

Justin White

QUESTIONS

1. How are the materials in the Gospels divided?
2. What are the two main difficulties that modern readers have in reading the Gospels?
3. What is required in order to effectively exegete the four Gospels?
4. What is the nature of the Gospels?
5. What does the literary context have to do with?

ANSWERS

1. The Gospels are divided into sayings and narratives. These refer to the teachings of Jesus and the stories about Jesus.
2. Two difficulties that readers have in reading the Gospels are the fact that Jesus didn't write the Gospels. Also, the fact that there are four gospels; three being similar, and John's gospel being so different.
3. In order to give a proper exegesis of the four Gospels, one would be required to think both in terms of the historical setting of Jesus and the historical setting of the authors.
4. The gospels are two-level documents. Historical context first has to do with Jesus himself, but also has to do with the individual authors (the evangelists) and their reasons for writing.
5. The literary context has to do with the place of a given periscope in the context of any one of the gospels.

TERMS

Pericopes- Individual stories and sayings.

Eschatological- Looking for the end.

Synoptic Gospels- "Common-view" Gospels.

SUMMARY

In studying the gospels, it's important to note that they all record facts *about* Jesus, recall the teaching *of* Jesus, and bear witness *to* Jesus. Two key take-aways from this are the importance of studying both the historical and literary contexts. Exegeting the gospels requires the exegete to consider both the historical setting of Jesus *and* the historical setting of the authors. In understanding the literary contexts of the gospels, it's important to understand the nature of the composition of the gospels as wholes.