

# SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

Nat Saginario

**AIM Institute | Synoptic Gospels**  
**Instructor: Nat Saginario**  
**Study Guide**

Welcome to our course on Synoptic Gospels. This publication provides a weekly schedule and preparation for each session.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to provide an analysis of the Gospels written by the synoptic writers Matthew, Mark, and Luke, with emphasis on the difference in their structure, subject matter, and presentation of Christ. The teachings of Jesus on the Kingdom of God as well as the parables will especially be followed through the Gospels.

**OBJECTIVES**

- Master the Gospels in their presentation of the life, person, and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. To recognize to whom each of the books was written and to learn how Christ was portrayed in each book.
- Inculcate faith in God as we see Jesus in the Word.
- Apply the universal principles of the Word of God, and the Gospels in particular, to contemporary life.
- Obtain an understanding of discipleship by studying how Christ trained His disciples.
- See the earnest heart of God securing a personal relationship with His creation through the reaching out of His Son Jesus.
- Learn about Christ's Kingdom and it's King, as well as learn from the parables how the Kingdom operates.
- Recognize that Jesus shared a basic truth with his disciples and the Church that would be the foundation of our faith. (We abide in Christ/Christ abides in us.)

**INSTRUCTOR:** Nat Saginario

“Teaching and mentoring has been the joy of my life.” Nat’s statement has totally represented the life and ministry of a man whose first priority is being in relationship with Jesus, second priority family, and third priority reaching out to people around the world challenging them to grow in Christ. This he has endeavored to do as pastor, assistant pastor, Bible college instructor, and cross-border missionary spanning 85+ countries. Nat presently resides near Cleveland, Ohio, and has been associated with various colleges, mission organizations, and churches. His academic preparation includes Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees, both in Education.

## **COURSE FORMAT**

This directed study format enables you to receive college level instruction while studying at home. (Note, AIM Institute does not offer accredited college credits.) Course elements include:

- Weekly video assignments
- Required textbook reading assignments
- Contact time with the instructor and classmates by the means of a weekly Zoom debrief classroom.
- Study questions for your personal benefit as well as preparation for the weekly debrief but not to be turned in.
- Notes made available by the instructor. There will be blanks for students to fill in while watching videos.
- Course will be graded as pass or fail. Bear in mind your weekly preparation will have a direct bearing on how much you gain from the course.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

- The first of twelve Weekly Zoom Debriefs will begin on Tuesday, October 4 at 7:00 PM (Eastern Standard Time) for 12 weeks
- You will receive a Zoom invite by email for each debrief.
- Preparation can be done at any time before the debrief.
- To maximize the use of your time, we will not cover information from the videos in the debrief unless there are questions.
- Completion of the course requires a project, a study on “Kingdom Teaching” drawn from Jesus’ parables.
- A complete schedule with weekly assignments and course project will be sent to you after you are registered.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

- This is an intensive course; students should plan to participate in all class sessions.
- Complete all course reading and writing assignments, watch videos.
- Complete course project.

## **LECTURE VIDEOS**

- Videos are available at [CLICK HERE](#)
- Use assigned study questions to prepare for weekly Zoom debrief

## TEXTS

- Holy Bible (Translation of your choice)
- *“Encountering the New Testament (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition),”* by Walter A. Elwell and Robert W. Yarbrough (available on Amazon.com, be sure to order the correct edition)
  - Publisher: Baker Academic (2013) ISBN: 978-0-8010-3964-5
  - Hardcover: 430 pages, this textbook will be used for other AIM New Testament survey courses.
  - Pages in the weekly assignments match this edition

## Participation

- **Essential:** Our weekly Zoom meeting is a discussion based debrief, not a lecture.
- Please be prepared to turn on your camera and test your internet connection in advance.

## Study Schedule

October 4 – December 20  
Weekly Debrief Tuesday 7PM EST

### October 4 | Session 1

- Watch video 1
- Orientation and course introduction
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 1

Questions:

1. In the parable of the patch on the old garment, or the new wine in old wine skins (Matthew 9:16-17; Mark 2:21-22; Luke 5:36), why did Jesus use those materials or liquids to explain His parable?
  2. What does the patch or wine represent in today's context?
  3. What can the ingredient in wine possibly represent?
  4. What can the teaching of Matthew 9:14-15; Mark 2:18-20; and Luke 5:34-35 mean to a person in this generation?
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### October 11 | Session 2

- Watch video 2
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Page 126, Pages 21-27

Questions:

1. In the parable of the wise and foolish builders (Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 6:46-49), who was Jesus speaking to? Where was Jesus when He spoke these words?
2. What was the main point of the parable?
3. Jesus speaks about the blind leading the blind. Where is that found in Scripture and who was Jesus referring to?
4. In video #2, what Empire conquered the Babylonian Empire?

### October 18 | Session 3

- Watch video 3

- Textbook Reading Assignment: Pages 28-38

Questions:

1. In video #3, what was the Greek Septuagint?
  2. In Matthew 7:15-23 and Luke 6:43-45, Jesus shares the parable about the \_\_\_\_\_. He said every tree would be known by its \_\_\_\_\_. False prophets would be known by their \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. Explain the teaching in Matthew 11:16-19; Luke 7:31-35. How would Jesus speak of this generation if He was teaching today, and what terms would He have used?
  4. Find where Jesus said that a pupil is not above His teacher, or a servant above his master. What does Beelzebub have to do with the teaching?
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#### **October 25 | Session 4**

- Watch video 4
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Pages 39-52

Questions:

1. Jesus tells the story of the two debtors (Luke 7:36-50). Who was Jesus speaking to and what was the context?
  2. In Matthew 24:42-44, Jesus said “watch.” Who and why was He telling them to “watch?”
  3. A popular parable is that of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). Who was Jesus’ audience when He spoke these words, and what was the context? What should we take away from this teaching today?
  4. In video #4, explain the abbreviations for dating: B.C. or B.C.E. and A.D. and C.E.
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#### **November 1 | Session 5**

- Watch video 5
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Pages 53-72

Questions:

1. Who was the audience when Jesus spoke about the doorkeeper in Mark 13:33-37? What was the context?
2. The parable of the wise servant is found in Matthew 24:45-51. From your own studies, what have you learned that you perhaps never knew or understood?

3. In video #5, approximately how many Jews were located within the Roman Empire during the first century?
  4. Matthew 25:31-46 tells the parable of the sheep and the goats. Who possibly were the sheep that Jesus was referring to and who were the goats? Who were the audience that Jesus was speaking to?
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### November 8 | Session 6

- Watch video 6
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Pages 73-82

Questions:

1. Matthew 5:14-16; Mark 4:21-22; Luke 8:16 was part of Jesus' teachings "The \_\_\_\_\_."
  2. Explain in your own words Jesus' teaching in Matthew 14:47-50.
  3. Explain in your own words Jesus' teaching in Matthew 13:51-52.
  4. What new understanding or insight have you received from personally reading again Matthew 25:14-30 this week?
  5. In video #6, tell some facts about John Mark's parents and probably his societal status.
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### November 15 | Session 7

- Watch video 7
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Pages 83-92

Questions:

1. In video #7, the "Ave Maria" is one of the songs found in \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. Where was the marriage feast parable spoken by Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_. What was the context for Him to tell this story?
  3. Jesus used the fig tree in various parables or teachings. What was Jesus conveying in Matthew 24:33-34; Mark 13:28-32; Luke 21:29-33? Who was Jesus speaking to and what was the context of this teaching?
  4. Jesus gave two teachings to a large crowd outside the Temple concerning "sons." Where are those teachings located in the gospels and what was the context for Jesus to deliver such remarks?
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### November 22 | Session 8

- Watch video 8
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Page 105-108

Questions:

1. There were some who listened to Jesus who were envious about others “having favor with God” who perhaps did not deserve that favor (in their estimation). That brought about the teaching in Matthew 20:1-16. Briefly write this parable using a modern-day situation.
  2. Luke 19:11-27 provides an opportunity for us to understand God’s unique value system. The New King James version of the parable tells us “...because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately,” Jesus had to deliver this parable. What was Jesus trying to teach them?
  3. Why did Jesus speak to the disciples about the importune widow in Luke 18:1-8?
  4. Pharisees and Publicans both begin with the letter “P” in English. Are they alike in any other way according to Luke 18:9-14?
  5. In video #8, what is the great trinity passage found in Luke?
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### November 29 | Session 9

- Watch video 9
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Pages 109-115

Questions:

1. In video #9, it is stated, “Jesus was not breaking the Law, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Law.”
  2. Where is the parable about the rich man and Lazarus found in the gospels? Do you think this conversation between the two can actually take place? Who was listening to this parable told by Jesus?
  3. One parable told by Jesus can often be overwhelming to those who are found in a place of servanthood or bondage. List the various expectations of the master in order, found in Luke 17:5-10.
  4. Three parables were told about three lost items or persons: sheep, coin, and sons. Luke 15:1-32, and Matthew 18:12-14. Who was in the audience and what was the context?
  5. In one parable, the main character has been given the title of the “unjust steward.” (Luke 16:1-13) Someone has said, “the parable shows how unscrupulous people are often more shrewd than Christians, and we need to be as wise as they are when protecting our Godly values.” What did that person mean?
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## December 6 | Session 10

- Watch video 10
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Pages 116-122

### Questions:

1. Luke shares three stories told by Jesus (Luke 14:7-35). List those stories and tell how they are connected.
  2. Luke 12:35-48 tells a story told by Jesus to His disciples in the hearing of a larger crowd. Why did both the disciples and the crowd come to hear what Jesus said?
  3. In video #10, What is the definition of Historical Criticism?
  4. Many teachings have been found in Luke's gospel. Luke 11:5-13 is about \_\_\_\_\_ and Luke 12:13-21 is about \_\_\_\_\_. Why was the first story shared by Jesus? Why was the second story shared?
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## December 13 | Session 11

- Watch video 11
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Pages 123-138

### Questions:

1. In video #11, on which of the days of Jesus' last week did He deliver the Olivet Discourse?
  2. Another example of a fig tree teaching is found in Luke 13:6-9. How did this parable differ from the other one in week #7?
  3. A well-known parable, that of the Good Samaritan, was told to a teacher of the Law. What new insight have you had as you reread this passage of Scripture this week? Luke 10:30-37
  4. Matthew shares four teachings of Jesus in order (Matthew 13:24-46) (also Luke 13:18-21). List the four. They are related...how? They are not related...how?
  5. What is your take on Jesus' teachings in Matthew 12:43-45; Luke 11:24-26? Can a Christian be filled again with an unclean spirit?
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## December 20 | Session 12

- Watch video 11

- Final discussion and challenge
- Textbook Reading Assignment: None
- Term Paper Due

Questions:

1. Mark 4:26-29 gives us a teaching of Jesus to \_\_\_\_\_. Where was Jesus when He taught these words?
2. Jesus was teaching a large crowd at the same location as the question above which is told in Matthew 13:3-9 and 18-23; Mark 4:3-25; Luke 8:4-15. What four conditions did Jesus speak about?
3. The divided Kingdom was the major point in Jesus' teachings found in Matthew 12:25-29; Mark 3:22-30; Luke 11:17-20. Explain, if you can, the reasoning behind the mindset of the Jewish leaders concerning this question. Who was Beelzebub?
4. In video #12, list the total names of the women who were at the tomb of Jesus on resurrection Sunday (a compilation of the four gospels).

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