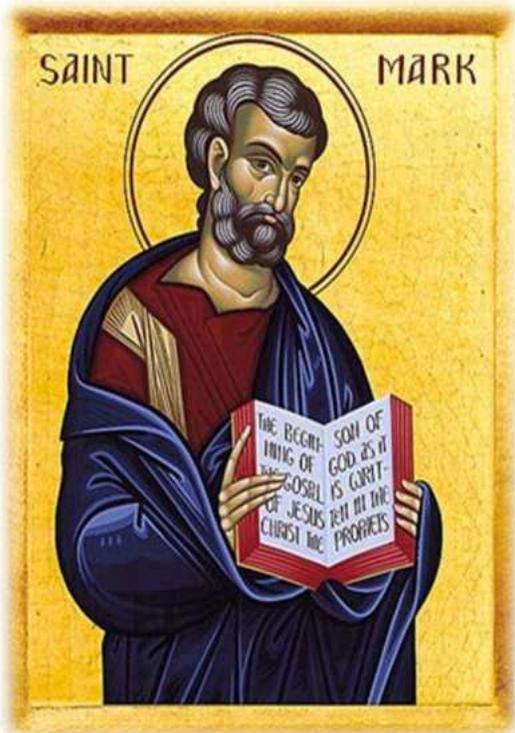
## 10- Each Gospel serves a particular purpose and complements the other:

The Holy Spirit inspired the 4 books of the Gospel. They altogether include enough biography and teachings of our Savior to lead His Church in faith & ministry for generations.

### 1- The Gospel according St. Matthew

- ❖ Written to the Jews, particularly those who embraced Christianity.
- ❖ Since the Jews were expecting The Messiah, Son of David, St Matthew demonstrated to them through so **many OT prophecies** that Jesus is **the expected King**.
- ❖ St Matthew presents Christ as **the Anointed One**, the King in whom all prophecies were fulfilled, and the Law was completed.
- ❖ The King Who came to reign over us and offer us the **Law of the kingdom of heaven**. He is therefore worthy of our obedience.
  
- ❖ So, the Gospel according to Matthew presents the Person of the Lord Christ in a Jewish-Christian point of view, **but its core is educational and apologetic**. It offers Christ the rejected by Jewish leaders, **the fulfillment of the Law, and the subject of O.T prophecies**. In Him the kingdom of heaven is accomplished, **correcting the Jewish conception of the Messiah as an earthly King**.



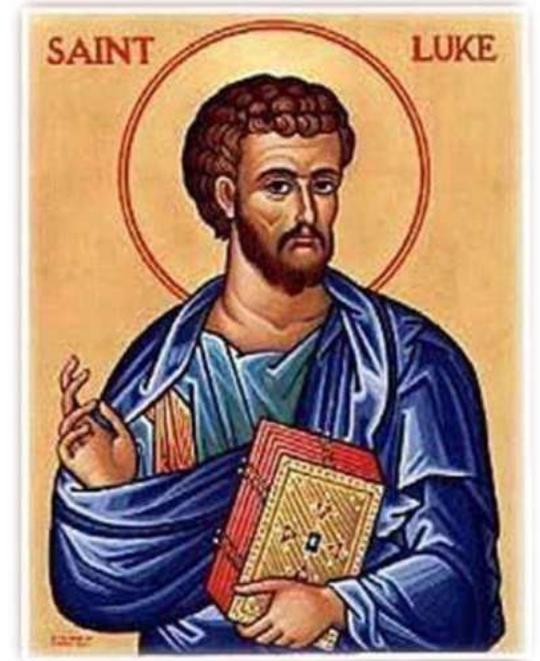


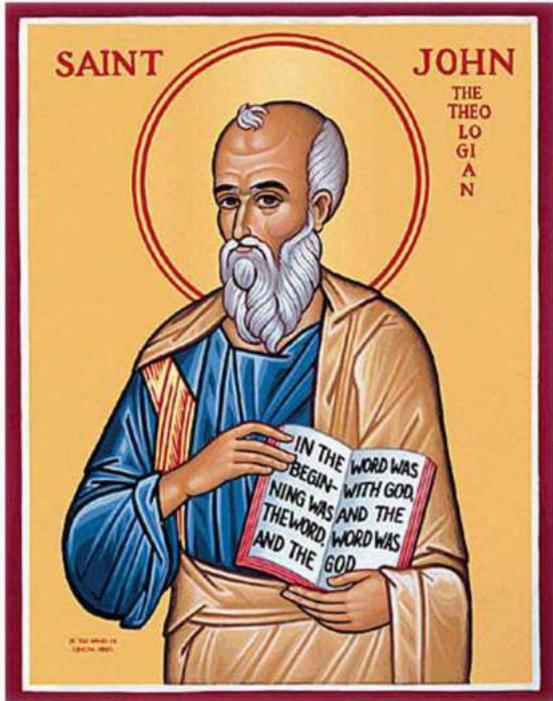
## 2- The Gospel according St. Mark

- ❖ Originally written to the Romans who were men of power & pride.
- ❖ Romans believed power is indication of life & civilization. So, The Gospel by St Mark offers the strong Christ that helps a humanity in need.
- ❖ St Mark accentuates Christ **the Savior**, who conquers the power of evil and sin, **the miracle wonder maker**, who defeated the devil by His Cross & love, and not warfare & violence.
- ❖ As Romans were occupied by their Empire, the Gospel by St Mark is to attract them to a **different kind of kingdom** that depends on the power of the Spirit and Divine work, and not on physical military strength.

### 3- The Gospel according St. Luke

- ❖ Written to the cultured Greek (scholars of philosophy & literature).
- ❖ Accordingly, it has a brilliant eloquent text. Probably the finest & most elegant of the 4 books in respect to literature.
- ❖ It does not offer the biography of Christ in a classical format, but in a divine style.
- ❖ St Luke declares Christ as **Savior of all humanity**; the educated & the illiterate, the philosopher & the simple, the rich & the poor.
- ❖ Christ does not save by human wisdom and philosophies, **but by the offering Himself sacrifice of love.**
- ❖ Greeks dwelled on human ideals & perfections. So, St Luke offers **Christ in an image of perfection & mercy.**
- ❖ He explains that Christ who was born of a woman, Son of Man, is also true God of the true God, the only Savior of man. He offers **Jesu the Nazarene as friend & Savior of men**, in Whom we must have faith & trust.





#### 4- The Gospel according St. John

- ❖ Generally, written to believers in the whole world. It declares to them the Divine Incarnated Word, who came among us to elevate us to Him in His heavens.
- ❖ The Gospel has its own Divine style, for it was **written to believers that know Christ, but needed a deeper knowledge of the Divinity of Christ**, especially that some heresies had surfaced, trying to diminish His Divinity and deny His incarnation. Ex. Some claimed that the body of Christ was imaginary. Others claimed that the Virgin gave birth only to Christ's humanity and that an upper Spirit came upon Him on His baptism and departed from Him at the Cross.
- ❖ St. John, had the task of **demonstrating the Divinity of the Lord** Christ and the reality of His incarnation.
- ❖ He **presents Jesus the Son of the eternal God (the Word of God)**, who appeared in the flesh for our salvation, and declares the Father to all those who accepts Him. (John 20:30) He demands us to worship, so that **if we believe in Christ, we obtain everlasting life**.

Gospel	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Comparison				
Date when written	Aramaic 39-42AD. Greek 60-67AD	60 or 61AD	58-63AD	After 70AD (90-100AD)
Place where written	Judea - Palestine	Rome	Rome?	Ephesus (Asia Minor)
Whom it was written for	Jews (Messiah)	Roman (Power)	Greek (Philosophy)	Whole world (Incarnation)
Opening	Genealogy of Christ	Voice crying in the wilderness	Offerings	In the beginning was the Word
Portraying of Christ	King	Servant of mankind. Mighty. Conqueror of the devil. Miracle maker	Merciful. Son of Man. Friend of mankind. The sacrifice and the Priest offering the sacrifice.	The Incarnated Word.
Christ came to	Fulfill the Law	Perform miracles	Save humanity	Dwell among us
Christ cared for	Prophecies	Performing miracles	History	Divinity
Its Symbol	Face of a man (the third animal) for Christ is born of Mary	Face of a lion (the first Animal) for Christ is strong	Face of an ox (the second animal) for Christ is the offering	Face of an eagle (the fourth animal) for Christ is the Resurrection