

The Bible: The Gospels

Chapter 19 Summary

Chapter Learning Objectives

- The participants will examine how the four Gospels differ in emphasis because of the different perspectives of their authors.
- The participants will recognize that in Scripture, especially in the Gospels, we get to know Jesus and the truth of his message of salvation.

Content Summary

1. We can get to know Jesus through the events of his life and his message, as recorded in the four Gospels, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the many letters of the New Testament.
2. *Inspiration* means that God is the ultimate author of the books of the New Testament, including the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These Gospels are at the heart of the whole Bible.
3. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the *synoptic* Gospels, because they record similar events and teachings. Yet each synoptic Gospel is also different from the others.
4. Matthew wrote for the Jewish people, and showed how Jesus' life fulfills the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament.
5. Mark wrote more for Gentiles and often explains Jewish customs in his Gospel.
6. Luke's Gospel emphasizes that Jesus came to save all people, and includes some unique stories to teach God's mercy and love for the poor. Luke's Gospel also teaches about Jesus' childhood.
7. John's Gospel is unique because it begins with the pre-existence of the Word of God as the Second Person of the Trinity. John's Gospel emphasizes the divinity of Jesus.
8. We can understand the Gospels better if we (a) know the audience and purpose for which each Gospel was written, (b) try to get the basic idea and realize that sometimes physical realities stand for spiritual realities, (c) realize that some Gospel events show that the Old Testament is being fulfilled through Jesus, (d) look to notes and commentaries within the Bible or in other books to help us, and (e) realize that we are not alone. We look to the bishops of the Church to explain Scripture and Tradition correctly, and, in our own study and prayer, we should ask the Holy Spirit to guide us.
9. If we read Scripture, we will get to know Jesus. In getting to know Jesus, we will learn what it means to be happy, in this life and in the next.

(All summary points are taken from *The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers, Second Edition*. Copyright © 2014 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.)

