

# Discipleship 101: The Gospels

## Chapter 10

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The Gospels are the Central point of scripture.

Four Gospel Exercise:

Remember:

- The Gospels are written about the same person – Jesus
  - Teachings of Jesus
  - Stories about Jesus
- Each Gospel is written by a different author, with a different purpose and audience in mind. Different themes are stressed.
  - Selection
  - Arrangement
    - They are not necessarily chronological
- Differences and Similarities:
  - Matthew, Mark, and Luke are synoptic gospels and contain large portions of similar material.
  - John included very different material as he focused on Jesus as the Son of God.

### Practical Process For Reading The Gospels



#### A. Observation – What do I see?

- Ask the standard questions. Who, what, where, when
- Look for connections to other stories or teachings around the passage.
- Look for special literary forms:

##### ➤ Exaggeration

*Matt 5:29-30 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.*

*Mark 10:24-25 And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup>It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”*

- Irony
 

*Luke 12:16-21 And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, 17 and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ 18 And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” ’ 20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ 21 So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”*
- Rhetorical Questions
  - Questions designed to make a point rather than to retrieve an answer.
 

*Matt 5:46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?*

*Matt 6:27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?*

## **B. Interpretation – What does it mean?**

1. Try to narrow down the main point for each story / section.
2. Because the Gospels and Acts are narratives, pay attention to the broader context when reading.
  - Look at the events before and after and see how they relate
  - Example of Mark 4:35-41 – the calming of the storm.
3. The Gospels demand some background information regarding history and culture.
  - Background commentaries and Bible encyclopedias are helpful here.
 

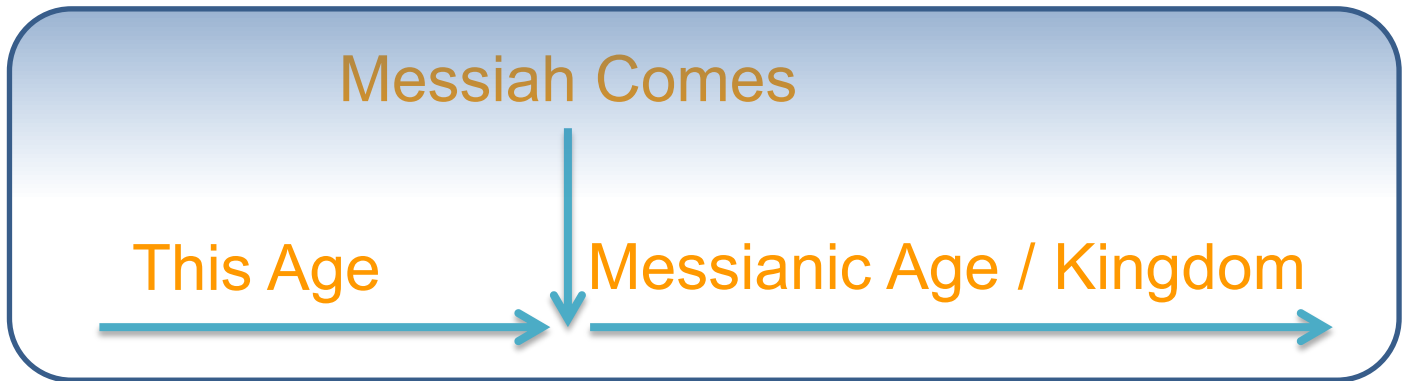
*Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*

Issues like:

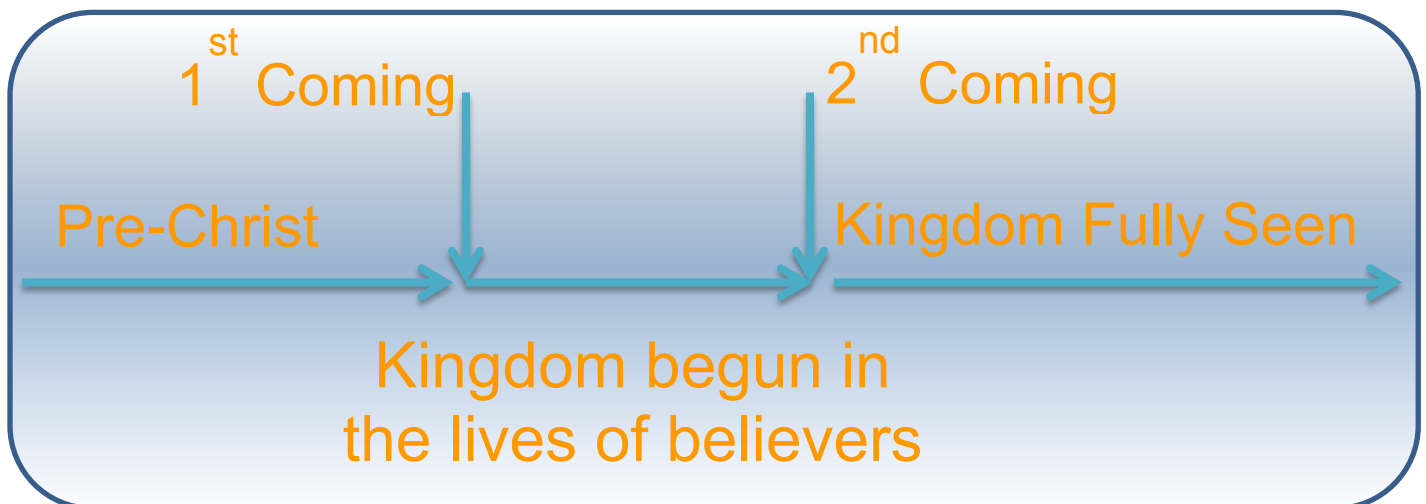
    - Group identity
    - Honor / shame
    - Strong kinship relationships
    - Social structure – slaves, men, women, children, Gentiles
4. With four different Gospels, compare the various Gospel accounts when appropriate. Look horizontally and vertically
  - A harmony of the gospels is helpful here.
5. Understand the centrality of the Kingdom of God in the Gospels.
 

*Mark 1:15 and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”*

## The Jewish Expectation of the Kingdom



## The NT Description of the Kingdom



➤ What does this passage teach us about the Kingdom?

6. Parables were often used to make one specific point. Don't miss it!

### C. Application – How does it relate and what do I do?

- Look for the eternal and cross-cultural truths.
  - See how Jesus teaches and demonstrates the Kingdom.
- Look for examples of how to live a Christ-like life.
- Pay attention to how Jesus disciplined and be disciplined by Him!
  - See the Gospels as an opportunity to know and be disciples by the Master.
  - Jesus wants a relationship with each of us to form us into Christ-likeness for His glory and work.
  - What does this passage tell me about Jesus and how He wants me to respond as His disciple and a citizen of His kingdom?

- How can you apply these truths today?
  - Who shall I be?
  - How should I think?
  - What should I do?
  - Who will I teach?

## Putting It Into Practice – Mark 4:35-41



Have someone start with prayer asking the Holy Spirit to reveal truth from His Word.

Read Mark 4:35-41

A. Observation – What do I see?

- What do you see in the text?
- Do you see any connection to the story before or after?
- Do you see any special literary forms? For instance, irony or rhetorical questions?

B. Interpretation – What does it mean?

- What is the main point of this section? (Jesus has authority as Messiah over nature)
- What has happened with the Pharisees before this in Mark 2:1-3:6? What are the leaders saying in Mark 3:22?
- What does this passage teach us about Jesus and His authority to bring in the kingdom?

C. Application – How does it relate and what do I do?

- How does Jesus demonstrate the kingdom? What should our response to Him be? (Awe!)
- Does Jesus give us an example of how to live a godly life here or the disciples a good or bad example of the same?
- How can we be discipled by Jesus in this passage?
- How can you apply these truths today?
  - Who shall I be?
  - How should I think?
  - What should I do?
  - Who will I teach?

**Pray** for God to help us apply His Word.