

## Do the Gospels Belong to the New Testament or the Old?

by Bob Waldron

[www.cvillechurch.com](http://www.cvillechurch.com)

Introduction: There are those making a strong effort to teach that Matthew Mark, Luke, and John all belong to the Old Testament, and to the fifty days between Jesus' crucifixion and the Day of Pentecost, and that none of them belong to the New Testament. The style of the writing is hysterical, shouting out in bold letters, blaming the whole thing on the Catholics, but never fear, a few enlightened individuals have discovered what has eluded virtually all Bible students throughout the centuries, and they are willing to lead us out of the fog. Such an approach always makes me cautious.

Jesus came to the Jews, and He preached among them. Therefore a great deal of what He had to say had to do with the law of Moses and with the failure of the Jews to serve God properly. But He also came to fulfill the law and to usher in the New. Therefore His lessons were to prepare the way for the New Testament, and a great deal of what He had to say was connected with the New Covenant. The efforts of men who wish to adapt the scriptures to prove what they want are never ceasing. One of the ideas that is being taught by some is that the gospels are not a part of the New Testament; therefore the things taught in them are not binding on Christians. I cannot but believe that one of the primary objectives of this doctrine is to eliminate the teaching of Matthew 5 and 19 on marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Therefore I invite you to join me in the study of this question: Do the Gospels Belong to the New Testament or the Old.

- I. The question is ambiguous and cannot be simply answered as is.
  - A. Does the question refer to the events recorded in the gospel, or to the record of them?
  - B. By New Testament, do we mean the period of the New Testament or do we mean the record of books pertinent to the New Testament?
  - C. The events recorded in the gospel accounts all occurred during the law of Moses.
  - D. But the gospel accounts belong to the New Testament age.
  
- II. These accounts were written **after** the church was established.
  - A. Why were they written?
    1. Matthew and Mark do not contain statements of their purpose, but Luke and John do. Matthew and Mark serve the same general purpose of providing the facts concerning the things Jesus did and said.
    2. Luke wrote Theophilus and told him that he was writing these things "that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed" (Luke 1:4).
    3. John wrote that "these things were written that ye might believe" (John 20:30-31).
  - B. Therefore these records of the gospel were written in order that men might have access to the deeds and teachings of Christ, that they might believe on Him and be saved.
  - C. They were written in the gospel age by men who lived in the gospel age that there might be a record preserved of the teachings and deeds of Jesus.
  - D. Jesus would send to the apostles the Comforter who would "bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (14:26).
  - E. Passages from John.

1. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (15:7).
  2. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (15:10).
  3. "I have given them thy words" (John 17:14).
- F. When the Hebrew writer stated that in these last days God hath spoken through His Son, does that refer only to what the Son said through His apostles but nothing of what He said personally? (Heb. 1:1-2).

III. The gospel accounts contain numerous references to things that did not apply during the lifetime of Jesus but anticipated the Messianic kingdom.

- A. Description of the new birth (John 3:3-5).
  1. This "new birth" cannot be regarded as the baptism taught by John the Baptist because John preached that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, not that the baptism he taught put one in that kingdom.
  2. Jesus said, "The least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than John" (Matt. 11:11).
  3. The expressions "kingdom of heaven" and kingdom of God" were used interchangeably by the gospel writers (cp. Matt. 13:31; Mark 4:30).
- B. Instructions regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage (Matt. 19:3-9). Quite clearly, Jesus is not going to allow what Moses "suffered them" to do (19:8).
- C. Conduct of the church (Matt. 18).
- D. Making all meats clean (Mark 7:19).

IV. When the apostles preached the gospel, what did they preach?

- A. The work of Jesus (Acts 10:36-42).
- B. Luke says he wrote his former treatise of "all that Jesus began both to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1).
- C. Did the gospel that the apostles preached pertain to the New Testament or to the Old? Obviously it was the New, because it was Jesus that told them to preach the gospel to all the world (Mark 16:15).
- D. Remember John's expression of the purpose of his gospel: that men might believe.
- E. Therefore, the events of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all happened under the Old Covenant, but every one of these books was written during the gospel age, and the gospel is the record contained in them.
- F. Therefore, clearly, and without doubt, the gospels belong to the New Testament.

Conclusion: I am always suspicious of an idea that would never occur to one merely reading the New Testament. This idea that the gospel accounts belong to the Old Testament would only occur to one who had an agenda to prove. We should reject completely this doctrine.