

I. Matthew. (ca. A.D. 50)

- Presents Jesus as Messiah and King
- Written to present Christ to the Jews

II. Luke. (ca. A.D. 57/58)

- Presents Jesus as the perfect Man as well as Messiah
- Written to present Christ to the Greeks

III. Mark. c. AD 65-63

A. Introduction

1. Presents Christ as the mighty Servant as well as Messiah.
2. Presents Christ to the Roman world.
3. Christ seen in ceaseless activity and great works of mercy.
4. The little word “immediately” is characteristic. εὐθύς

B. Mark 4.26-29

1. The only kingdom parable unique to Mark.
2. The Kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed into the ground.
 - a. The identity of the sower is unimportant, though the parable of the sower and the seed seems parallel (sower = Christ, apostles, etc.)
 - b. The central issue: the way the seed grows “of itself”
 - c. The seed = the good news of the kingdom
3. The ground brings forth spontaneously, though we don't understand how (Gk: *automate* — in the emphatic position)
 - a. The crop grows without human intervention
 - b. When the crop matures, the sower comes to harvest it (the beginning of the Kingdom)
4. Mostly describes this present age: the slow growth aspect of the Kingdom of God.

C. Mark 13.4-37 "The Olivet Discourse"

1. The course of this age (5-13)

- a. The disciples apparently saw the destruction of the temple and the end of the age as simultaneous
- b. When Jesus mentions the destruction of the temple, it prompts their questions
- c. The present age contains false signs: "See to it that no one misleads you" (5)
- d. All the events described in vv. 5-13 are consistent with the present age, though no doubt similar persecutions will occur in the Tribulation

2. The last half of the 70th week, the Great Tribulation (14-23)

- a. Key identifier: the Abomination of Desolation
- b. The Great Tribulation will be a unique time of trouble (19)
- c. A warning about false Christs, working signs (Antichrist will work signs in the Tribulation) (21-22)
- d. The Lord teaches these things for disciples to develop discernment (23)

3. The coming in glory with signs in the heavens (24-27)

- a. Dramatic signs in the heavens accompany the return of the True Christ
- b. All will see Christ come, there will be no mistake
- c. The Lord will gather all the saints of the Tribulation period when he returns (27)
 - 1) Note, some see this as the resurrection of OT and Tribulation saints
 - 2) Pastor Don holds that the OT saints accompany the Church in the Rapture

4. The parable of the Fig Tree shows that when these things begin, they will develop rapidly (28-31)
 - a. "This generation" is the generation alive when "these things" begin to happen
 - b. The Tribulation and Return occur in a relatively short time frame
5. General exhortations to watch end the discourse (32-37)
 - a. The Lord's knowledge of the day and hour (32)
 - 1) The limitation Jesus mentions likely is a function of self-imposed limitations by the Incarnation
 - 2) "Jesus may not have known this information when He made this statement, but He probably knows the time of His return now."¹
 - b. If the Son doesn't know the hour, certainly we do not
 - 1) "Take heed" he says – not for signs, but for readiness
 - 2) He tells a parable of the doorkeeper: "stay on the alert" (34)
 - 3) The command is for all, "be on the alert" (37)

IV. John c. AD 85-90

A. Introduction

1. Written to present Christ as Son of God as well as Messiah.
2. It is the universal Gospel emphasizing the deity and love of Christ

B. John 1.41-51

1. The disciples very early identified the Lord Jesus as the promised Messiah. (41)
2. Nathan further identifies him as the divine Son of God and King of Israel, even if he doesn't fully understand the meaning of the terms (49)
3. Jesus tells them all that they will see more dramatic things than this, implying his true relationship with the Father and his deity (49-51)

¹ Constable, Mk 13.32.

C. John 3.1-15

1. This is the first time that Jesus used the phrase, “the Kingdom of God.”
2. A person must be born from above before he can even see the Kingdom of God.
3. This means that Old Testament saints were born again. (3-5, cf. Matt. 8.11)

Mt 8.11 “I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline *at the table* with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven;

4. Along with this mention of the Kingdom, Jesus mentions the Cross as an absolute necessity — a feature of his teaching from the beginning of his ministry (14-15)

D. John 5.22-29

1. The Father has given all judgment to the Son, a new revelation to the Jews, who expected judgement from the Father (22)
2. One reason for delegating judgement to the Son is to force all men to honor the Son — “every knee will bow” (23)
3. The one who responds in faith to Christ will not suffer judgement, but has life (24)
4. Christ has the authority to raise all the dead. (25-29)
 - a. Two kinds of resurrection

- 1) Resurrection of life for those who have done the good [note *deeds* in italics] (see Jn 6.28-29)

Jn 6.28-29 Therefore they said to Him, “What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?”²⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”

- 2) Resurrection of judgment for those who have done the evil (by comparison with Jn 6.28-29, “the evil” = unbelief)

5. Concluding remarks

- a. Those who teach a general judgment stress this passage.
- b. But this ignores the progressive nature of revelation as well as the teaching of Rev. 20.
- c. Our Lord need not make time distinctions every time he teaches a topic, especially when further revelation will bring clarity