

# Why Four Gospels?

Making Sense of the Gospels

The key model:

Earth Up (Matthew, Mark &  
Luke)

Heaven Down (John)

# The Difference

- ✦ Earth Up: Start with Categories We Relate To
- ✦ Heaven Down: Tell the Result before We Start the Story
- ✦ Importance of the Difference:
  - ✦ Most people come to Jesus from the earth up

# Additional Angles

- ✦ Another advantage is additional angles
  - ✦ An illustration from football reply.

## The Starting Points

Mark: John the Baptist

Matthew/Luke: Infancy  
(Joseph/Mary)

John: Pre-Existence

# Why Four and Not More?

- ✦ Four gospels emerged as special quickly
  - ✦ Papias
  - ✦ Clement of Alexandria
  - ✦ Justin Martyr
  - ✦ Muratorian Canon
  - ✦ Tatian
  - ✦ Irenaeus
  - ✦ Codex versus Rolls (Collections)
  - ✦ Other gospels not used in worship (Origen)

# Canon: What about...?

- ✦ Church Choosing the books later (4th century)?
- ✦ History is Written by the winners?
- ✦ 27 Books not listed until AD 367 by Athanasius?
- ✦ The Gospel of Thomas?

# History and Choice of Perspective

- ✦ Synoptics: As it was happening
- ✦ John: Sometimes on further review (We did not understand at the time notes)
- ✦ Point: Learn to appreciate the gospels from either standpoint