

KNOW THE BIBLE



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The New Testament

The Gospels & Acts

The Promise Fulfilled

*The first 3 books of the New Testament are **Matthew, Mark, and Luke**. These books make up the Synoptic Gospels. “Synoptic” means seeing together. The first 3 books agree extensively in language, in the material they include, and the order in which events and sayings from the life of Christ are recorded.*

*The 4th and last Gospel account is the Book of **John**. It is written later by the apostle, John, himself. It differs in style content offering another perspective from eyewitness testimony. The Gospel Book of John is often referenced as the first book to read for evangelizing purposes.*

*The Book of **Acts** is a historical account of Christian origins. It tells of the founding of the church, the spread of the gospel, and the coordinated account of its evangelist beginnings.*

The books that make up the beginning section of the New Testament are:

- **Matthew**
 - **Mark**
 - **Luke**
 - **John**
 - **Acts**
-
- **Matthew** – the main purpose of the apostle, Matthew, is to **prove that Jesus Christ is the Messiah**. He does this primarily by showing how Jesus in His life and ministry fulfill the OT Scriptures. Matthew has more OT quotations and allusions to the OT than any NT writer. To drive home His statement, Jesus' Davidic lineage through the husband of Mary (Joseph) provides His legal status to the throne of David. You will find that the Lord does not miss anything for not only does He provide legal status to fulfill prophetic scripture, later in the Book of Luke, He provides the genealogy through Mary to King David thus connecting Jesus to the blood line of King David! Another name for Matthew, the tax collector and apostle, is Levi.
 - **Mark** - the author of the Book of Mark is John Mark, a close associate of Peter, the apostle. Mark was largely influenced by Peter. Mark was also a cousin of Barnabas. The emphasis of this book is more on **what Jesus did than what He said**. Remarkable emphasis on Jesus as a teacher and a vivid account of His ministry.

- **Luke** - *the account given in the Book of Luke is from the physician, Luke, a loyal friend to Paul. Probably a Gentile by birth, Luke often a companion of Paul during his missionary journeys. Luke is also the author of the Book of Acts which is an extension of this gospel book. Well educated in Greek culture and language, Luke uses personal investigation from eyewitness testimony including the preaching and oral accounts of the apostles themselves. **He directed this account toward the Gentile Christian and the spread of the gospel** to the entire world based on the teaching of Jesus. Special significance to understanding the way to salvation.*
- **John** – *The apostle John, “the disciple whom Jesus loved” is the author of this gospel account. He is also the writer that the Lord uses to pen other NT writings including the Book of Revelation, 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John. Written after the synoptic gospels, this book is often prescribed as the first book to read for evangelistic reasons. The main purpose of John is to **confirm the deity of Jesus as the Christ, to spread the gospel, and strengthen the faith of believers.** The Gospel Book of John in a way encompasses the goals of all the synoptic writers.*

He was part of Jesus’ inner circle along with Peter and James. His close relationship with Jesus is trumpeted by the Lord Jesus’ request that John take care of his mother Mary just before his death on the cross. His faith in Jesus’ as the Son of God trumped Jesus’ half-brothers as caretakers for His mother due to their non-belief until after His resurrection. He was supposedly the only apostle to be present at the crucifixion staying at His side until His death. Tradition has it that John ended up being the only apostle to die of natural causes. All other apostles were martyred for their belief in the resurrected Christ; a most convincing statement to the resurrection of which they were eyewitnesses to.

- **Acts** – The author God uses to pen this book is the physician, Luke. This is the 2nd volume written by the gospel writer. It recounts the first 30 years of church. The Book of Acts of All the Apostles concentrates on the **beginning and expansion of the church**. The objectivity of his account is demonstrated by the recording of both the success and failure of the early church and disharmony among some of the disciples. To the delight of historians, Luke offers precise details of times and places that are consistent with archaeological findings. Other important information given is the account of Paul's life which supplies the setting for the letters later written by the apostle, Paul.

The timeframe of which the apostles wrote these accounts is shortly after the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their transformation from cowardly hiding from Roman and Jewish authorities to boldly speaking of the resurrected Messiah after witnessing the resurrection even unto death themselves gives great credence to their testimony and validity to what they saw.

Their apostolic authority is one of the main reasons for their acceptance as the only gospel account along with their consistent teachings of Jesus Christ. Other much later accounts some centuries later have attempted to reshape the account of the Lord Jesus Christ often infiltrating the message of Christ bringing about Pharisaical and heretical teachings. These extra accounts were written anywhere from the 2nd through the 6th centuries (Apocrypha). They are completely unrelated to the named authorship that they claim to be. They are also not consistent with the readily accepted earlier accounts of the apostles themselves namely Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Other important collaboration comes from many secular historians from the distant past. From Pliny the Younger, the Talmud, Tacitus to

Josephus, all from the 1st century give credence to the account of the gospel writers. The resurrection and deity of Christ are confirmed by the very people that conspired to kill Him.

*The gospel accounts of the life of Christ give a great panoramic view of who Jesus was and is. You get different perspectives from different people giving every reader a consistent vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Jesus says in **John 8:24**,*

“I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins.”

*You must believe that Jesus Christ is the resurrected Messiah, the Son of God. He does not leave you any opening to believe otherwise. Your salvation is completely dependent on the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and your faith in Him as your Savior. You cannot receive salvation through good works or deeds in the dear life you have been given. Only those that are alive when He comes again AND those that have fallen asleep **IN HIM** are partakers in the gift of eternal life!*

SEE Ephesians 2:8-10 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

This is the 1st of 5 sections of books in the New Testament. There are 5 books in this group totaling 44 books to this point: (*remember: We have built into memory the OT, now comes the NT. Double **M**'s start this section*)

(Write the books in the spaces below; for permanent memory)

M _____

M _____

L _____

J _____

A _____

Now you know the first 5 books of the New Testament in order, the flow of the books, and what they are about.

Below are 5 Bible verses from the Gospels and Acts. Match the correct Bible verse to the corresponding Book. The idea is to become familiar with where topics and names are found in the Word of God.

1. *“If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those that ask Him!”*

Matthew 5:3

2. *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth...”*

Mark 13:28

3. *“Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.”*

Luke 11:13

4. *“I have told you things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

John 16:33

5. *“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as the twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near.”*

Acts 1:26

Below are 5 Bible verses from the Gospels & Acts. Correctly identify the Bible verse with the corresponding book. The idea is to become familiar with where topics and names are found in the Word of God.

“They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. ‘Go, stand in the temple courts,’ he said, ‘and tell the people the full message of this new life.’”

1. Which book of the Gospels & Acts? _____

"When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the "sinners" and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

2. Which book of the Gospels & Acts? _____

"but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand."

3. Which book of the Gospels & Acts? _____

“On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.”

4. Which book of the Gospels & Acts? _____

“He told them, ‘this is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’”

5. Which book of the Gospels & Acts? _____

Matthew 2:11 Acts 5:18 Mark 2:16 John 10:26 Luke 24:46

After identifying the previous Bible verses, take the time to find a Bible verse on your own that really identifies with that particular book. Just the act of searching and writing it down gives you a better sense and greater familiarity with the Word of God. You are actively participating in studying the Holy Bible.

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

Acts

Notes

Describe a topic in this section to remember.

(Example: *The genealogy of Christ is given through both parents to cover both the legal lineage & the blood lineage. Joseph's lineage (legal) Matthew 1 & Mary's lineage (blood) Luke 3*
