

Topic

● I THE CHURCH REMEMBERS

● A The same was not true for the Resurrection

● 1 It is impossible for us to put the separate stories of the four Gospels together in a meaningful synthesis

● a In Mark and Matthew

- (1) The disciples are told to go to **Galilee – a place symbolic of universal, catholic love**

- (2) It is there in Galilee that Jesus will appear to them

● (3) Mark 16:6*

- (a) *But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. 7* "But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you."*

● b In Luke

- (1) These same disciples are told to **stay in Jerusalem**

- (2) There, in Jerusalem, Jesus will appear to them and they will receive the Spirit

- (a) Luke does this to show a shift in God's dwelling from a place, the Old Jerusalem, a city, to a people, the New Jerusalem, the Church

- (b) And of course this shift occurs while that people, the Church, are gathered together in prayer to God in that place, Jerusalem

● (3) Luke 24:46

- (a) *He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47* and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*
- (b) *48* You are witnesses of these things. 49* I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."*

● c In John

- (1) There seems to be a blend of both traditions

- (2) Jesus appears to the disciples on Easter Sunday evening in Jerusalem

● (a) John 20:11

- [1] *but Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb*
- [2] *.... 14 At this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. 15 "Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."*
- [3] *16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned towards him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher).*
- [4] *17 Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"*
- [5] *18 Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.*
- [6] *19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"*

- (3) Jesus then appears to the disciples in Galilee

● (a) John 21:1

- [1] *Afterwards Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias. It happened this way:*
- [2] *2 Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together.*
- [3] *3 "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.*
- [4] *4 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. 5 He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered.*
- [5] *6 He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. 7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"*

- 2 To us, these differences can seem to challenge the truth of our entire faith

● a "Proofs" of the Resurrection seem to conflict

- (1) But the stories were not meant as proofs to the four churches to which they were addressed – they were meant to be aids to enrich their experience of Jesus
- (2) The Spirit of Jesus experienced in their hearts and lives was all the proof they needed that He lives

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- b Paul, accidentally provides the "proof" we seek
 - (1) Writing just over 25 years after Easter he said
 - (a) 1 Corinthians 15:1
 - [1] Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.
 - [2] 3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.
 - [3] 5 and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.
 - [4] 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.
 - [5] 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.
 - [6] 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.
 - (2) Paul did not write this passage to prove to the Corinthians the resurrection of Jesus
 - (3) He wrote it to prove the resurrection of Christians who had died
 - (a) As certainly as Jesus had risen
 - (b) So, certainly, these dead Christian will rise
- B The stories the Church remembered and circulated were molded to fit the needs of each local church community
 - 1 New circumstances arose with new problems
 - 2 The early Christians accented new aspects of an old story to make it relevant to the new problem
 - 3 Examples
 - a The Parable of the Sower
 - (1) The story was told by Jesus to encourage the discouraged:
 - (a) A fantastic yield results despite many obstacles
 - (b) The yield in its equivalent today would be 500 bushels to the acre
 - [1] Mark 4:8
 - [a] "But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirty fold, some sixty, and some a hundred."
 - [2] Normal yield at the time was 7 fold: 7 bushels reaped for each planted
 - (2) An application was added later to explain the mystery of apostasy
 - (a) Mark 4:15
 - [1] "And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.
 - [2] 16 These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 "and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.
 - [3] 18 "Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, 19 "and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.
 - [4] 20 "But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty fold, some sixty, and some a hundred."
 - (b) Notice that the explanation switches the accent of the story
 - [1] The Parable spotlighted the power of the seed
 - [2] The explanation spotlights reactions of the soil to the seed
 - b The Parables
 - (1) They were stories originally told by Jesus to clarify and challenge
 - (2) Remember:
 - (a) With time they were isolated from circumstances; from when, where, and why Jesus told them
 - (b) They became mysterious without the background scenes that helped shed light on them
 - [1] Matthew 7:6

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- [a] "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces."
- [2] This advice was used completely differently by Matthew and by a document about 25 years later, the Didache
 - [a] Scholars aren't sure how Matthew used it -- they differ because it is so mysterious
 - [b] The Didache used it to justify a "closed communion," reserving attendance at the Lord's Supper to Christians only
- (3) Allegorical features in the stories were then accented or added
 - (a) The son killed "outside the vineyard" is used this way
 - (b) Jesus was killed outside the vineyard of Jerusalem
 - (c) Matthew 21:33*
 - [1] "Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey."
 - (b) 34* When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. 35* "The tenants seized his servants: they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third."
 - [3] 36 Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them in the same way."
 - [4] 37* Last of all, he sent his son to them. "They will respect my son," he said. 38* "But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.'"
 - [5] 39* So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him."
 - (4) The use of allegory made the stories into religious secrets understood only by the Church which possessed the key, the explanation, to these details
- C All this changing and adding was guided by the Spirit of Jesus!!!!!!!
 - 1 This altering of and adding to the words of Jesus seems upsetting to us
 - a Everything done changing stories was done by Jesus, by the Risen Jesus
 - b All of the new words put on His lips, are spoken by Jesus, the Risen Jesus, often through "prophetic messages" spoken in Church assemblies
 - (1) The words were spoken by those gifted with the charism of prophecy for the good of this local church
 - (a) 1 Corinthians 12:1
 - [1] Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. 2
 - [2]4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.
 - [3]7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.
 - [4] 8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,
 - [5] 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.
 - [6] 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.
 - (2) Others were given the gift of discerning the Spirit to insure that no individual could falsely and/or mistakenly speak in the name of Jesus
 - c Does this make these new words of Jesus less valid or sacred than words spoken and actions performed by the Historical Jesus?
 - d Both sets are spoken or done by same Spirit of Jesus
 - 2 So all these changes are fully His, fully Words of Jesus
 - a The words of the Living, Resurrected Jesus
 - b As much the words of the Living Jesus as were those words spoken by the Historical Jesus during His life on earth
 - 3 Example of these changes are
 - a The original "Our Father" was probably an eschatological prayer since all the verbs are in an once only format
 - (1) Matthew 6:9
 - (a) "This, then, is how you should pray:
"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

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- [1] 10 your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- [2] 11 Give us today our daily bread.
- [3] 12 Forgive us our debts, as we also have
forgiven our debtors.
- [4] 13 And lead us not into temptation.
but deliver us from the evil one.'
- (2) We ask God to end time, to perfect His rule, His love, His life
- (3) We ask Jesus to return now, ending time as we know it
- b But Luke (or his Church) applied the historical words to daily needs, changing the form of the verbs
- (1) Luke 11:1
 - (a) One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him,
"Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."
 - (b) 2 He said to them, "When you pray, say: "
'Father,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
 - (c) 3 Give us each day our daily bread.
 - (d) 4 Forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation."
- (2) Jesus inspired Luke to modify an end-of-time prayer to make it a prayer for today
- c Which were the words of the Historical Jesus and which are the words of the Living, Resurrected Jesus?
 - (1) The verbs in Luke's prayer are not in the once for all form used in the same prayer in Matthew
 - (2) Matthew has two more petitions than Luke
 - (a) "...10: your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 - (b) "...13: but deliver us from the evil one.'
 - (c) Note: this new "Protestant translation" does not include the disputed "for thine is the kingdom, power,
and glory."
 - (3) Scholars believe
 - (a) Luke has the correct number of petitions but the wrong form of the verbs
 - [1] No one would edit and drop petitions from the only prayer of Jesus
 - [2] People would add to these words -- inspired by prophets
 - (b) Matthew has the wrong number of petitions but the right form of the verbs
 - [1] Jesus was eager for the coming of the Kingship -- thus the once-and-for-all form of the verbs
 - [2] With the passage of time, Luke was inspired to prepare the Church to lead its daily life, not just to prepare for the Final Tomorrow
 - [3] Jesus was not returning immediately
 - {a} Therefore the Church needed to do more than prepare for the end
 - {b} It needed help to live today and carry out the universal mission Jesus shares with it
 - {c} Therefore Luke (or his Church) applied the prayer to its daily needs, changing the form of the verbs
 - 4 The stories and collections were amended in order to assist people in understanding the Risen Jesus as He ministered to them now
 - II ALL CHRISTIANS PREACHED THE GOSPEL
 - A Christians shared the Good News of Jesus with others by the way they lived
 - 1 They did not share it in writing biographies as we would expect them to share Jesus
 - 2 They shared Jesus by "preaching"
 - a The term did not mean to them what we understand by it
 - b We understand the term to mean someone lecturing us, pressuring us, guiltting us
 - c They understood it to mean announcing to someone that God's love was present in their lives and begging these people to accept this love
 - B Each person shared Jesus differently
 - 1 Each experienced Jesus differently

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- 2 Jesus is too rich for anyone to capture Him completely
 - a The same is true today
 - b This explains why every priest, every minister, every Christian, should,
 - (1) First, come to know a different, a unique, experience of Jesus
 - (2) Then, share this different, this unique, experience of Jesus
- C Each offered the world the Jesus that they experienced
 - 1 They attempted to offer His Spirit, power, life, as a reality in their lives
 - 2 They did not gospel an "idea," a series of facts or dogmas
 - 3 Rather, they gossiped the Living Jesus whom they experienced
- III THE FOUR WRITTEN GOSPELS
 - A Four people wrote out their experiences of Jesus
 - B They were not the only four to do so; among the others were the authors of
 - 1 The Gospel of Thomas
 - 2 The Gospel of Jude
 - C But these four alone carry a double guarantee
 - 1 It is really Jesus that the author experienced
 - a They were not confusing their own feelings with Jesus
 - b Jesus was not what some Christians mistakenly thought and shared in their "false" gospels,
 - (1) Someone who acted as a magician
 - (2) Someone who used His power in a vengeful, spiteful, manner
 - (3) Someone who used His power to produce fear in His audience
 - 2 And this experience of Jesus is accurately reflected in their sharing
 - a The Spirit of Jesus guides the entire writing of the Gospel
 - b The Spirit guides the authors as they
 - (1) Select stories
 - (2) Shape the stories -- adding and subtracting words and details
 - (3) And create the overall structure -- placing stories in series within the finished work
 - c The Spirit guides the authors to insure that it is the Jesus they experienced that they are sharing with others
 - D Because the Spirit of Jesus guarantees the accuracy of these four sharings
 - 1 Knowing the correct name of the human author of a Gospel is unimportant
 - a The names of the authors were not part of the finished documents
 - b These names were guesses or memories in the early Church
 - 2 "Mark" quite possibly is the name of the author of his Gospel
 - a There was no one famous with that name in the early Church
 - b So there was no reason to credit a gospel to him
 - 3 Other claims regarding the authors are challenged by some scholars
 - a The early Church wanted eyewitness experiences
 - b But the real authors of Matthew and Luke were not such witnesses
 - (1) An eye witness sharpens story details
 - (2) These gospels soften such memories as they edit the work they received from Mark
 - (a) Mark 4:35
 - [1] On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."
 - [2] 36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. 37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.
 - [3] 38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"
 - [4] 39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

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- [5] 40 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"
- (b) Matthew 8:23
 - [1] Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him.
 - [2] 24 And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep.
 - [3] 25 Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"
 - [4] 26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"
- (c) Luke 8:22
 - [1] Now it happened, on a certain day, that He got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out.
 - [2] 23 But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy.
 - [3] 24 And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm.
 - [4] 25 But He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another, "Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"
- (d) Notice how the reference to Jesus being asleep with His head on a pillow is dropped
 - [1] This is not typical of the way that an eyewitness edits
 - [2] Dropping details reflects the work of a much later editor molding a story to fit his need
- c **The final editor of John certainly was not such a witness**
 - (1) **The "Beloved Disciple" was such a witness**
 - (2) But the final editor certainly wasn't
 - (3) "The Beloved" is not identified by name in the Gospel!
- E **Each document is a literary expression of Jesus as experienced by the author**
- IV **THE GOSPELS ARE NOT LIVES OF JESUS CHRIST**
 - A **The Good News is the "Living Jesus Christ" who is Lord**
 - 1 He changes lives -- the Living Christ
 - 2 **Historical details do not transform lives -- we are not changed by knowing the "Life of Christ"**
 - B **This truth is a preliminary to any correct understanding of any of the 4 Gospels**
 - 1 It is crucial to recall as we read the Gospels
 - a The Gospel's goal is not to impart knowledge: not to tell us where Jesus was once born
 - b The Gospel's goal is to communicate experience: to tell us that Jesus is reborn in us now
 - 2 We must remember this detail as we read
 - a **Mark is not interested in telling us what Jesus did**
 - b **Mark is interested in telling us what Jesus does**
 - c **However relating some of the things Jesus did is a good way to show what Jesus continues to do**
 - (1) **Jesus healed once so Jesus is healing now**
 - (2) **Jesus forgave once so Jesus is forgiving now**
 - (3) **Jesus cleansed once so Jesus is cleansing now**
 - d **All of the other evangelists do the same: they try to introduce us to Jesus now**
 - C **This standard governs the selection of the material each Gospel uses to share Jesus;**
 - 1 **The purpose of this selection is not to offer us accurate historical information -- the Jesus of Yesterday**
 - 2 **Rather it is to share with us an accurate gift -- a particular experience of the Jesus of Today**
 - D **Each Gospel molds the selected materials to make the picture of Jesus more accurate**
 - 1 **They try to present the Risen Jesus, Lord and Christ, who was experienced**
 - a **The Jesus of the Easter Church**
 - b **The Jesus of Easter faith**
 - 2 **After Easter the things that the historical Jesus did were understood more clearly**

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- a The significances of His actions were often hidden at the time that Jesus performed them
- b **So the evangelists mold details and sayings to bring out their real significance**
 - (1) "Heal" takes on the meaning of "save"
 - (2) "Raise up" takes on the meaning of "resurrect"
- E Each evangelist shapes his material differently
 - 1 Jesus was experienced differently by each evangelist
 - 2 So the material was shaped uniquely
 - a **What is selected and what is omitted**
 - (1) Luke's has a vacuum in his recounting the deeds of Jesus called the "Great Omission"
 - (a) Even though he followed Mark's general ordering of stories, he dropped all the stories Mark connected with the second Feeding (4000)
 - (b) And he added much material of his own, so he simplified other parts of the story, removing most of the duplication he found in Mark
 - (2) Since he intends to show that the Church is founded on an accurate experience of Jesus, he has no mention of the disciples leaving Jesus in the Garden
 - b **Where the material was put**
 - (1) Matthew's gathered 10 miracles which were scattered throughout Luke and Mark in order to show that Jesus is the New and Greater Moses
 - (a) **The Sermon on the Mount preceded it:**
 - [1] **Moses received the Law that was the basis of the first covenant, the first Israel, from God on a mount**
 - [2] **Jesus offered the basis of the new covenant, the Church, the New Israel, on a mount**
 - (b) Matthew, in the chapters that follow the sermon, (8, and 9,) gathered 10 acts of wonder from all over Mark – which he had followed very loyally up to this point – and placed them together in this section
 - [1] **God had worked 10 signs through Moses to free His People and lead them into the Promised Land, Palestine**
 - [2] **Jesus works 10 signs to show He is freeing God's People and leading them into the true Promised Land, the Kingdom of God**
 - (2) **Matthew's 5 sermons were created by selecting sayings of Jesus and joining them to show that Jesus was forming the New and greater Israel, the Kingdom of God**
 - (a) **The story of the creation of the first Israel is told in 5 booklets – the Torah**
 - (b) **The story of the creation of the new Israel is told in 5 booklets,**
 - [1] **An account of the actions of Jesus was followed by a sermon**
 - [2] **Each sermon ended with the same phrase**
 - {1} **Matthew 7:28**
 - {1} **When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching.**
 - {b} **Translations, sadly, often use different English words for the same Greek phrase Matthew used**
 - {1} **In the Greek, Matthew says literally, "When Jesus had finished this word"**
 - {2} **At the end of the last sermon, Matthew says, "When Jesus had finished all these words"**
 - c **How the material was presented**
 - (1) Matthew changes "James and John" to their "mother" to protect the disciples from an embarrassing greed
 - (a) **Mark 10:35**
 - [1] **Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."** 36 **"What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.**
 - [2] **37 They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."**
 - (b) **Matthew 20:20**
 - [1] **Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. 21 And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."**
 - (2) **He softens all criticism of the disciples**
 - (a) **They represent the Church leadership**

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- (b) **And this Church, (Matthew's Church, not the Church of Mark and Luke,) is engaged in a bitter fight with the synagogue, the Jewish religion**
- (c) **He can't afford to be as critical of the disciples as Mark had been**
 - [1] **Where Mark has Jesus criticize the disciples for having "no faith," Matthew softens the criticism to "little faith"**
 - {a} **Mark 4:39**
 - {1} *He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.*
 - {2} *40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"*
 - {b} **Matthew 8:25**
 - {1} *The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"*
 - {2} *26 He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?"*
 - [2] **In Mark, James and John come to Jesus with a greedy proposal; Matthew changes the person making the request to their mother**
- **F Each Evangelist shares a different experience of Jesus**
 - **1 Mark**
 - a **Jesus' divinity and power are not stressed**
 - b **His Humanity and suffering and service are stressed**
 - c **Mark offers us a warning: don't try to live His glory in the world today**
 - **2 John:**
 - a **Jesus is the Lord, Eternal Word**
 - b **He replaces all of the OT with Himself: feasts, items (paschal lamb, vine)**
 - **3 Matthew:**
 - a **Jesus is the Lord of Glory (like John)**
 - b **But He is also the Lord of Church -- experienced in and through community**
 - c **Since He is the Lord of Church, He teaches the Church about its mission to the world**
 - **4 Luke:**
 - a **A Jesus who loves the unlovable of life**
 - (1) **Poor**
 - (2) **Women**
 - (3) **Pagans**
 - (4) **Unclean**
 - b **A Jesus who shares His mission with the Church**
- **G Different presentations result from the different experiences of Jesus and the different circumstances of the Church communities needing the separate Gospels**
 - **1 Mark shares Jesus for a Church that was mostly Greek in its background, not Jewish -- he must explain Jewish traditions**
 - a **He had received independent stories about the mission of Jesus**
 - (1) **He used mainly stories of deeds, of the actions of Jesus**
 - (a) **He included very little of the teaching Jesus offered**
 - (b) **And yet "Teacher" was one of his favorite titles for Jesus**
 - (2) **Mark, therefore, intended that we see Jesus teaching in and through His deeds**
 - b **He organized the material he had received according to a double pattern of geography and time**
 - (1) **Mark's geography was symbolic**
 - (a) **He used "Galilee" as a symbol for the place where Jesus unites all those that the world divides**
 - [1] **It becomes a symbol of a love that is "catholic" which means "universal"**
 - [2] **Jesus unites us all by loving us as we are**
 - [3] **Jesus begins His mission in Galilee -- He reveals the kind of love He is**
 - {a} **He constantly crosses back and forth across the Sea from the Jewish to the pagan side**

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- {1} Everything He does on the Jewish side, He does on the Greek side – except, of course, teach
- {2} The two times Jesus and the disciples start to cross the sea to serve the pagans the existence of the Church (a boat) is threatened by storms
- {b} **Mark 4:35**
 - {1} *On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." 36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.*
 - {2} *37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.*
 - {3} *38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"*
 - {4} *39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.*
 - {5} *40 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"*
 - {6} *41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"*
- {c} **Mark 6:45**
 - {1} *Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away.*
 - {2} *46 And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray.*
 - {3} *47 Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land.*
 - {4} *48 Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.*
 - {5} *49 And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out; 50 for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."*
 - {6} *51 Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. 52 For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.*
 - {7} *53 When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there.*
- (b) **He used Judea and Jerusalem as symbols of a love that is limited**
 - [1] He used them as symbols of a love that is parochial – a love that has boundaries
 - {a} **Some people in the circle of our world are "clean" while others are "unclean"**
 - {b} Such a symbol of limited love cannot and does not accept Jesus who is in His nature universal Love
 - [2] Jesus ends His mission in Jerusalem – His death offers a sign of the love that God gives all sinners
- (c) **He used a journey to connect the two places, Galilee and Judea**
 - [1] **Jesus tries to teach the Church that He saves us**
 - {a} Through the cross, not the sword
 - {b} Through service, not power
 - [2] **Three times He announces His forthcoming Passion and death**
 - [3] But the Church, symbolized by the disciples continually fails to understand
 - {a} Again, reality is more important than history
 - {b} **The failure of the disciples to grasp how Jesus saves serves as a caution**
 - {1} To all Church leaders
 - {2} To all Christians
 - {c} We, too, are likely to want God to rescue us
 - {1} By using power in our world
 - {2} Rather than by offering service to our hearts
- (2) **Time is sacrificed to geography**
 - (a) **Since Jesus ministering is all that is important, Mark starts His Gospel with the Baptism,**
 - [1] No birth, infancy, or hidden life references are offered

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- [2] **Mark used the Baptism as an anointment for ministry**
 - {a} **Mark 1:9**
 - {1} It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.
 - {2} 10 And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.
 - {3} 11 Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 - [3] It was a sign that God was filling Jesus with God's Spirit and appointing Him for a very special mission
 - [4] Immediately after this anointing, Jesus starts serving us
- (b) **Since Jerusalem must reject Jesus, (partial love cannot contain universal love)**
 - [1] He journeys there only once in His life
 - [2] And He is killed within five days of His entering the city
 - [3] A careful reading of Mark shows that no one in the city welcomes Jesus as He entered the city on Palm Sunday – all the cheering is done by His followers
 - {a} **Mark 12**
 - {1} 9 Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!"
 - "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
 - 10 "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"
 - "Hosanna in the highest!"
 - 11 Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.
- c **In the entire Gospel, no one understands Jesus until He dies**
 - (1) Our God is recognized only in the total love He gives us
 - (2) The only person in the whole Gospel who recognizes Him is the pagan centurion who killed Him
 - (a) **Mark 15:37***
 - {1} With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. 38 The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.
 - {2} 39 And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"
 - (3) He is the first to see the absolute love of God offered to us in Jesus
 - (4) Ours is a God of universal love who saves us with His service, not His power
- 2 **Matthew writes for a Church locked in a bitter dispute with the synagogue**
 - a His Church had a rich Jewish heritage
 - b The hostility between the Church and the synagogue colors much of his Gospel
 - (1) His Church had been expelled from the synagogue and cursed by it – they were a rump group
 - (2) Matthew's Gospel has an elaborate organization
 - (a) He began with Mark's basic organization
 - [1] The ministry is divided into Galilee, Journey, Jerusalem
 - [2] But this structure was not as important to understanding Matthew's Gospel as it had been to grasping the presentation in Mark
 - (b) He took Mark's narrative and added to it five blocks of material
 - [1] Five booklets of narrative were followed by five sermonettes
 - {a} The Israelites felt the record of their formation was told by the first five books of Bible – The Torah
 - {b} The Church, The New Israel, sees it's story also told in five booklets
 - [2] This narrative/sermon sequence echoes Moses' sermon in the fifth of the five booklets of "The Torah"
 - [3] He added an introduction and a conclusion
 - {a} Birth stories
 - {b} Rebirth stories
 - [4] The purpose of this overall structure is to show the Jewish-Christian Church that
 - {a} Jesus is the new and greater Moses

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- {b} **Jesus is the true Son of David**
- {c} **Jesus is the new and perfect Israel**
- [5] **He frames the Gospel according to a giant "inclusion"**
 - {a} [Parentheses hold Chapter references in Matthew]
 - {b} A – Story of Birth (1 and 2) First OT quote "God with us"
 - {1} B – Baptism (3 and 4) Tempted with "If you are the Son of God" three times
 - {a} C – Entry into the Kingdom (5 to 7) Sermon on Mount. Long sermon
 - {(1)} D – Sending out of the Twelve (10) Short sermon
 - {(a)} E – Parables (13) Half told to the crowd. Split sermon
 - {(b)} E2 – Parables (13) Second half told only to the disciples. Split sermon
 - {(2)} D2 – Receiving those Jesus sends to us (18) Short sermon
 - {b} C2 – Final Entry into the Kingdom (23 to 27) Long sermon
 - {2} B2 – Baptism by Fire (27) Tempted on the cross three times with "If you are the Son of God"
 - {c} A2 – Rebirth (28) Last words of Jesus "I am with you always"
 - [6] There are many smaller parts to the inclusion
 - {a} The opening of the First sermon was a litany of those **"Blessed" addressed to the Church**
 - {b} The opening of the Last sermon contained a litany of **"Voes" to those in the synagogue**
 - {c} The first sermon included a saying: Not all who say **"Lord, Lord" will enter the Kingship**
 - {d} The last sermon included the Parable of **five foolish virgins locked outside the marriage feast who vainly call "Lord, Lord" once again the similarity often is hidden by translators who use "Master, Master" for the parable**
- 3 **Luke writes for a Greek Church slowly but surely realizing Jesus was not returning soon**
 - a **Luke began by using the general structure of Mark: (1) Galilee, (2) The Journey, (3) Jerusalem**
 - (1) He added an introduction and a conclusion
 - (2) Like Matthew, he added teachings and other materials
 - (3) But he made the Journey the most important part of his Gospel
 - b Luke added a new period to salvation history
 - (1) Paul, Mark, Matthew: had two eras to Salvation History
 - (a) "A Time of Preparation" (Ends with the Baptist)
 - (b) "The Time of Jesus"
 - [1] Jesus ministering, suffering, dying, rising, ascending
 - [2] The Church waiting for Jesus to return and complete what He has begun
 - (2) Luke added "The Time of The Church"
 - (a) The Church's today is as much a part of God's plan as was the "Time of Jesus"
 - [1] **The Church has more to do than wait for Jesus to return**
 - [2] It needs to continue the same missions as Jesus
 - (b) He showed this by writing a second booklet – The Acts of the Apostles
 - [1] Acts was meant to be read together with the Gospel
 - [2] Both Jesus and the Church have the same ministries
 - {a} Preaching
 - {b} Healing
 - {c} Teaching
 - c He used geography to tie the whole work together
 - (1) **The Gospel begins and ends in Jerusalem**
 - (a) The whole sweep of the Gospel is to Jerusalem
 - (b) This is one reason the Journey is so crucial
 - (2) **Acts begins in Jerusalem and moves to the ends of the world**
 - (a) Acts ends with Paul preaching Jesus in Rome

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- (b) The mission journeys of the Church were prefigured by the great journey of Jesus
- (c) The Church must be as apostolic as Jesus had been
- 4 John also writes for a Church at war with the synagogue
 - a But his organization is unique
 - (1) In material – he includes very few stories in common with the Synoptics except for those of the Passion
 - (2) In organization
 - (a) Jesus makes many trips from Galilee to Jerusalem
 - (b) He travels there at least three times for Passovers alone
 - b John's Organization
 - (1) The Prehistory of the Word
 - (2) The Book of Signs – Chapters 1 to 12
 - (a) Jesus offers seven signs, miracles, most followed by long sermons
 - [1] [CHART]
 - (b) Jesus replaced everything in the Jewish religion with Himself
 - [1] He gives lasting rest, not the sabbath
 - [2] The Jewish water of ritual cleansing was replaced with a superabundance of wine (spirit) of joy
 - [3] He is the Paschal Lamb without blemish who takes away all sin
 - [4] He, not Temple, is the vine
 - (3) The Book of Glory – Chapter 13 to the End
 - (a) From the Last Supper
 - (b) Through the "Passion"
 - [1] In John, the story of Jesus' death is not really a Passion
 - {a} Grief is never expressed by Jesus
 - {b} At every moment, Jesus is in control – events do not occur until He gives permission
 - {1} John 18:7
 - {a} *Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."*
 - {b} *8 Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," 9 that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."*
 - {c} *10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.*
 - {d} *11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"*
 - {e} *12 Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him.*
 - [2] Pilate is on trial, not Jesus
 - {a} Pilate thinks he is rendering a verdict on Jesus
 - {b} He actually is rendering it on himself – as history has proven
 - (c) To Resurrection on Easter
 - (d) To Ascension on Easter
 - (e) To Pentecost on Easter
 - c The Gospel is based on a sweeping motion
 - (1) The Book of Signs
 - (a) Jesus, the eternal, preexistent Word, descends from Heaven
 - (b) He unites Himself with us and reveals Himself to us
 - (2) The Book of Glory
 - (a) Jesus ascends, returns to the Father
 - (b) This return is done in one continuous motion with 3 parts
 - [1] He is lifted up on cross

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- [2] So He can be lifted up from the grave
 - [3] So He can be lifted up in glory through the Ascension
 - (c) Since He has united Himself with us, He takes us with Him on this journey
 - d All of this sweep is based on the dominant thought of the time, Neo-Platonic Philosophy
- V CONCLUSIONS
 - A The Gospels are not offering us a Life of Jesus but the Living Jesus
 - B Since accurate history was not their goal, details may clash between them
 - 1 When was the Ascension?
 - a On Easter? (John, Luke, and implied in Mark and Matthew)
 - b 40 days after Easter? (The Acts of the Apostles)
 - 2 Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?
 - a Yes: Mark, Matthew, Luke
 - b No: John
 - C When reading a Gospel, do not fill it out with details from other Gospels
 - 1 Doing so ruins each unique presentation of Jesus
 - 2 There is no Temptation in Mark
 - a Mark was first of the Gospels to be written – he has a battle in which Jesus takes the active part
 - b We must not read the temptations Matthew and Luke later added to their Gospels into the earlier work of Mark
 - D Put each story in context
 - 1 The cursing of the Temple is clarified by being surrounded by stories about the cursing of a fig tree
 - a Mark 11:12
 - (1) Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. 13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.
 - (2) 14 In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.
 - (3) 15 So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.
 - (4) 16 And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple.
 - (5) 17 Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"
 - (6) 18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching.
 - (7) 19 When evening had come, He went out of the city.
 - (8) 20 Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. 21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away." 22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God.
 - 2 The double healing needed to cure the blindness is not a sign of weakness on the part of Jesus –
 - a It is placed at the start of a journey done to remove blindness
 - (1) Mark 8:22
 - (a) Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him.
 - (b) 23 So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.
 - (c) 24 And he looked up and said, "I see men like trees, walking."
 - (d) 25 Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.
 - b Another healing is placed at the end
 - (1) Mark 10:46
 - (a) Now they came to Jericho. As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great multitude, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the road ["alongside of the way,"] begging.
 - (b) 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

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- (c) 48 Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you."
- (d) 50 And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. 51 So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."
- (e) 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you
- (f) And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road. ["on the way"."]
- 3 There are two feedings – one Jewish [5000] and the other pagan [4000] – in Matthew and Mark to show Jesus desires to feed everyone, Christians, Jews, pagans with the superabundance of His Love
- 4 Read each unit, each story to enrich our experience of Jesus
 - a Not for historical facts
 - b Not to compose a biography
 - c Facts and biographies cannot and do not save people from their internal emptiness
- 5 Jesus, not the facts, is our "Good News"