If you’ve ever opened the Bible and come across the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—you may have felt a bit confused: *“Why four accounts? Don’t they all say the same thing?”* This question is more common than it seems, and its answer is not only fascinating from a historical perspective, but also deeply theological and pastoral. The four Gospels are not a monotonous repetition; each one offers a unique face of Jesus Christ and a message adapted to different human and spiritual realities.

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1. The History Behind the Gospels

The Gospels are accounts written by different authors between approximately 60 and 100 A.D., about thirty or forty years after the death and resurrection of Christ. Each evangelist had a specific purpose and a particular audience:

- **Saint Matthew**, writing around 70 A.D., addresses primarily Jewish converts. His Gospel presents Jesus as the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, constantly referring to fulfilled prophecies: “*All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet*” (Matthew 1:22). Matthew wants to show that Christ is not just a teacher, but the fulfillment of Israel’s hopes.
- **Saint Mark**, probably the first to be written, around 60–65 A.D., focuses on the actions of Jesus. It is the shortest and most dynamic Gospel, intended for Christians facing persecution in Rome. Mark presents a suffering Jesus who gives Himself out of love, emphasizing the reality of the Cross.
- **Saint Luke**, a physician and companion of Saint Paul, writes around 80–85 A.D., with a predominantly Gentile audience. Luke highlights mercy and the universality of Christ’s message: the poor, the marginalized, women, and foreigners occupy a central place in his narrative. Here we see the pastoral heart of the Gospel: “*Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests*” (Luke 2:14).
- **Saint John**, the latest (around 90–100 A.D.), offers a deeply theological Gospel. John does not seek to narrate chronological events, but to reveal the divine identity of Jesus: the Word made flesh, the Son of God who brings life and light. His message is filled with contemplation and spiritual depth: “*The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory*” (John 1:14).

Each evangelist, therefore, writes not to compete with the others, but to complement a richer understanding of Jesus.

2. Different Perspectives, One Message

Although the four Gospels recount the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, they do so from different perspectives. It is like looking at the same landscape from four different angles: each view reveals nuances that the others do not.

- **Matthew** emphasizes the teaching of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law and the prophecies.
- **Mark** reminds us of Christ’s suffering and radical self-giving.
- **Luke** places emphasis on compassion and inclusion.
- **John** invites us to contemplation and deep faith in the divinity of Jesus.

This multiple approach has pastoral and practical value: it allows us to draw closer to Christ in ways that fit our life and context. One believer may identify with the merciful Jesus of Luke, while another is moved by the suffering Jesus of Mark, or inspired by the teacher Christ of Matthew and the divine Christ of John.

3. Is One More Valuable Than Another?

From a theological point of view, no Gospel is “superior” to another. The Catholic Church accepts all of them as **the inspired Word of God**, and together they form a complete mosaic of the life and mission of Jesus. However, we can observe that each has a distinct emphasis that may be more helpful depending on the spiritual needs of the reader:

- If you seek doctrinal understanding and the fulfillment of God’s promises, **Matthew** is essential.
- If you need strength to persevere in the midst of suffering, **Mark** is inspiring.
- If you desire to encounter the merciful heart of God, **Luke** is your guide.
- If you seek a deep and contemplative relationship with Christ, **John** is irreplaceable.

It is like a symphony: each instrument has its moment, and together they create perfect harmony. Separately, they lose richness; united, they reveal the fullness of Christ.

4. Practical Application in Our Daily Lives

Understanding that there are four Gospels is not just an intellectual exercise, but an invitation to live closer to Christ:

1. **Multiplicity of perspectives**: Just as the Gospels offer different angles of Jesus, we can learn to look at our own lives from various perspectives: justice, mercy, love, and deep faith.
2. **Personal identification**: Each person can approach the Gospel that touches their heart. This allows for a more personalized spiritual journey without losing the unity of the Christian message.
3. **Dialogue and community**: Reading the four Gospels in community teaches us to value the diversity of experiences within the Church and to recognize that each brother and sister may have a unique relationship with Christ.
4. **Prayer and meditation**: The Gospel of John, for example, invites us to contemplation and deep prayer; Luke calls us to compassionate action; Matthew guides us toward fulfilling God’s will in our actions; Mark strengthens us in suffering and self-giving.

5. Conclusion

The four Gospels are not repetitive; they are complementary. Each allows us to know Jesus through different facets, like a diamond that shines with many reflections. Recognizing this teaches us a fundamental lesson: **the truth of God is rich and multifaceted**, and our journey of faith can be as well. By reading them with attention, prayer, and openness, we find not only historical information, but also spiritual guidance, inspiration for daily life, and a deeper encounter with Christ.

As Saint Paul says: “*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*” (2 Timothy 3:16). Reading the four Gospels allows us to live out this teaching fully, integrating wisdom, faith, compassion, and contemplation into every aspect of our lives.