

The Gospels
Home Study 10



Day 1

Read Matthew 1

What stands out in the introduction to this book?

Day 2

Read Mark 1

What stands out in the introduction to this book?

Day 3

Read Luke 1:1-17

What stands out in the introduction to this book?

Day 4

Read John 1:1-18

What stands out in the introduction to this book?

Day 5

Read John 20:19-31

Why was the Gospel of John written?

Day 6

Read Luke 24:36-53

What does Jesus tell us about understanding the Old Testament?

Day 7

Read Matthew 28:16-20

What comes next?

The Gospels Group Study 10



As we read the Gospels it becomes obvious that they are written to help us understand all that has gone before.

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfil them (Matthew 5:17, NIV).

Sometimes we find direct quotes from the Old Testament explaining how a particular passage is about Christ (See Matthew 27:9). But it is far more common for the Gospels to explain the Old Testament without even giving references, as the writers assume we know where the quotation is from.

Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad (John 8:56, NIV).

Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him (John 12:41, NIV).

The Old Testament is about Christ and the Gospels repeatedly point this out to us. The more you read it the more you will see Jesus.

*You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. **These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life. ...** "But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. **If you believed Moses, you would believe in me, for he wrote about me.** But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say? (John 5:39-40 & 45-47, NIV).*

An example from Isaiah

*Here is **my servant**, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put **my Spirit** on him and he will bring justice to the nations (Isaiah 42:1, NIV).*

*Jesus was baptised too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and **the Holy Spirit** descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21b – 22, NIV).*

Introductory Questions:

1. Who in the Gospels reads the Old Testament but doesn't see what the writers are talking about and enjoy Christ? How does Jesus respond to such people?

2. **Read Matthew 11:27 and John 1:18.** It is often said that salvation in Jesus is something that only occurs clearly after the Gospels. How do you think Jesus would answer this?

3. **Read Luke 16:27-31.** Why do you think Abraham believes Moses and the Prophets are stronger evidence for repentance than Lazarus being raised from the dead?

4. How confident are you in using the Old Testament to explain the Gospel. What will help?

How do the Gospels quote the Old Testament?

Jesus quotes from Isaiah's sermons, seeming to pluck the passage out of the time and context it was written to, saying this is a direct prophecy about his listeners:

"You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: "These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men,"(Matthew 15: 7-9,NIV).

There is a simple answer. God's word is timeless! What applies in Isaiah's time is a word for Jesus' time and a word for ours – no need of explanation. Sin hasn't changed. Salvation in Jesus hasn't changed. The point the Gospels make clear from beginning to end is if you know the Scriptures and understand them, you will believe on Jesus.

The Trinity's involvement

It is important we notice (just as in creation) the emphasis on the whole of the Trinity being involved in salvation. Each Gospel starts by showing the Trinity's involvement in the work of Jesus at his baptism (at the beginning of his ministry). Later we see that is through Jesus, the Father is known (See John14:9). Both Jesus and the Father give us the Holy Spirit (See John 15:26).

Why four Gospels?

Matthew shows how Jesus fulfils the promise to Abraham, David and the Prophets of the exile. There are more Old Testament quotes in Matthew than the other Gospels. (See Matthew 1:17 and Matthew 28:19).

Mark is a simple introduction to the Gospel of Jesus Christ (See Mark 1:1).

Luke shows how Jesus is the second Adam – giving individuals real hope (See Luke 3:38, 2:10-11 and 19:10).

John simply tells us why he wrote his gospel (See John 20:31).

However, even though the Gospels each have a very different purpose, they are all dominated by one theme – Jesus, the Christ.

(The Christ – Messiah – The Anointed One)

- **The Christ is both God and man**
- **The Christ brings the kingdom of God**
- **The Christ has to suffer and die for our sin**
- **The Christ has to rise again victorious**
- **The beginning of the end**

The Christ is both God and man

He is God

All the Gospels start with John the Baptist who was to announce and prepare the way for God who was coming to save. **Read Isaiah 40:3.**

As we read on in the Gospels we see Jesus behaving in a God-like way, creating new life with a word in his various miracles.

John just starts his Gospel by simply stating the plain truth. **Read John1:1.**

He is man

It is also clear from all the Gospels that Jesus was fully man. This is shown in his birth, in how he felt tired, how he was hungry – he really was just like us.

Three of the Gospels start with his temptation in the wilderness. Why?

It is clear that where Adam failed in Eden and the Israelites failed in the wilderness, Jesus, who becomes a man, succeeds. **Read Hebrews 4:15.**

He is God living amongst us in the man Christ Jesus. **Read John 1:14.**

Matthew again simply summarises this truth. **Read Matthew 1:23b.**

The Christ brings the kingdom of God

'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God is near' (Mark 1:15, NIV).

Jesus gathers the twelve apostles together and spends three years teaching them about this kingdom. They are from very different backgrounds and yet they can all enter. There are many examples in the Gospels of the most unlikely characters believing. What is more amazing as we read the Gospels is how many do not see how Jesus is the Christ.

Further Questions:

5. Read Mark 8:31. How is the kingdom made?

6. Read Luke 1:31-33. What part of the Old Testament does the kingdom of God fulfil?

7. Read Mark 1:14-15 and 8:34-38. How do you enter the kingdom of God?

8. Read John 5:39-40 and 5:46-47. Why would we expect the Pharisees to believe on Jesus? Why don't they?

9. Read Matthew 13:13. In this verse Jesus quotes from Isaiah 6 to explain why he teaches in parables. Why do you think he uses parables?

How can people believe?

In Isaiah 6 Jesus tells the prophet it is only when everything is destroyed and he is all that is left (the holy seed), only then will people understand.

When Nicodemus stopped trusting in his religion and trusted only in Christ then he understood (John 3). When the Samaritan woman stopped looking for satisfaction in other things and found it only in Christ then she understood (John 4). And so it is with every individual in the kingdom of God. When we trust only Jesus and have turned from everything else, when he is the only king – only then can we see and enter the kingdom of God.

Pause for thought

What are you tempted to put your trust in? What effect does this have on your relationship with God?

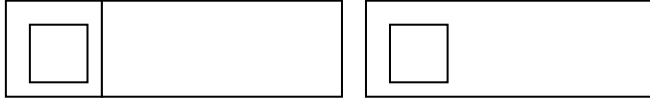
The Christ has to suffer and die for our sin

The Gospels are all dominated by the week leading up to and including Jesus' death. His death throws a shadow over the whole of his life and teaching, including even his birth (Luke 2:35). And in Jesus' death the writings of the Prophets begin to unfold before our eyes.

10. Read 1 Peter 2:24 and 1 Peter 3:18. Why did Jesus have to suffer and shed his blood in such a violent way?

11. Read Matthew 26:55-56. Why did he die at that particular time and in that particular way?

The temple curtain torn down



And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom (Matthew 27:50-51, NIV).

12. Read Luke 24:44-49. When your eyes are opened by Jesus, what do you see when you read the Old Testament?

13. Read Luke 24:31-32. How should seeing this make you feel?

Pause for thought

Can you think of an occasion in your life where the Bible is opened up and you have had this experience?

The Christ has to rise again victorious

The whole Trinity is seen to be involved in the resurrection

*You killed the **author of life** but **God** has raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this (Acts 3:15, NIV).*

*And if **the Spirit** of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you (Romans 8:11, NIV).*

14. Read 1 Peter 1:3, 1Thessalonians 1:10 and Hebrews 7:25. Why is the resurrection so important?

15. Read Acts 2:30-31 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. Someone says there is no mention of the resurrection in the Old Testament – how would you answer them?

The beginning of the end

In Jesus we see an end to the shadows of Old Testament worship which centred around Jerusalem and the temple, because one greater than the temple is here (See Matthew 12:6).

The temple, spectacular as it was, must now be destroyed along with Jerusalem.

As he was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What magnificent stones! What magnificent buildings!” “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.” (Mark 13:1-2, NIV).

But this is only the beginning of the end. There will be many disasters like this one until Jesus returns and the world is judged. The old heaven and earth as it is will pass away. But his kingdom will endure forever.

“At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens (Mark 13:26-27, NIV).

It is then his kingdom will have come.

16. Read Titus 2:13. What are we to do?

17. Read Ephesians 1:13-14. He has left someone to help us and to guarantee our inheritance in that kingdom. Who is he? (We will see more in the next study.)

The hopes and fears for all times find their fulfilment in the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Summary Questions:

What did this study teach me about Jesus?

What did this study teach me about the Bible?

What did this study teach me about myself?

Jesus

