

## **An Exposé of The Gospels of Jesus**

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It has been known throughout the Christian religions of the world that there are several ways to visualize the teachings of Christ, and in many cases, feuds have developed between their differences. You would think that with the amount of information we have about Jesus, we could come to a mutual understanding of his message. But this is not the case. Why!? First of all there does appear to be some differences within several of the scriptures themselves which could very well be a contributing factor to this dilemma. Secondly, it seems many opinions have risen because of this. Are they justified, or are they just theories? Either way, it really should be looked into and not just left as an open question. So let's see if we can't come to a rectified solution by merely using a simple method of deduction, and see what happens.

For example; in a book entitled, "Getting to Know Your Bible", it claims there is a strain between the writings of James and the writings of Paul. James writes, "Faith without good deeds is useless"; James 2(20), where Paul writes, "What makes a man righteous is not obedience to the law, but Faith in Jesus Christ.", Galatians 2(16), and Paul also insists that good deeds must necessarily follow if one has true faith. Paul's writings also seem to strain with the Gospels. Good deeds must be a practice, not just expected to follow. You have heard it said many times, "You are saved because you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." But if your belief in Jesus is only that; he is the Christ and/or the Son of God, then how does the saving come into play?

Remember, Jesus himself said, "He who hears my words and acts upon them, is like he who built his house on rock,..... and he who hears my words and does not act upon them, is like he who built his house on sand,....." Matt 7(24-27), Luke 6(46-49) and Isaiah 29(13-14). If you believe also in the wisdom of his words, and how they can help you see the light of understanding, truth, and the flow of life, and act upon them and make them part of your own life, then you are saved. So, it does appear that James' statement is true, and so is the strain between them. But it goes beyond that.

The writings of the Acts of The Apostles and the Epistles of Peter and James show a strong cooperation to the teachings of Jesus, as well as a uniform strength seen in other books of the Old Testament. Paul's writings seem to be

of a lesser strength, almost to the appearance that he has lost some of the values from the teachings of Jesus. However, one must understand that almost all of Paul's writings are a follow up to his previous visit to each people or country. In other words, we only have his later message or complaints on how they should conduct themselves apart from their old ways. We do not have records of any of his words or observations that he delivered to these places on his first visit.

It should be understood that all these advises or warnings are written towards their individual contained lifestyles in his examples. It needs be understood that most of his visits were with the Gentiles outside the Jewish circle, which were pagans by nature. Though they worshiped gods of their own, conforming to a 'new' god (so to speak), was not that difficult for them. However, his approach was, that forgiveness was already in place from Jesus, therefore faith tends to follow. But back in the Jewish community, Jesus mission was to 'Restore' a *defective* faith practice forced upon them by their own rulers. *How do you transform that to a people who have no idea what that means?* So, we are only receiving a follow up sample of what Jesus' words might have meant through Paul's interpretation. Paul's actions seen in the Acts of the Apostles however, do not conflict with Peter, James, or the first Gospels.

The Gospel of John also produces many aspects quite damaging towards the character, methods, and wisdom of Jesus, demonstrated in other works. First, in the Gospel of John, the writer himself is considered the one whom Jesus loved. Yet, there is no evidence to support this anywhere else in the Bible. All other reports point to Peter as the one Jesus loved, or rested his hopes on; Matt 16 (13-20), Mark 8(27-30) and Luke 9(18-21). Much of John's work appears to lay some of the glory onto himself as a special chosen one by Christ. Matt, Mark, Luke, The Acts, Peter, and James, are all content to leave the glory to Jesus.

A second point to cover is the character of Jesus in John's Gospel. Very often in his Gospel, Jesus openly proclaims who he is, why he came, and why they should believe in him. This type of action also cannot be verified anywhere else in the Bible outside of John's Gospel. For example; in the first three Gospels, Jesus often times restricts the Apostles from revealing who he is, as noted in the same passages mentioned above about Peter. It is also mentioned in more passages such as Matt 17(1-9), Mark 3(7-12), Mark 5(42-43), Mark 7(31-37), Luke 9(28-36) and Isaiah 52-53. He also restricts them from revealing him through his miracles; Mark 5(38-43), Luke 9(25-36) and Luke 17(11-19).

Third, the other Gospels show that Jesus, when referring to himself, refers instead to the Son of Man, but does not openly reveal to them who this Son of Man is. Now John's Gospel, being as open to the identity of Jesus as it is, even contradicts its own character of Jesus by him mentioning the Son of Man, but not revealing the identity of that term to the people; John 3(14), 12(23), and 12(34-36). This instead helps to confirm Jesus' style, as seen in the first three Gospels

A fourth point to bring out, is that the first three Gospels and other works not only do not display Jesus openly proclaiming his identity as does the Gospel of John, but rather they display a lot of his words that teach against this type of self-proclamation, such as; "The exalted shall be humbled and the humbled shall be exalted," Matt 23(12), Luke 14(11), Luke 18(14) and Isaiah 42(1-4). Jesus also taught in the first three Gospels who is the greatest. It is not the ruler or benefactor, but rather the greatest among you is the servant; Matt 18(1-4), Matt 20(24-28), Mark 9(32-34), Mark 10(41-45), Luke 9(46-48) and Luke 22(24-30). He also taught that when doing anything for God, do it in secret, so that what God sees you do in secret, He will repay you; Matt 6(1-18).

Again, according to the first three Gospels, Jesus taught in parables, [or moral stories], to teach truth, in its basic form. If they were going to believe, it would be by his words and his works, not because he needed to convince them who he was. As he also taught, "By their fruits you shall know them; Matt 7(13-23) and Luke 6(43-45). This should be a true light of his personal presence as well. If not, then it looks as though he's contradicting his own teachings.

Many works from the very first books (such as the Law Books), the Psalms, the 'wisdom' books of Proverbs, Wisdom and Sirach, the prophet Isaiah, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the Acts of The Apostles, and the Epistles of Peter and James, all show a strong cooperation in the depiction of a most highly unpretentious and wise Son of God. How he chose to portray his wisdom, his power, and his teachings are indeed very important, and should not be taken for granted. But over the years, the identity and wisdom of Jesus has been over shadowed by the asserted values in the other Epistles, and the characteristics and teaching methods of Christ have been smothered by the exalted works from John as well. It seems unfair that these later writings should have so much power over the other works mentioned above.

Although, let's try something else. It has been stated by many biblical scholars in their introductions to the Gospels by pointing out that John wrote his Gospel much later in time, (25-30 years), perhaps after the other Gospels of Jesus had already made their appearance. He seems to have written his Gospel with an inserted expressiveness in some of his accounts, so as to convince his readers that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. (There is evidence within John's own Gospel, as well as its relation to the other three that suggests this.) There was a write up on this approach, and it may be possible that questions were arising concerning the belief in Jesus as being the Christ during John's time. So, to help generate this point, it was presumed he elevated some of his accounts of Christ's teachings, to further elaborate on who Jesus was. Though the *elaborations* themselves may be true, their illustration of His method and style of teaching become contradictory or hypercritical with the wisdom and teachings portrayed in the other three Gospels.

However, it has been stated that John may not have incorporated these elevated expressions himself. It has been claimed by biblical scholars that a second writer may have been involved in John's Gospel sometime after its original writing, or perhaps even after his death. Historical references to John's Gospel and even Catholic Bibles that include introductions to each of the Gospels, state this as so. You see, either of these could be true. Because it would explain why there are two endings in John's Gospel, why some accounts in some stories end, and then re-continue, and why the 'nature' among half of his Gospel correspond with the other three, while the other half appears accelerated and contradictory to Christ's former tactfulness among his deliverance. This makes it very difficult to get a hold of Christ's wisdom.

These later writings are not meant to be discredited all together. The point here is, we can't allow ourselves to simply take them for granted just because they are there. Stability needs to be a factor here if we are to find Jesus' real baseline. It should be noted, there was valuable evidence in these works still to be taken into consideration. (As a matter of fact, three revealing key factors were uncovered within John's very Gospel that helped greatly in bringing these things to light).

When the relative character and method episodes of Christ were gathered, they were then joined in with the others and the final setting was laid to rest. The finished draft may not have revealed any new observations, if there were any, until after the work was put away for a while and had a chance to breath,

(say six months or so) and read later, as though it was a brand-new read. Only then would it be learned if this effort was rightfully justified.

The result; that experiment conducted back in the early eighties exposed all these very issues on their own. The effort itself was conducted purely on mechanics, (blindly you might say, purposely; *'do not let the right hand know what the left hand is doing'*), to see if anything would come forward. Five years later the finished draft was entitled; *A Collective Gospel of Jesus and its Revealing Story*, © 1984. Several years later, after reviewing the finished result, this *Expose'* is among some of the findings that surfaced. (Yeah; there's more.) This discovery led on and up to other levels never before imagined. It's had some revisions since for minor oversights, but the bulk of the work hasn't changed.

A larger percentile of the Gospels were retrieved in this effort more than you would think, in spite of how much many theologians would like to break down, such as in the Jesus seminars. *If you don't know the theme, how can you judge the content?* You may find this work presents a refreshing stability and wisdom of Jesus from the very Gospels themselves, never seen to this level before.

This work is not mean to say that this is exactly how Christ's story life actually played out. That's near impossible. But it does reveal intensities in Jesus' teachings, that's been hidden way too long. The Gospels shall always remain as the original historical documents. The whole purpose of this merging effort was to discover if it could possibly unveil a sturdier portrayal of Jesus and his teachings. There exists no doubt this direction was the right path towards finding a sound footing in our Lord's deliverance.