

5. Piecing the Gospels together

There have been many attempts to set out a sequence of events from the four Gospels and none are identical. No Gospel writer claims to present a chronological order.

This harmony of the Gospels can be downloaded as a PDF. Go to <https://www.dayone.co.uk/products/nothing-but-the-truth>

The Gospel writers often use expressions like: ‘at that time’, ‘another time’, ‘one of those days’, ‘again, Jesus began to teach by the Lake’ all of which give little certainty of timing. The phrase ‘some time later’ (John 5:1), makes it almost impossible to place the events of that chapter. Only with such expressions as ‘that same day’ or ‘immediately after’ can we be sure of a sequence. For a suggested order for the last week in the life of Jesus and of the resurrection accounts see *Evidence for the Bible* (Day One Publications) pp. 205–210.

It should also be remembered that a repetition of similar teaching may not have been given at the same time. Doubtless Jesus repeated himself many times. See this comment on pages 286, 589, 591, 617, 620.

The outline that follows is this author’s own and does not claim to be precise. All passages in the four Gospels are covered.

Main Events	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
The eternal nature of Jesus				1:1–14
The message of Gabriel to Zechariah			1:1–25	
The birth of John the Baptist and Zechariah's praise			1:57–80	
The genealogy of Jesus	1:1–17		3:23–38	
Gabriel appears to Mary			1:26–38	
The angel appears to Joseph	1:18–25			
Mary visits Elizabeth and Mary's song of praise			1:39–56	
Bethlehem: The birth of Jesus			2:1–7	
The angels appear to shepherds			2:8–20	
Jerusalem: Jesus presented in the temple			2:21–38	
Bethlehem: The visit of the magi	2:1–12			
Egypt: The family escape and the murder of the infants	2:13–20			
Nazareth: The family return home	2:21–23		2:39–40	
Jerusalem: Jesus as a boy questioning the teachers			2:41–52	
The ministry of John the Baptist	3:1–12	1:1–8	3:1–18	1:15–36
The first disciples of Jesus				1:37–51
The baptism of Jesus	3:13–17	1:9–11	3:21–22	
The temptations of Jesus	4:1–11	1:12–13	4:1–13	
Preaching and healing in Galilee				
Jesus' first miracle at Cana in Galilee				2:1–11
Capernaum for a few days				2:12
The Passover in Jerusalem and preaching in Judaea				
The first cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem				2:13–25
A secret meeting with Nicodemus				3:1–21
A 'certain Jew' questions John the Baptist				3:22–36
The woman at the well in Samaria				4:1–42
A return to Galilee				
Jesus' first rejection at Nazareth			4:14–30	

Book 6, Chapter 5

Main Events	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
John the Baptist imprisoned		1:14	3:19–20	
Jesus begins preaching in Galilee	4:12–17, 23–25			
Capernaum: evil spirits and Simon's mother-in-law		1:21–34	4:31–41	
Jesus prays alone and continues preaching in Galilee		1:35–39	4:42–44	
Healing of an official's son at Capernaum				4:43–54
The calling of his disciples and the great catch of fish	4:18–22	1:15–20	5:1–11	
Jesus commissions his twelve disciples		3:13–19	6:12–16	
The sermon on the mount	5:1 to 7:29		6:17–49?	
Healing a man with leprosy	8:1–4	1:40–45	5:12–16	
Capernaum: centurion's servant healed and teaching	8:5–22		7:1–10	
Nain: Widow's son raised			7:11–17	
Capernaum: The paralytic healed and forgiven	9:1–8	2:1–12	5:17–26	
Matthew Levi called to be a disciple	9:9–13	2:13–17	5:27–32	
Questions about fasting	9:14–17	2:18–22	5:33–39	
Healing a sick woman and raising Jairus' daughter	9:18–26	5:21–43	8:40–56	
Healing the blind and mute. The workers are few	9:27–34			
Jesus sends out his twelve disciples	9:35 to 10:42	6:7–12, 30–32	9:1–6	
John's disciples question Jesus	11:1–19		7:18–35	
A woman anoints Jesus in Simon's house			7:36–50	
Parables in Galilee			8:1–21	
Unbelief condemned and Jesus' invitation to rest	11:20–30			
The cornfield, healing and Lord of the Sabbath	12:1–21	2:23 to 3:6	6:1–11	
Jesus accused of exorcising by Beelzebul	12:22–37	3:20–30	11:14–28	
The sign of Jonah	12:38–45		11:29–32	
'Who is my mother?'	12:46–50	3:31–35		
Jesus preaches from a boat	13:1–2	3:7–12		
Parables by the Lake of Galilee	13:3–52	4:1–34		
Nazareth: Jesus' second rejection by his home town	13:53–58	6:1–6		

Main Events	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus calms a storm on Galilee	8:23–27	4:35–41	8:22–25	
Healing of the two demon-possessed men	8:28–34	5:1–20	8:26–39	
The death of John the Baptist	14:1–12	6:14–29	9:7–9	
Healing the disabled man at the pool in Jerusalem?				5:1–47
Near Bethsaida: Feeding the five thousand	14:13–21	6:33–44	9:10–17	6:1–15
Jesus walks on the Lake of Galilee	14:22–33	6:45–56		6:16–21
Crowds searching for Jesus				6:22–24
Jesus, the bread of life				6:25–40
Capernaum: The Pharisees grumble against Jesus				6:41–59
Many disciples desert Jesus				6:60–71
Gennesaret: Many healed	14:34–36			
Debating with the Pharisees	15:1–20	7:1–23		
Tyre: The faith of the woman	15:21–28	7:24–30		
Healing a deaf and dumb man		7:31–37		
By Galilee: Feeding the four thousand	15:29–39	8:1–10		
Magadan: the Pharisees demand a sign	16:1–4	8:11–13		
Jesus warns of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees	16:5–12	8:14–21		
Bethsaida: a blind man healed		8:22–26		
Caesarea Philippi: Peter's confession of Christ	16:13–20	8:27–30	9:18–27	
Jesus predicts his coming death	16:21–28	8:31 to 9:1		
Eight days later, the Transfiguration	17:1–13	9:2–13	9:28–36	
Healing the demon-possessed boy	17:14–21	9:14–29	9:37–43	
Passing through Galilee and prediction of his death	17:22–23	9:30–32	9:43–45	7:1–9
Capernaum: the provision of the Temple Tax	17:24–27			
The disciples question who is greatest in the Kingdom	18:1–9	9:33–37	9:46–48	
'Whoever is not against us is for us'		9:38–41	9:49–50	
The millstone warning		9:42–50		
Parable: the lost sheep	18:10–14			
Parables: forgiving a brother; the unmerciful servant	18:15–35			

Book 6, Chapter 5

Main Events	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Through Samaria into Judah (Luke 9:51–52)				
On his way to Jerusalem through Samaria			9:51–56	
The cost of discipleship			9:57–62	
Jesus sends out the seventy-two disciples			10:1–24	
The parable of the Good Samaritan			10:25–37	
Ten men healed of leprosy			17:11–19	
Into Judah (Matthew 19:1)				
Bethany: the home of Martha and Mary			10:38–42	
Jerusalem: The Feast of Tabernacles				7:10–52
The woman taken in adultery				7:53 to 8:11
Teaching in Jerusalem				8:12–59
Healing a man born blind				9:1–41
Jesus, the Good Shepherd				10:1–21
The Feast of Dedication				10:22–39
Jesus returns across the Jordan				10:40–42
Bethany: The raising of Lazarus and the Jewish plot				11:1–44
Village of Ephraim: Jesus withdraws from the crowds				11:45–57
Jesus' teaching on prayer			11:1–13	
'Your eye is the lamp'			11:33–36	
Six woes in the home of a Pharisee			11:37–54	
Warnings and encouragements to the crowd			12:1–12	
Parable of the rich fool			12:13–21	
Encouragement not to be anxious but to be watchful			12:22–48	
Warning of division caused by the Gospel			12:49–53	
Interpreting the times			12:54–59	
Necessity of repentance and parable of the fig tree			13:1–9	
A crippled woman healed on the Sabbath			13:10–17	
Parables of the mustard seed and yeast			13:18–21	
The narrow door into the Kingdom			13:22–30	

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Jesus warned by Pharisees, weeps over Jerusalem			13:31–35	
In the home of a Pharisee and parable of the banquet			14:1–24	
Counting the cost of discipleship			14:25–35	
Parables: Lost sheep, lost coin, lost son			15:1–32	
Parable: The shrewd manager; rich man and Lazarus			16:1–31	
Rebuking an erring brother; faith and duty			17:1–10	
Parable: the persistent widow			18:1–8	
Parable: the Pharisee and Tax Collector			18:9–14	
Jesus' teaching on divorce	19:1–12	10:1–12		
Receiving little children	19:13–15	10:13–16	18:15–17	
The rich young man	19:16–30	10:17–31	18:18–30	
Parable of the vineyard	20:1–16			
'Going up to Jerusalem': Jesus predicts his death	20:17–19	10:32–34	18:31–34	
The request of the mother of James and John	20:20–28	10:35–45		
'Leaving Jericho': healing two blind men (Bartimaeus)	20:29–34	10:46–52	18:35–43	
At Jericho: The conversion of Zacchaeus			19:1–10	
Parable of ten minas			19:11–27	
Bethany: In the home of Simon, Jesus anointed by Mary	26:6–13	14:1–11		12:1–11
Jerusalem (John 12:12 'The next day')				
Sunday: The triumphal entry	21:1–11	11:1–11	19:28–44	12:12–19
Monday/Tuesday:				
The fig tree withered	21:18–22	11:12–14, 20–26		
Second cleansing the temple and return to Bethany	21:12–17	11:15–19	19:45–48	
The Greeks' request and Jesus predicts his death				12:20–36
Many of the Jews will not believe, but some do				12:37–50
Jesus' authority questioned	21:23–27	11:27–33	20:1–8	
Parable of the tenants	21:33–46	12:1–12	20:9–19	
Parables: the two sons and a wedding banquet	21:28 to 22:14			

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Main Events	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Paying taxes to Caesar	22:15–22	12:13–17	20:20–26	
Marriage and the Resurrection	22:23–33	12:18–27	20:27–39	
The greatest commandment	22:34–40	12:28–34		
Jesus explains that he is the Son of God	22:41–46	12:35–40	20:41–47	
Seven Woes	23:1–39			
The widow's offering		12:41–44	21:1–4	
Destruction of the Temple and signs of the end	24:1–51	13:1–37	17:20–37; 21:5–38	
Parables: ten virgins, talents, sheep and goats	25:1–46			
The plot against Jesus and Judas' betrayal	26:1–5, 14–16		22:1–6	
Wednesday:				
The Last Supper	26:17–30	14:12–26	22:7–38	
Jesus washed his disciples' feet				13:1–17
Jesus warns of a betrayer				13:18–30
Peter's denial predicted	26:31–35	14:27–31		13:31–38
Jesus' encouragement and promise of the Spirit				14:1–31
The vine and the branches				15:1–17
Warning of persecution				15:18 to 16:4
The ministry of the Spirit				16:5–16
Their grief will turn to joy				16:17–33
Jesus' prayer for his disciples				17:1–26
Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives	26:36–45	14:32–42	22:39–46	18:1
Jesus' betrayal and arrest	26:47–56	14:43–52	22:47–53	18:2–11
Wednesday/Thursday:				
Jesus taken before Annas				18:12–14, 19–23
Jesus before the High Priest, Caiaphas	26:57–68	14:53	22:54	
Jesus mocked and beaten and Peter's denial	26:58, 69–75	14:54–72	22:54–65	18:15–18, 25–26
Thursday:				
Jesus condemned by the Jewish Sanhedrin	27:1	15:1	22:66–71	
Judas' remorse and death	27:3–10			

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Jesus before Pilate	27:2, 11–14	15:1–5	23:1–5	18:28–40
Jesus before Herod			23:6–12	
<i>Friday:</i>				
Jesus before Pilate again	27:15–26	15:6–15	23:13–25	19:1–16
Jesus handed over to the soldiers and beaten	27:27–31	15:16–20		
Simon of Cyrene carries the cross	27:32	15:21	23:26	
The crucifixion of Jesus (9.00 am)	27:33–44	15:22–32	23:27–38	19:17–27
The repentant thief			23:39–43	
Jesus' death (3.00 pm)	27:45–56	15:33–41	23:44–49	19:28–37
His burial by Joseph and Nicodemus	27:57–61	15:42–47	23:50–56	19:38–42
The guard at the tomb	27:62–66			
<i>The resurrection:</i>				
The women at the tomb	28:1–10	16:1–8	24:1–11	
Mary Magdalene and Jesus				20:1–2, 11–18
Peter and John at the tomb			24:12	20:3–10
The rumour spread by the Jews	28:11–15			
Jesus meets with Mary Magdalene		16:9–11		
Two on the Emmaus road		16:12–13	24:13–35	
Jesus meets with the ten disciples			24:36–49	20:19–23
With the eleven including Thomas		16:14		20:24–31
Breakfast by the Lake				21:1–14
Peter's profession of love				21:15–23
Jesus' commission to the disciples and his ascension	28:16–20	16:15–20	24:50–53	
(The record of the ascension in Acts 1:1–11)				
John's final confirmation of the truth of his Gospel				21:24–25