

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUR GOSPELS

God became human without ceasing to be divine: that is the united yet individual testimony of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. While they may very profitably be studied separately, and the following introductions are thus given from that viewpoint, yet they together present the picture God wanted mankind to have. While studying each Gospel separately may bring points to one's attention that might otherwise escape, it is the firm persuasion of the writer that more harm than good is done thereby. The constant problem that is part and parcel of much modern scholarship stems partly from just this practice. For 1700 years, the scholarship of the church assumed that 1) God is, 2) had revealed Himself in Christ to this world, 3) had recorded His will for humanity in the Bible, first in the Old Testament preparing the way for His visit, and then in the New Testament, recording that visit and giving directions to men in regard to His way for them. Men began with the obvious premise that God could inspire men to write books, and specifically the books with which we are now concerned. In so doing, the portrait was complete when all four were treated as one whole. (Some did not like Tatian's harmony of the four but it was not because the four were not to be studied together. It was because *Tatian's Diatessaron* was not inspired!) The human factor was not denied nor excluded from the writing of these books, but God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit directed that the original autographs from the hands of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were as He wanted them to be. So far so good.

Through the centuries, men readily recognized the striking differences between the four accounts, as well as their remarkable parallels, sometimes even word for word. It was not until the rise of rationalism and its bosom

companion philosophy, evolution, that men began to play one book against another. The assertion by Lachmann (1793-1851) that Mark was the primary source really started the move. Assuming that things go from simple to complex, and that God (if there was one) had no hand in producing the four Gospels, men began to tear them to pieces. The theories of Jean Austruc in his book about Genesis (pub. 1753), appeared in an enlarged form in Johann Eichhorn's Introduction (1780-83). In this book, the ideas implicit in evolution emerged, and the position was readily picked up by others, especially in Europe. Calling the approach "The Documentary Hypothesis," men such as Vater, DeWette, Ewald, and Hupfeld propounded the basic idea that the Old Testament was a product of the evolutionary principle. The Jewish nation was the source of the Old Testament in the main rather than God. Books considered prophetic could not be so, since God (if one existed) had not revealed anything to man. Thus, as example, Isaiah was considered the work of several authors, and none of it was prophetic; Daniel was considered as having been written in the period ca. 165 B.C.

Soon this basic idea was applied to the New Testament, and it persists until now. Current scholarship has applied *source criticism* (which attempts to discern which Gospel writer copied from which) and its offspring *form criticism* (which attempts to find out how the writers got their information, how the stories were developed by the church over a period of time, which then were written in the Gospels) and its child *redaction criticism* (which purports to know what the author's purpose was in his theological creation called a Gospel, since that purpose not only determined what went into the book but conclusions from that material) to the four Gospels in general, and the Synoptics in particular. The fact that the Synoptics (Matthew, Mark and Luke) have some material common

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

to all make them prime targets for such approaches. Actually, these three approaches to the study of the Gospels are just the theories of Eichhorn et. al in new dress. Perhaps to subsume all three under the heading of unbelief would not do them much if any injustice. In the following discussion, the main subjects will be the Four Gospels, but the arguments would apply to the whole Bible as well.

If we assume that God not only exists but also could reveal Himself to man even in a book, and that the apostles could be so used to either produce or help produce the book called the New Testament (and the Gospels in particular, since that is our specific point of discussion) then the existence of our Bible is not too surprising. The fact is that nothing known to or by man can deny these possibilities. The existence of the Bible rather affirms the fact that God does exist, and has revealed Himself. Now it is also past denying that God could not have used men like the apostles Matthew and John, and companions to the apostles, Mark and Luke, to write four books. Approaching the four books, as being at least possible productions by this means, we note that the apostles were promised guidance in not only what they had been taught and experienced but also in regard to things they yet knew not, Jn. 16:7-14 as an example. Who can deny absolutely that God kept His promise? Nothing is impossible with God, and such guidance is entirely possible. The books are prime evidence that God did do so.

But some will say, how account for the wide disparity between the accounts, or the parallels, even word for word at times? We answer, Is anything too hard for God? We can not account for the divine/human relationship of Jesus either, but if God is, such a relationship is entirely possible. What is so hard about also assuming that the Gospel records were products of a divine/human relationship? If Jesus is possible, why not the four accounts of

His life? One fact is not more difficult than the other! Stated differently, we assume that Jesus was divine and human at the same time, and that the four accounts of that God/man are just what they appear to be: products of two inspired apostles and two inspired men who were companions to apostles.

There is no one who can absolutely deny that such possibility can exist. Finite man can not establish an absolute of any kind. Even that statement, which is in the form of an absolute, can only be made in relationship to God Who is an absolute. Thus the statement about man's limitation is but an obvious deduction from recognition of our limited nature and relationship to God, the infinite being. It is only when men in unbelief, under such guises and philosophies as rationalism and evolution, assume that they are "God" that problems arise.

Do not conclude that the argument is for man to be naive—it is just an argument to show that scholars who argue that the Gospels can not be what they appear to have assumed what they can not prove. One may hold any position in regard to the four accounts that is desired, but by the same token, no one can establish beyond a shadow of a doubt that the four accounts can not be what they appear to be.

The reason for the above discussion is this: there is evidence within the four accounts that is difficult to understand. Yet there is no statement within any of the books, nor none in early writings, that indicates any of the writers used the others for information. We are not categorically denying that such may have happened, but it is an assumption quite without a firm basis. Luke mentions previous accounts, 1:1-4, but certainly does not state that he used any of them. (By the way, some current advocates of form criticism and redaction criticism argue that the early church produced basically what we have

in the Gospels. Hence they affirm that the Christ presented in the accounts was produced by the church, and deny that we can even know much if anything about the real Jesus. But Luke's prologue denies that: he says he got (?) his material from those who were eyewitnesses. Thus the church did not produce what Luke wrote. The only reason that some men argue for the Gospels being products of the church is 1) because they have accepted the premise of evolution and 2) it gets them free from an authoritative directive from God.) On the supposition that the apostles Matthew and John were the men who wrote the books with their names, it is a bit ridiculous to affirm that they needed sources to write what they themselves experienced. If the inspiration Jesus promised them actually happened, then they did not need any sources, since God could have miraculously revealed to them what they did not know themselves. In effect, the same is true for Mark and Luke: if inspiration from God be possible, then their accounts are possible, without any use of sources, all negations of this fact notwithstanding. We but note that the early church which included many inspired men accepted the four accounts in just this way. We heartily concur. (What seems to escape some, not all, scholars, is that if they make the Gospels products of the church, written late in the first or second centuries, then we have no inspired accounts of Jesus' life at all! We then would be adrift with no real hope at all.) It seems to us that if this position be correct, we have nothing to lose and everything to gain. If we deny the position that the Gospels are true products of God through men, and the denial is valid, we have no hope anyway. We may as well live in "confident despair." However, if the four accounts are from God and thus true, and we deny such and live that way, we gain nothing and lose all. The better choice in every way is to accept them as God's

love letters to men, and joyfully live in that light. To this end we so dedicate all we are and hope to be.

The above discussion is about three things: presuppositions, scholarship and faith. No one approaches the study of the Gospels without some kind of idea as to how they came to be. Even the attempt to approach them with an "open" mind expresses a presupposition that such is the correct way to do so. With respect to scholarship and faith, the two are certainly not antagonistic to one another, necessarily, nor are they synonymous, necessarily. One could be neither, either or both (or even varying degrees of both). This book is written from the point of view that 1) God is, 2) God was revealed through the divine/human personality known as Jesus of Nazareth, 3) His life was made known at least partially through the Bible, and more completely through the Four Gospels, and 4) which books in the original autographs were products of inspiration from God by means of human writers.

The following introductions to the four accounts are both too long and too short. Much more could have been said, much less, too. Hence, the problem always of what to write. We have added a list of books that will be helpful, some in one way, some in another. The vast amount of material available on the Four Gospels would take several good-sized books just to list. What we have attempted to do is give a selection ranging from one theological pole to another, since all are in some way useful, if only to give opposing viewpoints. Listing obviously does not mean endorsement of views expressed within the books.

MATTHEW LEVI, THE TAX-COLLECTOR, AND HIS BOOK

The Man Himself

Called by Jesus from an active life Mt. 9:9, he identifies himself as a tax-collector, 10:3. His place of business was Capernaum, a city at the cross-roads of commerce, from the far eastern countries, from Europe and Africa, as well as a commercial fishing city. From such a background, he probably knew several languages, and was acquainted with various schools of thought. Doubtless he was hated by most fellow Jews, as can be seen in Mt. 21:32; Luke 15:1-2.

He is mentioned very little in the Gospels, once in Acts 1:13, and not at all in the rest of the N.T. He is identified as Levi the son of Alphaeus by Mark, 2:14, and Levi by Luke, 5:27, in their accounts of his call to discipleship, though they later identify him as Matthew, Mk. 3, Lk. 6.

He was not the only apostle or Christian to have more than one name. Consider the following among the disciples of Christ:

Simon-Peter	Judas-Barsabas
Thaddaeus-Judas of James	Saul-Paul
John-Mark	Bartholomew-Nathanael
Joseph-Barnabas	Thomas-Twin
Simon-Niger	Joseph-Barsabbas-Justus
Jesus-Justus	

Early church testimony was unanimous for Matthew Levi being the author of the Gospel bearing his name. He is not identified as the author by name in the book, but we would hardly expect the early church to discard so many books with author's names in them that claimed to be something while accepting an anonymous book with-

out some very good reasons. The early readers were expected to receive it as authoritative, we assume, and did so. (It would hardly be likely that the hated tax-collector would be associated with a book if it were not so.) The probable reason is that an apostle was the author, and the book had such authority behind it. Interestingly enough, Levi's book was quoted more by the early church than all the other Gospels put together. It was not until the third century when the matter of Christ's nature became a major issue that John's Gospel became well-used.

Matthew's use of the Old Testament (over 60 quotes or allusions) helps provide a connecting link between the Old Testament. Note that the first great discourse, chs. 5-7, is about Jesus' relationship to the law. He often used the Greek translation of the Old Testament called the Septuagint (LXX) in his quotes. The Epistle of Barnabas (ca. 130) first uses the expression, "It is written" while quoting Matthew 20:16 and 22:14.

Though not always chronologically exact, yet the method of presentation is orderly, showing Matthew's thought processes, which doubtless were helpful in making him a fit person to be a tax-collector.

Though he does not mention himself as the author of his book outright, the incidental remark in 9:10 about Jesus sitting in "the" house probably shows it was Matthew's house in which the feast occurred. His notice of the word *nomisma* (state coin) in 22:19 may well reflect his background in money matters. If it was possible for an apostle to write a book, and for God to work through Matthew the apostle to do so, then we should not be surprised if such occurred, and the early church to so recognize it.

His Book

The book is often called the "ecclesiastical gospel"

because of the emphasis upon the church/kingdom. This Gospel is the only one to use the word "church," 16:18, 18:17.

Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promise in the Old Testament is the theme of this book. It begins by tracing the lineage back to David and Abraham, both of whom had received promises from God. The genealogy (though it includes two Gentiles in it) shows the Jewish reader that Jesus was of the proper lineage legally. Yet this polemic purpose, seen in the O.T. quotes and the genealogy, does not exclude that idea that the whole world was to be in on God's blessings. The Gentile wise men, Galilee of the Gentiles (4:15), the faith of the Roman Centurion (8:10), the ministry to bring the Gentiles hope (12:18-21), the "other nation" in 21:33-44, and a universal mission (ch. 28), all reflect a Messiah-king for every road.

Early church men such as Clement of Rome (ca. 30-100), Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (martyred ca. 116), Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (martyred 155), Papias, bishop of Hierapolis (ca. 80-155), Tatian (born ca. 120), Clement of Alexandria (ca. 155-215), and Origen of Alexandria (ca. 185-254) all knew and used Matthew, with no dissenting voice against his authorship. The book was included in the Old Latin and Old Syriac versions (both about 150 A.D.) which shows its importance. Sometimes it was placed first in early Greek Manuscripts followed by John (then Mark and Luke) since both were written by apostles, though Matthew wrote before John. The Diatessaron by Tatian (ca. 170) uses it and the Muratorian canon (ca. 180) which lists all but four books (I Peter, II Peter, James and Hebrews) in our N.T. has the first part lost, but begins with Luke, then John. It obviously gives evidence that Matthew and Mark had been mentioned as the first two in the list. Hence, though some modern scholars either assert that Matthew's book was but an

enlargement of Mark, that Matthew did not write it, or both, they are quite at variance with the rest of the church. We conclude that their unjustified presuppositions have caused them to be out of step rather than those mentioned above who assert that Matthew was written by Matthew Levi, the apostle. Obviously the early church, some of whom gave their lives for their sacred books, were more than a little interested in the quality of the books they claimed as the Bible. If the book of Matthew had apostolic authority as commonly believed, then it would be held in much different light than many other books circulating around which had no such backing, though claiming it. The early church was certainly more interested in who authored a book than who provided some of the material in it (as is the case with Mark and Peter).

The book was apparently written some years after the events if 27:7-8 and 28:15 are any indication. However, the lack of any stated fulfillment of the predicted fall of Jerusalem in ch. 24 probably indicates the book was written prior to A.D. 70. Whether the remarks of Luke in 1:1-4 imply that Luke had access to books that were insufficient in some way (thus seemingly not speaking about Matthew or Mark's Gospels) is debatable. Perhaps Luke did not know of Matthew or Mark's Gospels, even though they were in circulation. If the position taken by some be true, that Luke implies all the accounts he knew were in some way questionable, then Matthew's Gospel was written sometime in the period A.D. 60-70. However, as stated above, Matthew and Mark's Gospels could possibly have been in circulation elsewhere, or not adequate for what Luke needed (or maybe God directed Luke to write his Gospel anyway!). Thus we really do not know how long before A.D. 70 the gospel was written. Some guess as early as A.D. 45-50. Irenaeus remarked that Matthew wrote his Gospel while Peter and Paul were yet

preaching. Clement of Alexandria remarks that Matthew and Luke wrote first, ahead of Mark and John. However, some dispute this statement. The lack of explanations of Jewish customs probably points to a predominantly Jewish audience and/or a time of writing before the forced dispersion under Titus in A.D. 70.

Matthew's book combines events and teaching to a considerable extent (much like John). The apostle records six great discourses: the Sermon on Mount (5-7), missionary instructions (10), lakeside parables (13), church polity (18), the condemnation of Jewish hierarchy (23), the discussion of Jerusalem's end and His second coming (24, 25), all built around events.

It is sometimes referred to as the Gospel of the king, since it traces Jesus' lineage to David, relates the search for the one born king of the Jews, refers to Jesus as "Son of David" nine times, (1:1, 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9, 15; 22:42), presents Jesus as king of every nation, 25:31, and has Jesus responding affirmatively to Pilate's question, "Are you the King of the Jews" in 27:11. Yet Jesus was more than an earthly king, for He was "God with us" (1:23) "always" (28:20), Who had come to save all His people from their sins (1:21), for the field is the world (13:38), and to do so for all time (even in the highways and byways, 22:9) through the church, His body, which not even death, and him (Satan) who has the power of death (Heb. 2:14) can destroy, 16:18.

Some have compared Matthew with Mark and Luke and there are events common to all (see the previous discussion of the Gospels). Yet Matthew has some 300 verses that are peculiar to his Gospel, showing that he is quite independent of anyone's book. The visit of the angel to Joseph, the visit of the wise men, the Sermon on the Mount, the sending out of the 12, the parable of the laborers in the vineyard and the material in ch. 25 are examples of

such material. The book has 10 parables and 3 miracles contained in no other book (such as the tares, the hid treasure, draw net, or the healing of the 2 blind men and the dumb demoniac).

Matthew's use of "kingdom of Heaven" (33 times) versus "kingdom of God" (4 times, 12:28; 19:24; 21:31, 43) is interesting as one compares the parallels in Mark and Luke's Gospels. Mark and Luke both have the "kingdom of God" a great number of times (over 30 times in Luke) and the expression "kingdom of heaven" not once! The idea of righteous/righteousness occurs more times in Matthew than all the other three combined. The idea of Jesus' humanity certainly is shown by the occurrence of the expression "Son of man" over 30 times. (This expression occurs 81 times in the four Gospels, and some over 40 times are distinct occurrences.) Jesus uses it much of Himself, perhaps to emphasize His human nature. Yet He would and did on many occasions likewise assert His deity, as in the Sermon on the Mount or to Caiaphas, 27:63-64. By the way, some present scholars do not think that Jesus asserted He was the Son of God to Caiaphas (or to Pilate later). However, Jesus was under oath and did not refuse to tell the truth about Himself ever. Thus Caiaphas so understood Jesus to affirm that He was the Son of God and considered it blasphemy, tearing his garment. It was for this assertion about His identity (see John 19:7) that Jesus died! And for the same reason did Matthew the apostle write: to show that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

OUTLINE FOR MATTHEW

1:1—2:23	Introduction and birth
3:1—4:11	John's preaching, Jesus' baptism and temptation

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

4:12—13:58	Jesus in Galilee
14:1—20:34	Journeys with the Twelve
21:1—25:46	Teaching in Jerusalem
26:1—27:66	Passion and death
28:1-20	Resurrection

JOHN MARK, THE MAN AND HIS BOOK

The Man Himself

John Mark appears by name some eight times in the New Testament. He first appears by name in Acts 12:12, associated with his mother Mary, whose home was a meeting place for the saints and to which Peter went when he was miraculously released from prison. Thus, at first mention he is in contact with apostles, and others including James the brother of the Lord. He had access to many who could tell him about the Lord, his life and ministry.

He next appears with Barnabas (who was related to him) and Paul in Acts 12:25, where he accompanies them from Jerusalem to Syrian Antioch. Then in Acts 13:13 he, having left with Silas and Paul on their journey, left them to return to Jerusalem. He apparently went back to Antioch of Syria, because in Acts 16:37 he is there when Paul and Barnabas disagree over him. He departs to Cyprus with Barnabas for evangelistic work.

Apparently the adverseness Paul felt towards Mark was of a temporary nature, because Paul mentions him as being in Rome with him, Col. 4:10. This reference informs us that he was some relation to Barnabas. The Greek term *anepsios* meant cousin in Paul's day. It came into Latin as *nepos*, whence our English word *nephew*. However, it did not mean *nephew* in Paul's day, but a

more distant relationship, best expressed by our English word cousin. (Remember—the King James version which uses “sister’s son,” i.e. ‘nephew’ was translated almost 1600 years after Paul wrote Colossians and the men who did the translating were somewhat guided by the Latin Vulgate as well as the Greek text they were using.)

We next meet John Mark in II Timothy 4:11 where Timothy is instructed to bring Mark to Rome(?) with him because he is profitable to Paul. The last reference to Mark is in I Peter 5:13, where he is called the son of Peter. Probably the word “son” means the same as it does in II Cor. 6:18, etc.

The man John Mark had much opportunity to know the facts about Jesus, not only from personal experience (does Mark 14:51-52 refer to the author of the book? It easily could, since the Garden of Gethsemane was nigh to Jerusalem, and it would not be unlike a young man like Mark to be around the disciples. In fact, the text in Mark 14:17 may indicate an eyewitness point-of-view.) but also from others who knew, either by personal experience, by revelation from God, or both. We think there is very good reason to believe that Mark could write his book without necessarily copying from anyone. He certainly did not write it in a vacuum.

In addition to his own opportunities, early church fathers indicate that he accompanied Peter in later years (as I Peter 5 indicates) and the Gospel was a reflection of Peter’s preaching. Papias as quoted by Eusebius (ca. 265-340) so wrote. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Origen all so affirm. It is possible that they all repeat the information that Papias gave. It is also quite possible, and much more likely, that they were just as interested in who wrote the book as we are, and upon investigation into the matter gave their conclusions. There is the evidence of Tatian’s Diatessaron (a harmony of the four

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

Gospels) which includes Mark's book as being equal in inspiration with the others, as well as the Old Latin and the Old Syriac versions which include the book.

Thus the testimony of the early church is that the book was produced by John Mark, the companion of Paul, Silas, Barnabas and Peter, and that the book was to be received as equal to the other three as far as inspiration goes. Surely if Mark were not the author, someone in the early church would have known who the true author was, and the proper person given the credit for it. Someone as insignificant as Mark when compared to the apostles would hardly have been ascribed the authorship of the book if it were not so.

His Book

Mark's book is many things—easily translated in comparison with the others, with rapidity of movement and vividness in detail—yet long discourses as in chs. 4, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13. The Greek word for someone in a hurry, or describing rapidity of action is *euthus*, which occurs some 42 times in Mark (only 7 in Matthew) and 14 of those times in respect to Jesus.

One would think that Jesus was moving all the time, yet if so, much teaching went on, because the words for teach and teaching, *didaskō* and *didachē*, occur more frequently in this book than in any other Gospel. The miracles were often used for the purpose of instruction, as in 5:19 and 11:21-23. The Gospel contains some 19 miracles (though many more are done, 1:34, 39; 3:9, etc.) and probably only 7 parables. Most of these can be found in either Matthew or Luke, but the following sections are either only in Mark or basically there: 4:26-29; 7:32-37; 8:22-26; 9:42-50; 13:33-37 and 14:51-52. In addition, many incidents are "touched-up" as the healing of

Jairus' daughter and the woman who was healed on the way to the house of Jairus (ch. 5) or the account of Bartimaeus in ch. 10, or the cursing of the fig tree in ch. 11. To add color and the feeling of motion, the Greek text contains some 141 "historic presents" (which are hard to translate into English).

Some have thought that Mark was written primarily for Gentiles, especially Romans, but there are some 19 formal quotations from the O.T. plus many more allusions (There are some 160 quotes or allusions in the Gospels) to it. The earliest testimony links the author and his book to Rome (*The Shepherd of Hermas* and *I Clement* may give some evidence for this idea, though disputable) but whether this is borne out by the evidence is certainly questionable. If so, there were still Jews in Rome as well as Gentiles, and the Gospel certainly was meant for everyone, and so realized by the time this book was written. Actually, no one really knows where any of the Gospels were written. The only date we can give with certainty for this Gospel is A.D. 70. Jesus predicted the fall of Jerusalem (ch. 13) and we assume that had it occurred before the book was written, Mark would have noted it. Clement of Alexandria as quoted by Eusebius stated that the earliest books written were those concerned with the genealogies (Matthew and Luke) and then Mark wrote for Peter. We know nothing actually contrary to this idea.

Mark's book often presents Jesus as in the midst of people, as a man serving others (Son of man occurs 14 times) though that servant is variously represented as a king, as God (note the mission of John in 1:1-3, and as Son of the Blessed, 14:61-62) or as a man, serving God—even to the death on the cross (some 40% of Mark is concerned with the events of the last week) accursed of God, Deut. 21:23, deserted by God, Isa. 59:1-2, having been mistreated, misunderstood, mocked, and betrayed by

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

His erstwhile friends. Perhaps Jesus' statement in 10:45 is the key: "I came not to be served but to serve, and give My life as a ransom for many."

OUTLINE OF MARK

1:1-13	Introduction
1:14—9:50	Jesus in Galilee
10:1-52	Journeys with Twelve
11:1—13:37	Teaching in Jerusalem
14:1—15:47	Passion and Death
16:1-8	Resurrection

LUKE, THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN, AND HIS BOOK

The Man

Pioneer church historian—premier traveling companion—physician of body and soul: such is our Luke. God certainly picked His men aright, and Dr. Luke is no exception. Author of at least $\frac{1}{4}$ of our whole New Testament (based on the total amount of material rather than the number of books), he traced "all things accurately" from Adam through Abraham to Christ, on to Pentecost and the first 30 odd years of church history. Luke, we salute you for a job well-done!

We can not separate Dr. Luke's Gospel from the book of Acts. To discuss the author of one is to do the same for the other. Indeed, he meant for us to so understand. In a comparison with a contemporary of Luke, Josephus the Jewish historian, we can see that Luke knew how historians wrote in his day, and so wrote his two-volume history. Josephus wrote a two-volume set called *Concerning the High Antiquity of the Jews* (known as *Against Apion* since Jerome's time, ca. 340-420) divided into Book

I and Book II. These two were intended by Josephus to be taken as one work, not two different ones. Luke and Acts, as we know them, were just as obviously meant to be such. The introduction to the Gospel is not repeated in Acts, but the connection is plainly made, being written to Theophilus by his friend (unnamed but known to us as) Luke. It is true to say, however, that the Gospels are unique, and deal with a unique personage, Jesus. Hence, the particular method of presentation may be as unique as the One of Whom they write.

The first volume is not the account of an eyewitness, so Luke had to obtain his material from eyewitnesses (see Acts 1:21-22) and ministers (the two terms are perhaps descriptive of the same person, at least at times) of the word. However, mid-way through the account of the early church activity, Luke becomes part and parcel of the chronicle he is producing. Thus he writes for all to read.

He is mentioned in Paul's letters as his fellow-worker, and beloved by Paul. He was probably a Gentile by birth, Col. 4:10-14, though where he was born is unknown. He went to Rome with Paul as he himself recorded in Acts 27, 28. Apparently others went with them, or met them in Rome, for Paul mentions others in Col. 4 and Philemon 23-24. But Paul's last letter shows all had departed, II Tim. 4:11, and Luke alone is with him. Some suppose that Paul's bodily affliction (II Cor. 12:7-9; Gal. 4:15) required the attendance of such as Luke, but that is unknown. Perhaps the willingness of Luke to practice the healing of bodies in return for financial help to be shared with Paul was the reason for Luke's presence.

His books are well-knit and represent painstaking care. For instance, in the healing of the man with the withered hand, Luke notes it was the *right* hand, ch. 6. He notes that the demonized man in the tombs had worn *no clothes*

for a long time. He is often acclaimed as the best writer in the N.T., from the viewpoints of style, grammar and word usage. Though the assertion can not be made that his books assuredly are products of a physician, they do display a careful touch for accuracy and necessary detail, products of such a person with an education like he apparently possessed.

(There is an interesting textual addition to Acts 11:28. Codex D [known as Bezae] and a few other MSS have an addition to the beginning of that verse that would read "and we having assembled." Then the account about Agabus would follow. If this reading is genuine, Luke's presence in Antioch of Syria would be evident, and a parallel to the "we" sections beginning in ch. 16. Acts 6:5 regarding Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch is then of interest. The incidents in chs. 11; 12:25; 13:1ff., etc. may be first-hand. If Antioch be Luke's original home, he may have attended the famous medical school of Aesculapius at nearby Algae. However, this is strictly conjectural.)

He did not intend that his work necessarily supplant all others (we do not really know if he were aware of Matthew and Mark—but they may not even have been written when he wrote his book—or if so, that Luke knew about them) but rather supplement others, especially to the end that Theophilus (and any "lover of God") might rest assured in faith that God had invaded the planet earth in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God.

He was sure of his facts, and accurate in their presentation. 2:1-7 used to be considered as containing more historical errors than any comparable passage of history. Time and research, especially in the papyri finds from Egypt, have proved Luke to be right rather than his accusers. Sir William Ramsay set out to Asia Minor to

prove the N.T. was not believable, but like many others who give honest effort, he had to change his mind. Time after time, the N.T. was correct, and he ended his life defending the book, and considered Luke the greatest of all historians of his day, not excluding Thucydides. His several books, including *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the N.T.* and *Was Jesus Born at Bethlehem* were written with this viewpoint. A. T. Robertson's book, *Luke the Historian in the Light of Research* is also good in this area.

The stay with Paul (Acts 23-26) in A.D. 58-60 at Caesarea gave Luke plenty of time to research the information (perhaps even from James the Lord's brother) necessary to the writing of the Gospel. The companionship with Paul could have provided the inspiration Paul the apostle could give necessary to making the book what God wanted it to be. The earliest patristic testimony to Luke's authorship is probably Irenaeus, who remarks that Luke wrote the Gospel as proclaimed by Paul. The Muratorian Canon contains the same general assertion as to the author of the book. In fact, as with the other three Gospels, the early church's testimony is that Luke wrote the book. Tatian's Diatessaron, Tertullian (ca. 160-220) and Eusebius all agree with Irenaeus. Marcion (ca. 140) the gnostic did not question Luke's authorship, but rather deleted some sections he did not like. Celsus (ca. 178) attacks it as a product of Luke. Evidence for its usage is very early as can be seen in the chart of patristic quotes.

As mentioned before, the obvious ties between Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1 assert the same writer and recipient. The discussion of who is meant by "we" in Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18 and 27:1-28 will rather clearly identify the "I" in Acts 1:1 as a companion of Paul.

Since the author went to Rome with Paul, it is likely that Paul mentions him in the prison epistles. The people

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

mentioned in the "we" sections of Acts are ruled out obviously, which are Aristarchus, Gaius, Secundus, Silas, Sopater, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus. Those mentioned by Paul in either Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, or Philemon are: Demas, Epaphras, Epaphroditus, Jesus Justus, Luke and (John) Mark. Consider the following then:

- a. Epaphras and Epaphroditus did not make the sea voyage, therefore are not the author, as they could not be eyewitness to those events.
- b. Mark is mentioned in Acts, but in third person.
- c. Demas, Jesus Justus and Luke are left. Demas is rather unlikely and does not seem to have been with Paul in Acts, nor Jesus Justus, and neither have any tradition backing them for the author. Conversely, early testimony is solidly for Luke. In view of the fact that early patristic writers made much of apostolic authorship, it is significant that Mark and Luke are acclaimed as authors of their respective books.

The occasion for the book was to help Theophilus in his faith. Whether the Greek term *katechethēs* means Theophilus had received some instruction but needed more, or what instruction he had received was doubtful is unsure. Luke endeavored to "set the record straight" in what he wrote. He tried to write "orderly" in his book. Some take this word to mean chronologically, others to mean in good order and continuous within itself. Both seem to be pretty much true. It was to be a credible record of proclamation about Jesus through His chosen followers, as seen in Luke 24:48 and Acts 1:8.

The dedication of the book to *kratistē* (most excellent) Theophilus is interesting. The term occurs again in Acts 23:26; 24:2 and 26:25. Josephus dedicated his

Book II (Against Apion) to kratistē Ephroditus. It rather appears to be a word used in addressing officials, though we know nothing of Theophilus, nor what relationship existed between Luke and Theophilus.

The time for the book is preceding Acts. We assume (though other positions could be possible) that Acts 28 was the last written by Luke, and written about A.D. 63. It seems rather incredible that Luke would close the book without giving an account of Paul's fate, though such is possible. Hence we assume a date of A.D. 55-60 for the Gospel.

Luke's book is the longest book in the New Testament and actually contains more about Jesus' life than any of the other gospels. Some of the things it contains are:

1. There is a cosmopolitan flavor about the book. For instance, all classes of people are mentioned, such as men, women, rich, poor, Jew, Samaritan, Gentile, good, bad, etc. Too, Jesus is presented as being a "redeemer," 1:68, so universally needed (often Luke used the Greek word *dei* 'it is necessary' to speak of Jesus) by everyone, 2:38; 3:6; 21:28, 35; 24:21; Acts 1:8, etc. Luke traces the lineage of Jesus back to Adam, the father of us all. It is noteworthy that Luke explains things pertaining to Palestine, but does not do so for the Greco-Roman world.
2. The special emphasis upon women and their place in the kingdom, chs. 1, 2, 8:2-3; 21:1-4, etc. The five healing miracles that are peculiar to Luke (Some 35 miracles are described in detail in the Gospels, and Luke gives 20. Among those are 26 miracles of healing and Luke has 16 of them.) reflect his particular interest. These five were characterized by being chronic or incurable. Note

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

the widow of Nain's son, ch. 7, the women with the curvature of the spine, ch. 13, the man with the dropsy, ch. 14, the lepers, ch. 17, and the healing of Malchus' ear, ch. 22. He records more private prayers by Jesus than any other Gospel, as in 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 10:21; 11:1; 22:32; 23:34. Individuals are often highlighted, as Zechariah, Simeon, the women in Simon's house, Mary and Martha, the prodigal son, the unjust judge, Cleopas and his companion, etc. The special section from 9:51—18:14, plus 19:1-28 are only in Luke. Some have estimated that over 50% of Luke's material is not in the other Gospels.

3. Points of godly living or doctrine receive their due, as Luke contains more of praise and adoration than any other book, such as 1:14, 44, 46ff., 64, 68ff.; 2:14; 29-30; 6:23; 15:23-32; 24:52; etc. The expressions "praising God," or "blessing God" are almost all in Luke's Gospel. Forgiveness, as in 7:36-50; 17:1-10; 18:9-14; etc.; authority, as in 1:20, 37; 2:49-51; 4:14; 7:1-10; 13:12; 17:14; 19:9; etc.; and the Holy Spirit, as in 1:35, 41, 67; 2:25-27; 3:22; 4:1, 14; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49 with Acts 1:5-8; etc. There is even considerable reference to the human spirit, which may reflect Luke's accurate analysis of the human body.

He has some 20 miracles, of which 6 are peculiar to him. There are over 30 parables in the Gospels, and Luke has some 19 of them.

Some have asserted that Luke's theological position was so different than Paul's as to militate against Luke's authorship. But there is certainly nothing that causes us to maintain that traveling companions must share the same viewpoint on things, much less express them in the same

ways, even if they do. However, a careful perusal of Luke-Acts as compared with Romans-Galatians will show this: both Luke and Paul wrote of and ministered a universal gospel predicating salvation for all the on the common ground of faith in Jesus Christ, and that the *new covenant was not an addition to the Law*, but a whole new relationship with God, whose children are not in any way obligated to keep the law of Moses, but are free in Christ. Certainly Luke's consuming directive was to declare the truth about Him Who came "to seek and save the lost, . . . the horn of salvation from the house of David, God's beloved Son in Whom He was well pleased."

OUTLINE TO LUKE

1:1-4	Prologue
1:5—2:80	Birth and childhood of John and Jesus
3:1—4:13	John's preaching, Jesus' baptism and temptations
4:14—9:50	Jesus in Galilee
9:51—19:27	Journeys with Twelve, ministry in Perea
19:28—21:38	Teaching in Jerusalem
22:1—23:56	Passion and Death
24:1—53	Resurrection and ascension

JOHN, THE "SON OF THUNDER" "WHOM JESUS LOVED" AND HIS BOOK

The Man

To love-or not to love: that is John's question. This man, as His Master, is not described physically in the N. T. Yet, one certainly comes to a distinct mental picture of

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

the author as well as the One of Whom he wrote when reading the Gospel according to John. He did not write to talk about himself, his family or his friends, for he defers to being anonymous, and does not name his family. His friends are named, but not praised or extolled. His Master, even Jesus, is the "lovely one" Who came that life abundant might be an integral part of every life.

Perhaps we know more about John than any of the other Gospel writers. His father was Zebedee, his mother Salome. James was his older(?) brother. His uncle and aunt were Joseph and Mary (which may help explain the request by Salome in Mt. 20:20), his cousins include Jesus as well as His brothers and sisters. He was a disciple of Jesus' cousin, John the Immerser, along with James. Two of his close friends, Peter and Andrew, were also John's disciples as well as fellow-fishermen. He was in some way friends (He also knew the man who had "ear trouble" because of Peter's sword, Malchus) with Caiaphas (or Annas) and thus could get in the court yard where Jesus was taken, and also get Peter in. His father, a resident of Bethsaida by the Sea of Galilee, was financially able to have hired help, and thus allow his two sons, James and John, to follow Jesus rather than help in the fishing business, plus the fact that his mother, Salome, could be one of those who supported (her sons, and) Jesus in His ministry, Lk. 8:2-3.

Like multitudes of others, John was transformed by Jesus. So much is this true that after having listened, followed, and preached about Christ for some 50 years, one reading his Gospel can hardly discern where Jesus leaves off speaking and John starts writing, as in ch. 3. Doubtless John did not have this sort of character at the beginning of life, as Jesus' description of him and his brother ("sons of thunder") implies. But is not the message of Jesus to become such a part of a person's life

that it could be said, "For (a man) to live is Christ" and that such a person has grown into the "measure of the stature of Christ's fullness?" Do not like minds produce like characters (Phil. 2:5)?

Note how John's book presents the personality of Jesus as being so like God the Father that it could truly be said that Jesus and the Father were one, 10:30. Jesus prayed for "oneness" in ch. 17, John records. Thus he himself so believed in Christ that Christ could live in him. It is said that in his last days, brethren would carry John to the assemblies, where he would often repeat, "Little children, love one another." Does that reverberate in your ears as a true echo of His Master?

John intended to be for his readers what he was for his brother: a connecting link with Jesus. He never implies that the other Gospels were not as useful as his, but only that Jesus had so many facets that another presentation of His life was useful. One could hardly plumb the depths of God's personality (or for that matter put down in writing the total truth about a human personality)—even if one filled the world with books! How glad we are, though, that the "disciple whom Jesus loved" gave us his book.

His Book

The Gospel certainly is unique in comparison with the Synoptics, not only for that which is omitted, but that included. Yet, its overall framework is the same as the others, and Jesus is yet presented as a divine/human personality. That it is the work of the apostle John is the testimony of the early church fathers. We note the wide difference between it and the Synoptics. It seems to us that if the Gospel had not had apostolic authority, its acceptance would have been slow if at all. But the

opposite is true. In fact, the earliest copies of any Gospel we have are those of John's! The Robert's Fragment, better known as the John Rylands 457, containing ch. 18:31-33 (recto) and 18:37-38 (verso) dates ca. 125-150. Portions of ch. 5 are alluded to in the Egerton Papyrus 2, also dated ca. 130-150. The former piece of papyrus is from Egypt which shows the wide usage of John at an early date. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (martyred ca. 116), Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (ca. 69-155), Justin (Martyr, ca. 100-165), Papias, bishop of Hierapolis (ca. 80-155), Tatian (born ca. 120), Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, (ca. 115-108), all knew and quoted the Gospel. Theophilus is the first to name John as the author. Irenaeus (ca. 140-203) accepted it as John's work and published at Ephesus, but remarked that some people did not do so on the basis that it painted a false picture of Christ, since what Christ promised (especially about the work of the Holy Spirit) could not be so. Gaius, an elder at Rome, refused the book on the same basis. Clement of Alexandria (ca. 155-215) and Origen of Alexandria (ca. 185-254) both knew and accepted the authorship of John. It was in the Old Latin and Old Syriac (both ca. 150) and the Muratorian Canon (ca. 170, which is so called because an Italian named Muratori found it in the Ambrosian Library at Milan in 1740). The external evidence is good, as is also the case with the other three gospels.

The evidence internally depends upon the identification of the "disciple whom Jesus loved." It is likely John since the book though anonymous was accepted almost universally as John's. The author evidently knew much about Jewish customs, doctrine and thought, as seen in 2:6, 13ff.; 4:7ff., 27; 5:10; 7:21-23, 37 and 8:12; 9:2ff.; 11:49ff.; 18:13ff.; 19:31-42; etc. The land of Palestine is familiar and events are given from an eyewitness point

of view, as in 1:28 and 12:1; 2:1, 6; 3:23; 4:5, 21; 6:1, 19; 11:54; 21:8, 11; etc.

The author is a friend of Peter's apparently, since they are often together (did a "son of thunder" and an "impulsive brash" fisherman make a pair?) as in 13:23-24; 20:2-9; 21:7. The person who best fits this idea is John, since James is either mentioned otherwise or dead. Note Mk. 5:37; Lk. 22:8; Acts 3:1, 11; 8:14; Gal. 2:9. Jesus gave the keeping of His mother to this disciple, 19:26, and John certainly is a logical person here. The author mentions the forerunner of Jesus only as John. The Synoptics call this man John the Immerser, and also mention another John who was prominent in Jesus' ministry, identifying the second man as Jesus' disciple. Thus the obvious reason for not identifying Jesus' forerunner in the fourth Gospel as John the Immerser is that the other man named John is doing the writing, which leaves no need to further identify the other man named John. The "we" in 1:14, and the oblique reference in 1:41 probably connects John and James, Peter and Andrew. The unnamed disciples in 1:35ff. are probably Andrew and John, and the account reads like a recollection of an eyewitness, which most naturally is John, son of Zebedee.

The text of 21:2ff. narrows the problems of authorship down to the two sons of Zebedee and two unnamed disciples. Peter, Thomas, and Nathanael are all ruled out, since they are mentioned elsewhere in third person. The one who first recognizes Jesus so mentions the fact to Peter. Later, Peter turns and sees this same disciple following and asks about him. This relationship probably points again to Peter and John, making John the author. This is the testimony of the internal evidence and with which we concur.

As it is with the other Gospels, we do not really know when the book was written. Remarks like that of Irenaeus

mentioned above locate the place and time of writing at Ephesus when John was old. Though some take issue with Irenaeus because his testimony is for the authorship of John who wrote it at Ephesus after the other Gospels were written, it is passing strange that if it were not so, why the assertion of Irenaeus was accepted both in the Eastern and Western sectors of the church. Irenaeus was a pupil of Polycarp, who studied at the feet of John the apostle. It would be hard to find any better testimony than his.

The purpose of John's book is stated plainly in 20:30-31. Hence all that he wrote was selected for that express purpose. Much more could have been added, but by inspiration we have 21 chapters to help us find life in Jesus. (Incidentally, many argue that ch. 21 is a later addition by someone other than John, but there is not one shred of evidence for such assertion. The chapter is always with the rest as far back as evidence goes. Internally, it shows the same writer as the preceding 20 chapters. Thus, we assume John wrote ch. 21, though v. 24 may be the testimony of others to John's authorship. Perhaps the present tense of the verb "bears" affirms the author is very much alive.)

The omissions are many—John did not mention Jesus' birth, genealogy, or childhood, the Sermon on the Mount, the three tours of Galilee, the confession of Jesus' identity, the long section of events in Luke 9:51—19:14, the discussion in the temple during the last week, the long discourse in Mt. 24-25, the institution of the Lord's supper, or many of the resurrection appearances, or the ascension, just to name some. He did not use the word church or repentance, or the noun form of the word for faith (though the verb form occurs many times). He omitted parables (though allegories occur, as in 10:1ff. and 15:1ff.) entirely, unless 10:6 be referring to one

(The Greek term means a "wayside saying," something akin to a parable). He recorded only two miracles, the feeding of the 5,000 and Jesus walking on the water, found in the Synoptics, while having six peculiar to himself, excluding the resurrection. He apparently has events covering possibly 20 days (ch. 13:1—19:42, almost 1/3 of the book, cover only one 24 hour day, Jewish time). He included but little of Jesus' ministry outside of Judea, ch. 6 at Capernaum, and ch. 21 at the Sea of Galilee being the exceptions.

Inclusions are just as striking—and almost the whole book is in this category. Only twice (ch. 6, 12) does John harmonize with the Synoptics to any degree before the last week. Even much of the last week is not the same, as all of chs. 14-17 show. Yet, though John's portrait of Jesus be different, how many aspects of Jesus do we know? Who can delineate all the different facets of a divine/human personality? We heartily agree with both Paul in I Cor. 13:12 and John in I Jn. 3:1-3 in this respect—we finite creatures can only know in part.

Individual personalities are abundant in John, such as Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the lame man at the pool, the blind man in Jerusalem, Lazarus, Caiaphas, and Mary, sister of Martha.

Great contrasts or relationships such as light/darkness, life/death, Father/Son, truth/error, etc. appear. Vivid metaphors about Jesus, coupled with His "I am's" occur: I am He (the Messiah) 4:26; I am the bread of life 6:35; I am the light of the world 8:12; "I am" 8:58; I am the door of the sheep 10:7; I am the good shepherd 10:11; I am the resurrection and the life, 11:25; I am the way, the truth, the life 14:6; I am the true vine 15:1; etc.

The ideas of Jesus' deity are especially prominent, as seen in 1:1-18, 50-51; 3:31-36; 5:17-29; 14:8; 17:3, 24-

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

25; etc. Yet John does not minimize His humanity, see 1:14; 4:6; 6:53-59; 15:20; 19:23-24, 28, 34; etc.

The concepts of to love, to believe, to see, to know and to speak are found in this Gospel. The idea of glory often is seen, and will be somewhat of an eye-opener to the reader who has not noticed its varied usage. Read 1:14; 2:11; 5:44; 7:18, 39; 11:4, 40; 12:28, 43; (the word "praise" translates the same Greek word) 13:31-32; 14:13; 15:8; 16:14; 17:1, 10, 22, 24.

Feasts of the Jews form major points in the Gospel. The sequence of Passover ch. 2, Passover ch. 5, Passover ch. 6, Tabernacles chs. 7-10:18, Dedication 10:19-39 and Passover ch. 13-20 keep the ministry of Jesus pretty well centered in Jerusalem or Judea in this Gospel, though ch. 6 only notes the nearness of a Passover. These feasts stretch the ministry of Jesus to over three years. Along with the Jewish feasts, notice how often Jesus is connected with the O.T., as in 1:11, 17; 2:13ff.; 3:1, 14; 4:22; 5:30-47; 6:30ff.; 8:56-58; etc.

John's Gospel is interesting to the Greek student for several reasons. Though the vocabulary and grammar are relatively easy, the obvious depth of meaning (seen even in the English) always challenges the reader. The Greek words *hoti*, (some 270 times), *hina* (about 140 times) *amēn*, and *palin* are frequent.

The work of the Holy Spirit is prominent, but often in distinctly new ways. Read 1:32-34; 3:34; 7:37-39; 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:7-14; 20:21-23.

While all of these ideas may be seen, and others like them, the personality of the "Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world," the eternal "I am" is the reason for the rest. Surely a sympathetic reading of this Gospel in its presentation of the incarnate Word will lead one to exclaim with Thomas about that Word: "My Lord and My God."

NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY: THE CHRIST

OUTLINE OF JOHN

1:1-18	Prologue
1:19—12:50	Public Ministry
13:1—17:26	Private Ministry
18:1—19:42	Passion and death
20:1—21:25	Resurrection

BOOKS FOR STUDY OF THE GOSPELS

Introductions

1. *Introduction to the New Testament*, Theissen, Eerdmans. The best one volume book. Does not accept primacy of Mark, etc. (1943)
2. *Introduction to the New Testament*, Harrison, Eerdmans. In some ways better than Theissen, but accepts primacy of Mark. (1964)
3. *New Testament Introduction, Gospels and Acts*, Guthrie, Inter-Varsity and Tyndale Press. One of a three volume set. Much more thorough than Theissen or Harrison, but also accepts primacy of Mark. Good set otherwise. (1965)
4. *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Crapps, McKnight, and Smith, Ronald Press. An introduction that displays results of source criticism, etc. However, good for other things, including explanations of current theological ideas. (1969)
5. *Introduction to the New Testament*, Feine, Behm, Kümmel, Abingdon. A German introduction updated by Kümmel. Detailed discussions and European viewpoints. German theological ideas. Akin to position of Crapps, McKnight, Smith. (1966)
6. *Introduction to the New Testament*, Marxsen, Fortress Press. German scholar, definitely advocate of source, form and redaction criticism. Useful when

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

compared with Briggs, as it shows end results of the positions mentioned here and in his book. (1968)

7. *Interpreting the Gospels*, Briggs, Abingdon. A good presentation of the various schools of thought current in the theological world. (1969)
8. *Jesus of Nazareth: Saviour and Lord*, ed. Henry, Eerdmans. A good book from rather conservative scholars on current theological positions. (1966)

Dictionaries and General Works

9. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, gen. ed Orr, Eerdmans. Five volumes from rather conservative scholars. Much helpful material, though published in 1939. A great contrast can be seen in theological positions between this set and the set from Abingdon. (1939)
10. *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, gen. ed. Buttrick, Abingdon. Much up-to-date material, and excellent in many ways. However, it reflects the point of view as seen in such introductions as Marxson's, above. (1962)
11. *The New Bible Dictionary*, gen. ed. Douglas, Eerdmans. The best of the one volume dictionaries, though somewhat more expensive than the two following, and with a tendency to reflect the viewpoint of Harrison and Guthrie above. (1962)
12. *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, gen. ed Tenny, Zondervan. The next choice after Eerdmans in regard to material, but somewhat better price for the average church member (1967)
13. *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, gen. ed. Unger, Moody. About as good as Zondervan's, except for Unger's premillennialism. (1961)
14. *Jesus the Messiah*, Edersheim, Eerdmans. Very helpful for Jewish customs, etc.

NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY: THE CHRIST

15. *Lessons from the Parables*, Lightfoot, Baker.
16. *Notes on the Parables*, Trench, Baker.
17. *Notes on the Miracles*, Trench, Baker.
18. *Introduction and Early Ministry*, Foster, Baker. A good section on the problems of the Gospels, and about source and form criticism, etc.
19. *The Middle Period*, Foster, Baker.
20. *The Final Week*, Foster, Baker.

Commentaries, 1 volume

21. *Gospel According to Matthew*, Plummer, Eerdmans.
22. *American Commentary on the New Testament*, Matthew, ed. Hovey.
23. *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. I*, Fowler, College Press.
24. *Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, McGarvey, Standard.
25. *The Gospel According to Mark*, Swete, Eerdmans.
26. *The Gospel of Mark*, Johnson and DeWalt, College Press.
27. *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, Cole, Eerdmans.
28. *The Gospel of Luke*, Geldenhuys, Eerdmans.
29. *Studies in Luke*, Applebury, College Press.
30. *New Testament Commentary, John*, Hendrickson, Baker.
31. *The Gospel According to John*, Morris, Eerdmans.
32. *The Gospel of John*, Turner and Mantey, Eerdmans.
33. *The Gospel According to St. John*, Wescott, Eerdmans.
34. *The Gospel of John*, Butler, College Press.
35. *Adam Clarke's Commentary*, 1 Volume edition, ed. Earle, Baker.
36. *Barnes Notes on the New Testament*, ed. Cobbin, Kregel.
37. *The New Bible Commentary, Revised*, ed. Guthrie and Mayer, Eerdmans.
38. *The Christ of the Gospels*, Shephard, Eerdmans.

GOSPELS INTRODUCTION

39. *The Fourfold Gospel*, McGarvey, Standard.
40. *Studies in the Four Gospels*, Morgan, Revell.
41. *The Expositor's Greek Testament, Gospels and St. John*, ed. Nicoll, Eerdmans.

Commentaries in sets

42. *The International Critical Commentary*, with volumes on each of the Gospels, T. & T. Clark.
43. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Robertson, Broadman.
44. *Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel*, Lenski, Wartburg Press.
45. *Interpretation of St. Mark's Gospel*, Lenski, Wartburg Press.
46. *Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel*, Lenski, Wartburg Press.
47. *Interpretation of St. John's Gospel*, Lenski, Wartburg Press.

INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE

God has spoken, not only through His Son Jesus, but through men moved by the Holy Spirit. The result of such inspiration is in our Bible. We firmly believe that 1) Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to guide men in their witnessing, Matt. 10:17-20; I Thess. 2:13; etc., and in their writing, I Cor. 14:37, etc., and 2) that the original autographs from these men were without error in fact or thought, even though God used men to produce His will in the form of written letters. However, nowhere did God promise to inspire any person who further transmitted that written word, either in preaching, copying or translating. Thus, no copy which we possess of the original autographs is a product of inspired men, nor is any translation of it, (nor interpretation either, since obviously translation is interpreta-