

Harmony *of* the Gospels

1. God the Word

September 6, 2015

When law enforcement officers or detectives listen to the testimonies of eyewitnesses, they expect that these testimonies would be different in some ways even if two of the witnesses were standing right next to each other and saw the same thing. Because everyone processes what he or she sees differently. If everyone's testimony is exactly alike, they are all lying.

Many Christians as well as non-Christians wonder, "Why do we have four Gospels? Couldn't God tell us about Jesus with one Gospel?" For a couple of reasons, first, each author gives us according to their unique perspectives, which together provide a deeper and more comprehensive portrait of Jesus. Second, each Gospel talks to different audiences with different objectives in mind.

The ancient Christian writer Origen who lived in the second century gave a good answer: "There are not four Gospels, but one four-fold Gospel."

Here is a quick list of each Gospel's distinctives:

- **The Gospel of Matthew**, writing to the Jews, was interested in establishing the regal rights of Jesus as King of the Jews. In doing so, he traced the genealogy of Jesus back to David and Abraham through His earthly father Joseph. He sets forth Christ as the Redeemer – King of Israel, the Messiah promised to the forefathers.
- **The Gospel of Mark**, writing to practical minded Romans, was interested in capturing those snapshots of Jesus that showed Him as a servant. Consequently, we don't see a genealogy of Jesus, because servants didn't have genealogies at that time. Yet, Mark had his eye on the activity of Jesus which would appeal to the Romans. This is the first Gospel that was written.
- **The Gospel of Luke**, writing to a Greek audience, was focused on Jesus' humanity. So Luke, a Gentile Christian doctor, traced Christ's genealogy all the way back to Adam through His earthly mother Mary. Throughout his account, Luke pictured the Son of man as Kinsman-Redeemer of the entire human race.
- **The Gospel of John**, writing to a timeless, universal audience, John stressed the deity of Christ and His unique relationship with God the Father.

A. LUKE'S PREFACE

Luke 1:1-4 Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, 3 it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, 4 that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

According to the biblical scholars who are good at Greek language, Luke wrote the first four verses in refined, academic style Greek. But then, for the rest of the Gospel, Luke didn't use the language of scholars, but of the common man, the language of the street which was Koine Greek.

After I read this portion, I thought that Luke should have been a lawyer more than a doctor. Because it seems that the lawyers get paid by the number of words they put in the contracts. We have no idea what they say in their fancy lingo, but there sure are a lot of them. We could summarize these four verses in just four words, "It's all true, Theo."

Luke was not one of those disciples who was an eyewitness of the ministry of Jesus from the beginning. Yet in the way he wrote was from firsthand experience, like Matthew and Mark, because Luke's account was based on diligent research and a complete understanding of Jesus' life on earth. And more than anything, Dr. Luke was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

B. BEFORE THE BEGINNING

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

As you read this verse, you cannot deny one direct connection with another verse at the very beginning of your Bible.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

The beginning in Genesis 1:1 started with the creation of God, however, the beginning in John 1:1, it goes back to when our eternal God alone existed, even our concept of time was not existing since the Lord had not created it yet.

I don't blame the unbelievers for the lack of their understanding when it comes to the truth of God in the Bible. Because they simply cannot comprehend the fact that God can be above and beyond our time limit. Besides, without the Holy Spirit's help, God's truth in the Bible is foolishness to them.

1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Apostle John introduces Jesus as "the Word," or in the Greek, "Logos." This word, as the apostle reveals to us, was with God, face-to-face, in eternity past. Yet, beyond our comprehension, this Word was not only with God the Father, but was God. Jesus was not simply the Revealer of God the Father, but God Himself revealed.

Just in case you may wonder with a question like this, "What do you mean that Jesus is the Revealer of God?" Jesus explained this to His disciples in John 14:

John 14:9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

As I have mentioned many times before, all the cults deny the deity of Jesus Christ, but with this simple sentence apostle John hushed them all.

Jehovah's Witnesses say that there is only one God that is Jehovah. But they destroy their own doctrine when they come to this very verse. Jehovah's Witnesses' 'New World Translation' reads like this:

"In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was **a** god." Jehovah's Witness' New World Translation

Their own translation is saying that there is more than one god. Which one is correct? Only one Jehovah or Jehovah plus a small god?

The claim of the Jehovah's Witnesses people defending their translation of John 1:1 is that because before the second time "God" is used in the passage, no article appears since it is written "God" and not "the God". In answer to this approach to Greek grammar and translation, we can only refer to the multitude of other times in the NT where "God" appears without the article. If the Jehovah's Witnesses people were honest and consistent, they would translate "God" as "god" every place it appears without the article. But it seems that this grammatical rule only applies when it suits the purpose of backing up the heretical doctrinal beliefs of the Jehovah's Witnesses. The Greek text of Matthew 5:9, 6:24, Luke 1:35 and 1:75, John 1:6, 1:12, 1:13, and 1:18, Romans 1:7 and 1:17, shows how the Jehovah's Witnesses translates the exact same grammar for "God" as "God" instead of "god" when it suits their purpose.

Jehovah's Witnesses uses to establish their claim in The Kingdom Interlinear, they quote two well-known Greek authorities to make them appear to agree with their translation. But they have two problems with these people. First, one of them is a well-known Greek authority, Dr Julius Robert Mantey. But his comment has been misquoted, he has even written to the Watchtower, and demanded that his name be removed from their book. Secondly, another Greek "scholar" whom the Watchtower refers to in their book, "The Word – Who Is He? According to John," is Johannes Greber. Greber was actually an occult-practicing spiritist, and not a scholar of Biblical Greek.

C. THE CREATOR, NOT A CREATED ONE

John 1:2-3 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

This is so-o-o-o good. Two very important things we must notice:

1) Christ Himself was not created.

2) All things were created by Christ without an exception.

God the Father was the architect, and God the Son Jesus was the primary agent of creation.

1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.

D. LIGHT AND DARKNESS

John 1:4-5 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

The Word is the source of all life. The ancient Greek word translated 'life' is 'zoe', which means "the life principle," not 'bios', which is mere 'biological life'. This life is the light of men, speaking of spiritual light as well as natural light. It isn't that the Word "contains" life and light; He is life and light.

It means that without Jesus, we are spiritually dead and in darkness. We are lost without Him. The true definition of darkness is an absence of light. Darkness cannot compete with light. A single candle light can be seen as far as 14 miles. A simple candle light overcomes any darkness in 28 miles radius. Because it naturally draws human's eyes to itself. The darker the darkness is, the brighter the light is.

Since man has a natural-born fear towards both death and darkness, he tends to grasp for any kind of assurance even if he has to generate one by himself and fools himself. That is the basis for any cult.

In v5, apostle John speaks of the darkness which is the people of the world. Light and darkness are recurring themes in John's Gospel. God is light while satan is "the power of darkness". People love either the light or the darkness, and this love controls their actions.

John 3:19-21 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.

You would think that many blind sinners would welcome the light, but such is not always the case. The coming of the true light brought conflict to them, because the powers of darkness within their hearts oppose it. They'd rather make fun of the Gospel and the truth of God in the Bible since they choose not to comprehend by their own choice so that they can continue in their carnal lifestyle.

Whenever Jesus taught a spiritual truth, the majority of His listeners interpreted it in a material or physical way. The light of God was unable to penetrate the darkness of their minds because they chose to hide inside of their spiritual dungeon so that they didn't have to hear the truth.

Right now some of you might be hiding inside of your own spiritual dungeon so that you don't hear the truth of God. He wants to set you free from the bondage that satan has upon you. You don't have to live in darkness. You can step out of darkness into the Light of the world.

E. APPLICATIONS

1) If someone chooses not to believe the truth of God, it doesn't mean that it does not exist. It only means that that person doesn't get the benefit of knowing the truth and he or she will be eternally lost.

2) God's Word is STILL SPEAKING. All we have to do is listen to Him through the Bible.

3) Jesus gives life more abundantly to those who diligently seek Him. Seek Him everyday.