

- f. The Zealots were a nationalistic party that fiercely opposed the Roman Empire and would use force if necessary.

2. The Gospels

- A. The word gospel is a Greek word that means “good news” (*evangelion* in Greek). It is the good news that Jesus the Messiah had come to provide salvation through his death, burial and resurrection.
- B. The Gospels center in on the three-fold ministry of the Messiah: prophet (Mt 21:6-11), priest (Heb 10:12) and king (Mt 27:11).
- C. The Gospels in the New Testament are unique pieces of literature in that they are not simply a biography or a history of the life of Christ. Each Gospel has a spiritual purpose and theme.

Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
To Jews	To Romans	To Greeks	To the Church
Christ as King	Christ as Servant	Christ as Savior	Christ as God
By a teacher	By a preacher	By a historian	By a theologian
Prophetic	Practical	Historical	Spiritual
Son of David	Servant of God	Son of Man	Son of God
Office of King	Office of Priest	Office of Priest	Office of Prophet
Genealogy: Yes, a King must have one	Genealogy: No, a Servant needs none	Genealogy: Yes, a Man should have one	Genealogy: No, God does not have one
Key Word: Kingdom	Key Word: Immediately	Key Word: Compassion	Key Word: Eternal Life

2. The prophetic timing of His trip to Jerusalem is stunning. It is the Passover, so Jesus and his disciples prepare for the Last Supper.
3. Jesus prays on the Mount of Olives, is arrested, tried and crucified. The remaining disciples are fearful and in hiding.
4. The resurrection of Jesus takes place and He appears to His twelve disciples, as well as to over five hundred people at the same time (1 Cor 15:3-6).

G. The divinity of Christ

1. The Gospels clearly portray the divinity of Christ. Jesus proved who He was by the things that He did. He walked on water, stopped natural storms, healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, healed paralytics, drove out demons, multiplied food and raised the dead.
2. He is called God by John (Jn 1:1). When John refers to Jesus as “the Word” (*logos* in Greek), it was clearly a reference to the divine. *Logos* was a favorite Stoic philosophical term. Around 600 B.C. the Greek philosopher Heraclitus used the term to designate the divine reason and plan which coordinates a changing universe.
3. The Gospels assert the divinity of Christ.

The Claim	The Passage
Matthew wrote that Jesus was the Son of God	Mt 3:16-17
Mark called Jesus the Son of God	Mk 1:1
Luke wrote that Jesus was the Son of God	Lk 1:29-33
John called Jesus the Son of God	Jn 20:30-31
Thomas called Jesus God	Jn 20:26-28
John the Baptist called Jesus the Son of God	Jn 1:32-34
Nathaniel said Jesus was the Son of God	Jn 1:49

4. The Disciples of Christ (also known as the twelve original apostles)

- A. Simon Peter was a partner in a fishing business with his brother Andrew. He became one of Jesus' closest friends (along with James and John). Evidently, he had quite a successful business and possibly had two homes, one in Bethsaida (where he was from) and the other in Capernaum.
1. He was compassionate, brave and was willing to sacrifice. He was a bit impulsive at times, but he had spiritual insight.
 2. The Gospel of Mark was Peter's account of the life of Christ. Peter ministered to the Jews throughout Asia Minor and Palestine and may have gone as far as Babylon to preach.
 3. Tradition says that he was crucified upside down in Rome.
- B. John was a fisherman who was quite possibly Jesus' closest friend here on earth. He was full of energy, ambitious and boisterous.
1. It seems he was a successful businessman and was one of five partners in a fishing enterprise with employees. Besides his fishing business in Capernaum, he had a house in Jerusalem and was a personal acquaintance with the High Priest.
 2. He may have had a violent temper because he and his brother James are referred to as the "sons of thunder." But he was impacted and transformed by God's love and was even given the responsibility of taking care of Mary, the mother of Jesus.
 3. He ministered primarily in Ephesus and the region of Asia Minor (modern Turkey). He was the author of five New Testament books. He was thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil and supernaturally survived. He was thus exiled to the island of Patmos where he wrote the book of Revelation. He is the only disciple who died a natural death.