

Is God there, is He fair, & does He care?

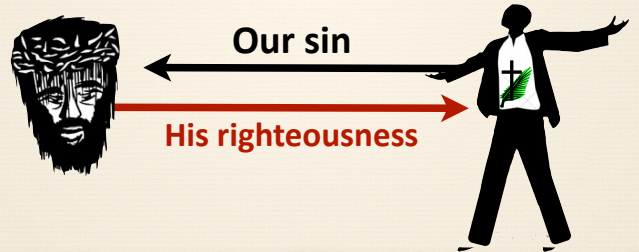
1. We are all created in the **image of God**.
2. We are all responsible to **be true to ourselves** as bearers of God's image.
3. We are all **frustrated** in doing so by the brokenness of ourselves and our world.
4. Jesus came to us as a **gift of God's grace** to bear our sin, and impute His righteousness to us.
5. Many have **received** Jesus Christ by faith so as to stand before a holy God in Christ's image.
6. Many others have not and chosen to **stand before God on their own merit**.
7. God will be perfectly **fair** in His judgment of both.

No one is forced to receive Christ but any can!

The great exchange

2 Corinthians 5:21

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."



A robust, healthy faith is:



✓ Intellectually **convincing**.

✓ Emotionally **satisfying**.

✓ Morally **transforming**.

✓ Socially **connecting**.

✓ Culturally **inspiring**.

Why do I believe the Gospel

- ✓ I find the claims of the Gospel to be **plausible to an open mind** once I sense that there is a spiritual reality that exists beyond the purview of materialistic science.
- ✓ I find the claims of the Gospel **palatable to a sensitive soul** that seeks answers to the three big questions of life - Mortality (Why do I die?), Meaning (Why do I live?), Morality (Why do I have a sense of good and evil?).
- ✓ I find the claims of the Gospel to be **preferable to the alternatives** realizing that we all start with faith assumptions of some kind.

Christianity that does not start with the individual, does not start.



This

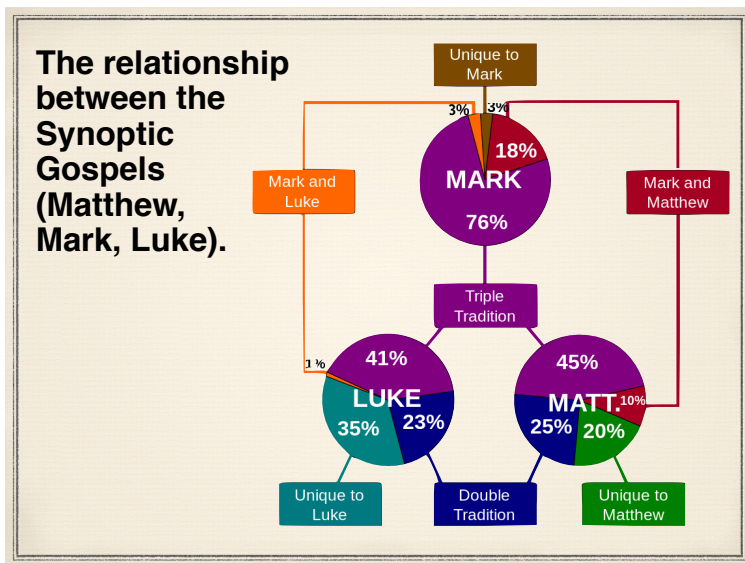
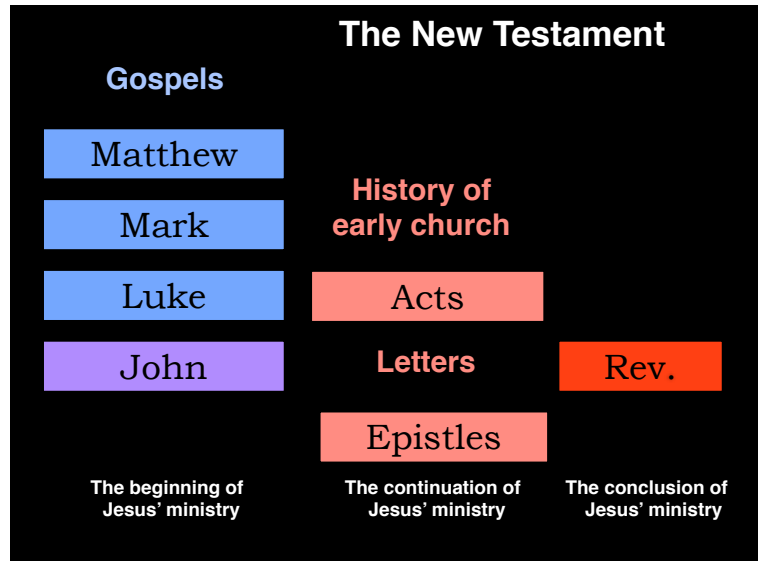
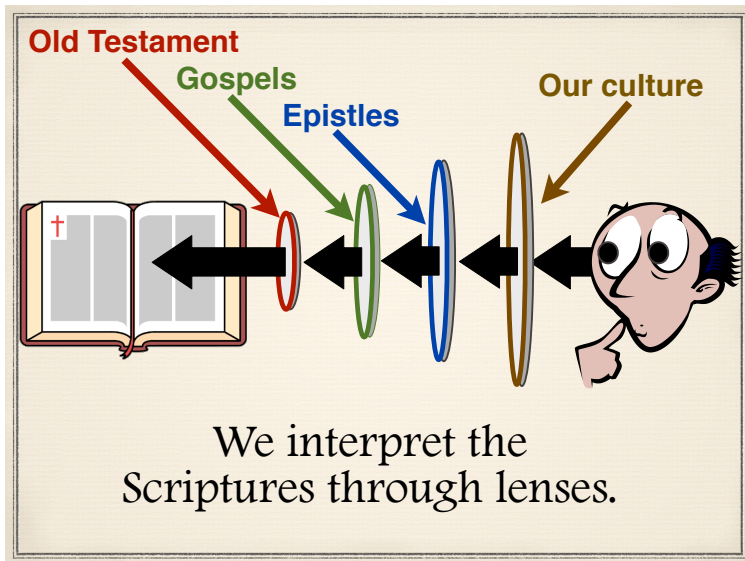
Christianity that ends with the individual, ends.



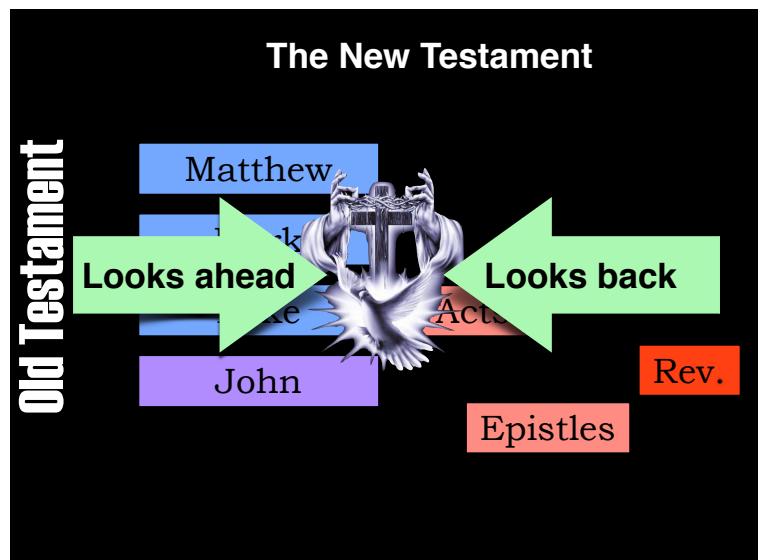
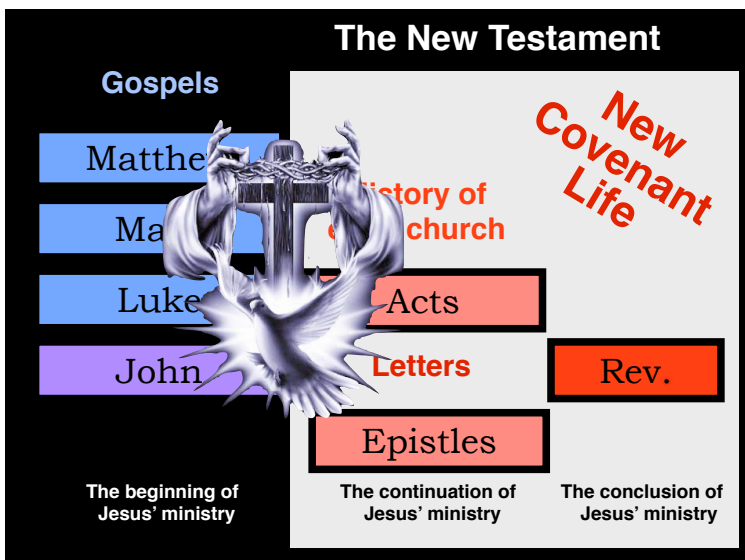
Not this

THE GOSPEL STORY





Healing Miracle	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
The nobleman's son at Capernaum healed				4:46-54
Sick man at pool of Bethesda				5:1-15
Man born blind				9:1-41
The demoniac in the synagogue healed		1:21-28	4:31-37	
Simon's wife's mother healed	8:14-17	1:29-34	4:38-41	
Circuit round Galilee	4:23-25	1:35-39	4:42-44	
Healing a leper	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-16	
Christ stills the storm	8:18-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
Demoniacs in Gadarenes	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	
Jairus' daughter. Woman healed	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	
Blind men and demoniac	9:27-34			
Healing the paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
Matthew the publican	9:9-13	2:13-17	5:27-32	
"Thy disciples fast not"	9:14-17	2:18-22	5:33-39	



The Cross, Resurrection, & Pentecost mark the change from the Old Covenant to a New Covenant.

Hebrews 7:18

“For, on the one hand, there is a **setting aside of a former commandment** because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.”

Romans 7:6

“But now we have been **released from the Law**, having died to that by which we were bound,”



The Law covenant of Moses could **only condemn not confirm.**

Acts 15

“¹⁰ Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke **which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?** ¹¹ But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus,”



Old Testament - Gospels

New Covenant

Old Covenant

Acts - Epistles

How should Christians view the Law of Moses?

Christians are free from the Law -

Romans 10:4

“For Christ is the end of the law of righteousness to everyone who believes.”

- as a covenant of works righteousness



- but not as an ethic of the Kingdom

Perhaps the greatest theological tension within the Christian church has been the relationship between the two Covenants - Law of Moses and Grace of Jesus Christ.

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

Acts

Epistles

Rev.

John explains the pre-Easter Jesus from a post-Easter perspective.

John 1:17

“For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”

Jesus recognized that his calling and purpose were centered on his **passion & resurrection.**

John 2:4,19

“My hour has not yet come.”

“Destroy this temple (**his body**), and in three days I will raise it up.”



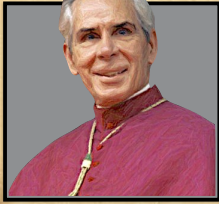
Old Testament - Gospels

Gospel

Law

Acts - Epistles

- **2:4** – And Jesus said to her [his mother], “Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? **My hour has not yet come.**”
- **5:28** – “Do not be astonished at this; for **the hour is coming** when all who are in their graves will hear his voice”
- **7:30** – Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him, because **his hour had not yet come.**
- **8:20** – He spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury of the temple, but no one arrested him, because **his hour had not yet come.**
- **12:23** – Jesus answered them, “**The hour has come** for the Son of Man to be glorified.”
- **12:27** – “Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘*Father, save me from this hour*’? No, it is for this reason that **I have come to this hour.**”
- **13:1** – Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that **his hour had come** to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.
- **16:32** – “**The hour is coming, indeed it has come**, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.”
- **17:1** – After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, “**Father, the hour has come**; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you,”



Fulton J. Sheen

"Of all the great religious leaders of history, Jesus is unique in that he alone came for the purpose of dying."

The emphasis of the Gospels

The Passion and Resurrection

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

Gospels

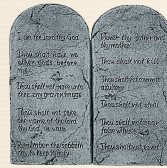
The Passion and Resurrection

birth, teaching, miracles, deeds of Jesus

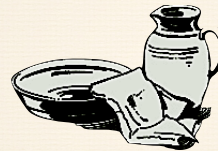
The emphasis of the Epistles

Epistles

The great symbols of the faith are NOT



The Law



The towel and basin



Crown of a King

reminding us of the life and ethical teaching of Jesus

The great symbols of the faith ARE



The Cross



The Lord's Supper



Baptism

reminding us of the death and resurrection of Jesus

Jesus' Gospel and Paul's Gospel

Mark 1

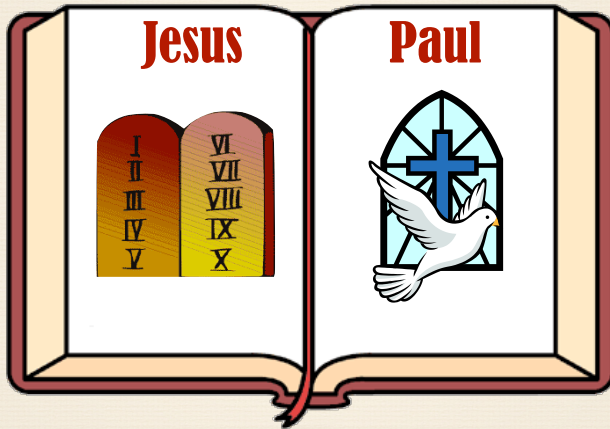
"¹⁴ Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "repent and believe in **the gospel**."

What were they supposed to believe?

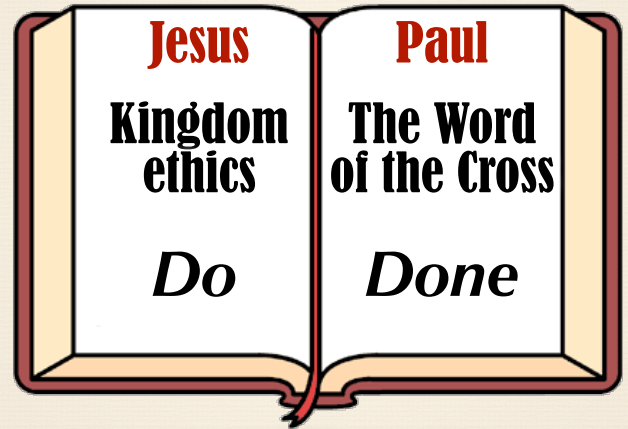
1 Corinthians 15

"¹ Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received, that Christ **died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was **raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures,"

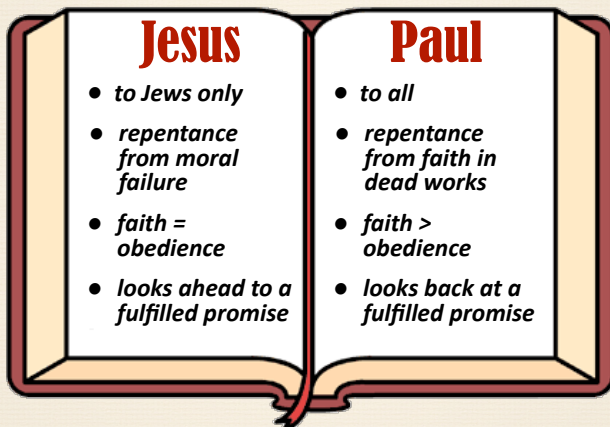
Jesus' Gospel and Paul's Gospel



Jesus' Gospel and Paul's Gospel



Jesus' Gospel and Paul's Gospel



Romans 16

“²⁵ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to **my gospel** and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of **the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past**, ²⁶ but **now is manifested**, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to **obedience of faith**; ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.”

Jesus promised the Apostles that the coming Holy Spirit would bring **more revelation and understanding.**

John 16:13

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth**; . . . and He will disclose to you what is to come.”



Old Testament - Gospels

Paul's Gospel

Acts - Epistles

Old Covenant

The Apostles saw the coming of the Holy Spirit as **the beginning of the Gospel community.**

Acts 11:15

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us **at the beginning.**”



Old Testament - Gospels

Paul's Gospel

Acts - Epistles

Old Covenant

Paul understood his Gospel to have been a **mystery until his day**.

Ephesians 3:3-5

“that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, . . . which **in other generations was not made known** to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;”



Old Testament - Gospels

Paul's Gospel

Acts - Epistles

Old Covenant

Don't confuse the ministries of the Law, the Son, and the Spirit.

**Tutor
(Mirror)**



The Law

**Surrogate
(Substitute)**



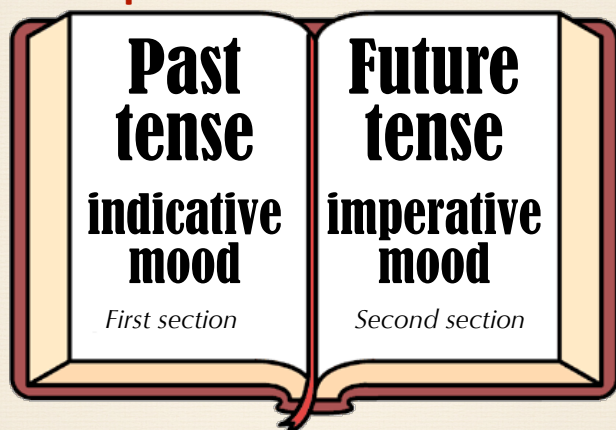
Jesus

**Paraclete
(Comforter)**



The Spirit

The pattern of Paul's letters



The order is consistent and significant

So how are we to view John?

1. John is a unique pre-Easter record of Jesus' life and teaching from a post-Easter perspective.
2. John bridges the gap between the Old Covenant (reflected in the Synoptics) and the New (reflected in Acts and the Epistles, especially Paul).
3. John's emphasis:
 - The deity of Jesus **over his humanity**
 - Faith **over repentance**
 - Reflective **over descriptive**
 - Extended discourses **over proverbial sayings**
 - Symbolism **over straight forward accounts**
 - Eternal life **over Kingdom of God**