

The Birth of Jesus Christ in the Gospels

| | Matthew's Gospel | Mark's Gospel | Luke's Gospel | John's Gospel |
|---|--|--|--|------------------------------|
| Narrative Emphasis | Doctrinal | Historical | Historical | Doctrinal |
| Theological Emphasis | Kingship – Davidic Emphasis | Kingship – Activity Emphasis | Kingship – Humanity Emphasis | Deity – Trinitarian Emphasis |
| Viewpoint | Jewish – Cultural | Roman – Brevity | Greek – Historicity | Christian Cross Cultural |
| Genealogy | Davidic | None | Adamic | None |
| John the Baptist | Described in Detail – Mentioned Repeatedly | Described Briefly – Mentioned Repeatedly | Discussed Extensively – Birth Recorded in Detail | Mentioned Briefly |
| Jesus Christ's Birth and Early History | Discussed in Detail | Not Mentioned | Discussed in Detail | Brief Mention |

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke (the so-called synoptic gospels) share a messianic viewpoint. Each presents Christ as the King of Israel. All three answer the same question, but to three different groups of people, “Why didn’t Jesus Christ, as Messiah of Israel, establish the Kingdom of God on the earth?” The answer is the same throughout, “Israel rejected the messiahship of Christ based on their misunderstanding of Old Testament doctrine.” This rejection was precipitated by a lack of the application of their biblical Mosaic covenant relationship with God through the substitution of tradition for Scripture.

John’s Gospel has a totally different viewpoint than the synoptics. He presents Christ in His deity, with a secondary emphasis on His messiahship to Israel. John selected specific events to illustrate the deity of Christ, and repeatedly relates the person of Christ to His messianic purpose as being sent by the Father.

It is a mistake to apply any of the four gospels to the believer. Only the upper room discourse of John 13-16 is prophetic of the future age, but Jesus teaches no Christian life process. However, the predictions concerning the coming and ministry of the Holy Spirit are basic to the future program of Christian living. But apart from the Spirit’s convicting work, no actual future ministry of the Spirit is presented, so one cannot read back into that discourse the truths concerning the baptism, filling, or sealing of the Spirit. John only predicts His change of residence through indwelling the believer.