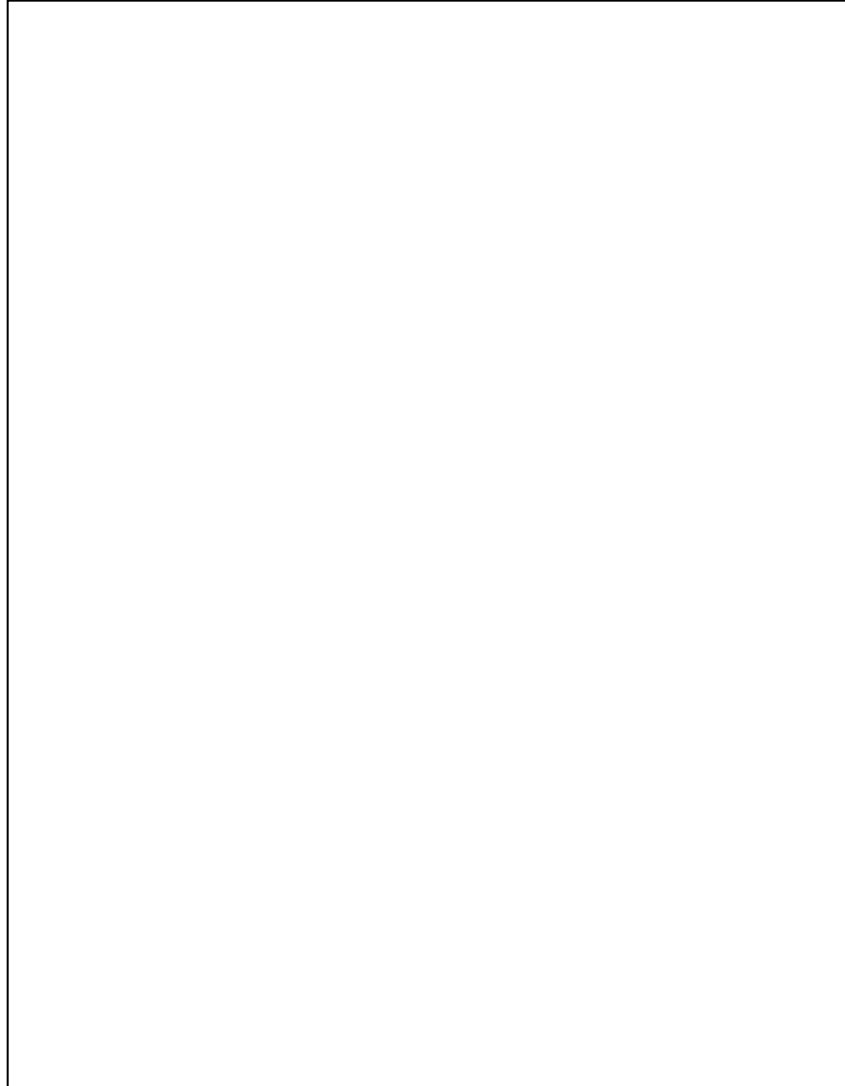


UNIT 6: YESHUA IN FOUR DIMENSIONS

NOTES

I. LOOKING BACK — “The Jesus Road”



Four Bodies of Water:

- Sea of Galilee Jordan River Dead Sea Mediterranean Sea

Five Geographical Regions:

- Galilee Samaria Judea Perea Decapolis

Nine Cities:

- Caesarea Tyre Sidon
 Nazareth Capernaum Caesarea Philippi
 Jericho Jerusalem Bethlehem

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II. YESHUA IN FOUR DIMENSIONS

- A. The Four Gospels: A “Collision” of Math and Literature
1. This is an ancient and on-going struggle:
 - a. Marcion – 2nd century heretic rejected all the Gospels but Luke.
 - b. Diatesseron – 2nd century attempt by Tatian to “harmonize” the four Gospels by combining them.
 - c. Jesus Seminar – 20th century team of biblical researchers who “voted” on Jesus’ authentic sayings and deeds (15 & 10 respectively!)
 2. There are two primary ways scholars approach the four Gospel narratives:
 - a. by “addition” – $1+1+1+1 = 4$ conflicting accounts
 - b. by “multiplication” – $1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$ complimentary composite
 - c. This is what is known as the “synoptic problem.”
- B. Some Foundational Building Blocks
1. We need to distinguish between *the* gospel and *a* Gospel.
 - a. *The gospel* is the term we use for the body of truth surrounding God’s work of redemption in Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:16; Eph. 1:13).
 - b. *A Gospel* is the term we use for one of four ancient documents accepted by the early Church as reliable records of the life of a real Jesus.
 2. We need to distinguish between the Gospels themselves.
 - a. Matthew, Mark, and Luke though very different from each other, collectively are very different from John.
 - b. These three Gospels are called the “Synoptic Gospels” (Gk *sunoptikos*, “together to see”).
 - c. Their similarities and differences make-up an entire field of study known as the “synoptic problem.”
 3. We need to anchor the Gospels in the redemptive purposes of God in the Incarnation.
 - a. Each author, in his own style, sought to provide timeless answers to four crucial questions:
 - (1) “Who was this person?”

Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” –Luke 9:18.
 - (2) “Why was he rejected by his own people?”

Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good

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work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.” –John 10:32-33.

(3) “What is *unique* about this man’s death?”

“Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. –John 12:27.

(4) “What does this information have to do with *me*?”

Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” –Matthew 27:22^a.

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” –Acts 2:37.

*adapted from: Frank Thielman’s *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 181.

III. FOUR “PORTRAITS,” ONE FACE

A. MATTHEW: The “Converted Crook”

1. Matthew was Jew, also known as “Levi” (Mark 2:14)
2. He was a “tax collector,” who lived in Capernaum and worked for Rome.
3. Jesus’ “call” to him to be a disciple is recorded in all of the Synoptic Gospels.
4. It was at Levi’s house that Jesus made his famous statement about “coming for sinners and not for the righteous.” (Lk 5:27-32; Matt. 9:9-12)
5. His name only appears where the names of the Twelve are given.
6. Matthew’s Gospel contains over 30 references to wealth, money and taxes.

B. MATTHEW: The Kosher Gospel

1. Over 40% of the OT quotes in the four Gospels are in Matthew.
2. He cites 19 OT books, compared to 24 for the other three Gospels combined!
3. His Gospel is full of Jewish culture, but empty of explanations:
 - a. Those in “the Seat of Moses” are to be obeyed (23:2ff)
 - b. The commandments are to be observed (5:17-19; 23:23)
 - c. fasting, sacrifices and Sabbath are observed (6:16ff; 24:20)
 - d. The Temple tax is to be paid (17:24)
 - e. Jesus’ genealogy is traced to Abraham and arranged in rabbinic fashion (1:1ff).
 - f. He alone uses the phrase, “Kingdom of Heaven.” (32x)
 - g. There are 10 references to Jesus as the “Son of David.”

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C. MATTHEW: A Prophetic Book

1. There are nearly 30 references to prophecies being “fulfilled.”
2. It is the most “forward-looking” of the Gospels:
 - a. The “church” is mentioned as a divinely ordained entity with authority.
 - b. The “Great Commission” extends to “all nations.” (28:19-20)
 - c. Jesus’ most extensive teaching on the “end times” is in this Gospel (ch. 24-25).

D. MARK: A “Chip Off The Old Rock”

1. Mark had a very close association with Peter (e.g. “my son” in 1 Pet 5:13), even though not an apostle himself.
2. The son of a wealthy Jerusalem family, cousin of Barnabas and traveled with Paul (Acts 12:12-14; 13:5).
3. His Gospel opens with a statement almost identical to Peter’s grand confession (cf. Matt. 16:16):

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

—Mark 1:1.

4. After John the Baptist, Peter is the first person to be introduced and his name is mentioned 21 times in this short Gospel (1:16).
5. Like Peter, this Gospel, even though the shortest, is saturated with action and passion:
 - a. the word “immediately” appears 40 times.
 - b. Unusual attention is given to Jesus’ emotions (e.g. compassion, anger, indignation, sorrow, tenderness, love; 1:41,43; 3:5; 8:12,33).

E. LUKE: The Grand, Gentile Gospel

1. He, like Mark, was a “non-apostle,” but also a non-Jew!
2. His Gospel is the largest book in the NT, and combined with Acts, he is the major NT author.
3. His Gospel is “grander” than the others:
 - a. Detailed birth narratives for John and Jesus (i.e. names, dates, etc.; 1:5-2:52)
 - b. The only account of the ascension (24:50ff)
4. Luke’s Gospel is the most “pastoral”
 - a. He gives detailed descriptions of individual people:
 - (1) His unique parables focus on people, *not* the “Kingdom” like Matthew.
 - (2) Zechariah and Elizabeth
 - (3) Elizabeth and Mary
 - (4) Martha and Mary
 - (5) Zaccheus

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- b. Luke gives the most attention to marginalized people:
 - (1) The “woman of the city” (7:36-50)
 - (2) The “transformation” of Zaccheus (19:8-10)
 - (3) The repentant thief on the cross (23:39-43)
 - (4) Parables and stories of widows (7:11-17; 18:1-8)
 - (5) He mentions 13 women not mentioned elsewhere.
 - (6) Luke clearly highlights God’s bias towards “the poor” and the rich’s bias *against* them (4:17-21; 6:20, 24,30).
5. Luke’s Gospel is more “prayerful”
 - a. 7 of the 9 prayers of Jesus are unique to Luke.
 - b. Three unique parables deal with prayer (11:5-13; 18:1-14)
 - c. Luke alone records Jesus’ prayer for Peter (22:31-32), His first exhortation to pray in the garden (22:40), and His prayer on the cross (23:34).
- F. JOHN: The Last Word on God’s Final Word
 1. This is most likely the last Gospel written, penned by an aged apostle.
 2. John, like Matthew, writes to connect Jesus to the Jews and their history.
 3. But, unlike Matthew, he highlights their rejection more than their association:
 - a. **1:11** – Jesus is rejected by “his own.”
 - b. **5:39** – the leaders are accused of “missing the point” of the entire Old Testament—him!
 - c. **5:45** – Jesus links true “Jewishness” (i.e. obeying Moses) with listening to him.
 - d. **8:34-41** – Jesus repeatedly appealed to and connected himself with Abraham (cf. 8:56-58).
 - e. **“the Jews”** – A term John uses to refer to the leaders who rejected Jesus (34 of his 63 uses are negative).
 4. John records more of Jesus’ theological teaching than the others:
 - a. The role of the Holy Spirit in conviction, conversion, worship and guidance (e.g. Jn 3,4,14-16)
 - b. The relationship of the Son to the Father (of the 184 references to God as Father in the Gospels, 116 are here.)
 - c. The great “I AM” statements of Jesus are in this Gospel:
 - (1) “I am the bread of life...” (6:35,48,51)
 - (2) “I am the light of the world...” (8:12; 9:5)
 - (3) “I am the gate of the sheep...” (10:7,9)
 - (4) “I am the Good Shepherd...” (10:11,14)

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(5) “I am the resurrection and the life...” (11:25)

(6) “I am the (only) way, the truth and the life...” (14:6)

(7) “I am the true vine...” (15:1,5)

(8) “I AM...” (8:58-59 and Ex. 3:14)

5. John records more of Jesus’ prayers, even though less of him actually praying (Jn 17).

V. CONCLUSIONS

- A. We need to remind ourselves of the revelatory purposes of God in the Incarnation:
1. The four Gospels are complimentary, but not comprehensive (Jn. 21:25).
 2. Jesus is God’s final and fullest self-disclosure (Heb. 1:1-4; Jn 14:9).
 3. We need to always be looking at Jesus instead of the others in the “cast.”
 4. We need to be looking “beyond” Jesus to the Father that He came to “exegete” (Jn. 1:14-18).
- B. Four “Portraits” — One Face
1. In Matthew, we see a doubly “prophetic” Christ.
 2. In Mark, we see a passionate and powerful Christ.
 3. In Luke, we see a pastoral and prayerful Christ.
 4. In John, we see a preeminent and priestly Christ.

The Parables of Jesus in the Gospels

TOPIC / PARABLE	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Parables About the Kingdom				
Parable of the soils	✓	✓	✓	
Parable of the weeds	✓			
Parable of the mustard seed	✓	✓	✓	
Parable of yeast ("leaven")	✓		✓	
Parable of the treasure	✓			
Parable of the great pearl	✓			
Parable of the net of fish	✓			
Parable of the growing seed	✓			
Parable of cloth/wineskins	✓	✓	✓	
Parables About Discipleship				
Parable of the harvest workers	✓			
Parable of the talents	✓			
Parable of the good Samaritan			✓	
Parable of nobleman's servants			✓	
Parable of the servant's role			✓	
Parables About Prayer				
Parable of friend at midnight			✓	
Parable of the persistent widow			✓	
Parables About Humility				
Parable of the wedding feast			✓	
Pharisee and tax collector			✓	
Parables About Wealth				
Parable of the rich fool			✓	
Parable of the great festival			✓	
Parable of the shrewd manager			✓	
Parable of the rich man & Lazarus			✓	
Parables About God's Love				
Parable of the lost sheep	✓		✓	
Parable of the lost coin			✓	
Parable of the lost son			✓	
Parables About Gratitude				
Parable about two debtors			✓	
Parables About Jesus' Return				
Parable of the 10 virgins	✓			
Parable of the faithful servants	✓		✓	
Parable of the man on journey		✓		
Parables About God's Will				
Parable of the two sons	✓			
Parable of the evil farmers	✓	✓	✓	
Parable of the unproductive fig			✓	
Parable of the wedding garment	✓			
Parable of unforgiving servant	✓			
TOTAL / UNIQUE	18/11	5/1	22/17	0/0

—Y E S H U A I N F O U R D I M E N S I O N S—
