

The Four Gospels

Different Writing Styles & What Makes Each One Unique

Each Gospel writer had a **different personality, audience, and purpose**, and the Holy Spirit used all of that to give us four beautiful portraits of Jesus—like four camera angles capturing the same Savior.

Below is a simple, clear comparison you can teach anywhere.

MATTHEW – The Teacher & The Kingly Portrait

Audience: Primarily Jewish readers

Style: Structured, organized, teaching-heavy

Theme: Jesus is the **Messiah**, the **King of the Jews**, and the fulfillment of prophecy

Writing Style Characteristics

- Matthew writes like a **teacher or rabbi** laying out lessons in order.
- Uses many **Old Testament references** (“that it might be fulfilled”).
- Presents long, detailed teachings like the **Sermon on the Mount** (Matthew 5–7).
- Contains structured discourses grouped by topics (kingdom, end times, discipleship).
- Very orderly, almost like a **textbook for Jewish believers**.

How Matthew Is Different

- He **connects Jesus to the Old Testament** more than any other Gospel.
- He emphasizes Jesus as the **long-awaited King** from David's lineage.
- His Gospel is perfect for showing Jesus as the **fulfillment of prophecy**.

MARK – The Action Reporter & The Servant Savior

Audience: Roman Gentiles

Style: Fast-paced, vivid, action-packed

Theme: Jesus is the **Servant** who came to do the Father's will

Writing Style Characteristics

- Mark writes like a **news reporter**—quick, sharp, dramatic scenes.
- Frequently uses words like “**immediately**” (over 40 times!).
- Shortest Gospel but packed with **miracles, deliverances, and action**.
- Focuses less on long teachings and more on **what Jesus did**.
- Describes emotions and crowds in vivid detail.

How Mark Is Different

- Converts Jesus' ministry into a **rapid-fire timeline**.
- Shows the **power** and **authority** of Jesus through His actions.
- Writes like he's saying, “Look what Jesus DID!”
- Emphasizes Jesus as a **Servant of all** rather than King or Teacher.



LUKE – The Historian & The Compassionate Savior

Audience: Gentiles (Greek-minded thinkers)

Style: Detailed, orderly, investigative

Theme: Jesus is the **Son of Man** who came to save the lost

Writing Style Characteristics

- Luke writes like a **historian** or **investigative journalist**.
- Uses careful research: interviews, eyewitness details, medical precision.
- Contains the most detailed birth narrative of Jesus.
- Highlights Jesus' **compassion**, especially for:
 - women
 - children
 - the poor
 - outcasts
 - sinners
- Uses polished Greek, showing his education and medical training.

How Luke Is Different

- Has the **longest Gospel** and includes the most parables.
- Shows Jesus' humanity and compassion more than the others.
- Gives a carefully **investigated, chronological** account.
- Emphasizes that salvation is for **ALL people**.

JOHN – The Theologian & The Divine Portrait

Audience: A universal/global audience

Style: Spiritual, reflective, symbolic, intimate

Theme: Jesus is the **Son of God**, fully divine and eternal

Writing Style Characteristics

- John writes like a **theologian** explaining mysteries of God.
- Focuses on **belief, light vs. darkness, life, truth, and love**.
- Includes long conversations between Jesus and individuals (Nicodemus, the woman at the well).
- Uses symbolism (light, water, bread, vine, shepherd).
- Written with a warm, personal, intimate tone—John knew Jesus deeply.

How John Is Different

- Not a Synoptic Gospel—very different structure from Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
- Focuses on **who Jesus IS** (His identity) more than what He DID.
- Contains unique miracles not found in the other Gospels.
- Begins with a profound theological truth:
“**In the beginning was the Word...**”
- Emphasizes Jesus’ **divinity** more clearly than any other Gospel.

Summary Chart

Gospel	Style	Focus	Picture of Jesus	Audience
Matthew	Teaching, structured	Prophecy fulfilled	King / Messiah	Jews
Mark	Fast, action-packed	Miracles & power	Servant	Romans
Luke	Detailed, historical	Compassion & humanity	Son of Man	Greeks / Gentiles
John	Spiritual, symbolic	Identity & divinity	Son of God	All people

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