

AN INTRODUCTION

THE FOUR

GOSPELS

THROUGH THE BIBLE



AN OVERVIEW

THE FOUR GOSPELS: A THEME VERSE?

John 20:31: "...these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."

John 20:30: "...truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book..."

John 21:25: "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."

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GOSPELS

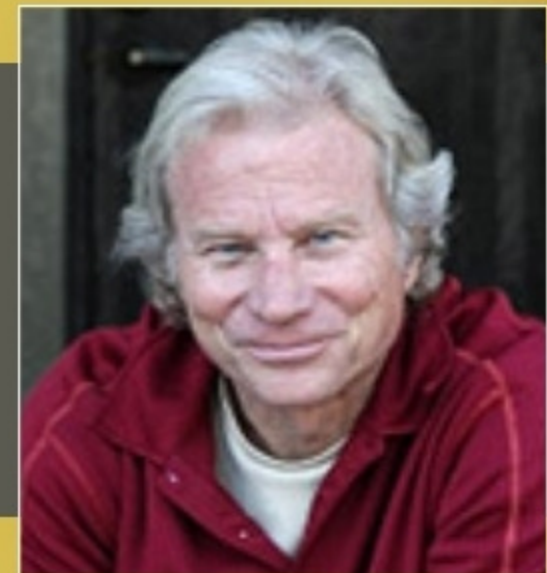


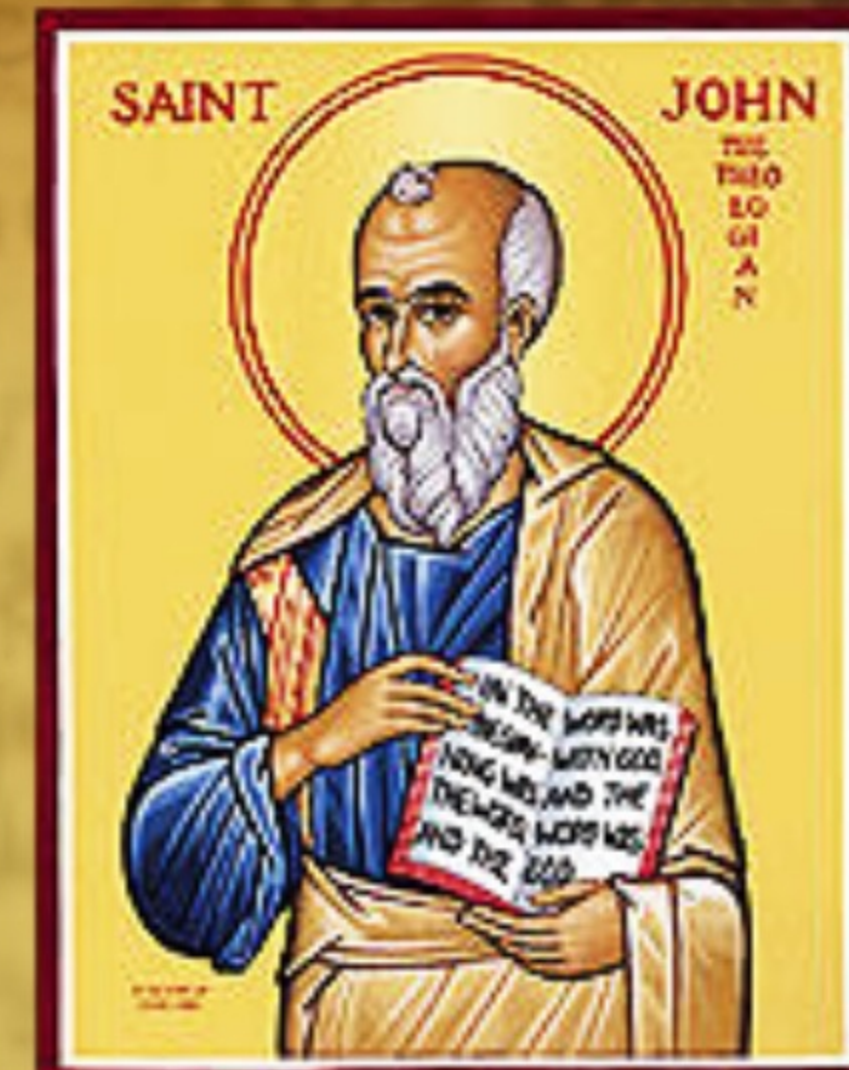
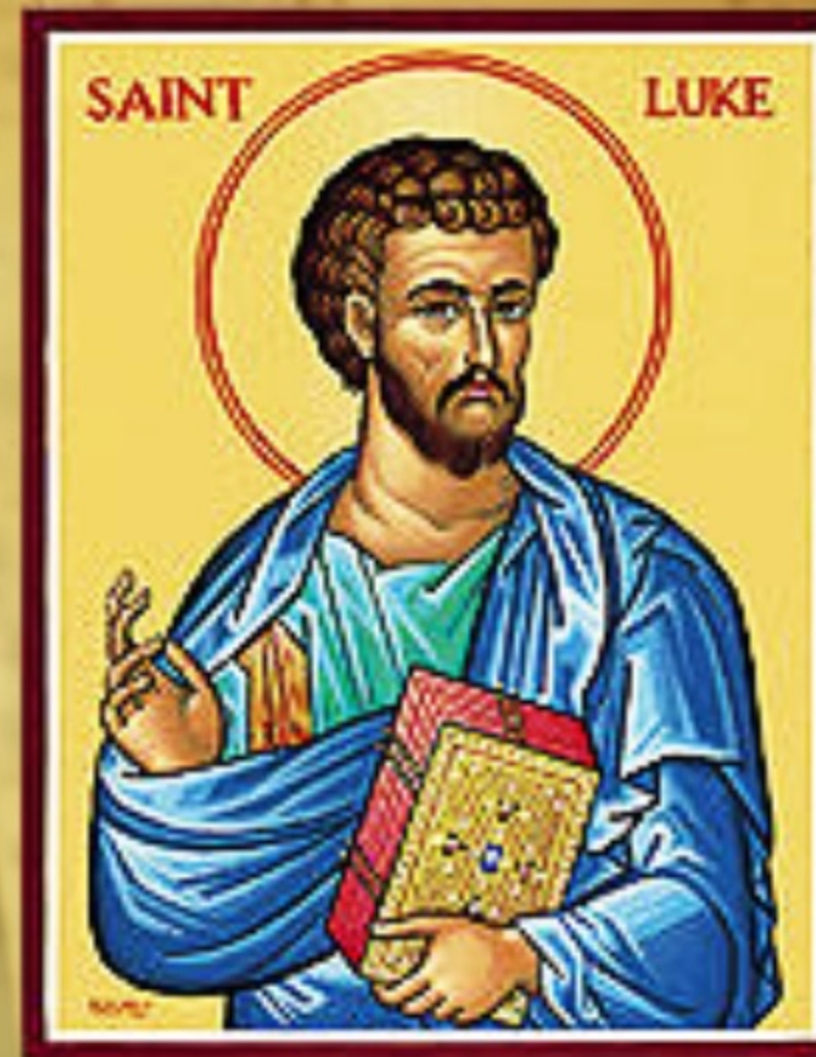
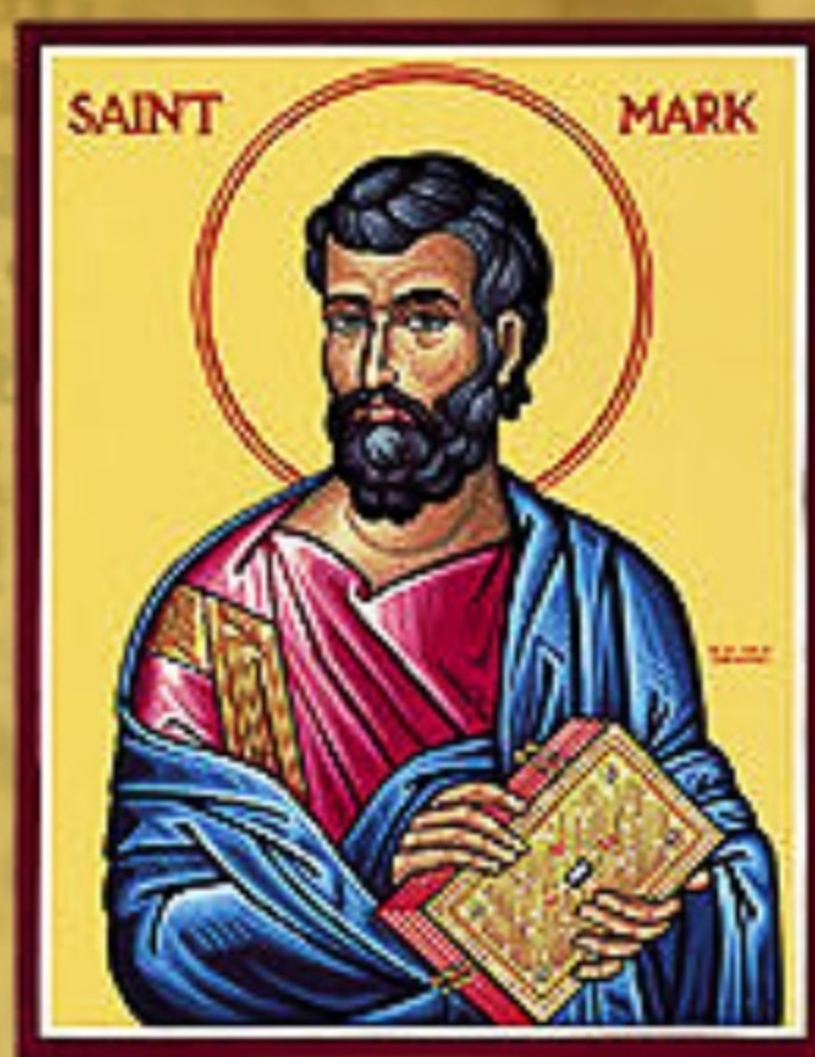
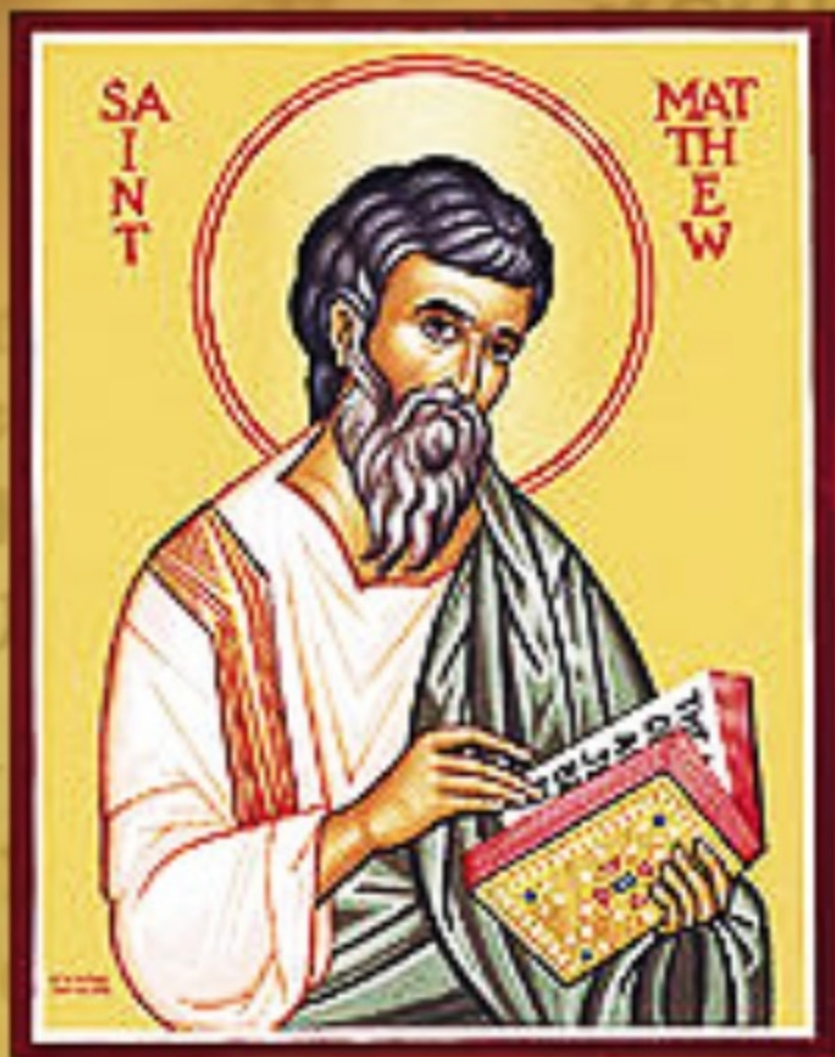
THROUGH THE BIBLE

AN OVERVIEW

*There is More
That COULD
Have Been
Written!*

*"The Gospels are **not** intended to be a history or biography of the life of [Jesus] in the modern sense of the term. Each author is selective in what he portrays."*





Who WERE These Men?
Who Were Their AUDIENCES?
Which One Should I Start With?




A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a white shirt, is smiling and looking down at an open Bible. A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a yellow shirt, is also looking down at the Bible. The background is a warm, golden-yellow color. The text is overlaid in a bold, yellow, blocky font with a black outline.

**WE ALL SHOULD
BE READING
OUR BIBLES**

**BUT, WHERE
TO START?**

ENCOUNTERING Jesus



- Luke 24:15-16: **“...while they conversed and reasoned... Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.”**
- VS. 27: **“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, [Jesus] expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”**
- VS. 31: **“Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him...”**

“(The gospels) are constantly—and from the first moment—tying the “Jesus story” back to the Hebrew scriptures. There isn’t a story or teaching about Jesus [in the Gospels] that isn’t packed with Old Testament allusion.” (The Bible Project)



THESE ARE ALL LEADING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT!

STUDIES AVAILABLE
ONLINE AT:
CCYUBACITY.COM or
YOUTUBE.COM/CCYUBACITY



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YOUTUBE.COM/CCYUBACITY





THE GOSPEL



**God is
Fulfilling
His Promises!**

Gr. 'euaggelion' = "good news"
Eng. = "evangelist," "evangelical"

THESE ARE ALL LEADING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT!

STUDIES AVAILABLE
ONLINE AT:
or
BACITY

**THE OLD TESTAMENT
ISN'T NECESSARILY
ALL "ABOUT" JESUS**

THE TABERNACLE → KING DAVID → THE TEMPLE

**BUT IT DOES ALL
"POINT" TO JESUS**

"Behold, I send... the
the covenant,
delight. Behold,
ing," says the
LORD of hosts."
Malachi 3:1

A POWERFUL PROLOGUE

John 1:1-18: “In the beginning [cf Gen 1:1] was the Word... And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He [Jesus] was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father... And of His fullness we have all received... For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. [But] The only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”

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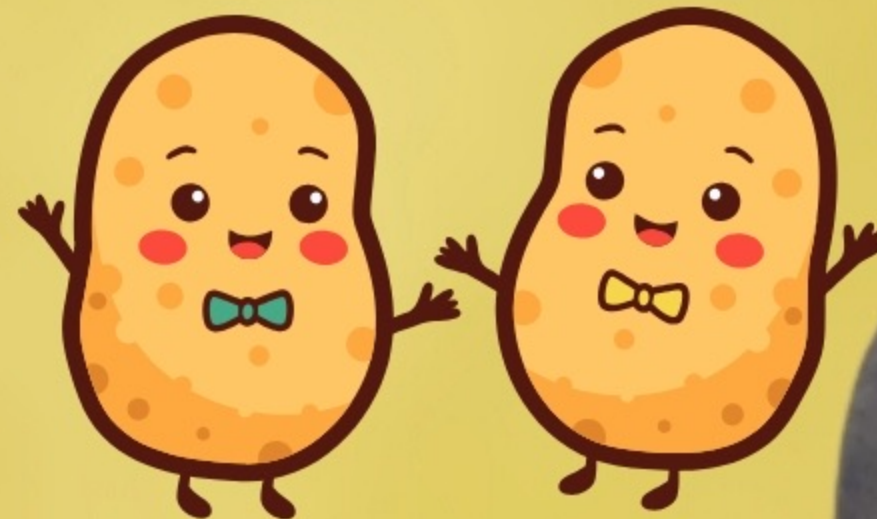


"This remarkable, profound portion [of scripture] is not merely a preface, or...[an] introduction. It is a summation of the entire [Bible]."
(David Guzik)

"This description is given in order that we may at once grasp a continuous history [from] an unmeasured past, and the identity of the Person who is Subject of that history." (Marcus Dods)

ON COMMENTATORS:

**"Some 'taters are
more common
than others!"**
(Jon Courson)



**Ho, Ho,
Ho!**

TODAY'S MESSAGE BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

In Part

Don Stewart Why Are There Four Gospels?

Is there something special about the number four? Why not more or less gospels?

Each Gospel Was Written For A Distinct Purpose

It is important that we understand these sources and what they are trying to accomplish. The Gospels are neither biographies of the life of Christ nor are they a disinterested record of certain events in His life. Each writer wants the reader to know the truth about Jesus and become a disciple. To accomplish this purpose, each Gospel is aimed at a certain audience and each writer is selective of the events he includes.



Matthew

The Gospel according to Matthew is aimed primarily at the Jew, the person familiar with the Old Testament. Jesus is portrayed as Israel's Messiah, the King of the Jews. Matthew records how the promises God made in the Old Testament, with regard to the Messiah, are fulfilled in Jesus. Matthew begins his book by stating the family tree of Jesus:

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1).

This genealogy demonstrates that Jesus is the rightful heir to the kingdom that was promised to David and his descendants and sets the tone for the book. The remainder of the book emphasizes that Jesus has the credentials to be Israel's Messiah.

Dr. J. Vernon McGee The Gospel According to Matthew...Mark...Luke...John

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW...MARK...LUKE...JOHN

"If the Holy Spirit had wanted one Gospel, He would have given us one Gospel. But He gave us four in order that they might meet the needs of mankind."



In the Fullness of Time

The question has been asked from the very beginning, "Why four Gospels? Why not five? Why not three?" Well, the wag has given an answer: "Three is not adequate, and five is superfluous, so we have four." But there must be a better reason than that.

Some scholars have attempted to resolve the problem by making a harmony of the Gospels. When I was in seminary, I studied the harmony in both English and Greek. They attempt (and these are sincere men) to come up with one account. It is amazing how outstanding men will trim the corners in an attempt to reconcile any disparity they think they've found in the Gospel records. Reading many of these harmonies is like trying to fit a size 4 shoe on a lady with a size 7 foot — it's just difficult to do! You've probably heard the story about the lady who went into the shoe store. The clerk, in a gracious way, asked, "What size do you wear?" She said, "Well, I can get on a 4, but 5 is my size, and since 6 feels so good. I always buy a size 7." Let me tell you, that's the way they harmonize the

Both Online at BlueLetterBible.org



**WE'RE TALKING
ABOUT...
...NOT**

"...it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe." 1 Cor. 1:21

**THE
GOSPEL
ASA MESSAGE**

THE GOSPEL AS A MESSAGE

It's Good News!

1 Cor. 1:21: "...it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."

Rom. 1:16: "[the gospel] is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes..."

A GOOD SUMMATION of the GOSPEL:

1 Cor. 15:3-4: "I delivered to you... that which I also received... which is of FIRST IMPORTANCE: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures... and that He was buried, and... rose again the third day according to the Scriptures..."

AN INTRODUCTION

THE FOUR

GOSPELS

AS AN ACCOUNT



THROUGH THE BIBLE

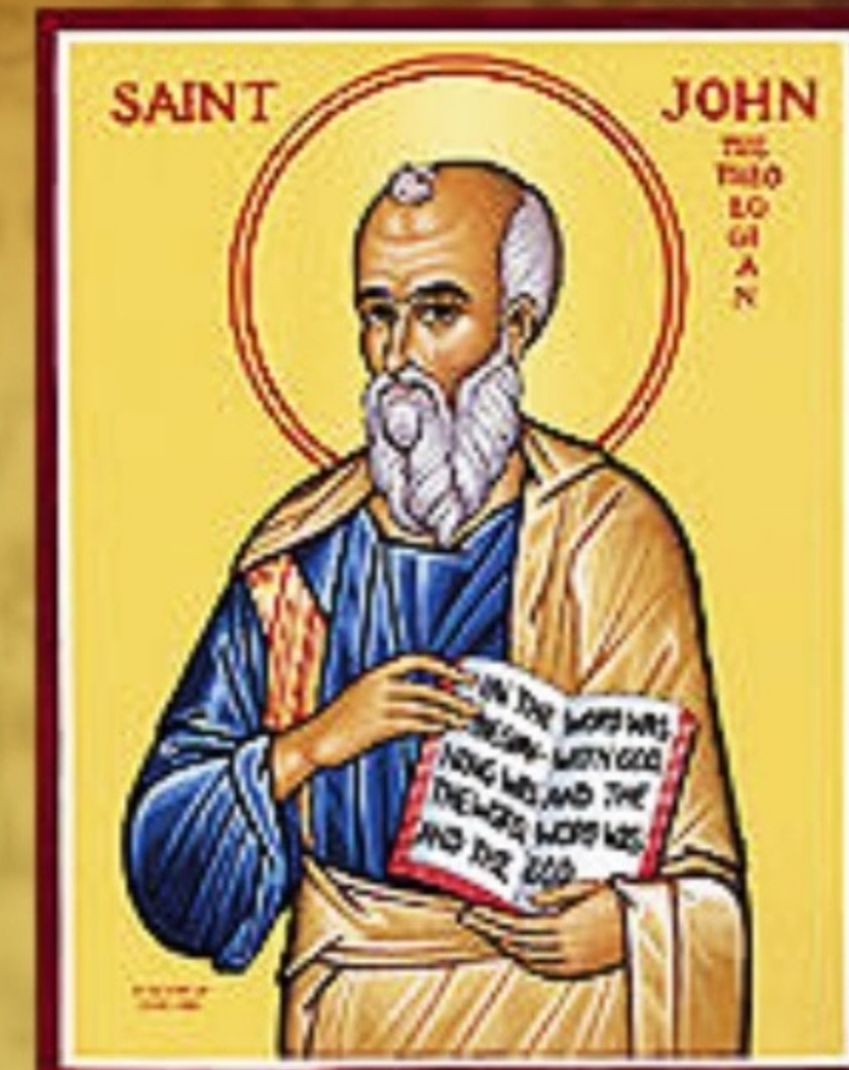
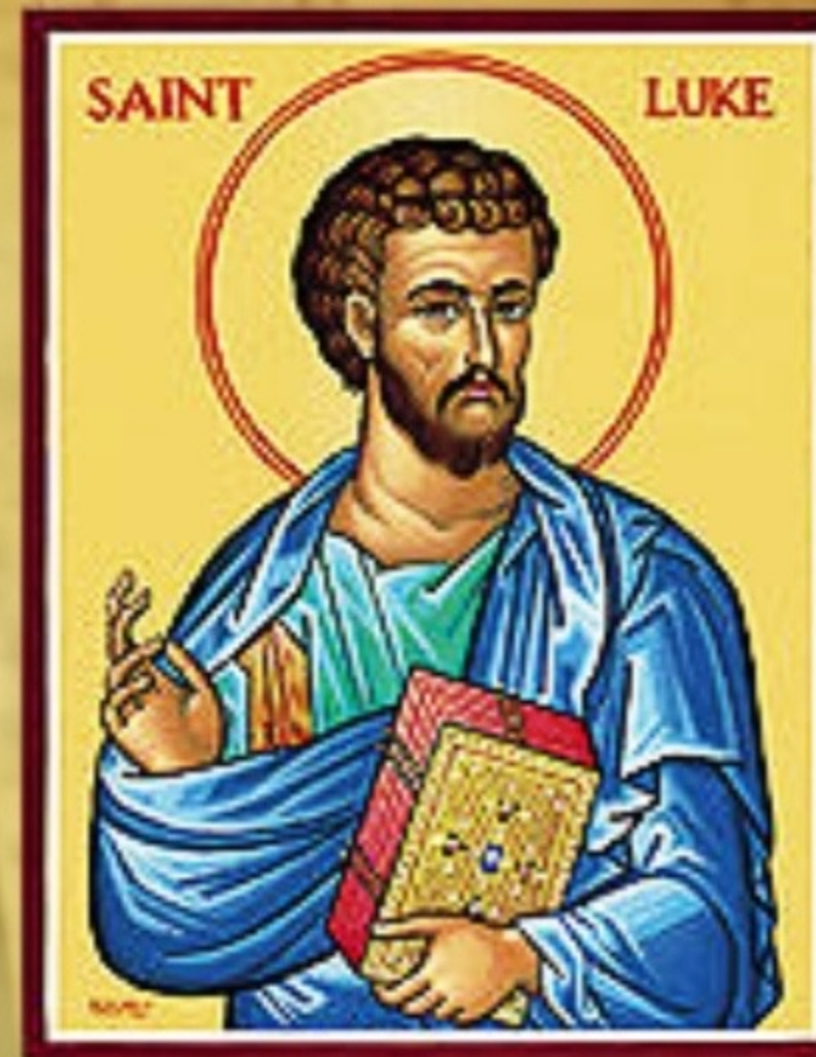
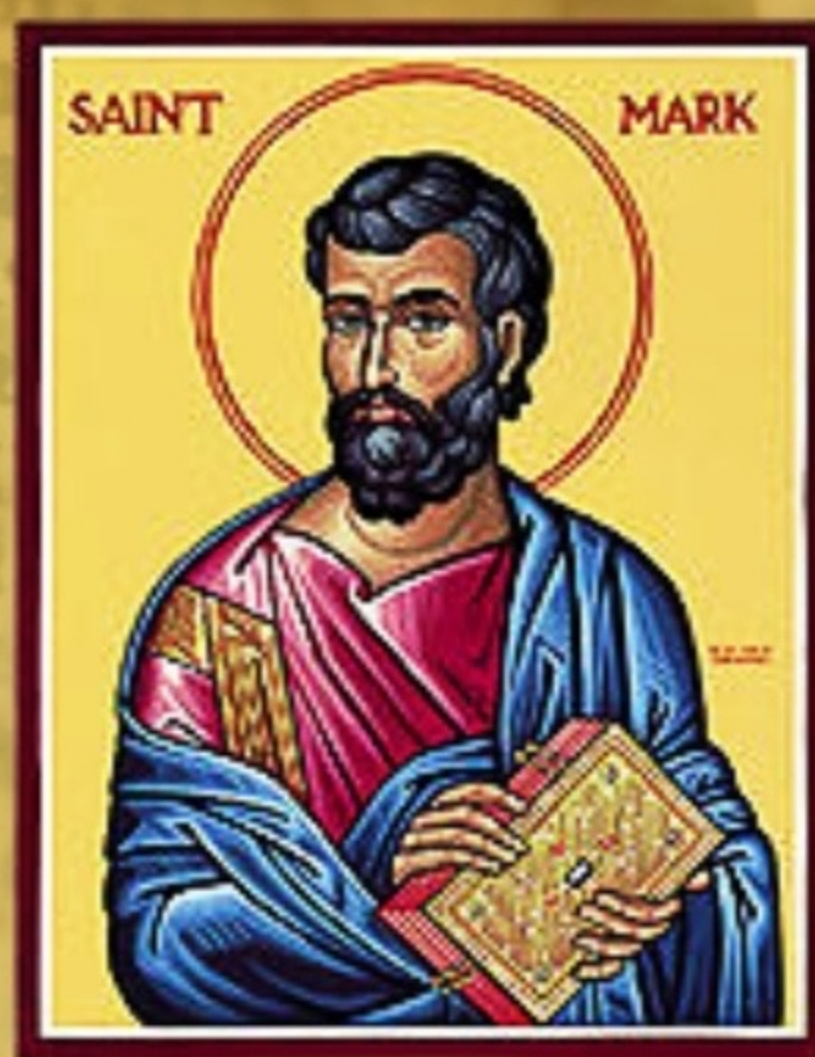
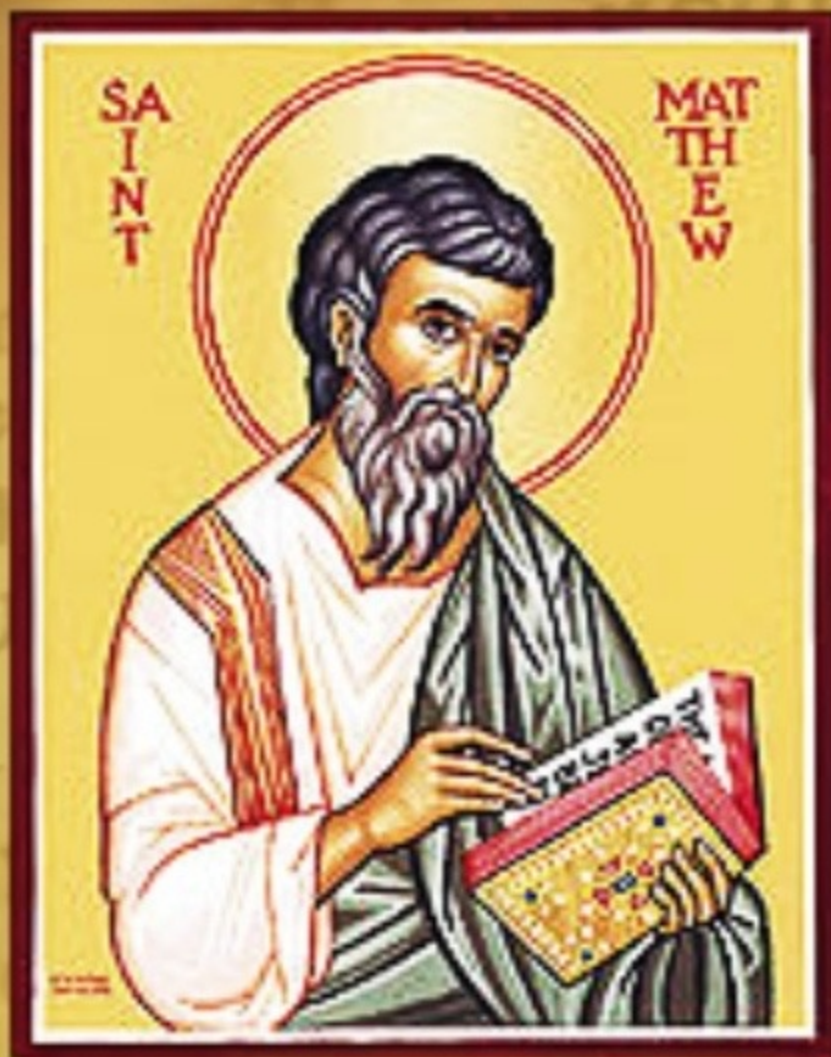


AN OVERVIEW

WE'RE TALKING
ABOUT...
...NOT

THE
GOSPEL
AS A MESSAGE

"...it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe." 1 Cor. 1:21



Who WERE These Men?
Who Were Their AUDIENCES?



THROUGH THE BIBLE



UNDERSTANDING THESE THINGS
REALLY HELPS US APPRECIATE
THE CONTENTS OF EACH

THE GENERAL CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL:

- **The Lineage, Birth, and Family of Jesus Christ**
- **One Account from Early Life (Luke 2)**
- **Jesus' Baptism**
- **His Earthly Ministry:**
 - Teachings/Parables, Healings/Miracles**
- **Disciples of Jesus (Apostles) & Multitudes**
- **Relationship with Religious Leaders**
- **Mission of Jesus**
- **Fulfillment of Prophecy & the Law**
- **Betrayal, Arrest, Crucifixion, Resurrection**
- **Ascension**



**This is
Brief!**

THE GENERAL CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL:

- The Lineage, Birth, and Family of Jesus Christ
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***TRY
SUMMARIZING
THESE!***

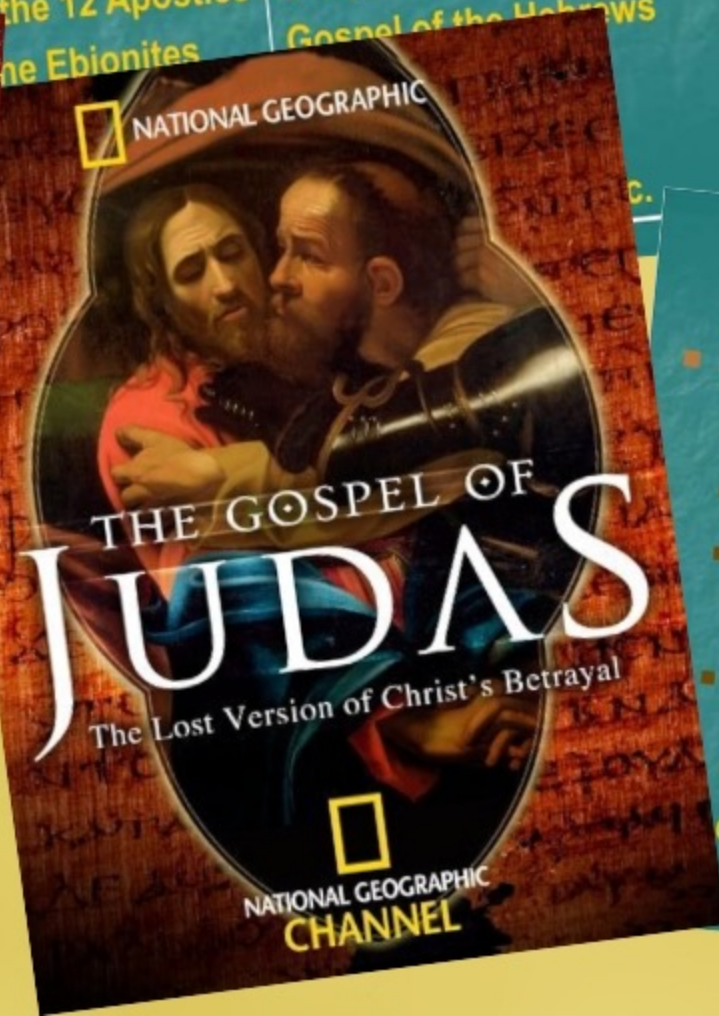
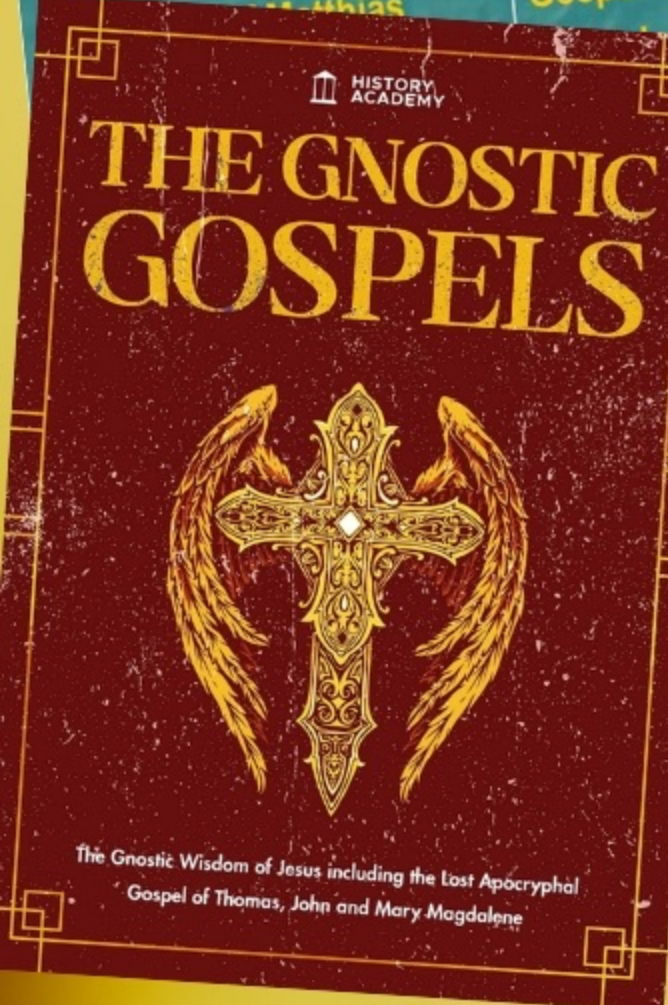


"OTHER" GOSPEL ACCOUNTS???

III) Non-canonical Gospels

- We know of at least 30 "Gospels" not in NT
 - many different origins, styles, theologies
 - some positively influenced Church tradition
 - others rejected as "Gnostic" and/or "heretical"
 - some texts complete, others badly damaged/fragmentary, others known only by title!

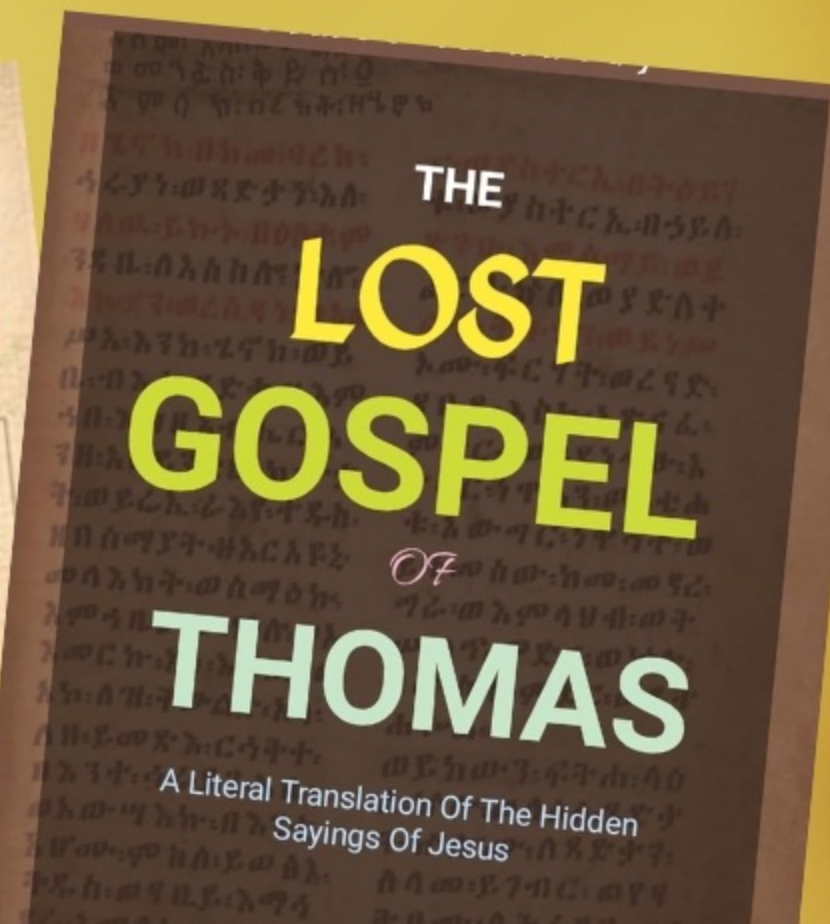
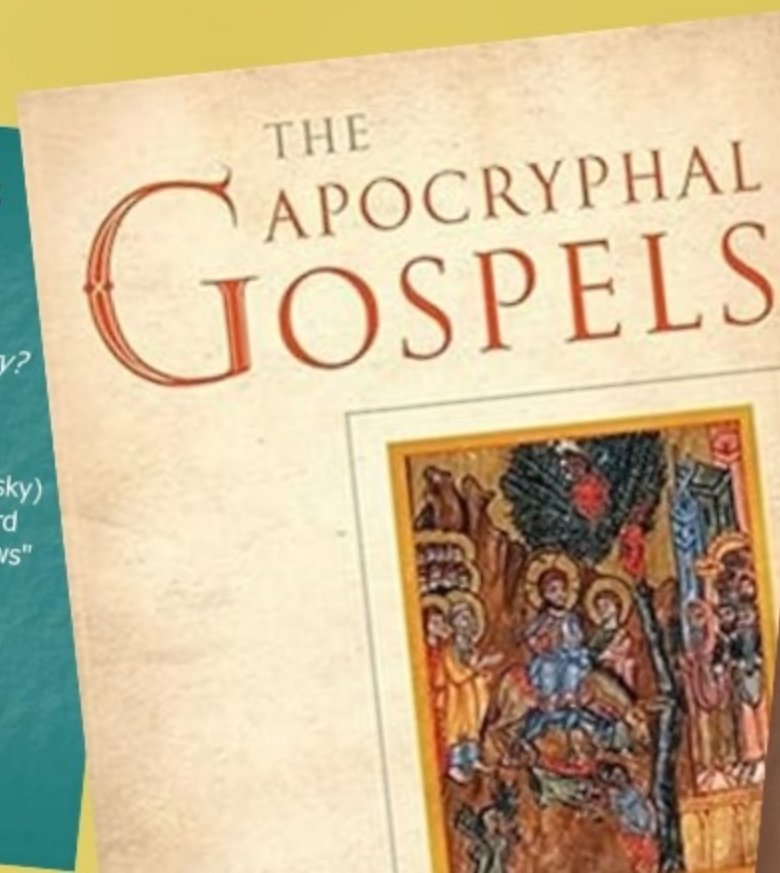
| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Arabic Infancy Gospel | Gospel of the Birth of Mary | Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew |
| Gospel of Matthias | Gospel of Nicodemus | Gospel of Bartholomew |
| | Gospel of the 12 Apostles | Gospel of Mary (Magdalene) |
| | Gospel of the Ebionites | Gospel of the Hebrews |



III) Non-canonical Gospels

- More recent texts:
 - Secret Gospel of Mark (1958, Morton Smith) – *forgery?*
 - Gospel acc. to Peanuts (1965, Robert L. Short)
 - Gospel acc. to the Simpsons (2001/2007, Mark I. Pinsky)
"Bigger and Possibly Even Better! Edition: With a New Afterword Exploring South Park, Family Guy, and Other Animated TV Shows"
 - Gospel acc. to Harry Potter (2002, Connie Neal)
"Spirituality in the Stories of the World's Most Famous Seeker"
 - Gospel acc. to Doctor Seuss (2004, James Kemp)
 - Gospel acc. to Martha (2000, Barbara Murphy)

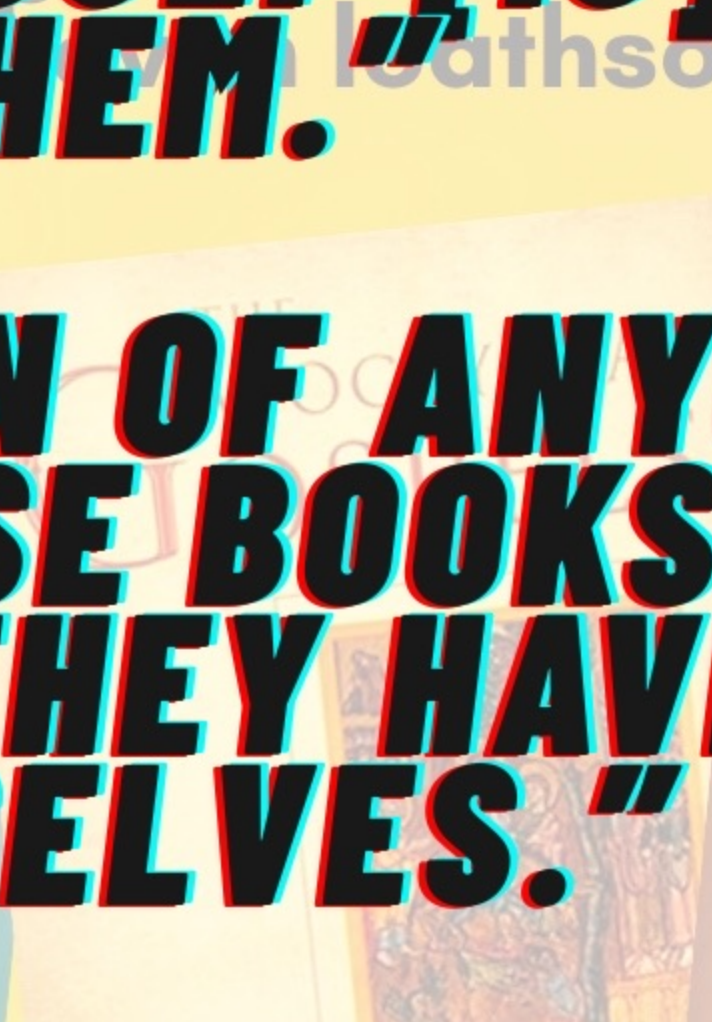
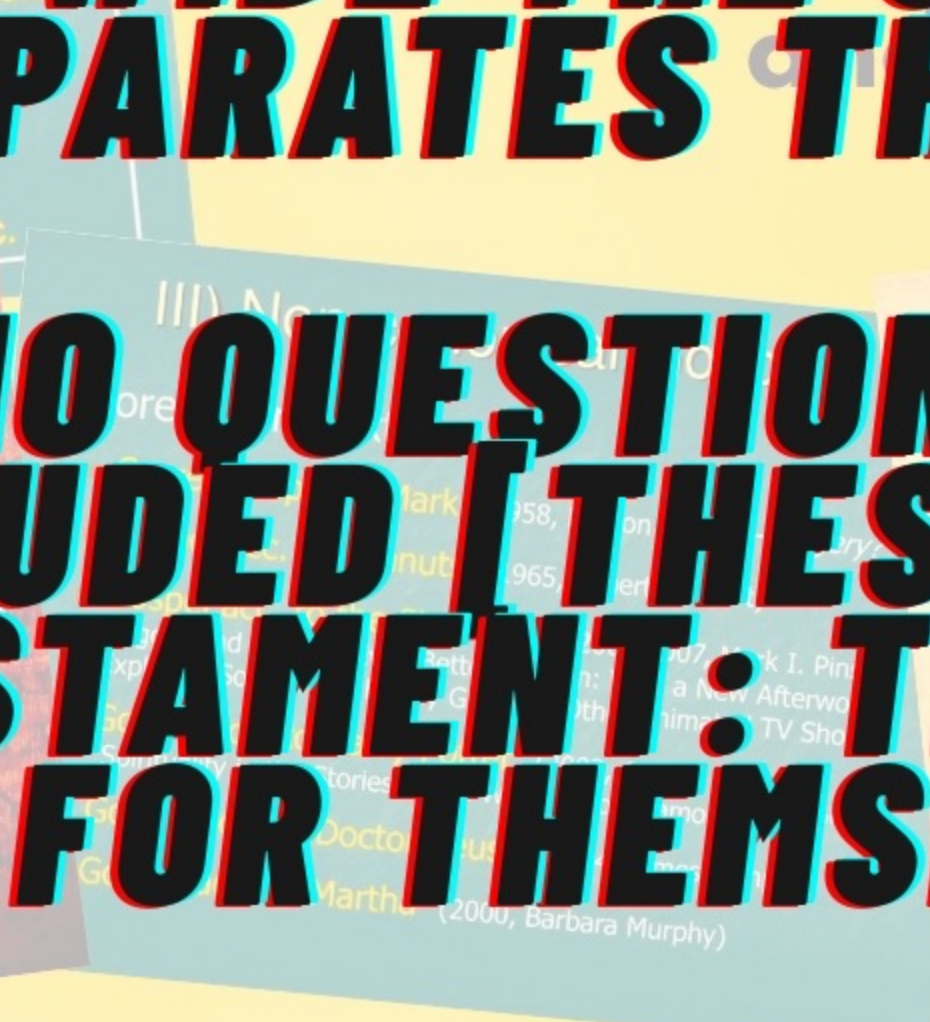
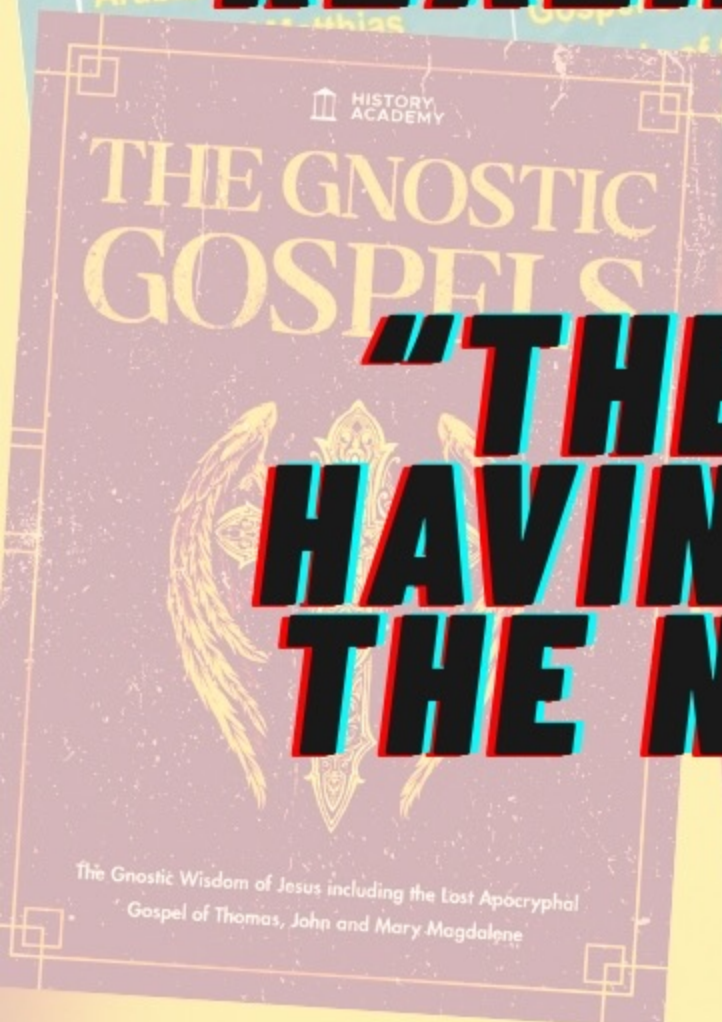
"These writings are not considered part of the New Testament and are widely regarded as inauthentic by [modern] scholars. They have been deemed as imitations... and are often characterized as trivial, highly theatrical, disgusting, and even loathsome."



"OTHER" GOSPEL ACCOUNTS???

"THE NON-CANONICAL GOSPELS... ARE OFTEN SAID TO BE THE BEST EVIDENCE FOR THE CANONICAL... WE HAVE ONLY TO COMPARE OUR NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS WITH OTHER LITERATURE OF THE KIND TO REALIZE HOW WIDE THE GULF [IS] WHICH SEPARATES THEM."

"THERE IS NO QUESTION OF ANYONE'S HAVING EXCLUDED [THESE BOOKS] FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT: THEY HAVE DONE THAT FOR THEMSELVES."



**WHO
DECIDED
WHICH
BOOKS
BELONG IN
THE BIBLE?**



"The conception... is that [Biblical] documents were written [as] just sort of 'friendly advice' to the church. And that it wasn't until the 4th century that the church decided, 'These are great books. We should make them Scripture, and infuse them with authority.'"

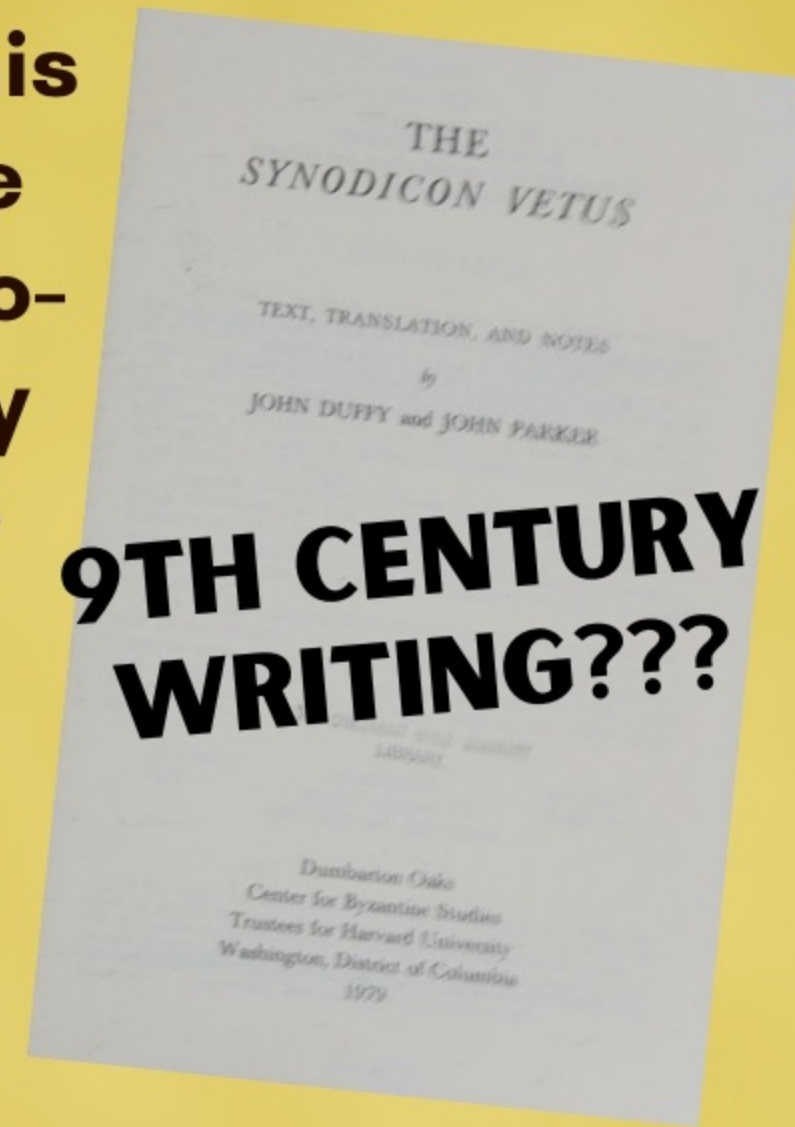


Michael Kruger
Theologian, President and
Samuel C. Patterson Professor of
New Testament and Early
Christianity at Reformed
Theological Seminary



"There is no record of any discussion of the biblical canon at the council of Nicea... The main source of [this] idea... seems to be Voltaire... whose ambivalent treatment of the Bible... reduced the sacred text to a mere moral manual..."

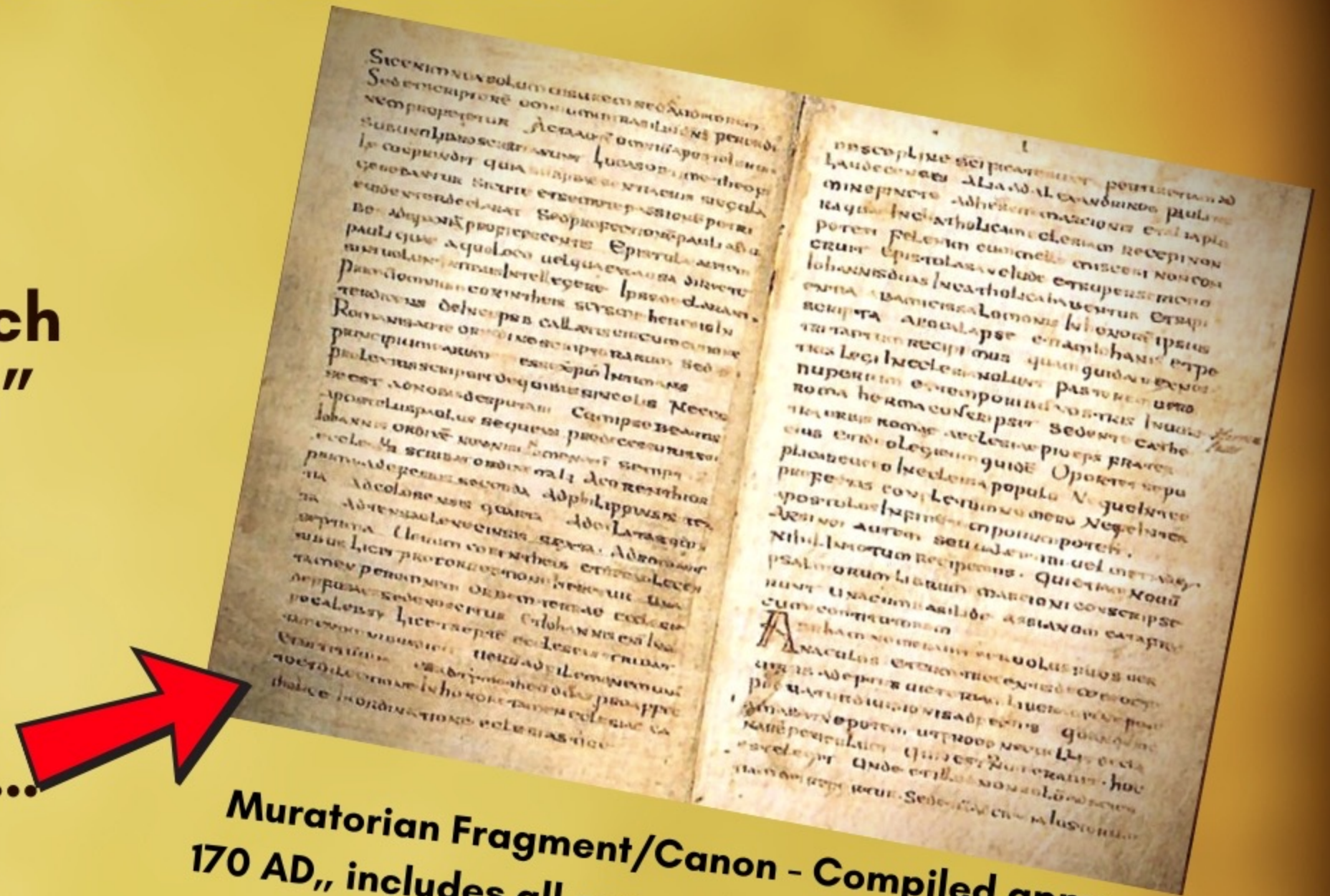
"The [earliest source] of this 'fictitious anecdote' is the Synodicon Vetus, a pseudo-historical account of early Church councils from the ninth century."



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"Modern scholars reject [this] notion and deem the development of the Christian biblical canon nearly complete... by the time the Muratorian fragment was written."



Muratorian Fragment/Canon - Compiled appx. 170 AD,, includes all current New Testament books except Hebrews, James, 1st and 2nd Peter, and 3rd John.

PAPYRUS 45 - THE CHESTER BEATTY LIBRARY



Papyrus 45 - Chester Beatty Library, Dublin Ireland

**Bound Copy of
the Gospels of
Matthew, Mark,
Luke, John, and the
Book of Acts from 1st
- 2nd Century AD
(pre-dating the
Council of Nicea in
325 AD)**

"This manuscript is the earliest undeniable example of a four-gospel codex and 30 of the original 112 [pages] survive."

PAPYRUS 45 - THE CHESTER BEATTY LIBRARY



**THE 4 GOSPELS IN THE BIBLE ARE
THE ONLY GOSPEL ACCOUNTS TO
DATE FROM THE 1ST CENTURY AD**

Born in the 1st century AD, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were written by the apostles and their companions. They were the first of the four Gospels to be written, and they were the only ones to be included in the New Testament. The Council of Nicea in 325 AD confirmed their status as the authoritative Gospels.

This manuscript is the earliest undeniable example of a four-gospel codex and 30 of the original 112 [pages] survive."

TWO TESTS TO DEMONSTRATE HISTORICAL RELIABILITY:

1 - How many COPIES of the original texts are there?

2 - How much TIME has elapsed between the **WRITING OF THE ORIGINAL** and the appearance of the **FIRST COPY**?

PLATO

WRITING OF
ORIGINAL

1200 YEARS

FIRST
COPIES

NUMBER OF
SURVIVING
COPIES = 7

CAESAR'S GALLIC WARS

WRITING OF
ORIGINAL

1,000 YEARS

FIRST
COPIES

NUMBER OF
SURVIVING
COPIES = 10

ARISTOTLE

WRITING OF
ORIGINAL

1,100 YEARS

FIRST
COPIES

NUMBER OF
SURVIVING
COPIES = 49

HOMER'S ILIAD

WRITING OF
ORIGINAL

500 YEARS

FIRST
COPIES

NUMBER OF
SURVIVING
COPIES = 643

ALSO:
Pliny the Elder
Suetonius
Tacitus
Napoleon
Sophocles

RELIABILITY OF ANCIENT DOCUMENTS:

NEW TESTAMENT TEXTS

WRITING OF
ORIGINAL



FIRST
COPIES



NUMBER OF
SURVIVING
COPIES = 6,000
(GREEK)

ALSO:
10,000 - LATIN
7,974 - Armenian,
Coptic, Slavic,
Georgian, etc.

“CANON” = “STANDARD”

“The Canon is a list of authoritative books, more than it is an authoritative list of books.”



BRUCE METZGER - Biblical scholar, Bible translator and textual critic, Professor Princeton Theological Seminary, Bible editor, Board of American Bible Society and United Bible Societies. Scholar of Greek, New Testament, and New Testament textual criticism



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***ALL THAT ANY OF THE
EARLY COUNCILS DID WAS
SIMPLY RECOGNIZE WHAT
THE CHURCH HAD
ALREADY ACCEPTED***





"The question has been asked from the beginning, 'Why 4 Gospels? Why not 5? Why not 3?'" [And the answer has been given]: 'Three is not adequate, and five is superfluous, so we have four.' But there must be a better reason than that."

*"You've probably heard the story about the lady who went into the shoe store. The clerk... asked, 'What size do you wear?' She said, 'Well, I can get into a size 4, but 5 is my [actual] size, and since 6 feels... good, I always buy a size 7.' That's the way they harmonize the Gospels. We do not need a harmony of the Gospels; we need a **dis**-harmony. There is a vast... divergence among the Gospel records."*

“Each was written for a particular purpose to meet the need of a separate segment of the world population. We need to recognize this and let the Gospels conform to this... pattern. If the Holy Spirit had wanted one Gospel, He would have given us one Gospel. But He gave us four in order that they might meet the needs of mankind.”

EXAMPLE OF SUPPOSED INCONSISTENCY IN THE GOSPELS

Mark 10:46: "As [Jesus] went out of Jericho with His disciples... blind Bartimaeus... sat by the road begging."

Luke 18:35: "...it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging."



EXAMPLE OF SUPPOSED INCONSISTENCY IN THE GOSPELS

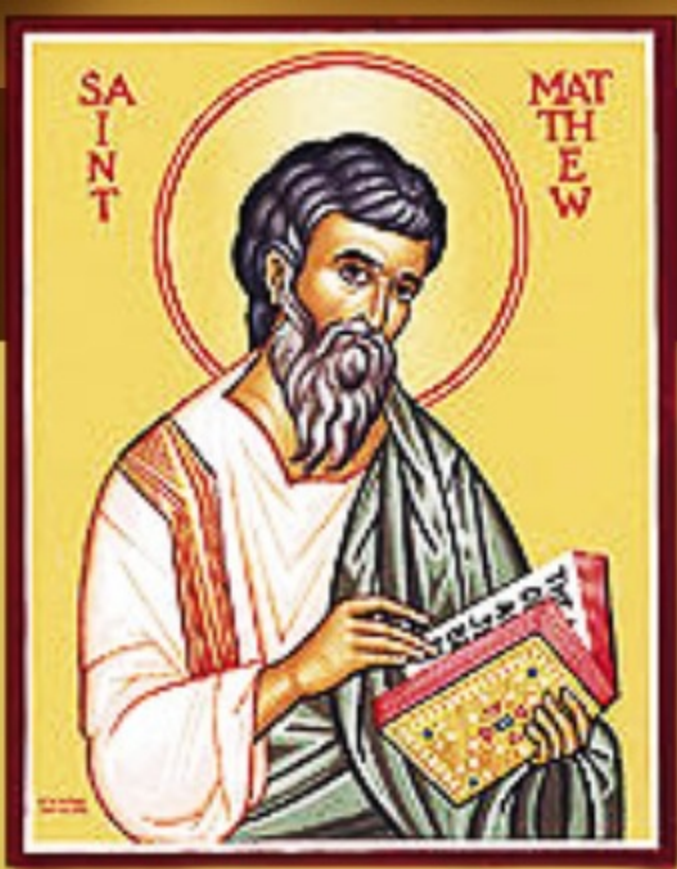
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Luke 18:35: **"...it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging."**

"In light of recent archaeology, [it was] discovered that by Jesus' time there were two cities of Jericho: the ancient city, and the newer Roman city. The miracle happened in-between these two cities of Jericho, as He was leaving one and entering the other." (David Guzik | EnduringWord.com)

“If you were to ask a husband and wife what they did last Saturday, you’re going to get different responses. The husband [may] tell you that they worked in the yard, went to the hardware store, and went out for lunch. The wife, on the other hand, might tell you, “We planted rosebushes, talked to our friends Jarriid and Allie (who they ran into at the store), and got into an argument (because the husband ordered a milkshake even though he’s lactose intolerant).” These two stories don’t represent discrepancies; they highlight differences in perspective.”

“For the wife, running into their friends was a bigger deal than going to the hardware store, so she focused on the important point and omitted the other. The husband had already forgotten about the argument, and remembered lunch as a high point. This example represents the differences you expect to encounter with people describing the same event. We run into the same kind of thing with the Gospels... They each focused on some details while ignoring others entirely. On the surface, it’s easy to assume they are contradictory, but... that’s not so.”



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Written by one of Jesus' 12 Apostles

Dated Appx. Between 70–90 AD

Written Primarily to a Jewish Audience (those familiar with the Old Testament: the "Religious Person")

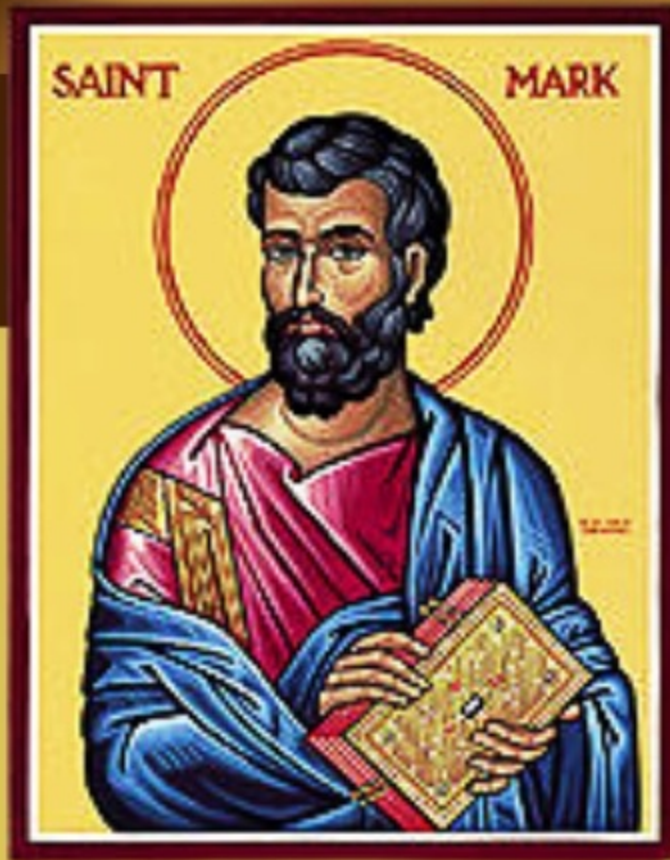
Jesus Portrayed as the MESSIAH, the "King of the Jews"

Considered the Most "Structured" Gospel

The Phrase "kingdom of heaven" appears 32 times throughout



"Matthew records how the promises God made in the Old Testament... are fulfilled in Jesus. [He] begins his book by stating the family tree of Jesus... [and] this genealogy [shows] that Jesus is the rightful heir to the kingdom that was promised to David... It sets the tone for the [rest of the] book, emphasizing Jesus has the credentials to be the Messiah." (Don Stewart)

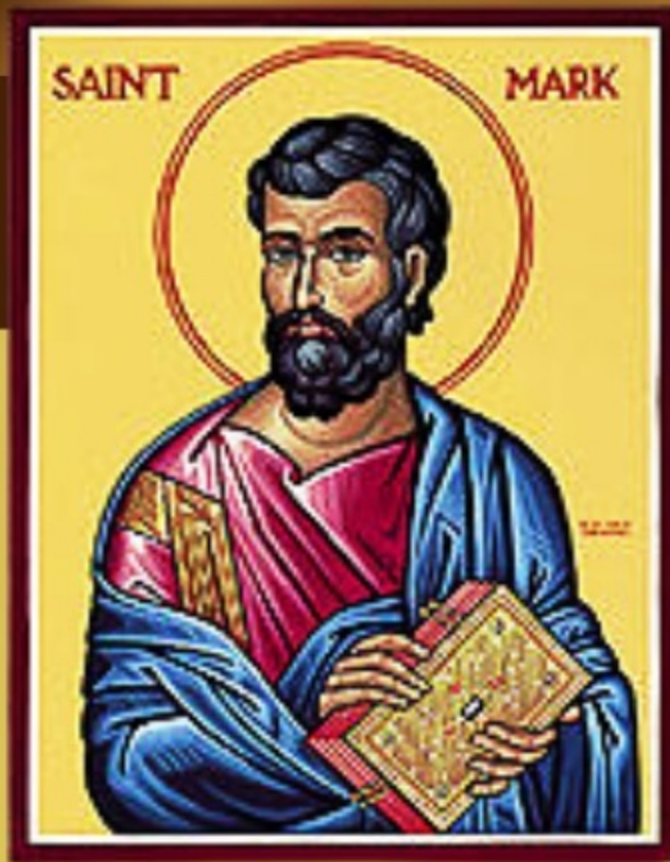


THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

**NOT an Apostle of Jesus
Believed to be Relating Peter's Firsthand Account
Dated Appx. 50 AD (Earliest Gospel)**

**Written to a Roman Audience (the "Self-Reliant Person")
Contains more LATIN words & phrases than any other Gospel
Considered the most "Dramatic" Gospel
Very short / Very fast-paced (only 16 Chapters)
A Gospel of ACTION**

**No Mention of Jesus' Birth or Lineage
Begins with Jesus' Earthly Ministry
Portrays Jesus as a Servant:
*"Doing the Job God Sent Him to Do"***



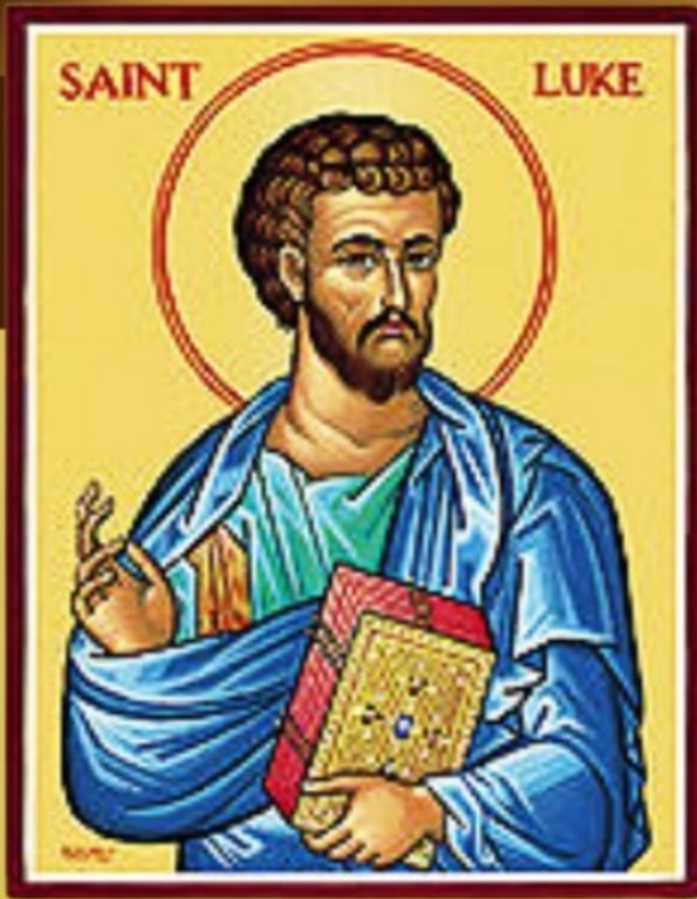
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

***A GOSPEL
OF ACTION!***

**NOT an Apostle of Jesus
Believed to be Relating Peter's Firsthand Account
Dated Appx. 50 AD (Earliest Gospel)**

"Mark shows that Jesus got the job done. [His] gospel records more miracles of Jesus." **(Don Stewart)**

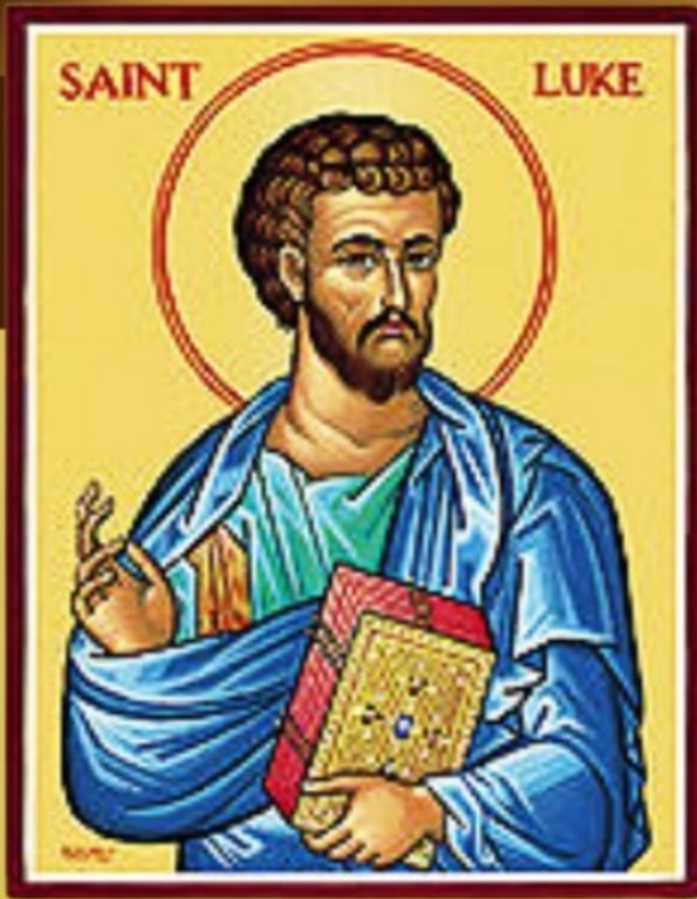
"In this Gospel, Jesus seems [to be] the busiest, quickly moving from one event to another. One of the key words in [this] Gospel is **'immediately,'** occurring over 40 times! The emphasis [in this Gospel] is... the DEEDS of Jesus more than the WORDS of Jesus." **(David Guzik)**



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

**NOT an Apostle of Jesus
Believed to have Interviewed Mary,
the Mother of Jesus
Also a Traveling Companion of Paul the Apostle
Dated Appx. 80-100**

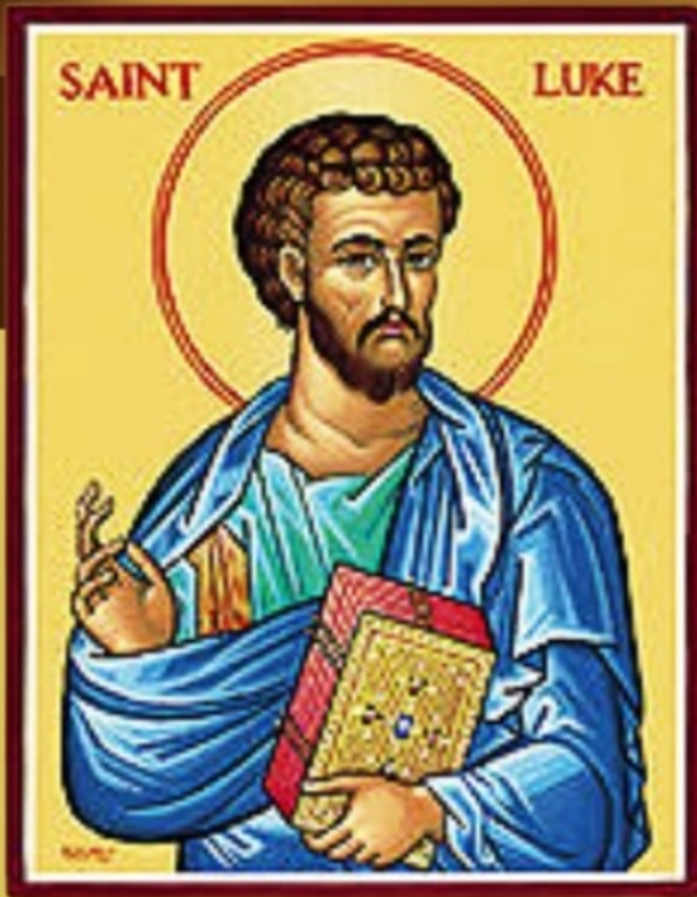
**Written to a Greek Audience (Intellectuals)
Luke was a Physician
This is the Longest Gospel Account
The Most "Thematic"
Contains the Most Parables of Jesus**



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

Luke States His Purpose with an Opening Monologue (Luke 1:1-4):

"Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, 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 had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed."

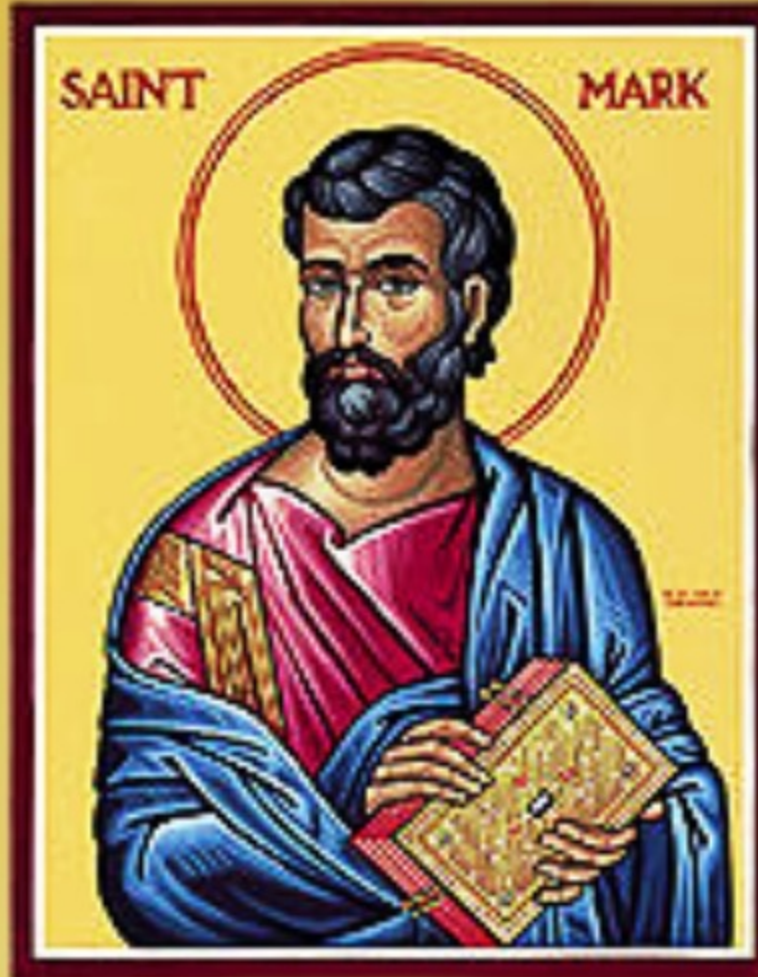
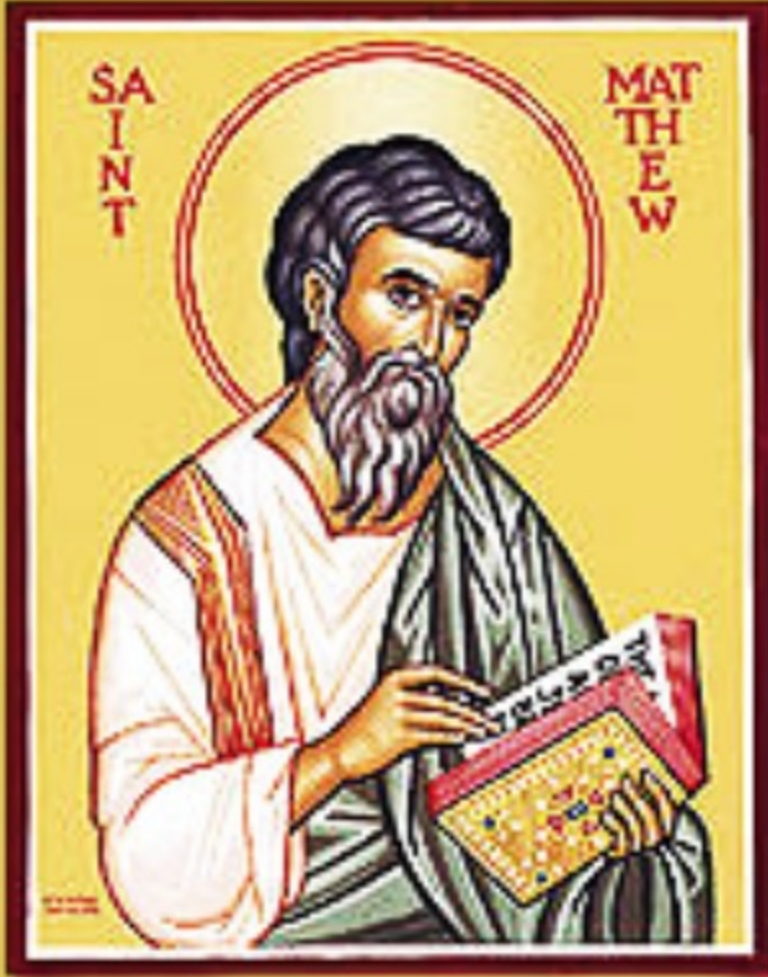


THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

"[These] first four verses... are one sentence in the original Greek. They are... refined, academic, [and] classical [in] style." **(David Guzik)**

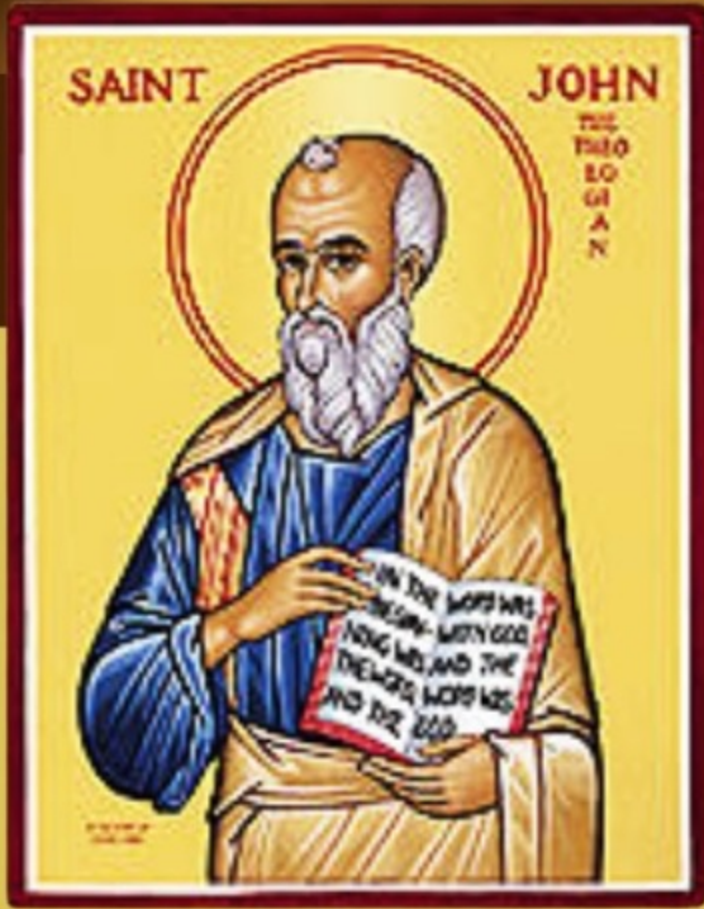
*"Luke is not writing as an eyewitness but as one... recording eyewitness testimonies **(Mary, the mother of Jesus)**. [Luke's] portrayal of Jesus is as the perfect man... He focuses on those events in Jesus' life that stress His humanity. The Greeks in their art and literature were always looking for the perfect man, [and] the Gospel of Luke reveals [Jesus as] that man."*
(Don Stewart)

THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS: "TOGETHER SIGHT"



**ALL SHARE
A SIMILAR
PERSPECTIVE**

- About 90 percent of Mark's content is found in Matthew...
- 50 percent of Mark's content appears in Luke...
- All the parables of Jesus are in the Synoptics (the Gospel of John has no parables)...



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

**An Apostle of Jesus (the Youngest)
The Last Written Gospel**

**Audience: The "Common Man"
Most Theological | Emphasizes the 'Son of God'**

**ONLY GOSPEL
WRITER TO
RECORD
JESUS' "I AM"
STATEMENTS**

I am the bread of life (Jn 6: 35)

I am the light of the world (Jn 8: 12)

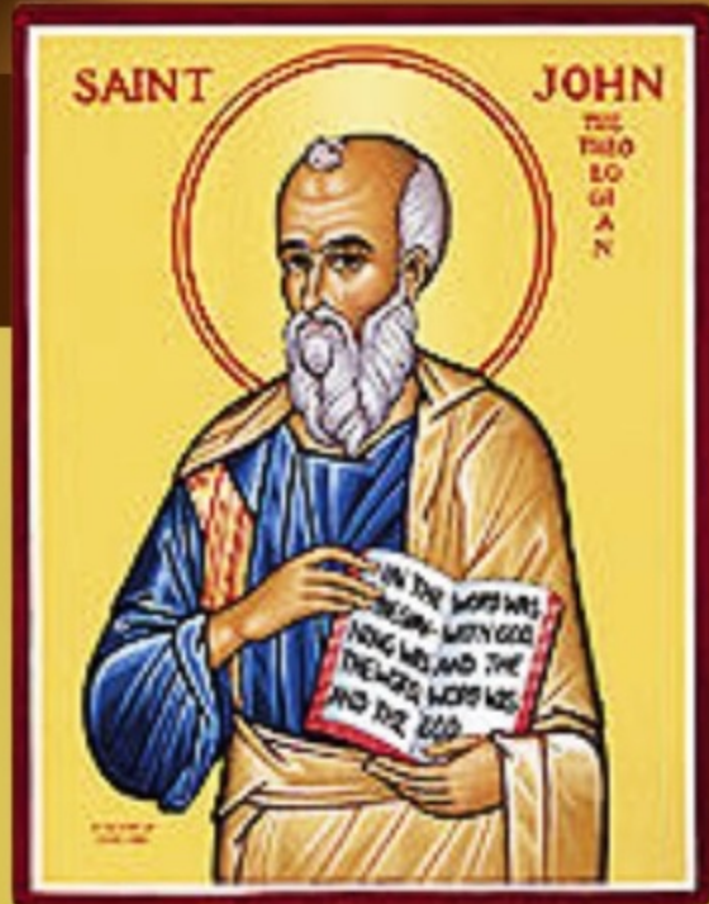
I am the gate for the sheep (Jn 10: 7)

I am the good shepherd (Jn 10: 11)

I am the resurrection and life (Jn 11: 25)

I am the way and the truth and the life (Jn 14: 6)

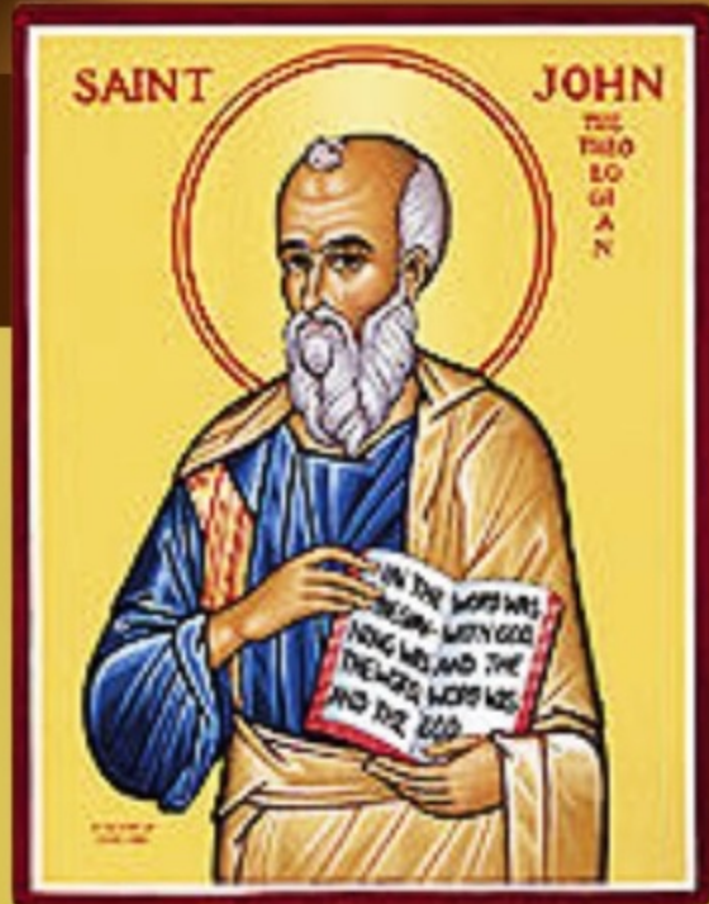
I am the true vine (Jn 15: 1)



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

“I AM”

John 8:56–59: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.” Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” Then they took up stones to throw at Him...”



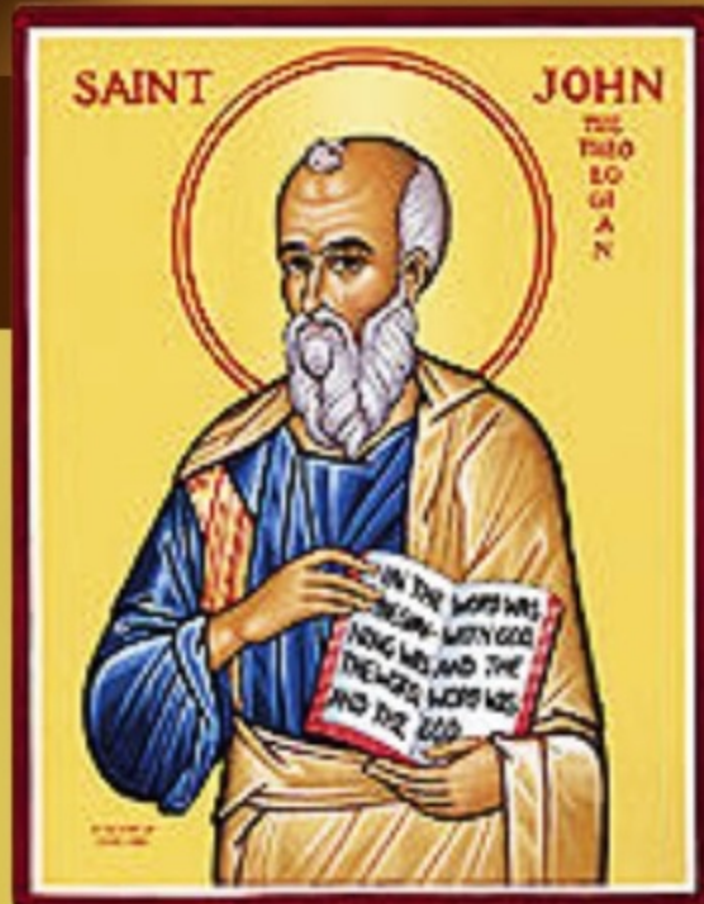
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

“I AM”

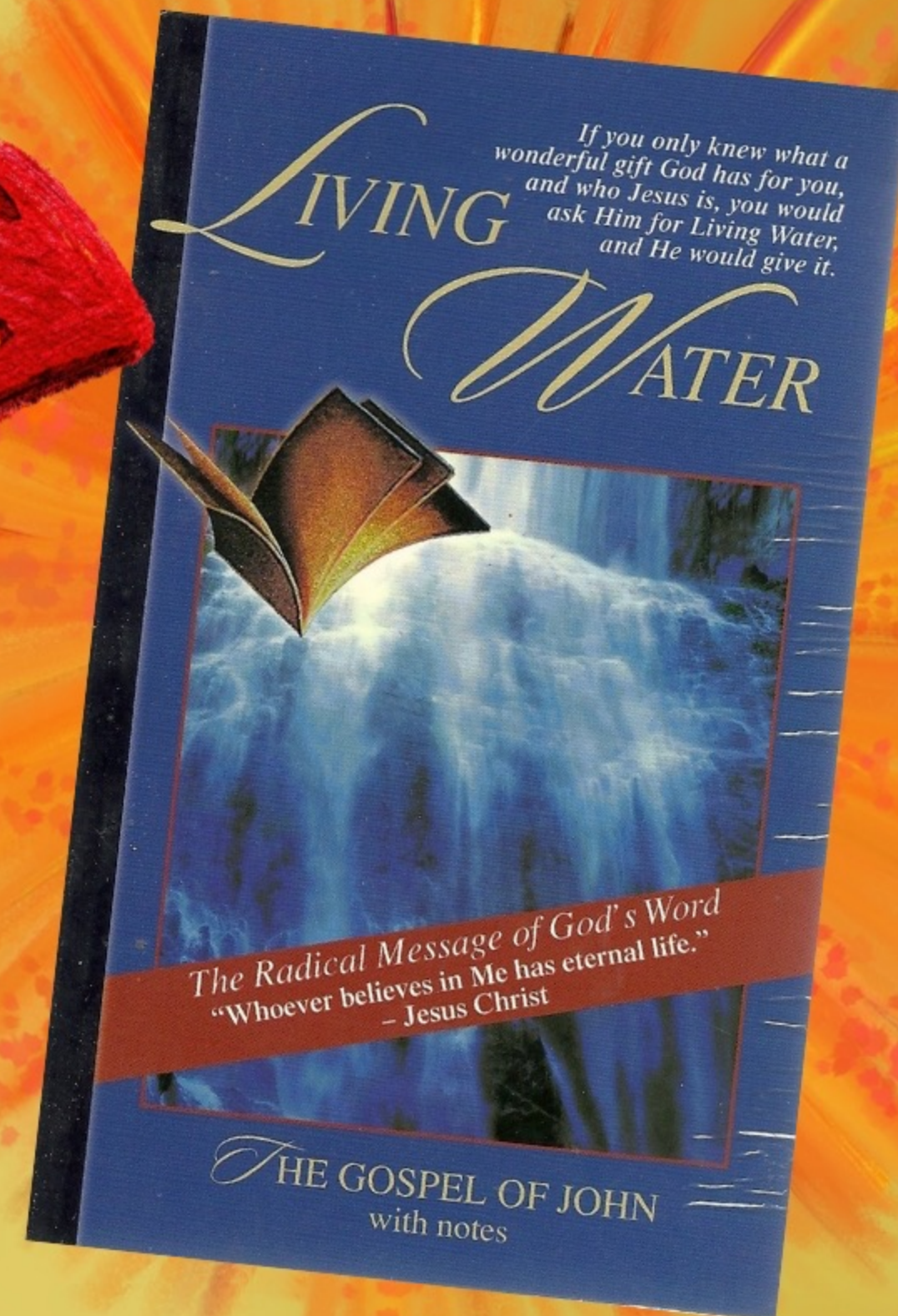
“This demonstrates that the religious leaders understood perfectly what Jesus meant. With this dramatic phrase Jesus [was telling] them that He was the eternal God... and they regarded it as blasphemy. They felt He was worthy of death & intended to carry it out at that moment.” **(David Guzik)**

“John wanted his readers to exercise faith [in] Jesus.”
(Don Stewart)

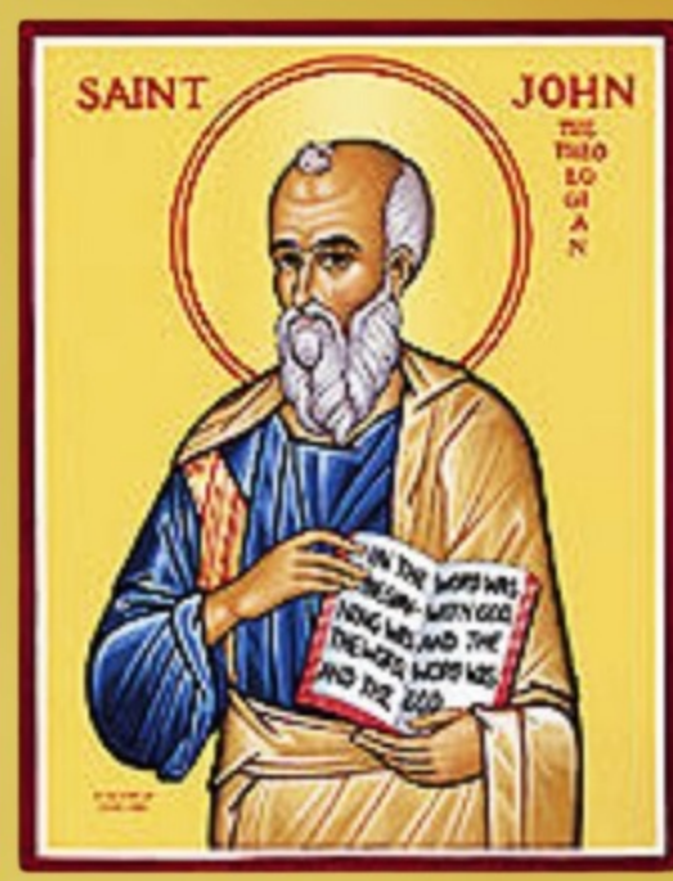
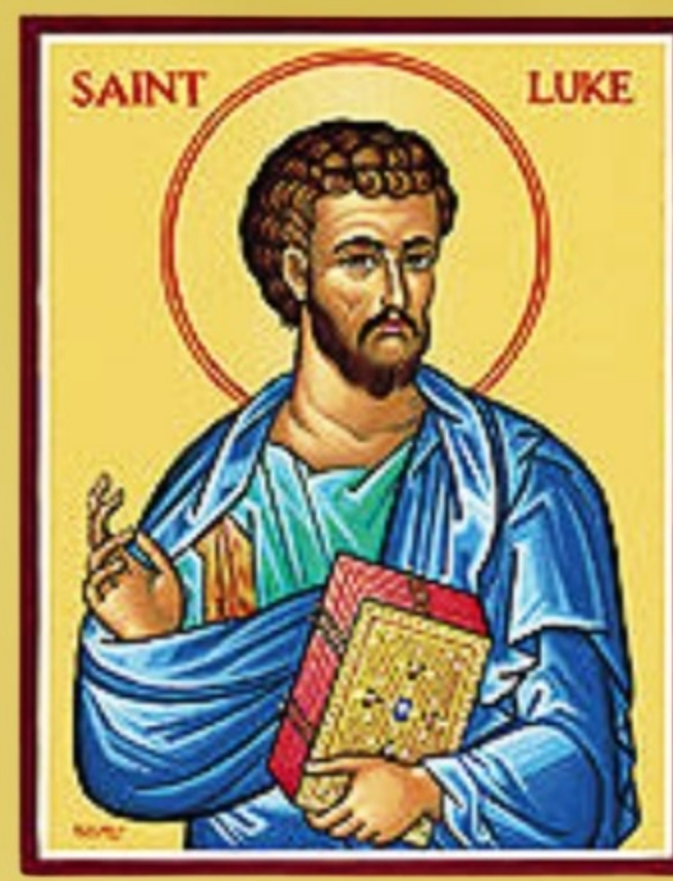
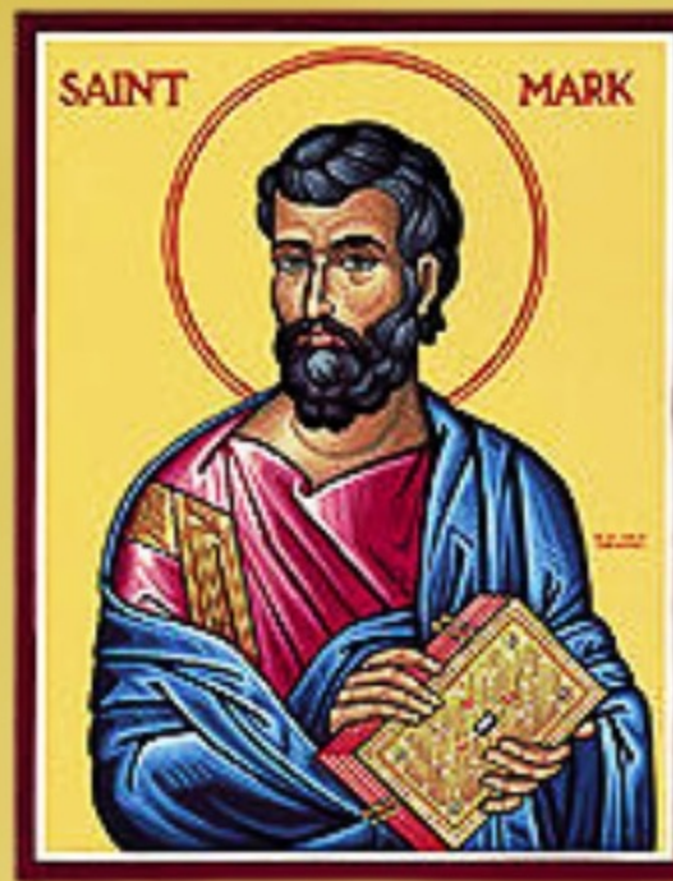
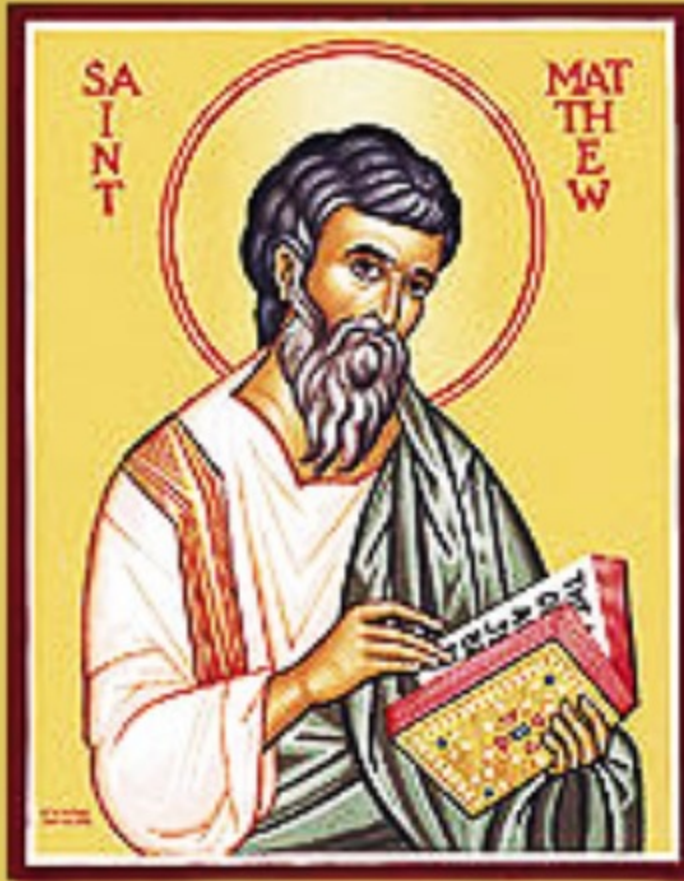
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN



**WE HAVE COPIES OF
THE GOSPEL OF
JOHN AVAILABLE
THIS MORNING!**

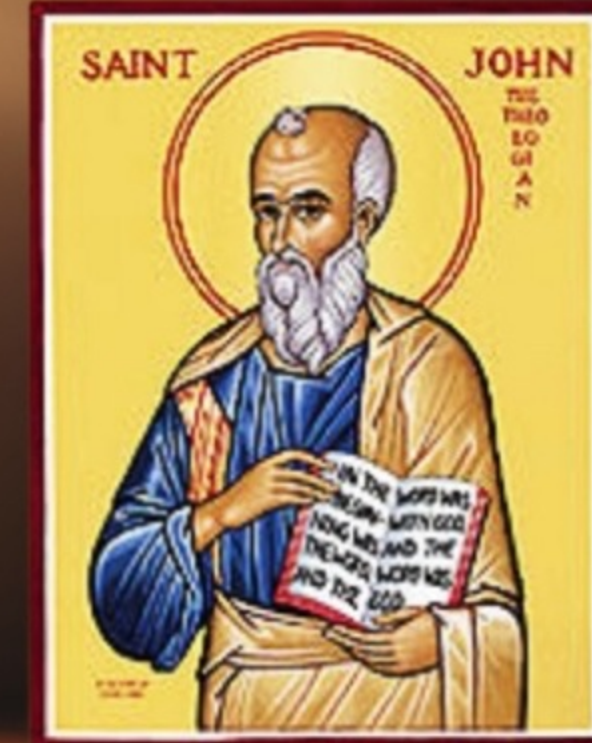
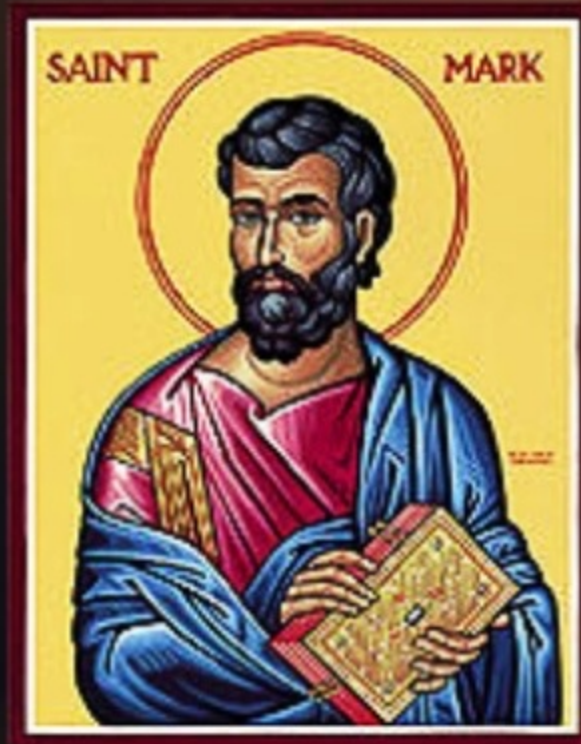
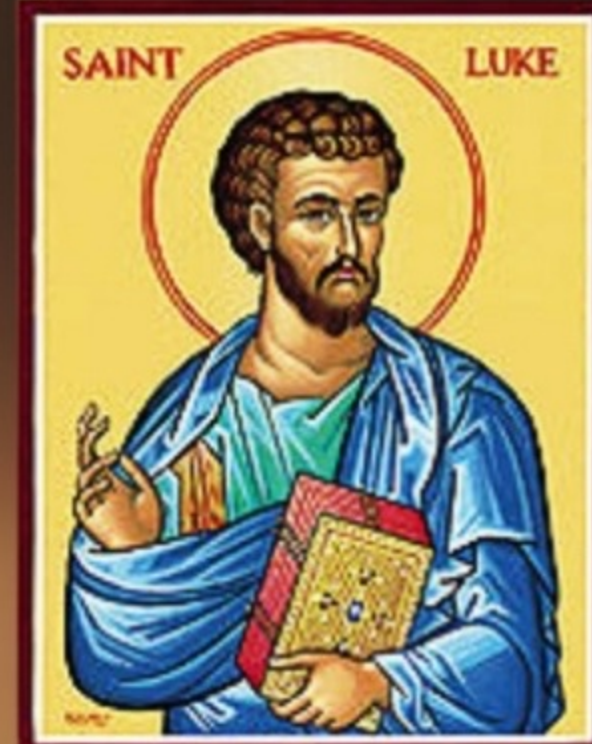
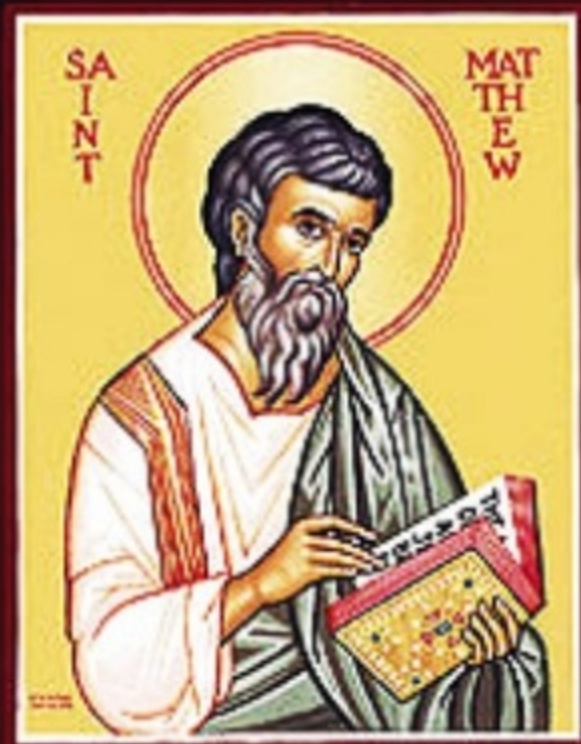


TO SUMMARIZE THE GOSPELS:



- In Matthew, Jesus is the Son of David (Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 1:1)
- In Mark, Jesus is the Son of Man (Zechariah 3:8; Mark 8:36)
- In Luke, He is the Son of Adam (Zechariah 6:12; Luke 3:38)
- In John, Jesus is the Son of God (Isaiah 4:2; 7:14; John 3:16)

THE DOORWAY TO THE NEW TESTAMENT



NEXT WEEK

THE ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES



THROUGH THE BIBLE

NEXT WEEK

THE FIFTH GOSPEL?



"There are [actually] 5 Gospels... Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, & the Christian.. Most people will never read the first 4."

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL



“[The Gospel] is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...”

Romans 1:16