

**Bible Study Class**  
**Clayton Presbyterian Church**  
**Lesson 1 Jesus**  
**Christ's Life Prior to His Ministry II**

As we begin this study hopefully, we can have a bit more discussion. These lessons are based on a study guide written by Gene Taylor in 1996. The study guide can be used by itself with just a Bible and some lessons will be done in that fashion. The study guide was based on a work by J.W. McGarvey and Philip Y. Pendleton called the *Fourfold Gospel*. This book combines the stories of all four gospels in chronological order. The study guide and the *Fourfold Gospel* are on the internet and the only restriction for their use is that they not be used for commercial purposes. I will list the scriptures for the next Sunday's lesson at the end of each Sunday. You may want to read them so you can participate in the discussion more. If you want the questions from the study guide in advance, I can print those for you as well.

Some of the lessons may spark enough discussion that we don't finish and that is okay, we will pick up the next Sunday. There are 26 lessons or about six months of talking about the life of Jesus. If it takes longer, so be it.

### **The Four Gospels**

The first four books of the New Testament—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—are called "gospels," meaning "good news." Each tells the story of Jesus from a unique perspective, emphasizing different aspects of who he is and what he came to accomplish.

The first three (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are called the Synoptic Gospels. Synoptic means "viewed together," and these three share a similar structure and relate many of the same stories. The gospel of John is more theological, with a greater stress on the identity of Jesus and the spiritual significance of his life. Strictly speaking, the authors of all four gospels are anonymous since they do not identify themselves in the text. Their authorship comes from the titles on early manuscripts ("according to Matthew, "according to Mark,") and early church traditions.

### **Matthew**

Matthew's gospel shows Jesus as the promised Messiah whose death brought salvation from sins. While some Jews rejected Jesus, claiming his death proved he was a fake, Matthew writes that Jesus is truly the Messiah, whose birth, life, and death on the cross fulfilled the promises of the Old Testament. His resurrection vindicated his claims and brought in a new era of salvation for all who believe in him.

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Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

**Mark**

Mark presents Jesus as the mighty Messiah and Son of God who exercises extraordinary authority to overcome the forces of Satan, sin, and disease. This powerful Messiah has not come to conquer the Roman legions, but to suffer and die as the Servant of the Lord and to pay the ransom for sins. The theme verse could be [Mark 10:45](#): "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

**Luke**

The gospel of Luke is the most universal of the four gospels, confirming that Jesus is the Savior of the whole world who draws people to himself from every race, culture, and social status. The message of salvation, which arose from within Israel, is now available to all. A theme verse could be [Luke 19:10](#): "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

John gives a portrait of Jesus as the divine Son who came to earth to reveal the Father and to bring eternal life to all who believe in him. The message of this gospel can be summed up in [John 3:16](#): "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

**Luke's Preface and Dedication and John's Introduction**

Read Luke 1:1-4

Read John 1:1-18

**Q 1** John applies the title "the Word" to Jesus in the prologue but nowhere else in his Gospel. The background to the term is found in the Old Testament, where God's word is the dynamic force of his will.

**Genesis 1: 3** And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

In the first two verses John declares that the Word has always existed, is in the closest possible relationship to God the Father, and is divine. John continues by explaining that God created all things through the agency of the Word and that

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nothing has been created that the Word did not create. This includes both physical and spiritual light and life.

**Q 2** The scriptures state that Jesus was involved in the creation of the world and the entire universe. This was possible because Jesus is God. The overwhelming message of the Scriptures teaches that Jesus is God.

**Q 3** John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'

**Q 4** The world of people the Word created did not recognize him, and the people that waited for him (the Jews) did not accept him. He was not the kind of military-messiah the Jews anticipated; however, all was not lost, for many put their faith in him, as this Gospel describes.

**Q 5** Those who believe in him become God's children.

**Q 6** John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'"

**Q 7** The superiority of this grace is seen in the fact that the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Jesus makes the invisible God visible.

### **The Genealogy of Jesus**

**Matthew 1:1-17 Audio Bible**

**Luke 3:23-38 Audio Bible**

**Q 8** 14 X 3=42

**Q 9** Joseph but because of the supernatural birth he expressed it this way.

**Q 10** Some commentators state that Matthew is more of a summary and neatly makes the 14 X 3 a memory device. Luke seems to include all of the generations.

### **Annunciation to Zacharias of the Birth of John the Baptist**

**Read Luke 1:5-25**

**Q 11** Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. He was a priest.

**Q 12** He was burning incense.

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**Q 13** Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. <sup>14</sup> He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, <sup>15</sup> for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. <sup>16</sup> He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup> And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

**Q 14** And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time." Some commentators think that he was deaf as well as speechless.

**Annunciation of the Birth of Jesus**

Read Matthew 1:18-25

Read Luke 1:26-38

**Q 15** Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet<sup>[b]</sup> did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.<sup>20</sup> But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,<sup>[c]</sup> because he will save his people from their sins."

**Q 16** More than 300 Messianic prophecies made in the Old Testament were all fulfilled through Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

- A descendant of Abraham ([Genesis 18:18](#))
- A descendant of Isaac ([Genesis 17:19](#))
- A descendant of Jacob ([Numbers 24:17](#))
- From the tribe of Judah ([Genesis 49:10](#))
- Born in Bethlehem ([Micah 5:2](#))
- Born of a virgin ([Isaiah 7:14](#))
- Escaped to Egypt as a child ([Hosea 11:1](#))
- Ministered in Galilee and along the Jordan River ([Isaiah 9:1-2](#))
- Rejected by Jewish people ([Isaiah 53:3](#))

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**Q 17** God will give him the throne of his father David,

**Q 18** How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the holy one to be born will be called<sup>[a]</sup> the Son of God.

**Mary's Visit to Elizabeth**

**Read** Luke 1:39-56

**Q 19** They were cousins. Elizabeth was carrying John.

**Q 20** The baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. He recognized that Mary was carrying Jesus.

**The Birth and Early Life of John the Baptist**

**Read** Luke 1:57-80

**Q 21** Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy. <sup>59</sup> On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, <sup>60</sup> but his mother spoke up and said, "No! He is to be called John."

**Q 22** And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, <sup>77</sup> to give his people the knowledge of salvation

through the forgiveness of their sins,

**Q 23** And the child grew and became strong in spirit<sup>[b]</sup>; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel. John grew up in the wilderness and may have had contact with religious communities like that at Qumran, an ascetic community whose writings, the Dead Sea Scrolls, were discovered in 1946.

**Q 24** We have no materials for filling up this brief outline of the thirty years that followed in the Baptist's life. The usual Jewish education, the observance of the Nazarite vow, the death of his parents while he was comparatively young, an early retirement from the world to the deserts that surrounded the western shores of the Dead Sea, study and meditation given to the Law and the Prophets, the steadfast waiting for the consolation of Israel, possible intercourse with the Essenes who lived in that region, or with hermit-teachers, like Banus, the teacher of Josephus. Josephus wrote that Banus "lived in the desert, used no other clothing than grew upon trees, had no other food than what grew of its own accord, and bathed himself in cold water frequently, both by night and by day, in order to preserve his chastity. I imitated him in those things, and continued with him three

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years." Josephus then returned to the city at the age of nineteen and began to live according to the rules of the Pharisees. Whatever may have been the surroundings of John's life, he entered upon his work in a spirit which was intensely personal and original.

Luke 1:1-4	John 1:1-18	Luke 1:26-38
Luke 1:5-25	Matthew 1:18-25	Luke 1:57-80