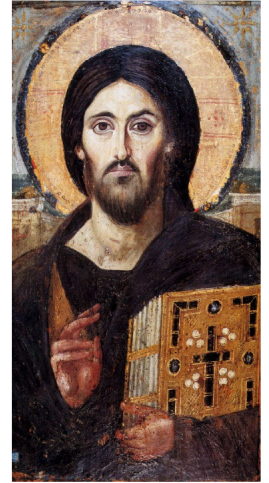


JESUS AND THE GOSPELS #1:

What sorts of documents are the Gospels?



C.S. Lewis's 3 Jesus options:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. ???

Our claim: It makes most sense to say that the Gospels are _____ of Jesus, written within the _____, based on _____.

What skeptics are claiming

Most scholars claim that the Gospels are _____; that the four Gospels we have were originally title-less and then, at some point, the "According to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John" superscriptions were added on.

Why they seem wrong

Guess how many anonymous documents have ever actually been found? _____

_____ ancient Gospel manuscript we've ever found, in any language, has been attributed to either Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.

So Who Did Write the Gospels?

Internal evidence: _____

External evidence: _____

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

For almost 400 years after Jesus, no one, orthodox or heretic, raises any question about who wrote the Gospels. That is powerful, external evidence for their authenticity.

The Lost Gospels

1. **Infancy Gospel of Thomas:** an account of Jesus' childhood by the apostle Thomas:

This little child Jesus when he was five years old was playing at the ford of a brook: and he gathered together the waters that flowed there into pools, and made them straightway clean, and commanded them by his word alone. And having made soft clay, he fashioned thereof twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath when he did these things. And there were also many other little children playing with him. But the son of Annas the scribe was standing there with Joseph; and he took a branch of a willow and dispersed the waters which Jesus had gathered together. And when Jesus saw what was done, he was wroth and said unto him: O evil, ungodly, and foolish one, what hurt did the pools and the waters do thee? behold, now also thou shalt be withered like a tree, and shalt not bear leaves, neither root, nor fruit. And straightway that lad withered up wholly, but Jesus departed and went unto Joseph's house. But the parents of him that

was withered took him up, bewailing his youth, and brought him to Joseph, and accused him 'for that thou hast such a child which doeth such deeds.' After that again he went through the village, and a child ran and dashed against his shoulder. And Jesus was provoked and said unto him: Thou shalt not finish thy course. And immediately he fell down and died.

2. **Gospel of Thomas:** a collection of 114 sayings given by Jesus to Thomas in secret:

Simon Peter said to him, "Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life." Jesus said, "I myself shall lead her in order to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven."

3. **Gospel of Peter:** a short account of Jesus' passion:

Now it was noonday, and darkness prevailed over all Judaea: and they were troubled and in an agony lest the sun should have set, for that he yet lived: for it is written for them that the sun should not set upon him that hath been slain (murdered). And one of them said: Give ye him to drink gall with vinegar: and they mingled it and gave him to drink: and they fulfilled all things and accomplished their sins upon their own heads. And many went about with amps, supposing that it was night: and some fell. And the Lord cried out aloud saying: My power, my power, thou hast forsaken me. And when he had so said, he was taken up.

Church Fathers

*"For we brethren, receive both Peter and the other apostles as Christ: but **we reject intelligently** the writings falsely ascribed to them, knowing that such were not handed to us"* (Serapion, bishop of Antioch).

*"Then of the New Testament there are four Gospels only, for **the rest have false titles** and are mischievous. The Manicheans also wrote a Gospel according to Thomas, which being tintured with fragrance of the Gospel **title corrupts the souls** of the simple sort"* (Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures, 4:36).

The Church Fathers _____ rejected the lost gospels, as not being written by the apostles themselves.

What sorts of Books?

The Bible contains multiple genres: _____, _____, _____, _____, _____ and so on. We need to know: are the Gospels history, biography, fiction, poetry, etc.? We do this by studying things like the _____, _____, _____, _____ and so on.

"There is no historical-biographical interest in the Gospels, and that is why they have nothing to say about Jesus' human personality, his appearance and character, his origin, education and development."

– Rudolf Bultmann

1)

2)

Matthew —

Mark —

Luke —

John —

3)

Luke 3- *"Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about 30 years of age, being the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi."*

Matthew 1- *"The book of the **genealogy** of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."*

4)

*"Having given as it were a summary of his life, I shall now take up its various phases one by one, **not in chronological order, but by categories**" (Suetonius, Life of the Deified Augustus).*

Compared with:

"Mark, having become Peter's interpreter, wrote down accurately everything he remembered, though not in order, of the things either done or said by Christ" (Papias of Hierapolis).

5)

*Just because the authors don't play by the rules of *modern* biographies, it doesn't mean that they don't want to tell us what Jesus actually said and did.

So what kinds of biographies?

The Gospels are _____

Ancient biographies very often insisted that they were recording the truth about what someone did or said. Likewise with the Gospels:

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

- Luke 1:1-4

This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.

- John 21:20-24

The Gospels are thoroughly _____ in style and attempt to capture accurately the _____ of what Jesus said and did.

When were the Gospels written?

Most scholars agree that all four were written in the _____. Mark, around AD _____, Matthew & Luke around AD _____, and John around AD _____.

1)

2)

Matthew and Luke's Gospels get dated to the 80s and 90s because of the date of the _____

And note that the **destruction of the temple** is never described as _____

"Pray that it may not happen in the winter" (Mark 13)

"Pray that your flight may not be in the winter or on the Sabbath" (Matthew 24)

The Synoptic Problem

Two-source theory: Mark was written first, and at the same time, a hypothetical gospel, Q, sprung into existence. Matthew and Luke use Mark and Q as their two primary sources. Anything found only in Matthew come from another hypothetical source M, and anything found only in Luke, from a source, L.



Instead of dating the Synoptic Gospels to the 70s, 80s, and 90s then, it's possible to date them to _____
_____, within the first few decades after Jesus' death.