
When were the four gospels written?

<u>MARK</u>	<u>MATTHEW</u>	<u>LUKE</u>	<u>JOHN</u>
Approximate date <u>70 A.D.</u>	Approximate date <u>80 A.D.</u>	Approximate date <u>90 A.D.</u>	Approximate date 90 A.D. (insertions and additions 100-150 A.D.)

What can be said of the four individual authors' style?

<u>MARK</u>	<u>MATTHEW</u>	<u>LUKE</u>	<u>JOHN</u>
<p>Mark writes in a very colloquial and oral style. His breathless exuberance strings sentences together with hurry-up adverbs. One could say he wrote in "street language". Not infrequently his spelling and grammar were corrected by Matthew and Luke who relied on him for much source material.</p> <p>Mark particularly liked to use the historical present tense. He used it scores of times. Most translations render Mark into the simple past tense; to get the full flavor of Mark - the way he wrote it - try the Scholar's Version. [SV] The historical present was only used five times in all of Matthew and Luke combined.</p> <p>Another frequent hallmark of Mark's style was the division between what was said publicly and what was said to the disciples 'in house' or privately.</p> <p>Mark shows a very human Jesus who sometimes fails in his endeavors and has a band of apostles who are frequently dim-witted and dense.</p>	<p>A distinctive feature of Matthew is his use of quotations from the Old Testament. Others may use such quotations to resolve conflicts or to buttress especially important positions; but Matthew makes it a central feature of his gospel. As he frequently says: "All this has happened so the prediction of the Lord given by the prophet would come true."</p> <p>Only in Matthew does Judas accept 30 pieces of silver. Matthew 27:9 Then what was spoken by <u>Jeremiah</u> the prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty silver coins, the price set on him by the people of Israel, Matthew introduced this story to illustrate fulfillment of a prophesy. It has slim contextual relevance and he got the author wrong. <u>Zechariah</u> 11:12 I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. He even changes items in some of Mark's stories to make his narrative fit the quotation.</p> <p>The concept of hell is not metaphorical to Matthew. Matthew seems to me to be a salvation by works sort of a guy.</p>	<p>Luke wrote in a very elevated, literary style. When describing healings he draws from a medical knowledge possessed by physicians. In the original Greek, he very carefully selects an exact medical term rather than a vernacular one.</p> <p>Luke very frequently Speaks of the <u>Holy Spirit</u> - 13 times in his gospel and 41 times in Acts. Mark, Matthew, and John vary rarely mention him. Having written <u>Acts</u>, which is almost as voluminous as his gospel, he has contributed more words to the New Testament than anyone.</p>	<p>John's gospel is a very theological treatise. He has Jesus constantly meditating on himself and his relationship with his father. The Greek word <u>pistis</u> is used in both John and the synoptics. In the synoptics it better denotes trust and is translated so in the Scholars Version [SV]. In John it is used to denote belief - belief beyond the acceptance of the positions of Jesus; belief that affirms his personhood. John uses sentences that are long and not infrequently in the passive voice. There are <u>no parables</u> recorded in his gospel, and curiously no mention of the institution of the Eucharist.</p> <p>John is known as the <u>I am</u> gospel for his very frequent use of those words: I am the good shephard; I am the bread of life, etc.</p> <p>"The Word Was With God" John introduced and developed a Logos Doctrine with parallels to Paul's.</p>

Who do each of the four gospel authors think Jesus was? [according to what they actually say]

MARK

Jesus was anointed.

Jesus was a man - a very special one; he was not a god. He was the messiah of the Jews - the son of God. [not God the Son] Mark did not believe that Jesus had pre-existed but was anointed by God at his baptism. Mark's Jesus was neither omniscient nor omnipotent. Jesus had limited authority. Mark presumed that Joseph was the natural father of Jesus. There was no implication or mention of a virgin birth. Jesus foretold of his death and resurrection. A young man sitting by the tomb said Jesus was raised. The passive voice suggests God did it. [The best ancient manuscripts have Mark ending with 16:8]

MATTHEW

Jesus was Godlike.

Matthew did not believe that Jesus had pre-existed. The birth and post resurrection accounts were incorporated into his gospel to bolster Jesus' status. [Apparently in later editions.] The Holy Spirit impregnated Mary. God raised Jesus from the dead.

LUKE

Jesus was Godlike.

He was the savior (Luke uses this word) of the world. He did not believe that Jesus had pre-existed. Birth and post resurrection accounts were incorporated into his gospel to bolster Jesus' status. [Apparently in later editions.] The Holy Spirit impregnated Mary. God raised Jesus from the grave.

In Acts 2:22-36 Luke quotes Peter as having said: "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst . . . you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless man . . . This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses . . . Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Does not Peter, among other prominent biblical characters, think of Jesus as a man raised to a very high station?

JOHN

Jesus was God.

[John 1:1-2] "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning."

There was no implication or mention of a virgin birth. John presumed that Joseph was the natural father of Jesus but the pre-existent spirit of Jesus entered his body at birth. Jesus raised himself from the grave.

[NOTE: Most English versions of Luke contain a phrase saying the disciples worshipped Jesus. The RSV did not include it. The nonstandard Greek word has other meanings.]