

1-3 Where Do I Start?

This lesson ties the purpose of this textbook—developing Christlikeness—with the content—the Gospels.

Terms:

- *Christ*—“anointed one”; the spiritual deliverer prophesied in the Old Testament
- *Signs*—miracles that say something about the nature of Christ as God

- I. The Gospels—present (John 21:25) the person and work of Christ—this is not everything Christ ever said or did; God gave us a “selective record” of what He wanted us to know about Christ. Miracles (Christ’s compassion and omnipotence), parables (Christ’s teaching), and historical and cultural setting.
- II. Their emphasis—intended to focus on the good news of Christ’s life and atoning death
 - A. **Purpose**—not biographical
 1. To prove a point about Christ
 2. **Arguments rather than biographies**
 - B. **Theme**—**Christ’s earthly ministry**—becomes more detailed closer to Christ’s death
 - C. **Focus**—**passion week**—most important event in human history
- III. **Unique portraits of Christ**
 - A. **The Promised King** in Matthew
 1. 130 Old Testament references
 2. 40 Messianic promises
 3. Demands allegiance to Christ as King—ends with “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth” (28:18)
 - B. **The Suffering King** in Mark
 1. 3 calls to us to bear a cross
 2. Christ is continually exercising authority over demons, disease, weather
 3. Focus of last half of book is that Christ must suffer—we must too, to be His followers
 - C. **The Perfect Man** in Luke
 1. Christ’s humanity—genealogy goes back to Adam, head of the human race, rather than to Abraham, head of the chosen race
 2. Christ’s concern for sinners—Luke calls people *sinners* 16 times, in contrast to 14 times in all the other gospels combined. My favorite Bible story is in Luke 7—“and she was a sinner.”
 3. Christ’s prayers—prayer is a distinctively human means of fellowship with God; 7 of Christ’s 9 prayers in Luke are not recorded elsewhere
 4. Christ’s compassion—13 women are mentioned who appear nowhere else in the gospels; 3 times Jesus refers to Samaritans favorably
 - D. **The Divine Son** in John—signs or miracles that prove Christ’s deity—John is the only gospel writer who states his intent clearly: “These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (20:31)