

# Is Christian Morality Unique?

## Part 2

Michelle Nailon CSB

01 of 12 slide sets

**The following sets of pictures cover a wide range of topics so  
an introductory outline would be helpful.**

The first set of slides provide an outline of Part 1 of *Is Christian Morality Unique?*. It shows how there are three basic social commandments of  
- "Thou shalt not kill,  
commit adultery or  
steal".

It considers how the the society of C1st Palestine was based upon Judaism yet it was also challenged by the Greek philosophy (cf. Hellenism) of the Roman Empire.

The slides then show how, from the earliest days, the followers of Jesus reduced the myriad rules of Judaism and at the same time, incorporated the idealism of Hellenism into observance of the Commandments.

This approach was developed in the three synoptic gospels of Mark (cf. poverty), Matthew (cf. relationship) and Luke (cf. power) and was even reflected in the accounts given of the crucifixion.

The slides argue that the approach of Christianity in "raising the bar" of the Commandments has continued on into the development of the industrialised world.

It is pointed out that while the three key social values are found in the other major world religions such as Buddhism, the tension between the two contrasting world views of Judaism and Hellenism is more obvious within Christianity.

## Questions, questions,...

Questions are then asked.

Is such a tension found within the cosmos itself, namely the tension between time and place?

Does Jewish society rely especially on the sense of time while

Hellenism relies especially on the sense of place?

Did the gospel writers show their awareness of such a time/place tension between Judaism and Hellenism within the basic structure of Christianity?

Can a semiotic, sociological analysis of the gospels reveal their awareness of this tension (cf. [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au))?

The slides go on to show how a semiotic, sociological analysis of the Acts of the Apostles and the gospel of John, reveal a sense of the "Living Authority" (cf. time) and the "Living Word" (cf. place) that is embedded in the texts.

The slides then diverge into an exploration of how ancient societies have attempted to "align" time and place in order to reach beyond the time/place "bubble" of the cosmos, towards the "Ground of Being" that exists beyond it.

Such an "alignment" has parallels with the structure of the Eucharist.

Here, participants are challenged to endorse the presence of the "living Word" (cf. Liturgy of the Word) and the "Living Authority" (cf. offering the fruits of one's daily labour).

This leads into a re-enactment of the Last Supper.

Here, the "Authorised, Living Word" becomes present in the midst of the congregation and through the Communion service, enters into their daily lives.

In the words of John's gospel "the Word becomes flesh"

No. 1

# Is Christian Morality Unique? Part 2

Michelle Nailon CSB

Set 01 of 12 slide sets.

No. 2

01	Is Christian Morality Unique - A re-cap of Part 1	
02	Time, Place and Cosmic Tension	
03	Judaism and Reliance on the Sense of Time	
04	Hellenism (cf. Greek Philosophy) and Place	
05	Mark 's Concentric Circles around Place	
06	Matthew, Structured around Time Statements	
07	The Gospel of Luke	Project Employment Inc. Melbourne 2024 All Rights Reserved
08	Luke's Acts of the Apostles	
09	Introduction to the Gospel of John	<a href="http://www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm">www.valuesclarification.org /ischristianmoralityunique.htm</a>
10	John and the Authorized, Living Word	
11	Historical Efforts to Align Time and Place	Isbn 978-0-9805603-8-1
12	Structure of the Eucharist	

No. 3

# Is Christian Morality Unique? Part 2

*Let's begin with a Recap of Part 1*

Page 1

No. 4

- ▶ From ancient times societies have attempted to work out an operating code of conduct
- ▶ For instance in 1700 BC there was the Law Code of Hammurabi in Babylon
- ▶ This had a stress on the rights to **life**, **a family** and **property**



Law Code of Hammurabi

No. 5

- ▶ Around C12th BCE Moses presented the Jewish forbears with the Commandments.
- ▶ There were parallels here with Hammurabi as the Commandments stress:

the right to life

*Thou shalt not kill,*

family

*Thou shalt not commit adultery*

property *Thou shalt not steal.*



No. 7

- ▶ An early Church Council (around 49CE) required Gentile converts to “avoid blood, fornication and strangling” rather than the many rules of Jewish law.

- ▶ But this was “raising the bar” of the Commandments.



Page 2

No. 6

- ▶ The life and teaching of Jesus shows a combination of the Commandments of Judaism with the idealism of Greek philosophy (cf. the Roman Empire)



No. 8



“Avoid blood” implied cruelty as such cf. *“thou shalt not kill”*



“Avoid fornication” implied uncommitted sex cf. *“thou shalt not commit adultery”*



“Avoid strangling” implied unjust business practices cf. *“thou shalt not steal”*

What do you think?

No. 9

▶ This “raising of the bar” continued on as shown in the gospels.

▶ In **Mark’s** gospel (70CE) Ch 10

▶ Jesus throws out the challenge

▶ *“Go sell what you have and give to the poor and you shall have treasure in heaven and come follow me”*



No. 11

No. 10

▶ This implies a **raising of the bar**.

▶ Instead of **stealing**, give property away.

▶ Instead of setting up your **own family/** household rely on your relationship with God.

▶ Instead of your own **self-determination** commit yourself to the following of Jesus and helping others

▶ i.e. move beyond the Commandments



No. 12



▶ The Gospel of **Matthew**

stressed the need to follow the Spirit of the Law

If you are fined for a tunic give your coat as well

**(Thou shalt not steal)**

Avoid even looking at a woman lustfully

**(Thou shalt not commit adultery)**

Avoid calling another a fool

**(Thou shalt not kill)**

(cf. Ch. 5)

No. 13

▶ In the gospel of **Luke**, the bar of these three commandments is raised as well: Consider:

▶ When someone asked to follow Jesus he warned them of extreme **poverty** (“nowhere to lay his head”) (cf. “**Thou shalt not steal**”)



No. 15

▶ When Jesus invited someone to join him the person asked to “bury his father first”, i.e. wait until he died. Jesus said *Your duty is to spread the Kingdom of God* i.e. help others in self-determination (cf. “**Thou shalt not kill**”)



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No. 14

▶ In Luke Ch 9 someone promised to follow Jesus after saying goodbye to his family.  
▶ Jesus replied *Once the hand is laid on the plough no one who looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.*  
(i.e. the task of proclaiming the kingdom takes precedence over setting up a family cf. “**thou shalt not commit adultery**”)

**When Paul was accused of being a ring leader of what his opponents called the "Nazarene Sect." Paul answered that rather, he was a follower of "the Way" (Acts ch. 24).**

**Paul had difficulty explaining what "the Way" entailed. In Acts 19:9 some people publicly maligned it.**

**Do you think a constant "raising of the bar" of the three key social commandments would have parallels with what Paul understood as "the way" of practising the Commandments?**

**And, in such case do you think the followers of Jesus would try to extend a living out of "the Way" into all aspects of their daily life and work?**

# Has an idealistic approach towards the Commandments stimulated the development of industry in the Western World? In such case arguably..... -

## Industry

An idealistic approach towards the Commandments stimulated the development of industry in the Western World

- - helping others towards self-determination, social security, material well-being etc.

No. 16

### ▶ Industry

- ▶ over the centuries as Christian societies developed, there has been an on-going tension between the moral edicts inherited from Judaism and the idealism of Greek philosophy.  
For example:

No. 17

- ▶ The “bar has been raised” in terms of universal education and health care  
(cf. “**thou shalt not kill**”)
- ▶ There have been improvements in **family support** (at least financially).
- ▶ There has been increased productivity and increased distribution of goods  
(cf. “**thou shalt not steal**”)

No. 18

- ▶ The values emphasis of :  
“thou shalt not kill, commit adultery or steal”  
exists in other world religions as well.

- ▶ e.g. the more detailed rules of **Judaism**,
- ▶ the edicts of the **Koran**,
- ▶ the *Tai Te Chien* of **Taoism**, and
- ▶ the self-giving of the *Bhagavad Gita* of **Hinduism**

No. 20

Also  
there are strong parallels between the vows of **poverty**, **chastity** and **obedience** in Buddhist communities and the Religious Orders of Christian (esp. Catholic) churches



No. 21

- ▶ the vows are a “raising of the bar” of
- ▶ thou shalt not kill, commit adultery or steal.

No. 23

- ▶ Christianity is based upon the two world views of Judaism and Hellenism.
- ▶ The question is asked “What is the nature of this tension between Judaism and Hellenism?”



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No. 22

On the other hand even while these values exist in other world religions, a Christian society is set up in order to embed the dialectical tension between its moral values and idealism.

Part 2 of *Is Christian Morality Unique?* looks at how this tension was incorporated into the gospels of Christianity.

No. 24

Is it connected to the cosmic tension between time and place?



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# Is Christian Morality Unique?

## Part 2

### *Time - Place*

*And the cosmic tension between them*

Set 2 of 12

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# What sort of tension exists between the two world views of Judaism and Hellenism?

No. 27

No. 28

In Part 1 of *Is Christian Morality Unique* it was shown that, from its beginnings there was an on-going tension within Christianity

between:

the Commandments of Judaism

and

the idealism of Hellenism (i.e. the Greek philosophy of the Roman Empire)



▶ The uniqueness of this dialectical tension points to the uniqueness of Christian morality or ethics as some would describe it.



Over the centuries, there has been an on-going "problem" of anti-semitism (anti-Jewish) sentiment amongst populations even while Jews live, contribute and achieve amongst us. Perhaps a culmination of anti-semitism was reached with the Nazis in the 1940's.

But even now, in the C21st, people struggle to understand the base from which Judaism operates - especially in terms of Zionism and the actions of the IDF (Israel Defence Force). The Israeli Government has constantly broken international law and one wonders if these people

honestly believe that while they are people of the law (i.e. the Commandments) they are also above the law.

It is not being proposed here to put forward a "solution" to such questions. However, given that it is being pointed out that Christianity is largely based upon Judaism then these are questions, not only to be dealt with by the Jewish community but also to be dealt with by Christians as well.

What do you think?

## Differences can run a lot deeper than we may realise

No. 29

- ▶ On the one hand, it could be expected that when two cultures, value systems and world views meet and form a hybrid society, there would be some form of dialectical tension between the two societies that comprise the hybrid.



No. 31

- ▶ Would this tension be superficial?
- ▶ or would it “dip into” a tension that exists within the core of creation itself?
- ▶ In any case, what sort of tension would exist at the core of creation itself?
- ▶ Consider:

Page 8

No. 30

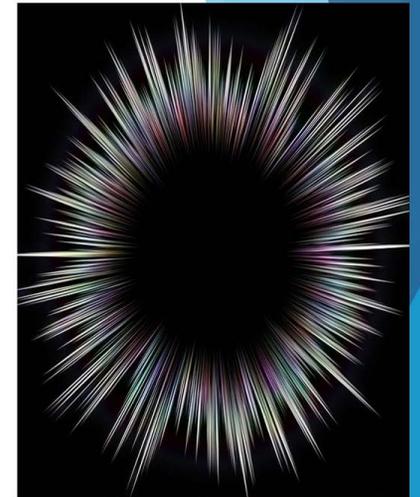
- ▶ One could therefore ask how significant would be the tension between the Commandments of Judaism and the rationalistic/idealism of Hellenism ?



No. 32

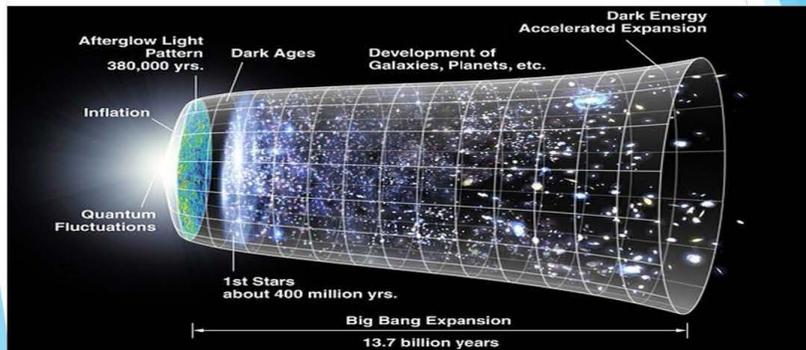
In these days of space exploration and a possible conquest of space travel, we are more conscious of the origins of the universe.

This dates back to the Big Bang that took place about 13.7 billion years ago.



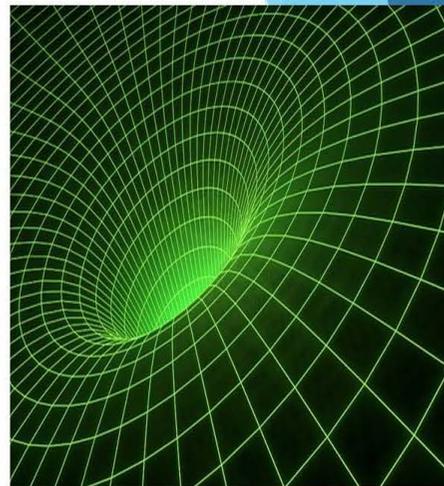
No. 33

- ▶ We are told the Big Bang happened in a millisecond flash of light that came from what astronomers call, a point of singularity.



No. 35

- ▶ Time and place are distinct from each other.
- ▶ But they also interact with each other e.g. astronomers can observe - time ripples within space



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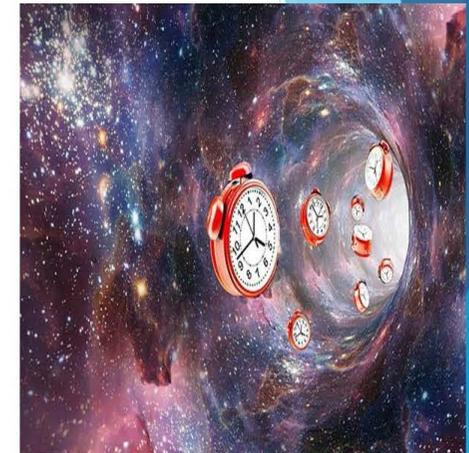
No. 34

- ▶ With the Big Bang came the emergence of :
- ▶ TIME and PLACE



No. 36

Astronomers also talk about “wormholes” which are a funnel-shaped space-time tunnel between two points, between universes



No. 37

They also talk of "black holes", that is, cosmic bodies with such extreme gravity nothing can escape from them.



No. 39

Where does that leave us as Christians?

As Christians we believe in the "incarnation", that is, that at some point in history God has entered into our material world

As Jesus Christ, God has lived amongst us.

This is a core belief of Christianity



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No. 38

In a cosmic sense we on earth, live in a "bubble" of time and place on an outer rim of the Milky Way.

In a material sense that is all we have.



No. 40

- ▶ Regarding the incarnation.
- ▶ To enter into the material world means to enter into the framework/bubble of Time and Place



# A core belief of Christianity is that God entered into our material world of time and place

No. 41

What did the time and place “bubble” of C1st CE Palestine entail?



No. 43

No. 42

Jesus was born into Judaism in first century Palestine.

At the time Palestine was governed by the Roman Empire, which in turn was largely based on Greek philosophy i.e, Hellenism.



No. 44



► In Palestine much of the architecture, clothing, customs, literary forms, art, social structures, form of government etc. was derived from Greek culture.



▶ In other words  
Jesus came into a  
world of Judaism  
and Hellenism



Would the tension between them have its roots in a primal tension that exists at the core of the universe between time and place?



▶ One can wonder to  
what extent were  
the two societies of  
Judaism and  
Hellenism based  
upon  
▶ time and place.

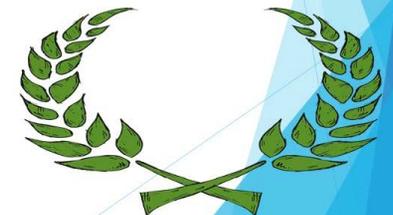


And

▶ Is the world view of  
Judaism largely  
based upon law with  
a special reliance on  
time?



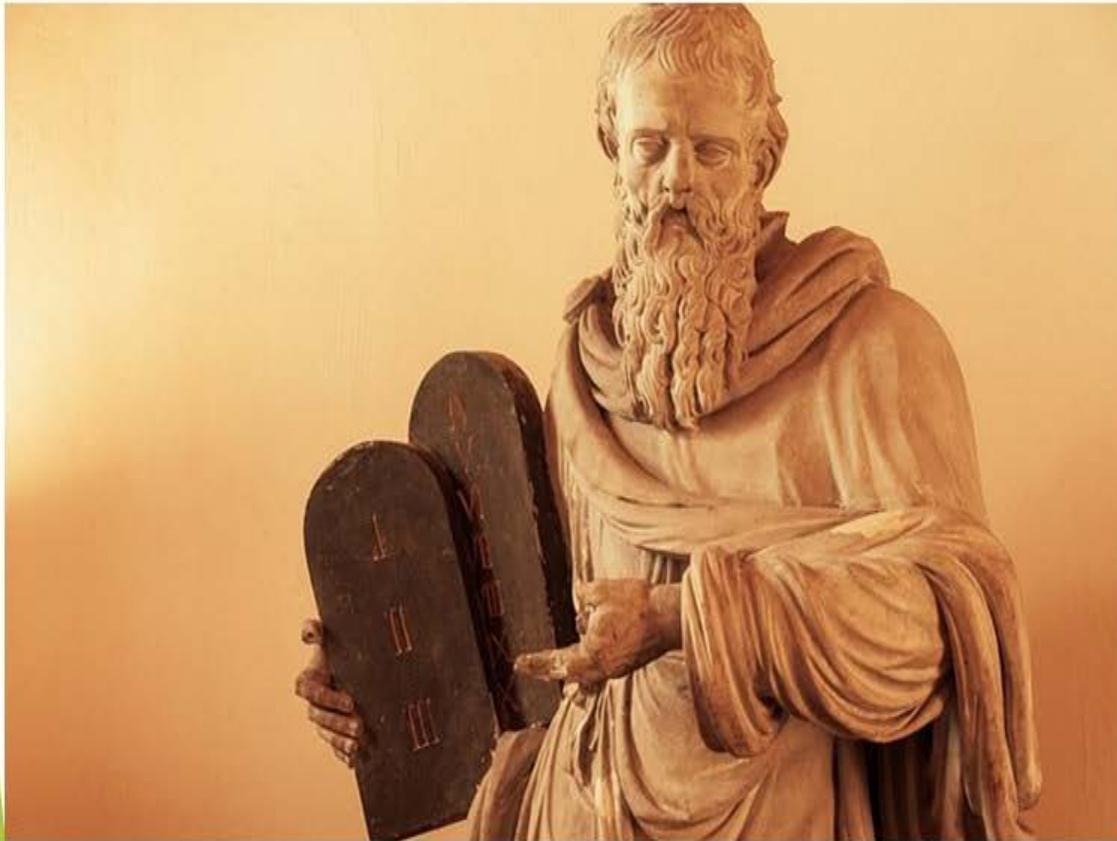
▶ Is the world view of  
Hellenism largely  
based upon order  
with a special  
reliance on place?



A closer look at Judaism and Hellenism may clarify the difference

# JUDAISM

and its reliance on the sense of time



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## What do you understand as the cosmos?

Does the tension between Judaism and Hellenism have a cosmic dynamic?

Judaism: law, history, covenant, morality, relationship, time

Hellenism: order, rationalism, idealism, geometry, urbanism, place

No. 52

### Consider Judaism:

- ▶ Nobody would be justified in claiming that they could sum up Judaism in a few short words.
- ▶ However, our brief here is to consider to what extent Judaism as a society relies on and bases itself on the sense of time.
- ▶ It would thereby be in a dialectical tension with a society that bases itself upon the sense of place. .

## Is the World View of Judaism

## Heavily Based on the Sense of Time?

**What do you think?**

No. 53

► We could list many attributes that show how Judaism appreciates its origins in **time**

- In ancient times Jews were known as “**the people of the book**”, that is they based their society on the Torah which outlined their history.
- So, from its beginnings Judaism has been re-directed towards its **history** and the sense of time.

No. 55

► The *Torah* (cf. the first five books of the Old Testament of the Bible) of the Jews requires people to keep the Commandments

► *You shall keep My statutes and My laws, which a person shall do and shall live by them.*

(Leviticus 18:5)

► The *Torah* constantly shows how, within the history of the Jewish people, when they broke their covenant with God catastrophe would follow e.g. the Jewish exile in Babylon 597 BCE



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No. 54

Judaism is based upon **Law**, that is the **Ten Commandments** given by God to Moses around C12th BCE

Law in itself is based upon the sense of time.

In natural law for instance, there is a cause and effect connection.

► Someone trips on a step and the effect is they hit the ground below.



No. 56



No. 57

The Jews believe they have a covenant with God, that is, an agreement that lasts over the centuries

This **covenant** extends over time and ensures the on-going existence of the Jewish people.

The on-going development of an extended family and people of course takes place over **time**.



No. 59

Jews observe a **liturgical calendar** which allows them to pause and consider the key tenets of their faith.

A key part of this is their observance of the **Sabbath**.



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No. 58

▶ Jews believe if they observe the commandments of God, God in turn will look after them.

▶ They constantly refer back to how **God parted the Red Sea** to allow Moses to guide the Israelites to a promised land.



No. 60

Many of the observances, especially of orthodox Jews, relate to the observance of time, for instance the practice of praying **five times a day**



No. 61

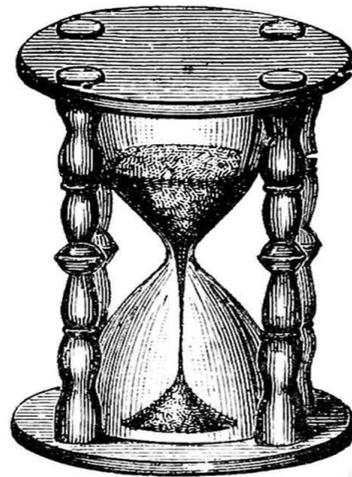
► At the present time Jews continue to harken back to their persecution by Nazis at the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war.



Interesting to note that Nazism was largely based on the philosophy of the Enlightenment.

Some of the leading Enlightenment philosophers rejected tradition (cf. time) in all its forms

No. 63



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No. 62

The roots of the Enlightenment can be traced back to Greek Philosophy

It is said that when the philosopher Heidegger began to claim (in *Being and Time* 1927) that “being is time”, the philosophy of the Enlightenment was ‘thrown on its head’.

One could wonder if the Nazi persecution of the Jews was ultimately based upon their hostility, to the Jewish stress on the sense of time.

No. 64

What about Hellenism,

i.e. a society based upon Greek philosophy and its rationalism and interest in the ordered patterns of the universe? ?

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# Hellenism

(a Culture based upon Greek Philosophy)

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# Is the World View of Hellenism (cf Greek Philosophy) Heavily based on a sense of the universe and the sense of space and place?

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## Hellenism

(a Culture based upon Greek Philosophy)



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No. 67

## Consider Hellenism as compared with Judaism

- ▶ According to Google the meaning of Hellenism is:

a body of humanistic and classical ideals “associated with ancient Greece and including reason, the pursuit of knowledge and the arts, moderation, civic responsibility, and bodily development.”



- ▶ Note there is an **absence** here **of the sense of history** that defines Judaism

## HELLENISM (and its reliance on the sense of place)

- ▶ Does the tension between Judaism and Hellenism have a **cosmic** dynamic?

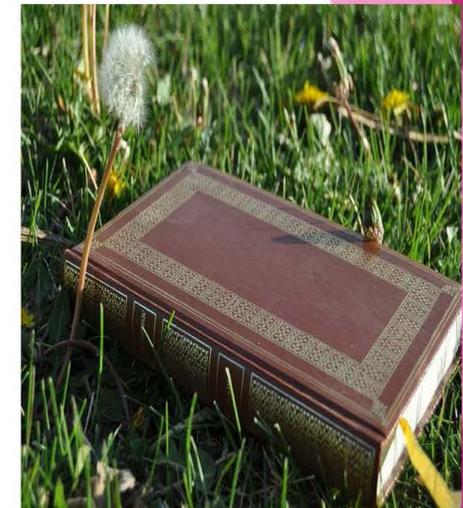
▶ Judaism is about:  
Law, history, covenant,  
morality, relationship, time.

▶ Hellenism is about:  
Order, rationalism, maths,  
idealism, the urban, place.

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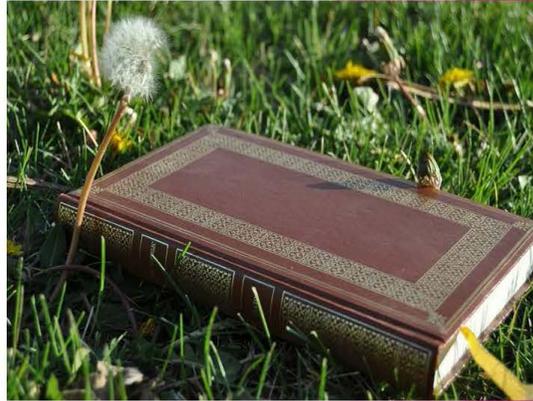
No. 68

- ▶ Greek philosophy is heavily based upon Plato’s *Republic*.
- ▶ Plato gives a graphic description of this “Republic” and modern workplaces are very parallel to his description. However, the actual Republic is **an ideal**.



No. 69

- ▶ In reality, in its full description, Plato's Republic does not exist and never did or could exist.
- ▶ Google describes it as a "psychological allegory"



What other distinctive features of Hellenism are there?

No. 71

- ▶ The Greek deities **inter-married** and sometimes married humans.
- ▶ In contrast, in Judaism, there was only the one God and there was no female deity.



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No. 70

- ▶ Greek religion described a **pantheon of deities**.
- ▶ This was in stark contrast to the monotheistic religion of the Jews who had an historical covenant with the one God.



No. 72

- ▶ Greek gods were **not known for being moral**.
- ▶ Some were **disorganized** and contradictory.
- ▶ The Greeks created gods **in the image of humans**.
- ▶ Greeks could **add gods** to their pantheon.

This approach has enabled governments with a base of Greek philosophy to absorb (and rule over) a **vast array of differing peoples and cultures**

e.g. in the urban context

No. 73



No. 74

▶ In the *Timaeus* Plato describes the creation of the world as work done by a **divine Craftsman**, who has done this by reference to a model – a system of rational principles which are to be embodied in materials, to produce a unified result.

▶ By contrast, the Jewish psalms reflect the belief that people can have a **personal relationship with God** who takes an on-going and active role in the universe.

No. 75

No. 76

▶ The Greek emphasis on mathematics, architecture and sculpture reflects their focus upon **ORDER**

▶ By contrast the emphasis in Judaism is on the moral **LAW**

▶ **The genius of Judaism** was to perceive that the ultimate cause of the universe is the one God who is both **loving and moral**.

**The genius of Hellenism** was to perceive that the ultimate base of the universe is **ordered**.



▶ The moral law is understood in terms of **time**

The order of the universe is expressed in **place**

Were the Gospel Writers aware of the time & place dialectic between the World View of Judaism and the World View of Greek Philosophy?

One can wonder to what extent were the gospel writers aware that the dialectical tension between the societies of Judaism and Hellenism is an expression of the cosmic tension that exists between time and place



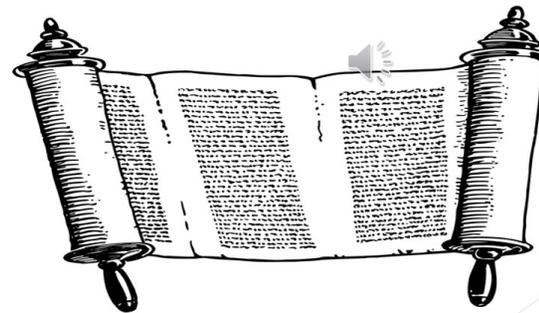
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No. 79



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## The Gospel of Mark a quick re-cap



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# The Gospel of Mark

## a quick re-cap



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# The Gospel of Mark .... a quick re-cap

## The Gospel of Mark a quick re-cap

- ▶ By 70CE the hostility of the Jews towards Roman rule had come to a head and they revolted against Rome.



No. 81

- ▶ The Roman army put Jerusalem under siege and then destroyed it, including the Temple.
- ▶ Scholars believe the gospel of Mark, the first gospel, was written around this time.
- ▶ Mark's gospel describes scenes from the siege.

No. 82



No. 83

- ▶ Where did the destruction of Jerusalem leave the Christian communities who were now gathering in "house churches" throughout the Empire ?
- ▶ What was their attitude towards Rome and its Hellenistic culture?



In the 60's the Christians in Rome had already endured terrible persecution by the Emperor Nero.

In 64 CE there was a fire in Rome that ravaged the city.

People blamed Nero for this. Nero blamed the Christians.

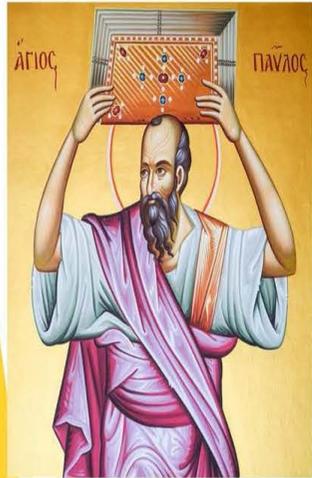
At the time some people described Christianity as a Jewish sect.

No. 84



Nero

No. 85



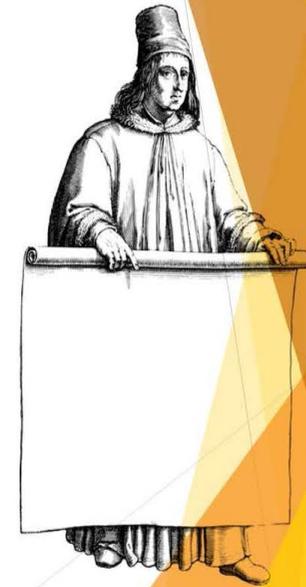
- ▶ But on the contrary, the Christians were not hostile towards Rome and its Hellenistic culture
- ▶ The first theologian, Paul of the 50's CE showed how Hellenism was incorporated into the message of Jesus.
- ▶ Paul said he would focus on preaching to the Gentiles (non-Jews) while Peter would preach to the Jews.

No. 87

- ▶ The paragraph pairs of Section A shows what **authority** is based upon (cf. Judaism and Law).
- ▶ Section B shows what is needed for a **sense of direction** (cf. Hellenism and its stress on Order)

Page 22

No. 86

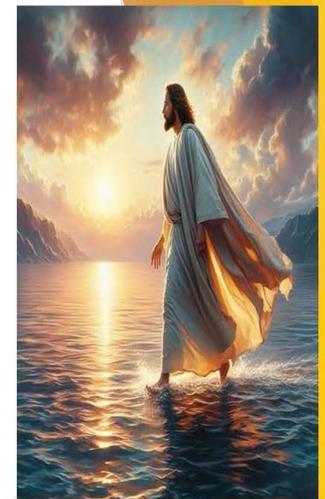


- ▶ A sociological analysis of Mark's gospel (cf. *Five Pivotal Texts* available in [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au)) shows how Mark sets out his gospel text in four sections.

No. 88

Section C is about the personhood of Jesus. There are **no** paragraph patterns here. By implication, Section C shows how the **person of Jesus** and his followers maintain a balance between the two.

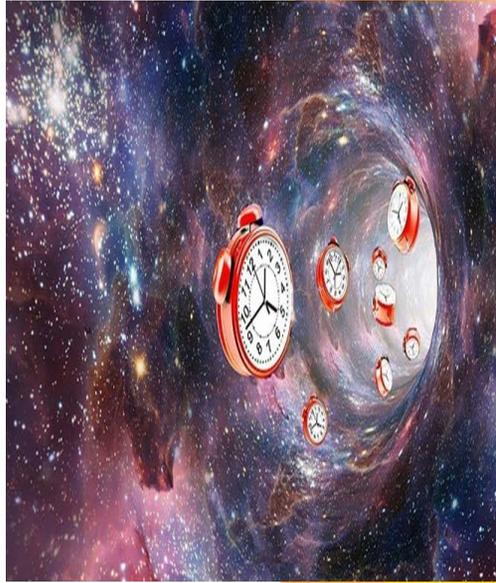
Section D, also structured into paragraph pairs, is about making a **response to Jesus**.



No. 89

How would such a structure show that Mark **was aware** that a dialectical tension between **Judaism and Hellenism**

connects to a cosmic dialectic between **time and place?**

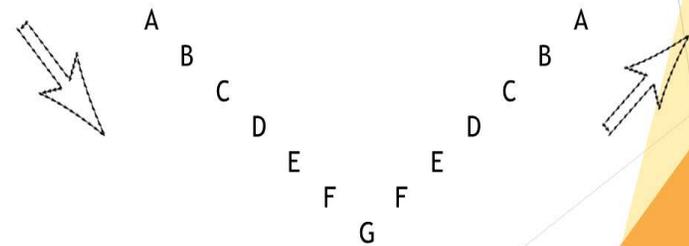


No. 91

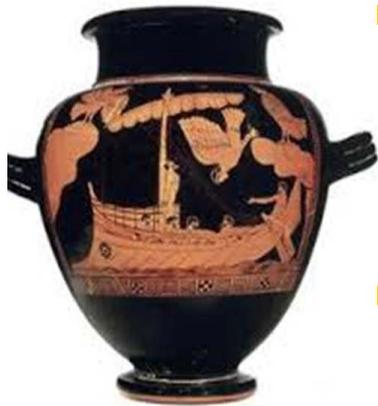
No. 90

- ▶ Mark used a concentric circle structure for his Sections A and B.
- ▶ The paragraph “hooks” he used are the names of **places**.

- ▶ Thus the first and last paragraphs are about “home”
- ▶ The third and third last “hooks” are about the “sea”.
- ▶ The fifth and fifth last “hooks” are about a “house” etc.



No. 92



Boat on a Greek urn

- ▶ Also, the way in which Jesus goes from place to place in these first Sections, echoes the adventures of Homer’s hero Ulysses who also went from place to place.
- ▶ Homer’s stories about Ulysses were the most popular stories in Greek literature.

The point here, is that Mark structures about half of his gospel around the sense of **“place”**

He sees **“place”** as key to an **undergirding structure of Christianity**



# The Gospel of Matthew

Michelle Nailon CSB

Slide 06 of 12 slide sets



No. 93

# What about The Gospel of Matthew?

[www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm](http://www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm)

## Matthew - a gospel about relationship

"..... and they all fled"

No. 95

# The Gospel of Matthew

Michelle Nailon CSB

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No. 96

# The Gospel of Matthew

- ▶ The Three gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke are called the synoptic gospels because they are similar to each other
- ▶ Matthew and Luke's gospels (85CE) largely base their text upon the gospel of Mark (70CE).

No. 97.

Thus,  
 Jesus was teaching in the early 30's CE,  
 Paul was teaching and writing in the 50's CE  
 Mark wrote his gospel around 70 CE  
 Matthew and Luke wrote around 85CE  
 The gospel of John was later, possibly 100 CE

No. 99

▶ According to a sociological analysis cf. *Five Pivotal Texts* available in [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au)

▶ Matthew's gospel was structured around the sense of **time**.

▶ **How so?**

No. 98

Both Matthew and Luke's gospels were written around 85 CE.

However, Matthew's gospel was written for a Jewish readership/audience

Luke's gospel was written for a Gentile (Greek) readership/audience

Consider Matthew

No. 100

- ▶ Each major section of the text finishes with "*After Jesus had said these things*"
- ▶ The Gospel finishes with the promise of Jesus "*I will be with you until the end of TIME*"

Matthew has a focus on law (cf. cause and effect which happens over time)

No. 101

The paragraphs of Matthew's Sections B and C are structured around a play on verbs (cf. time) –

- ▶ Section B paragraphs begin with an exhortation:
- ▶ Blessed are the poor
- ▶ You are the salt of the earth
- ▶ Do not think I have come to destroy the law or the prophets
- ▶ Be wary of your righteousness
- ▶ Do not accumulate treasure
- ▶ Do not judge
- ▶ Enter through the narrow gate
- ▶ The Section B paragraph themselves are a challenge to **go beyond the law** i.e.
- ▶ Sin
- ▶ Being average
- ▶ Being literal
- ▶ Show
- ▶ Treasure
- ▶ Judging
- ▶ The easy

No. 103

No. 102

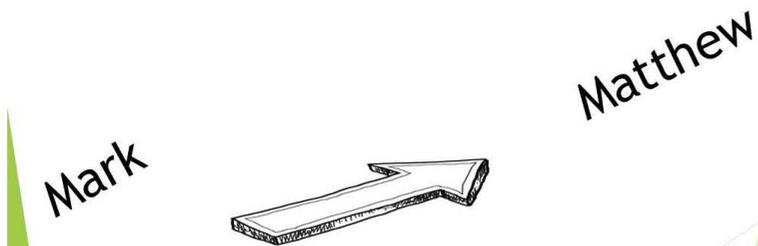
Section C paragraph “hooks” are present participles, (cf. verbs and time) that begin or focus the paragraphs e.g.

- ▶ Coming, entering, seeing, approaching, embarking, coming, passing, going, calling
- ▶ Section C paragraphs are about
- ▶ **Internalising the Law**
  - ▶ that is,
- ▶ Ask for help
- ▶ Recognise authority
- ▶ Accept touch
- ▶ Accept healing
- ▶ Be independent of the crowd
- ▶ Be ready to move
- ▶ Leave excuses
- ▶ Follow
- ▶ Trust
- ▶ Prioritise
- ▶ Forgive etc.

No. 104

There are obvious and also subtle links with Mark's structure e.g.

- ▶ Matthew's Section C has 21 paragraphs.
- ▶ The middle one of these, no 11, is about people letting a man down through a roof. Jesus forgives the man's sins then cures him.
- ▶ People challenge his ability to forgive.
- ▶ This incident matches the middle paragraph (No. 9) of the concentric circle of Mark's Section B.
- ▶ Here forgiveness is also being stressed



No. 105.

Matthew's Sections D also begins with a statement about time, made or implied

- ▶ But (when) John hearing
- ▶ Then
- ▶ At that time
- ▶ Yet (while) he was speaking
- ▶ On the day
- ▶ When he ended
- ▶ Now in the 4<sup>th</sup> watch etc.



No. 107

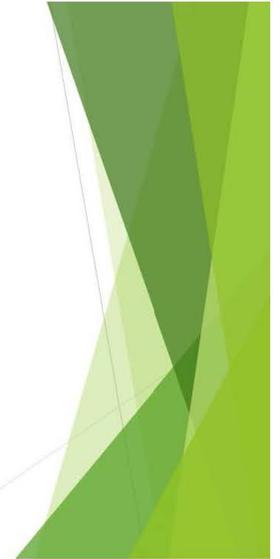
No. 106

The Opening Paragraph in Section D says "Wisdom is justified by her works"

Then, all the 31 paragraphs to follow fit in with "what Wisdom does" e.g.

Proves  
Excuses  
Believes  
Prophecies  
Brings hope

Justifies  
Judges  
Predicts  
Relates cf. God's will  
Bears fruit etc.



No. 108

Again there is a subtle link here, with Mark's structure

- ▶ The **middle** paragraph here in Matthew's Section D, matches the **middle** paragraph of Mark's concentric circle in his Section B



This is about Jesus walking on water .

And, the theme of forgiveness is repeated in the last paragraph in Matthew's Section D



No. 109.

Paragraphs in Matthew's Section E also begin with time statements made or implied.

A semiotic, sociological analysis of this section shows that Matthew is not only showing positive aspects of a society based upon Judaism with its reliance on the sense of TIME

He is also WEIGHING UP **negative** aspects that can come from an over-reliance on the sense of time and an over-stress on law externals.

### Matthew's Section E

- Avoid
- Selfish use of law
- Belittling of children
- Many possessions
- Making demands
- Condemnation
- Ambition
- Controls
- Vestiges of Greatness etc.

No. 110



No. 111

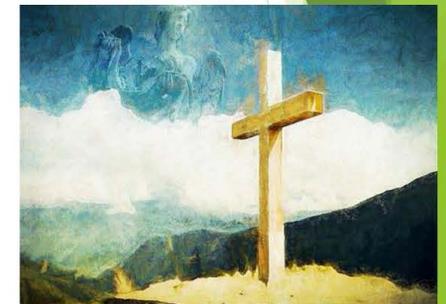
What about Matthew's Section A?  
This is about the birth and early life of Jesus.



And, like Mark's Section C, the text here does not appear to be organized into some sort of paragraph pattern.

There is a parallel here with Luke's Section A as well. In the overall context of the sociological analysis mentioned above, there is the inference made here, that both Judaism (cf. time) and Hellenism (cf. place) meet in the "still point" of the person of Jesus.

It is in Jesus that a balance can be found, within each society and between the two.



Matthew's Section F is about the forgiveness of Jesus' disciples after they had all flee and leave him to face the crucifixion.

Again, this shows that a key theme of the gospel is **forgiveness**.

Forgiveness is about relationship.

Relationship develops over **time**.

The sociological analysis of [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au) shows how Matthew's gospel structure sets out the good and weak points of a society based upon time.

Would you reason yourself about whether or not a society based on the sense of time would have both good and weak points?

Have you ever reflected about the connection between relationship and time?

For instance have you reflected on the "special" connection you have with old school chums and of course the connection with family members, even in the extended family?

In fact, the gospel of Matthew, written in and for a community of Jewish Christians, is permeated with the sense of time and the search for balance

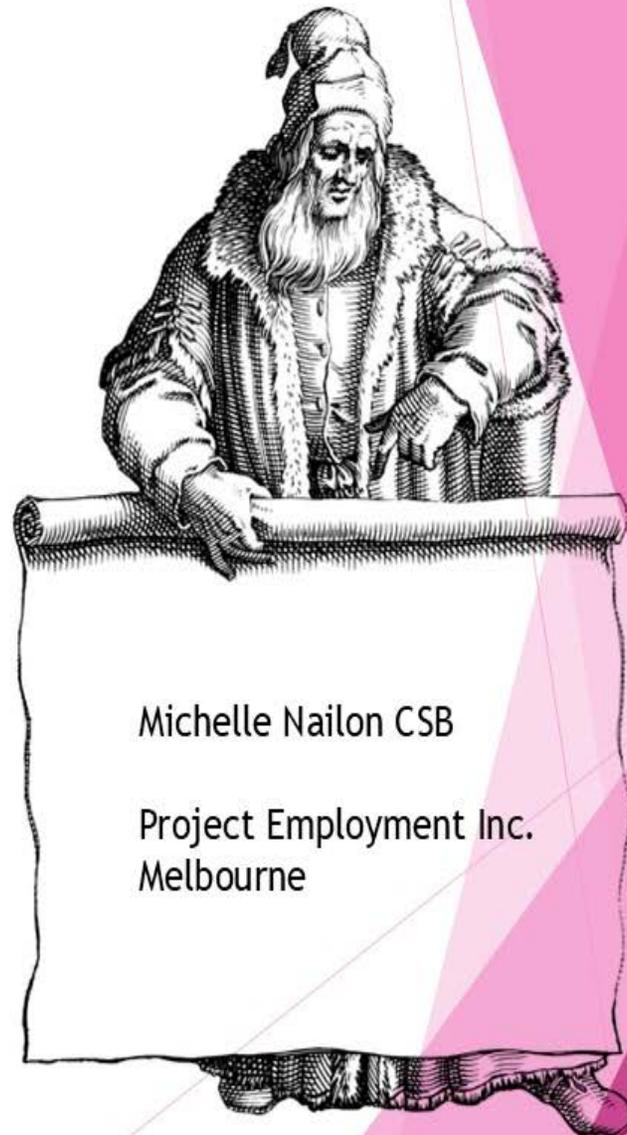
**What About the gospel of Luke ??**

[www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm](http://www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm)

# The Gospel of Luke

## a Gospel for the Gentiles

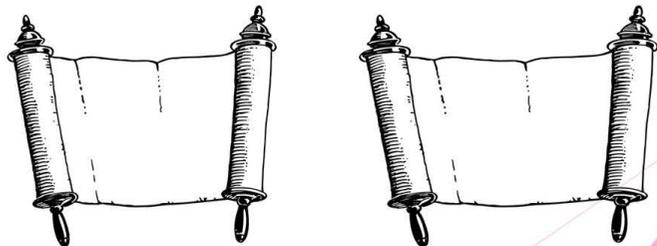
Slide 7 of 12 slide sets



# Luke and the need for a sense of place ...to connect with a sense of direction

No. 117.

- ▶ Luke actually wrote two parts to his gospel. The second part is called *The Acts of the Apostles*. In both of these books Luke addresses an educated Greek called Theophilus.



No. 119

- ▶ Also, as part of his structural framework, Luke ends each his paragraph Sections in his gospel with a reference to a journey
- ▶ **towards Jerusalem.**



Page 30

No. 118

As with the other gospels, a semiotic, sociological analysis of Luke's two books, cf. *Five Pivotal Texts* [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au) uncovers an underlying structure.



In the case of Luke, he relies on the names of **places**, that is, place as such, in order to organize many of the paragraphs of his text.

No. 120

- ▶ In his *Acts of the Apostles* the framework of a journey is continued, and, in this case the direction is
- ▶ **towards Rome.**



Luke's stress on the need for a sense of direction fits with the Section B of Mark's gospel.

No. 121.

A society based upon Order (and place) needs to have a sense of direction.



No. 123

No. 122



No. 124

As with Matthew, Luke's **Section A** is about the early life of Jesus.

On the one hand, Matthew presents Jesus as a child of Judaism.

On the other hand, Luke presents him as a child of the world.



In Luke's Section A, as in Matthew, there is no apparent attempt to create a paragraph pattern here.



In the gospels, when there is no patterned structure in a section of paragraphs, an inference is made that

Jesus provides the "still point" **within and between** the two differing social types that the writers are describing.

No. 125.

- ▶ Recall,
- ▶ Matthew's society is based upon Law and time (cf. Judaism),

- ▶ Luke's society is based upon Order and place (cf. Hellenism).



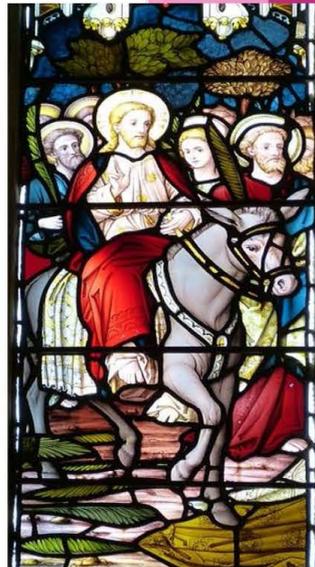
No. 127

### Luke's Section B

- ▶ Capernaum
- ▶ Synagogue/city
- ▶ house
- ▶ desert/cities
- ▶ boats
- ▶ city
- ▶ deserts
- ▶ house
- ▶ house
- ▶ cornfield
- ▶ synagogue
- ▶ mountain
- ▶ down mountain

To Jerusalem

- ▶ Capernaum
- ▶ city
- ▶ house
- ▶ cities 7 villages
- ▶ boat
- ▶ city
- ▶ journey
- ▶ house
- ▶ villages/houses
- ▶ outside Bethsaida
- ▶ (alone)
- ▶ mountain
- ▶ down mountain



Page 32

No. 126

### In Luke's Section B

we find the paragraphs are organized according to two sets of places. The second half of the list repeats the first half.

Luke organizes his places according to two parallel lists rather than in the shape of a concentric circle as Mark had done.

This is because he wants to stress the need for a sense of direction (and avoid going around in circles).



No. 128

- ▶ As with Matthew, Luke's **Section B** outlines the qualities needed at the individual level to fit in with the type of society he is describing. This society is multi-cultural, ordered and urbanized. He describes.
- ▶ Recognition of authority
- ▶ Compassionate Power
- ▶ Bodily care
- ▶ Proclamation
- ▶ Recognition of Power in nature
- ▶ Opposition to disease and bad spirits
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ Forgiveness etc.



- ▶ In Luke's Sections C and D he organizes his paragraphs according to people being addressed (rather than places).
- ▶ In fact, points made in the paragraphs appear to run like a "continuum line".
- ▶ This shows that Luke's society which is based on order, could also "slide" from a well-functioning democracy into totalitarianism



No. 131

## Section C

- ▶ In his Section C, Luke describes qualities for the best type of society that is based on the social order of a **democracy** cf.
- ▶ Stay peaceful
- ▶ Be detached
- ▶ Look to the future
- ▶ Keep moving
- ▶ Reach out
- ▶ Make love basic
- ▶ Prioritise reflection
- ▶ Ask
- ▶ Use spiritual power etc.



No. 132

Then, like Matthew, Luke moves into a Section that describes **negative** aspects of a society, i.e. when it tips over into excess.

In the case of Matthew this is an over-stress on external law.

In Luke's case in Section D this is an over-stress on idealism (and towards totalitarianism) cf.

## Section D

### Section D

- ▶ Overstress on a "saved" leader
- ▶ Rejection
- ▶ Hierarchy
- ▶ Payment base
- ▶ Elitism
- ▶ Ideological foundations
- ▶ exclusion of difference
- ▶ over-absorption into a system
- ▶ material obsession
- ▶ inflexibility

and also

### Over-stress on idealism

- Ingratitude
- Alienation of dignity
- Predictability
- Over-formalised justice
- Self-grandisement
- exclusion of children
- over-focus on material security
- total self-reliance
- focus on this life only
- closure to the new

No. 133.

But Luke is an optimist.  
He insists on the power of God.

His next Section E, is about a  
Kingdom Figure who deals  
with the negatives.



No. 135

No. 134

Luke's final Section F is about  
the crucifixion, resurrection and  
the passing on of power to the apostles.



No. 136

The story of the crucifixion shows up  
the social tendency towards narrowness  
- (cf. a law-based society)  
and the loud voice -  
(cf. an order-based society)

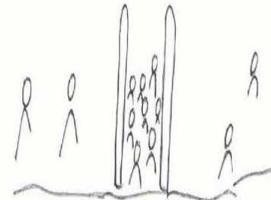
(f) Warning against narrowness  
(c/f a law/time based society)



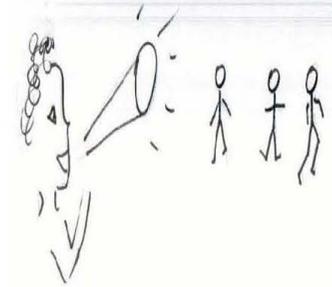
.. and the 'loud voice' ..  
(c/f an ordered/place based society)



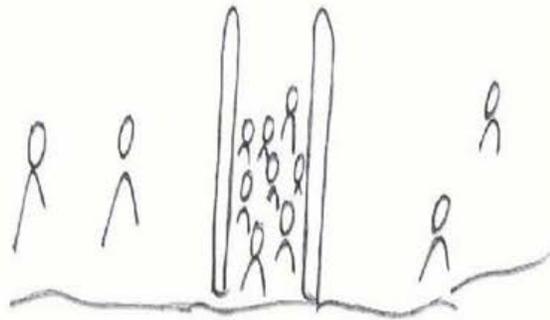
(f) Warning against narrowness  
(c/f a law/time based society)



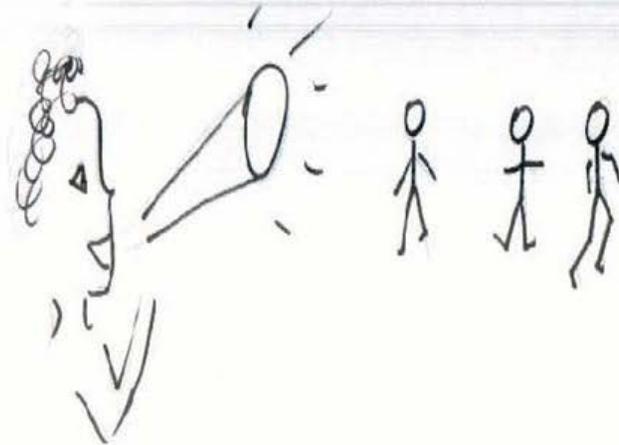
.. and the 'loud voice' ..  
(c/f an ordered/place based society)



(f) Warning against narrowness  
(c/f a law/time based society)



.. and the 'loud voice' ..  
(c/f an ordered/place based society)



Thinking back over your own life in the past and present can you think of instances when people have been inclined to narrowness and/or "the loud voice"

Can you think of how whole societies can be affected by e.g. overstress on national interest at the expense of neighbours and/or State-based propaganda?

# *Acts of the Apostles*

*Michelle Nailon CSB*

Slide set 8 of 12 slide sets

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Isbn 978-0-9805603-8-1

# Luke's 2nd book, the "Acts of the Apostles" leads into the Gospel of John

No. 137.

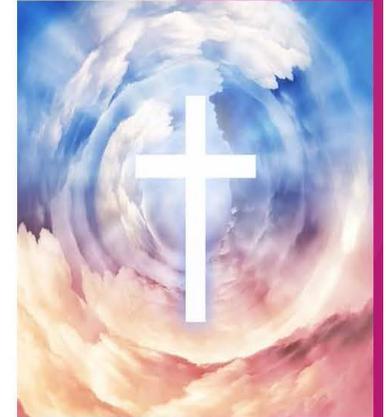
What about Luke's second book called "the Acts of the Apostles"?

- ▶ Luke's *Acts of the Apostles* shows the struggle of the emerging Church against both narrowness and the loud voice.

It also helps to prepare for an understanding of how Jesus continues to exist

within time  
and  
within place

No. 138



No. 139

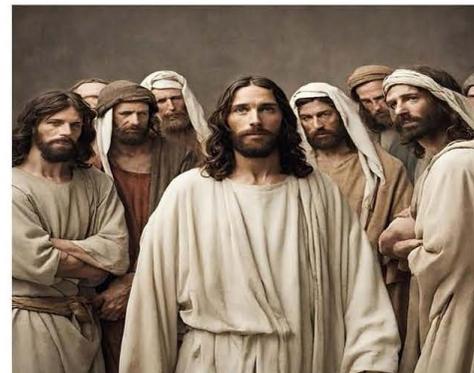
How does "the Acts" do this?

It "paves the way" for a sense of "the living authority" and "the living voice" that is revealed in the gospel of John.



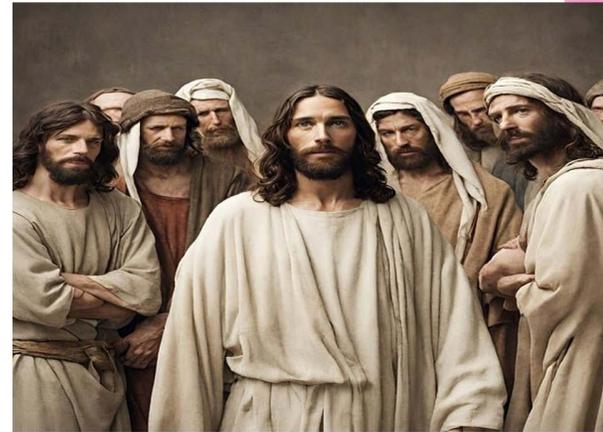
No. 140

What is the Story in the Acts of the Apostles?



and further thoughts on

How does Luke's "Acts of the Apostles" lead into the gospel of John?



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No. 143

No. 144

*Acts of the Apostles*

*The story of the beginning of the international, multi-ethnic Church*

- ▶ *The Acts of the Apostles* was the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of Luke's gospel, written in about 85CE.
- ▶ The story is about the early Church.
- ▶ It's 2<sup>nd</sup> half deals with the gradual journey of Paul to Rome, the heart of the Roman Empire (and the known world)



No. 145

## Also, a sociological, semiotic analysis of *The Acts* [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au)

- ▶ shows how this book introduces and develops ideas that are a prelude to the Gospel of John written around 100 CE.



- ▶ Consider

No. 147

- ▶ As **Section A** develops, details reach backwards into Luke's gospel, showing links to this first book while describing the immediate establishment of the church after the resurrection of Jesus.



- ▶ **Section B** shows how, from the beginning, Church members recognized authenticity in people outside the community (and Judaism)
- ▶ **Section C** shows the struggle of the community against the narrowness of the Jews (including Jewish Christians).

Page 37

No. 146

An analysis outline (cf. [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au)) is as follows:

- Section A Intro to Identity and the Re-tracing of steps
- Section B Recognise Outside autonomy
- Section C Cope with opposition to outreach
- Section D Heed multiple voices and the living word
- Section E Recognise authority in the range of figures
- Section F Challenge the Social Centre of the World

No. 148

**Section D** includes a vast number of words relating to speech. While doing this the paragraphs give a description of **“the Word”**.



No. 149

The paragraphs in Section D appear to be organized around the word “Word”, that is, except the second last paragraph.

This particular paragraph describes a riot in which people were shouting and protesting about Paul. An inference here is that “the loud voice” and “the word” do not co-exist. The paragraph therefore appears to be defined by its mention of “the way”.

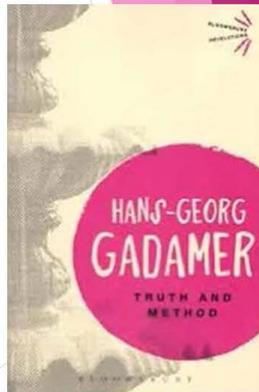
No. 151

As regards this section D in Luke’s *Acts*, there are some interesting parallels here, with a C20th philosopher named Gadamer.

*This has relevance to Luke’s presentation of the Word*

Gadamer wrote in opposition to the philosophers of the Enlightenment.

Rather than follow them, he based his approach on that of Heidegger and Heidegger’s emphasis on time (cf. “Being is time”)



No. 150

Consider descriptions of “the Word”:

- The “word” is taught and preached by many
- The “word” continues to live on with those who ‘have’ it
- Speaking the “word” is permitted by the Ultimate Spirit
- The “word” is spoken to those ready to believe
- The “word” is received by those who include the wealthy
- The “word” has opponents
- The “word” urges proclamation
- Teaching the “word” is commanded by the Final “I AM”
- The “word” expects attention
- The “word” is increased and strengthened by the “I AM”
- The “word” is linked in with “the way”
- The “word” continues the work of “I AM”

No. 152

In his book *Truth and Method* Gadamer starts by pointing out how the portrait and the play as such, are in a sense, a subject.

This is because they take the observer and the participant out of themselves and they show them new dimensions of reality.



No. 153



No. 155

No. 154

Gadamer also said that all language is interconnected

He pointed out that language is constantly changing its meaning.

In doing this, it enables people to see reality more clearly.

Also, in doing this, language as well, is **acting as a subject**.

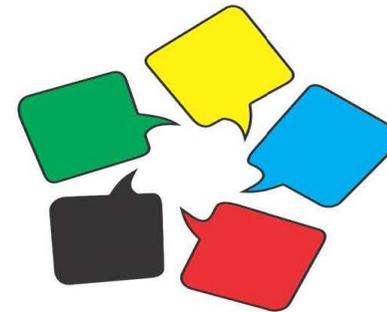
This compares with Luke's paragraphs in *Acts* e.g. *The "word" continues the work of "I AM" (God)*

No. 156

Thus, by the end of Section **D** in *Acts* we have the sense of language as such, that is, "the Word" acting as a **subject** and showing us dimensions of reality.

Because language is interconnected everywhere, and the spoken word happens in the "now" (like music), the living word is especially associated with place.

Is there a connection here with the sense of place??



# A "corporate will" can act as a "subject"

(Does this link in with complaints we hear about the "culture" of an organisation?)

No. 157

What about Luke's Section E  
in Acts?

A semiotic analysis shows this is  
about supportive action taken by  
people of good will

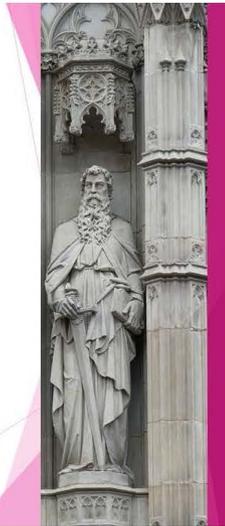
The analysis shows a range of people  
providing Paul with a range of supports.



▶ Consider Section E:

- ▶ Disciples accompanied Paul
- ▶ Prophets warned him
- ▶ Church leadership required purification
- ▶ Law enforcers protected him
- ▶ State Law imposed respect

No. 158



No. 159

- ▶ Religious leadership provided a forum
- ▶ Kith and kin gave secret help
- ▶ the Governor gave on-going protection
- ▶ The Successor weighed up his case
- ▶ the Emperor provided a base for world outreach
- ▶ the Monarchy gave a hearing.



- ▶ In doing the above these people helped to protect Paul as he prepared for his journey to Rome.
- ▶ Insofar as they were all doing the will of God, they were acting with "authority" and with a "communal intentionality", even if they did so independently of each other.

No. 160



# The significance of "what happened" is better understood after the passage of time

No. 161

Again, there are some parallels here with the philosopher Gadamer. He made reference to the influence over time by the "anonymous intentionality" of people.

He said that in accord with Aristotle's view, such intentionality forms a communal life-world, which connects the moral and historical life of humankind with the cosmos.

No. 163

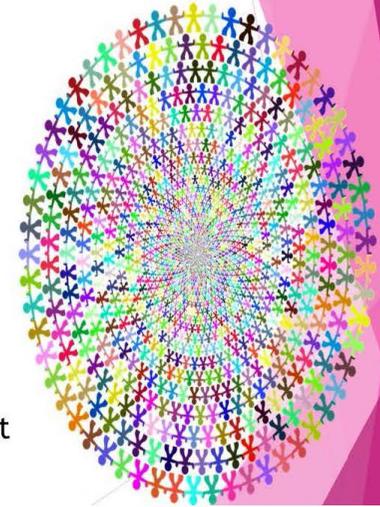
By the end of Section **E** we have the sense of a "corporate will" which is also acting as a **subject** and is shaping the development of history. .

Is there a connection here with the sense of time??

No. 162

Such an "anonymous will" acting within and upon history is also, in a sense, a subject.

One is reminded here of the "Body of Christ" that the apostle Paul taught about

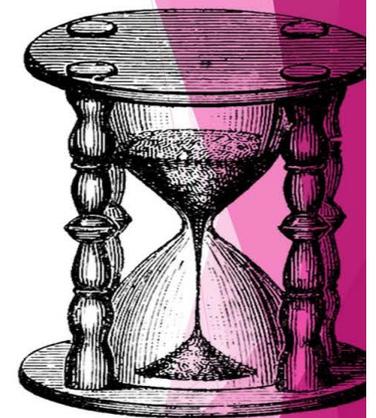


No. 164

Gadamer said a person cannot fully understand history by only looking at the immediate historical period.

This is because the significance of what was going on, at any one period, can only be understood with the passage of time.

This would also apply to the impact of action, happening over time



**The "Word" acting as a subject and a "corporate will" acting as a subject remind us of**

**the "Body of Christ" as described by St Paul**

**To what extent are you aware of Church teaching about "the Body of Christ"?**

**What is your own understanding about this?**

No. 165

No. 166

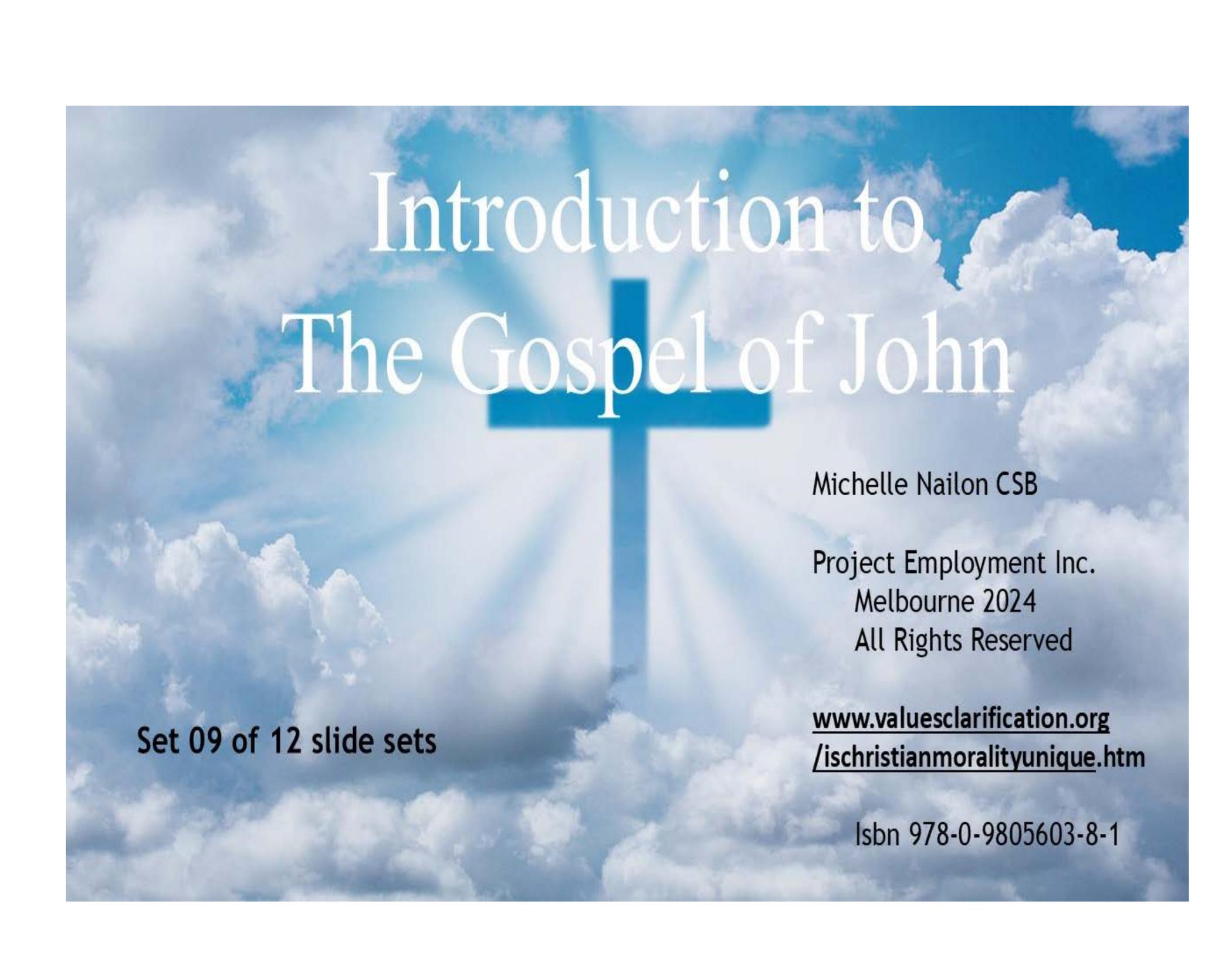
A sense of  
"the Word"  
acting as a subject over place  
and a sense of  
a "corporate will"  
acting as a subject over time  
leads into the

Gospel of John.



Did John also show a focus on  
Time and Place??

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# Introduction to The Gospel of John

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Isbn 978-0-9805603-8-1

What does John do?



# John takes the meaning of the Greek word "Logos" a step further

As pointed out in the previous video, Luke's *Acts of the Apostles* prepares theologically for **major themes** in the gospel of John.

For instance, the *Acts* talks about attributes of "the Word".

The Greek word for this is "Logos".



No. 169



▶ For the Greeks like Plato, the meaning of the "Logos" remains abstract and it is the root word for "logic".

▶ However, *Acts* presents the Logos as "the Word" who takes an active and defined role in the daily lives of people.

No. 170

No. 171

No. 172

John takes the meaning of the Greek word "**Logos**" a step further on, from the understanding in *Acts*.

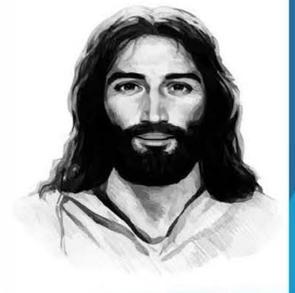
In his opening verses he states that "*The Word (Logos) was made flesh*".

In making this statement, John (and Christianity) is making the claim that the Logos has now, in a specific event, physically entered into the history of the world,



▶ John goes on to identify the Logos with the person of Jesus Christ cf. "*And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.*"

▶ The rest of his gospel goes on to explain the identity of Jesus Christ as.



▶ **The Logos**

living amongst us.

# "And the Word (i.e. the Logos) was made flesh" (and still lives amongst us)

No. 173

The Logos  
living amongst us



No. 175

- ▶ This is because the portrait and language enables us to see beyond our own human experience.



Page 44

No. 174

- ▶ As stated in the previous video
- ▶ There are parallels here with the philosopher Georg Gadamer's teaching in

*Truth and Method.*

- ▶ Gadamer says that language as such, like the portrait or the play, is in a sense, a "subject".



No. 176

In talking about "the verbal world" Gadamer said that this verbal world can be open to every possible insight.

He said via the verbal world, each world view can be extended into every other world view" (p.463). He also talks about understanding being "passed down" via a living tradition.

A description of this would be to call it a "fusion of horizons"



No. 177

Gadamer points out that with John's gospel, Christianity introduces the idea of the **"Word unfolding"**.

In the case of the written word, if individuals read something and broaden their understanding, then this (also) is an unfolding "event".



No. 179

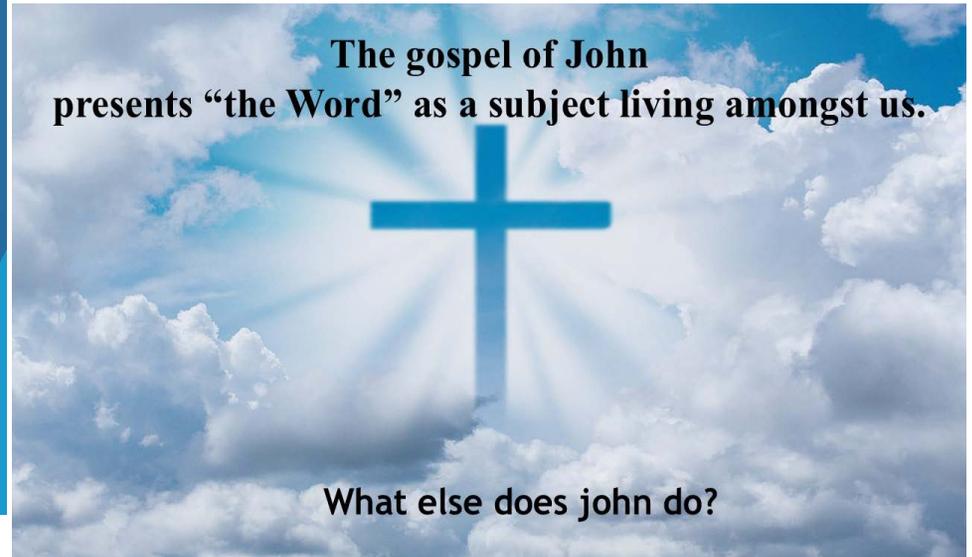
A "Corporate Goodwill acting as a subject amongst us



Page 45

No. 178

"The Word" as a subject, living amongst us



No. 180

Recall that in Section E of Acts Luke presents a range of people who are acting with "corporate goodwill".

Even as individuals they are acting as part of a corporate "subject", in helping Paul to reach his destination of Rome.



No. 181

- ▶ As stated in the previous set of slides, insofar as these people were all doing the will of God, they were acting with “authority” and with a “communal intentionality”, even if they did so independently of each other.
- ▶ Again, one is reminded here of Paul’s teaching about the “Body of Christ”.

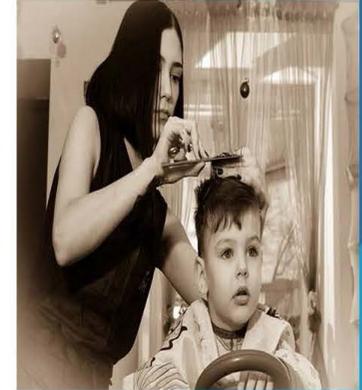


Again, consider Gadamer’s philosophy.

He refers to an “anonymous will” amongst people which (like the portrait or the play) acts as a “subject”.

The effects of actions by people who share in such an “anonymous will” can be understood over time.

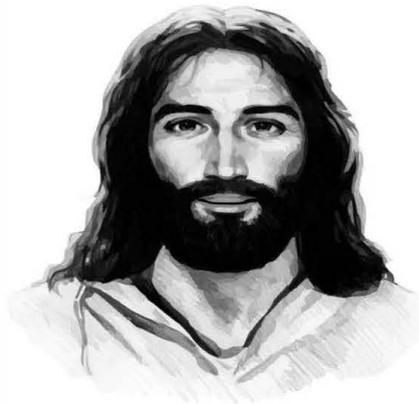
No. 182



No. 183

John presents Jesus as the expression of communal goodwill.

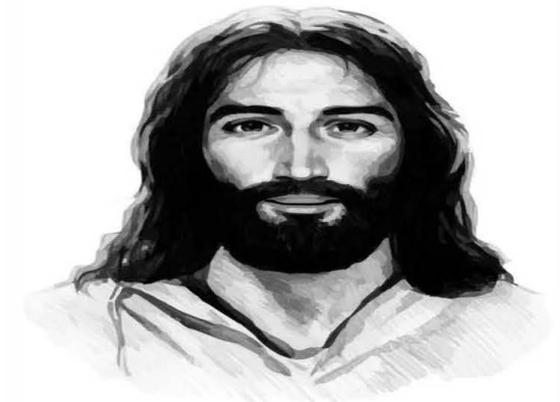
Jesus is presented as the Living Authority of God and characteristics of Jesus as the “Living Authority” are outlined.



In his gospel John goes on to outline characteristics of the “Living Word”

A challenge is then put out to the followers of Jesus to **identify** with him

No. 184



People doing the Will of God

Thus in the Gospel of John a description is given of:

The Living Authority and  
The Living Word

Christianity is based on the belief that Jesus rose from the dead and he continues to live amongst us.

What is your understanding of this belief in the "incarnation"?

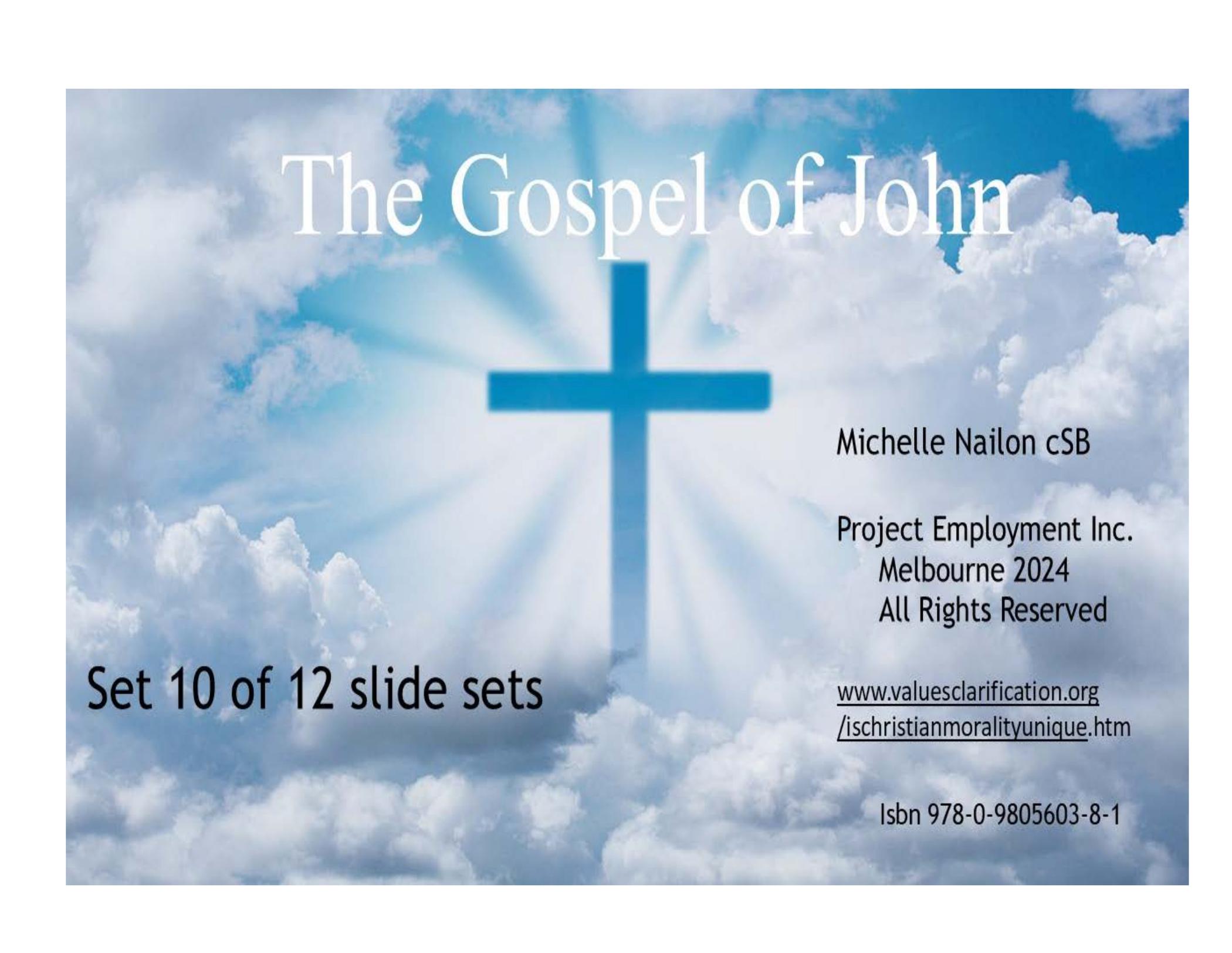
Could you imagine the incarnation is enacted in the on-going will of God as expressed in the evolution of creation??

Could you imagine the incarnation is expressed in the pervasive "word" which expresses the truth about what is going on in creation??

Could you imagine Jesus Christ Himself living amongst us as the "Living Authority" and the "Living Word"?

A sociological analysis of the gospel of John (cf. [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au)) shows how John presents the identity of Jesus in terms of "the Living Authority" and "the Living Word"

# The Gospel of John



Michelle Nailon cSB

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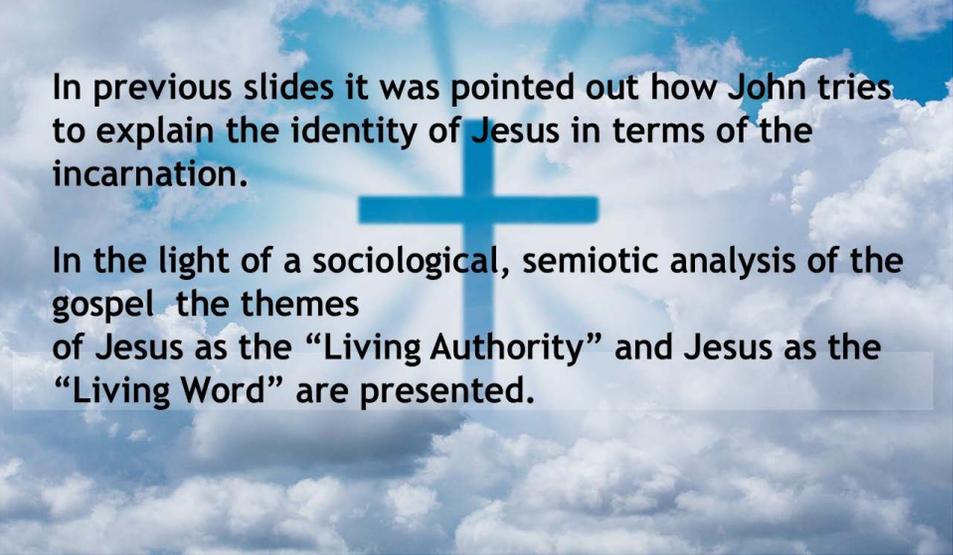
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**What do you know about the gospel of John?**

**Academics agree that this gospel differs from the gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke, which, because of their similarities are called the "synoptic gospels".**

**Academics also agree that the writer of John's gospel takes particular interest in trying to explain who Jesus is.**

**Do you have your own ideas about the identity of Jesus?**

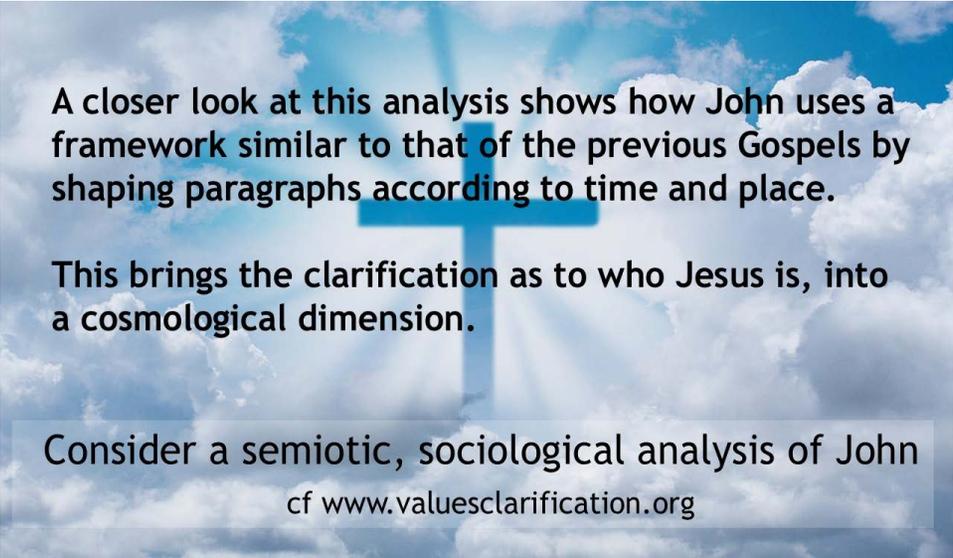


In previous slides it was pointed out how John tries to explain the identity of Jesus in terms of the incarnation.

In the light of a sociological, semiotic analysis of the gospel the themes of Jesus as the "Living Authority" and Jesus as the "Living Word" are presented.

No. 189a

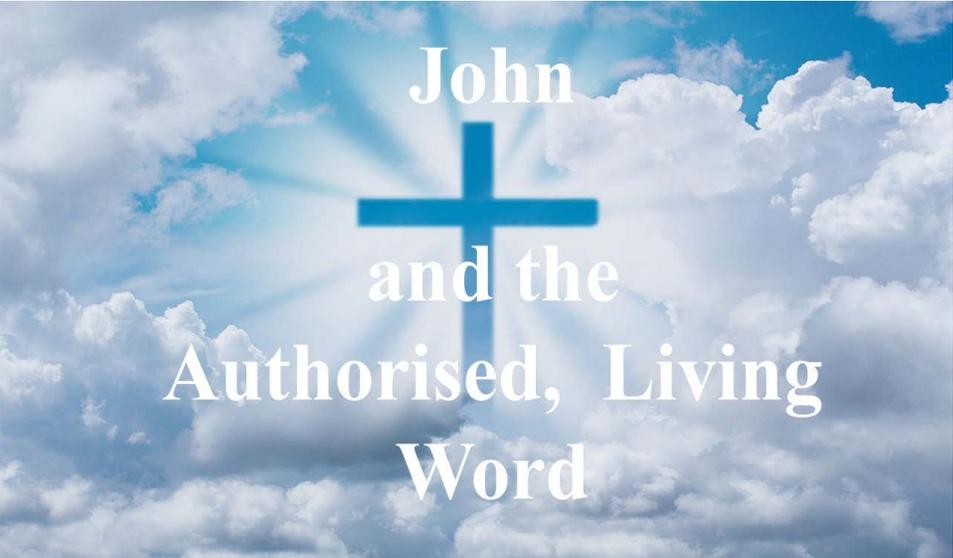
No. 191



A closer look at this analysis shows how John uses a framework similar to that of the previous Gospels by shaping paragraphs according to time and place.

This brings the clarification as to who Jesus is, into a cosmological dimension.

Consider a semiotic, sociological analysis of John  
cf [www.valuesclarification.org](http://www.valuesclarification.org)



John  
and the  
Authorised, Living  
Word

No. 193

A sociological structure of the gospel of John (cf. *Five Pivotal Texts* [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au)), shows how John develops the idea of the

“Word Unfolding” as he explains

Who is Jesus?

First, he presents Jesus as the **Word**.

No. 195

Then

▶ in his Section B, in a similar way to Mark’s Section A, John has a focus on the definition and meaning of

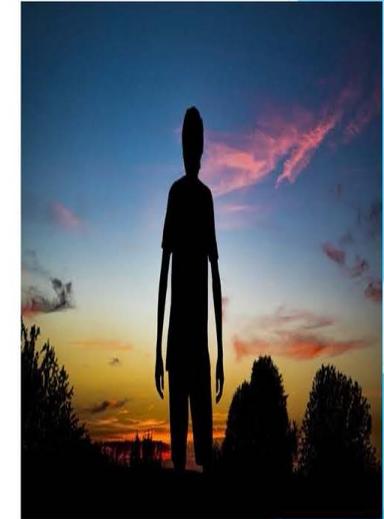
▶ **authority.**



Page 49

John states in his “Section A” that the “Word was made flesh”

The Rest of the gospel explains what this means



No. 194

No. 196

Here, in this Section B, John appears to define and explain authentic

“**Living Authority**” as being identified with Jesus.

How does he do this?



No. 197

As in the gospels of Mark and Luke,  
John uses PLACE NAMES

to structure the paragraphs in his Section B  
and later on in his Section C

How does he do this?

No. 198

In a way similar to that of Luke's Section B he sets  
out a number of paragraph pairs.

These are structured into a consecutive  
(rather than a circular) pattern and each place acts  
as a "hook" for the paragraph

No. 199

Consider the paragraph "hooks" in John's Section B:

Bethany beyond the river Jordan	Judea at the river Jordan
Into Galilee	Into Galilee
Cana/Galilee	Cana/Galilee
Capernaum/Galilee	Capernaum/Galilee
Jerusalem/Temple	Jerusalem/Temple
Night	An hour

No. 200

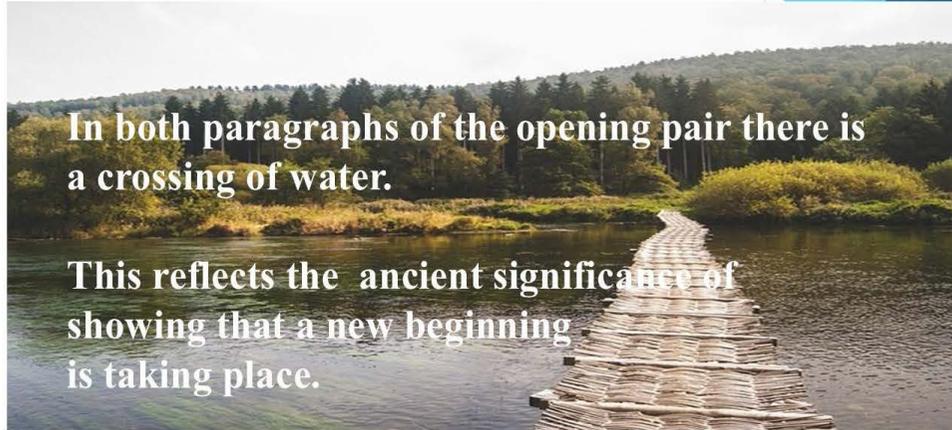
The major point in common between each  
paragraph pair appears to describe  
something about "living authority".

Consider:

Living authority	represents God
Living Authority	invites
Living Authority	relies on the household
Living Authority	works for the Father
Living Authority	gives witness

No. 201

A couple of comments can be made about this structure



No. 203

No. 202



No. 204

▶ A second comment, can answer the question.

▶ Why is the apparent paragraph “hook” in the last pair about **time**?



Recall the sociological structure of **Matthew's** gospel.

This was written for Jewish Christians and Matthew makes an effort to identify time as such, with Judaism and its roots within Jewish law and the authority of the law.

No. 205

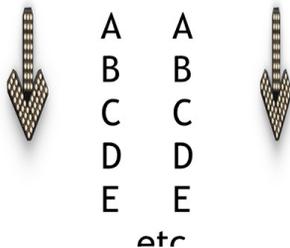
Arguably John's use of time statements in his last paragraph pair in his Section B, is a gentle reminder that even though he is using place names to organize most of the material here, he also wants to connect authority and law with the sense of time.

No. 207

Having described major attributes of "Living Authority" in his Section B, what does John go on to do in his Section

**C ?**

Here, he again sets out a structure of paragraph pairs that are based on parallel places.



Page 52

No. 206

Authority

Law

Time

Understanding Law, e.g. the natural law, is based upon observing cause and effect. This takes place over TIME



No. 208

Consider the paragraph "hooks" of place in his Section C

across the sea	across the Jordan river
In the mountain alone	remained (alone) in place
sea journey	on journey to
synagogue	tomb
not Judea	not openly
Temple (cf. home)	Bethany (cf. home)
into Jerusalem	into Jerusalem
Temple	(in Temple)
Jesus hidden	Jesus hidden
porch of Solomon	(Jesus has gone)

No. 209

Again, the opening “pair” shows a crossing of water



No. 211

No. 210

As with Section B, the point in common to each paragraph pair describes an attribute of Jesus.

In this case, in Section C, the points provide a description of Jesus as the **Living Word**.

Consider:

No. 212

### “The Living Word”

The Living Word	appeals to the crowd
The Living Word	is sought after
The Living Word	achieves goals
The Living Word	brings life
The living Word	is doubted and outlawed
The Living Word	is aware of death threats
The Living Word	has public witness
The Living Word	is conscious of timing
The Living Word	is the light of the world
The Living Word	speaks like a Shepherd.

- ▶ In this Section C, John shows how Jesus is being rejected by the leaders of Judaism. For example, their unbelief results in the synagogue being compared with a tomb.
- ▶ The last paragraph “pair” in this section starts in the porch of Solomon when it was winter.
- ▶ However, in fact, this paragraph does not have a match.
- ▶ In the Porch of Solomon, when the leaders tried to arrest him, “Jesus went away from their grasp”



- ▶ So, in this paragraph “pair”, Jesus has in fact gone.
- ▶ (This touches on the theme that for a sense of direction, there needs to be a focus on Jesus).



No. 213

No. 215

What about the next section in John’s gospel, his

### Section D?

A comparison can be made here with the basic structure of Mark’s gospel.

No. 214

In Mark’s Section C there does not appear to be any paragraph “pattern”. Rather, when dealing with the person of Jesus, especially as the “adult child” (cf. Matthew and Luke’s Section A),

**the gospel writers do not appear to use a paragraph pattern.**

No. 216



The implication here is that the person of Jesus is the “arrival point”.

Jesus is the point of balance, the “still point” within and between Judaism and Hellenism, between Law and Order, and as proposed above, between Time and Place.

- ▶ **In Mark’s Section C**, which appears to be about Jesus in the context of “the Child”, Jesus invites someone to

“Go sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. And come follow me”  
i.e.

**IDENTIFY WITH  
JESUS**



No. 217



No. 219



No. 218

► In a similar way in John's Section D (without a paragraph pattern), Jesus challenges his disciples to

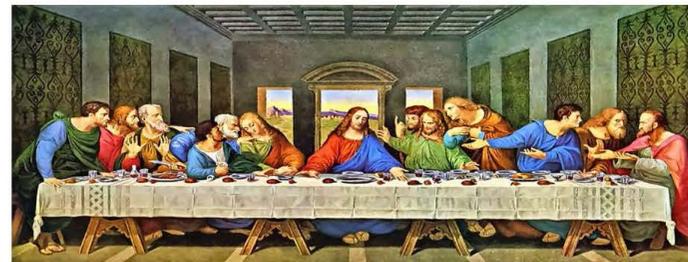
**identify with him.**



No. 220

Within this Section, after his betrayer has left, there is the last supper (the first Eucharist).

Also, Jesus addresses his followers as "children" and he prays for them.



No. 221

## Section E



No. 223

No. 222

John's Section E includes the crucifixion story and resurrection.

In John's account there is a dimension of triumph here.

Also, it appears there is a paragraph pattern here but this is fairly loose.

The pattern appears to be organized around persons being told to do something.

In this sense the paragraph Section picks up on a sense of direction into the future.

No. 224

## ▶ John's Section E

▶ In a future society (in which law and order prevail in balance), the society is characterized by:

- ▶ legal rights,
- ▶ non-violence,
- ▶ credibility of witnesses,
- ▶ a philosophical base,
- ▶ stress on the humanity of Jesus,
- ▶ the fulfillment of Scripture,
- ▶ church members being respected as "children",
- ▶ recognition of the "way" of the child,
- ▶ care for the body of Jesus,
- ▶ support for Church leadership,
- ▶ the sacrament of penance,
- ▶ the priority of faith

Page 56

John's Section F is about a meeting between the risen Jesus and his disciples by the sea of Galilee.

Some may argue that this chapter has been added to the gospel later on.

However, the general setting, which is by the sea, completes a concentric circle about water which has already been threaded throughout the gospel.



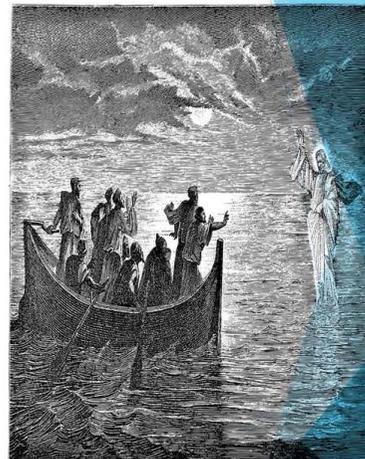
Consider this concentric water circle and weigh up whether or not you think it provides a “summary point” for the gospel

Remember John was dealing with “Jewish Christians” who were loath to accept the full identity of Jesus

### Consider the concentric water circle

1. Immersion in water	1. Immersion in water
2. Jesus uses water to make wine	2. Jesus serves meal using water (to obtain fish)
3. Nicodemus taught re new birth through water	3. Water from side of Christ (symbolizes new birth of Church)
4. “I am thirsty” plea to Samaritan woman	4. “I thirst” plea on cross
5. pail mentioned for collecting water	5. bowl mentioned re vinegar
6. Pool of Bethesda sign	6. Pool of Siloam sign
7. Sea of Tiberias (cf. Emperor claim to divinity)	7. “Rivers of living water” (cf. claim re living God)
8. Jesus walks on water	

- The middle of this concentric circle of images is about Jesus walking on water.
- This scene actually matches the middle of the concentric circle in Mark’s Section B which is about what is needed for a sense of direction.
- The story also matches the middle of Matthew’s Section D.



“When the disciples took Jesus on board, they immediately reached the place where they were going”



No. 229

Here, not only are time (“immediately”) and place (“where they were going”) being mentioned. The need for a sense of direction is also included.

Also the imagery of a boat in stricken waters calls to mind the dilemma of John’s Church community.

A key theme in John’s gospel, as pointed out by scholars and mentioned above, was the difficulty of Jewish Christians in accepting Jesus as the “end point”.

No. 231

▶ The water circle again shows how Jesus is the “still point” within and between

Time and Place

No. 230

John asserts that when Jesus was taken on board his disciples immediately reached the place where they were headed.



The same would be true of the on-going Church.

No. 232

TIME and PLACE

No. 233

Does all this have anything to do with the Christian claim that the incarnation is on-going, that is, that Jesus Christ continues to exist within time and place??

How can this be so?



No. 234

The gospel of John shows Jesus existing within time and place as the Authorized, Living Word

No. 235

Philosophers such as Gadamer provide some sort of understanding as to how there can be a “living authority” that is continuing on, when creation acts according to God’s will

He provides some sort of understanding as to how there can be a “living word” that reveals the truth about reality

No. 236

Does this existence continue to be renewed in an on-going way in the celebration of the Eucharist ??

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# Historical Efforts to Align Time and Place and Law and Order

Set 11 of 12 slide sets

Michelle Nailon CSB

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**Have you ever thought about trying to put time and place into alignment?**

**You could think of it this way.**

**Regarding time: Should you try to live in the past and cling to what worked in the past? Or should you live in the present and reject the wisdom and traditions of the past?**

**Regarding place: Should you look upon nature in front of you, as something that can be abused as well as used?**

Before going into the relevance of previous slides to the Eucharist, it would be helpful to explore some answers to three major questions that have some relevance to the sense of time and place.

1. Was the approach of the gospel writers totally novel or have other groups of people sought out a “still point” between time and place in order to “open up” a time/space portal of the cosmos?

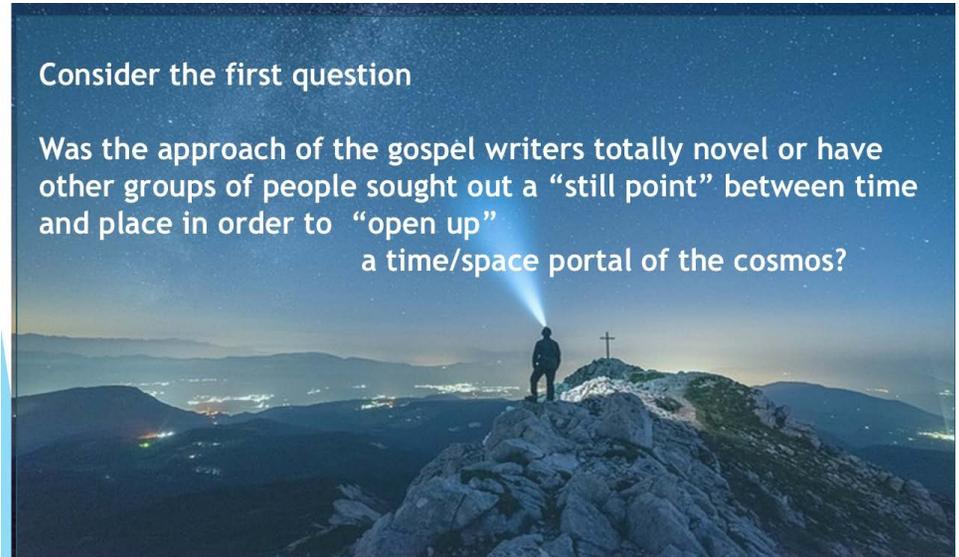
2. Over the centuries, how successful has been the gospel attempt to combine the two world views of Judaism (with its focus on law and time) and Hellenism (with its focus on order and place)?



3. Does the gospel of John provide a “lead in” to the Eucharist and is an “alignment” of the sense of time and place found here ?

Consider the first question

Was the approach of the gospel writers totally novel or have other groups of people sought out a “still point” between time and place in order to “open up” a time/space portal of the cosmos?



# Ancient Efforts to Align Time and Place

No. 241



No. 243

- ▶ In Peru's Machu Picchu Temple, at sunrise on the winter solstice, the light will stream through the window so the Sun's rays fall directly onto the ceremonial stone.



- ▶ In Turkey, unearthed artefacts suggest a site was ingeniously and creatively used by Neolithic people for healing and regeneration.
- ▶ At the winter solstice, sunrise will fully illuminate the stone head.



Page 61

No. 242

- ▶ The Egyptian pyramids were aligned with the stars. When a certain alignment took place, the pharaoh could lead his people into the next world.



- ▶ In Egypt's Karnak Temple (of 5,000 years ago) the rising sun of the winter solstice would penetrate the inner sanctum and rest on its Holy of Holies.



No. 244

- ▶ The Stonehenge monument in England (2,500 BC) was designed to align with both the sunrise of the summer solstice and the sunset of the winter solstice.



# Efforts to align time and place are deeply embedded in the human psyche

No. 245

- ▶ In Mexico's Chichen pyramid (400s A.D). the feathered serpent god Kukulcan appears to 'visit' the temple at the spring equinox.
- ▶ At that point in time triangles of light and shadows are created on the side of the staircase to give the appearance of a snake slithering down the northern steps of the temple.
- ▶ Then at the summer solstice it looks like the pyramid is split into two..



No. 247

Some scholars believe Australian aborigines also aligned time and place

Summer solstice      Equinox      Winter solstice



Fig. 4. The Wurdi Youang stone arrangement and the hypothesised solar alignments, from Norris et al. (2013). The point where the lines converge is the best vantage point for observing the solar markers.

Arrangement near Mt Rothwell and Little River Victoria

Page 62

No. 246

- ▶ Efforts to align time and place have continued on to connect life in this realm with life beyond it.  
In Melbourne Australia at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month the sun shines directly on the tomb of the unknown soldier.
- ▶ People pause for a minute's silent reflection, in the hope their focussed attention will bring peace to those who have died in battle.

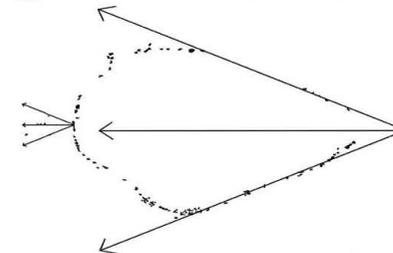


No. 248

Wurdi Youang, this 11,000 year old stone arrangement found in Victoria, shows the exact position of where the Sun sets at summer and winter solstices and at the spring and autumn equinoxes.

62

Rock Art Research 2013 - Volume 30, N



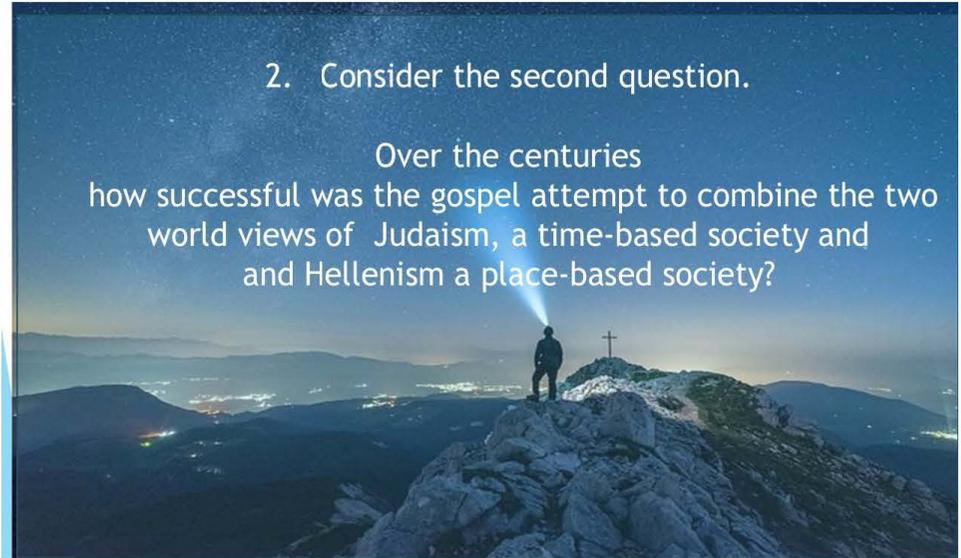
The challenge to align time and place in deeply embedded in the human psyche.

In Melbourne, consider the last five minutes of a Grand final match in which Collingwood kicks the winning goal. For the Magpie fans, time and place have been aligned!



2. Consider the second question.

Over the centuries how successful was the gospel attempt to combine the two world views of Judaism, a time-based society and and Hellenism a place-based society?

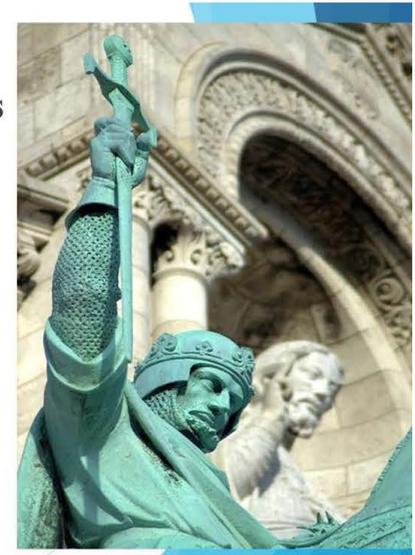


Historical Efforts to Align two differing world views

- ▶ The gospel writers challenge people to live with two “conflicting” world views.
- ▶ But how are they expected to do this?
- ▶ If we look back over the centuries a number of varied attempts have been made here.



- ▶ 1. In the early years of the church, after Christianity was endorsed and adopted by the Roman Empire, the texts of Greek philosophy “faded away”.
- ▶ 2. But during the C12th Crusades these Greek texts were rediscovered.

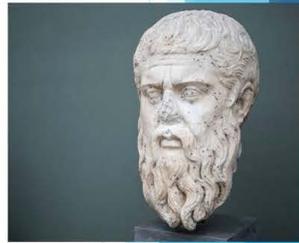


No. 253

- 3. Aquinas then began writing a rationalized church framework based on the works of Aristotle.

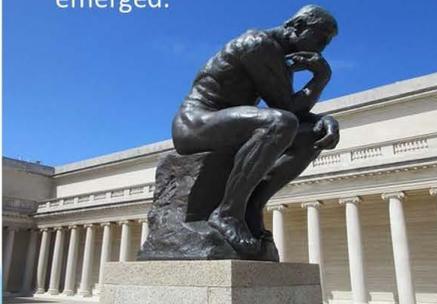
When some church authorities objected to this, Aquinas pointed out that Church teaching had already been relying on the writings of St Augustine, for centuries.

Theologians had not realised that Augustine in turn was reliant on the philosophy of the so-called Greek “pagan” Plato.



No. 255

- 5. During the centuries to follow, Enlightenment philosophy emerged.



A chief source for Enlightenment thought were the ideas of the ancient Greek philosophers..

- 6. Some Enlightenment philosophers rejected tradition altogether.

They thereby provided a C20th rationale for the Nazis to attempt an “obliteration” of time-based Judaism altogether.

Page 64

No. 254

- 4. The rediscovery of Greek philosophy triggered the Renaissance in Europe and then the Protestant Reformation.

Christianity was then split into the two rival factions of:

Catholics (cf. a law-based society) and Protestants (cf. an order-based society).

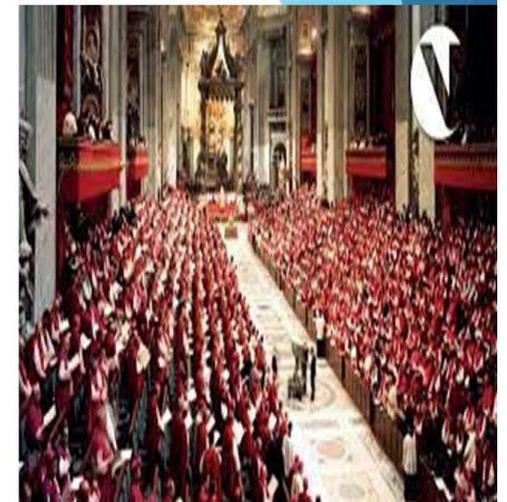


No. 256

- ▶ 7. In the 1960's the Catholic Church attempted to recognize and endorse the “Hellenism” of the Protestant tradition.

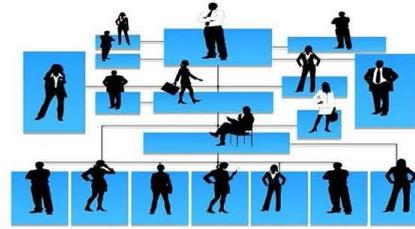
- ▶ But such a “truce” between the two world views has not been easy, even at a personal level.

For instance:



No. 257

- ▶ Does identification with the “still point” of Jesus, mean living midway between the two differing types of society?
- ▶ But does this “water down” the benefits of either side?
- ▶ Most people already operate in the long-term environment of family and the busy, “now-focused” work world.



The work world

No. 259

No. 258

### A third Question for this set of slides

3. Does the gospel of John provide a “lead in” to the Eucharist?

**The Catholic Eucharist is a celebration of what people believe to be the REAL PRESENCE of Jesus Christ. How so?**

No. 260

The Eucharist proclaims, endorses and enacts the presence of the

Living Word and the

Living Authority

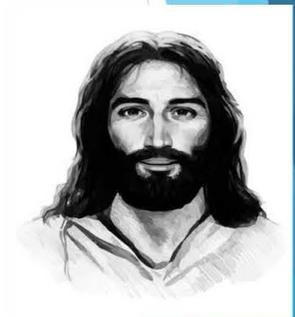
dwelling amongst us

[www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm](http://www.valuesclarification.org/ischristianmoralityunique.htm)

The gospel writers, take such an understanding of language and the will of a people, acting as a “subject,” further than this.

John describes Jesus Christ as the “living authority” of God acting within the context of history.

He describes Jesus Christ as the “living word” of God acting in the ‘now’ and in the world.





The Eucharist proclaims, endorses and enacts the presence of the

Living Word and the

Living Authority

dwelling amongst us

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A Challenge to put on your own thinking cap!

At present there are about 1.4 billion Catholics in the world. By definition this means they have a belief in the on-going incarnation of Jesus Christ.

But perhaps there is a wide range of understanding(s) about what this means.

Perhaps a re-interpretation of cosmology and the place of Jesus Christ in it, has affected the attitude of some people towards the Mass.

Have you ever thought of the presence of Jesus Christ in terms of a Living Authority and a Living Word at work in the world around us?

Have you thought of the Eucharist as an endorsement of this Living Authority and Living Word?

# The Eucharist

Set 12 of 12 slide sets

Michelle Nailon CSB

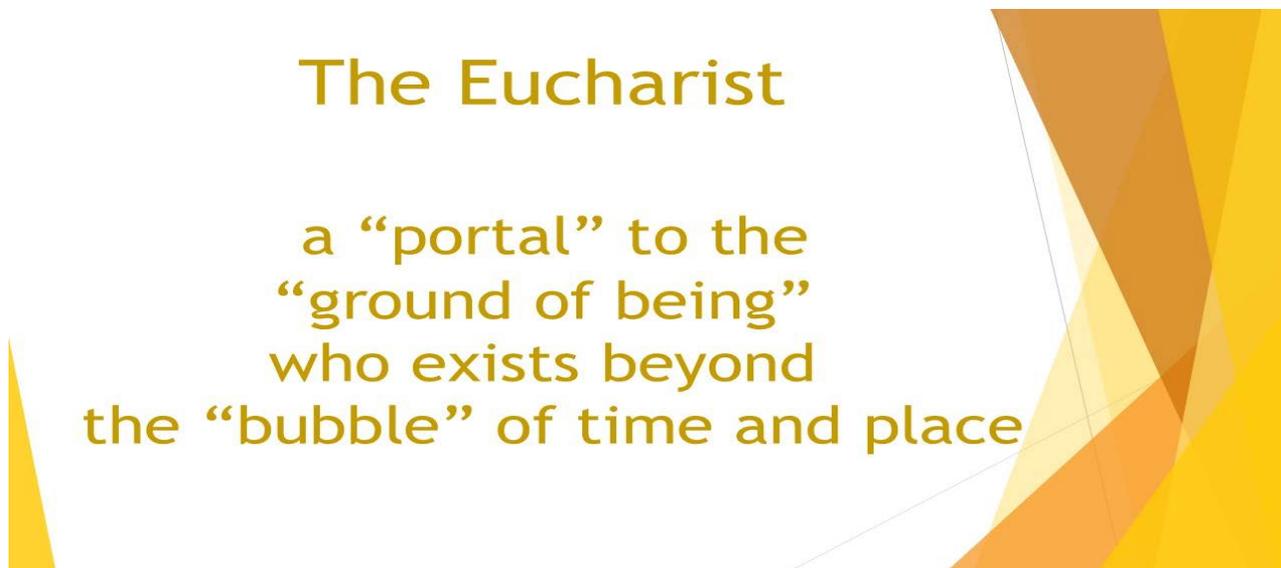
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## The Eucharist

a “portal” to the  
“ground of being”  
who exists beyond  
the “bubble” of time and place



To a standard "church goer" accustomed to the homilies given at a Eucharist, the above language may appear unfamiliar and even questionable.

However a quick exercise with one's mobile phone or laptop can provide a background to this.

For instance, Google's AI will readily give a full explanation of each phrase and show how this fits in with both the Bible and Church teaching.

You could try it!!

No. 265

**The Eucharist**  
Does this 2,000 year old ritual provide a structure for an alignment between place and time?

No. 267

No. 266

To what extent does its present form show an attempt by the Vatican II Council of the 1960's to revive a sense of alignment between the

**“Living Word”** and the  
**“Living Authority”** ?

No. 268

**Consider changes of the 1960's to the celebration of the Eucharist,**

The priest now faces the people.

He speaks in their local language.

Hymns are mainly based upon the Words of Scripture.

People are encouraged to join in responses and sing.

People are invited to do the readings.

The priest is asked to provide a homily at each Mass.

At the Offertory people bring up gifts from their daily work lives.

People receive communion in the hand.

The Eucharist includes the meaning of sacrifice of our own wills and a meal to strengthen us.

No. 269

Such changes require people to be **participants** in the Mass and not just observers.



No. 271

**Scripture is interpreted here, in terms of the present time, in order to keep its message “alive”.**

**This section of the Eucharist is a reminder that the Word of God itself is “alive”**

**It is also linked in with the sense of place . How so?**

Page 68

No. 270

**The first major section of the Mass is about the Word of God**

**This entails a Proclamation of the Word by a member of the Congregation who reads a passage of Scripture.**

**Then a gospel passage is read and an explanation of the readings is given by the priest**

No. 272

Recall that like music, speech is based on “the now” rather than on the passage of time.

Indeed it is very hard if not impossible to recapture the exact meaning of what was said in a past age.

At the same time, as pointed out by the philosopher Gadamer, all language is inter-connected.



No. 273

Arguably, even animals and birds share in a “universal language” of intonation.

One can tell if a chook is startled, afraid, angry, delighted or chatty etc.

This “language of intonation” extends “everywhere”.



No. 274

- ▶ As pointed out previously, the philosopher Gadamer argues that language acts as a “subject”, because of itself, it extends one’s understanding of reality.
- ▶ Logically, because language takes place in the “now” and is everywhere, it is heavily reliant on the location of **place**.

**Endorse the existence of**

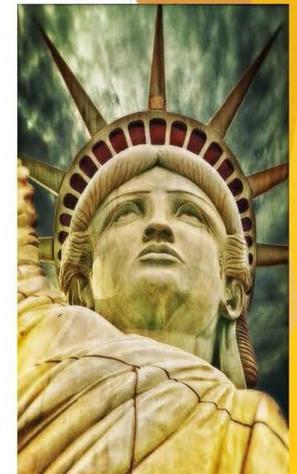
**the Living Word**

No. 275

- ▶ Recall that the gospel of John takes the meaning of the Greek Logos or ‘Word’ a step beyond that of recognising language as a subject (i.e. a doer of action).
- ▶ John says “And the Word was made flesh.”
- ▶ In making this claim, John (and Christianity) is not only endorsing a Hellenistic world view (cf. Greek philosophy, heavily based on rationalism and discourse).
- ▶ The claim is also being made, that the incarnation continues.
- ▶ The Word continues to live on as a “Living Word,” revealing the truths of existence.

No. 276

- ▶ Also recall that in the Acts of the Apostles, Luke distinguishes between the Word and the “loud voice”.
- ▶ “The Word” is not just any voice
- ▶ At the start of the Eucharist there is a Proclamation of the Word
- ▶ This endorses the existence of the Living Word and along with it the sense of **place**.



No. 277

## What is the Second Major Section of the Eucharist?

The Second major section of the Eucharist is the  
Offertory Procession followed by the Offertory



**Endorse the Existence of**

No. 279

Again, consider the reflections of  
the philosopher Gadamer referred to previously.

He says the significance of historical events  
can only be understood after a passage of time.

He says the combined will of people form  
an “anonymous will.” which acts as a subject.

This “anonymous will” has an impact on history.

No. 278

This section of the  
Eucharist ritual,  
endorses  
the sense of time and  
an awareness of the  
**Living Authority.**



How so?

**Living Authority**

No. 280

Within the Eucharistic prayers, people present  
are united with those men and women  
“doing the will of God throughout the ages.”

This prayer reminds the Congregation that  
their daily efforts in carrying out the will of  
God enables them to participate in  
the Living Authority.

Living Authority and its impact exists over  
time.

No. 281

### What happens at the Offertory?



- ▶ In the offertory procession there is an offering of the fruits of people's daily work (usually in the form of the collection)
- ▶ Then there is the offering of bread and wine "the work of human hands," by the priest

No. 282



No. 283

▶ People share in the Living Authority when they carry out the duties of their daily lives.

▶ The Offertory exercises and endorses the "Living Authority"



No. 284

Thus, the first two parts of the ritual of the Mass form an endorsement of:

- the sense of the Living Word and the sense of place.
- and
- the sense of Living Authority and the sense of time.

# The Ritual Provides a Structure for Commitment

No. 285

**The ritual provides a structure in which place and time are aligned.**



No. 287

- ▶ **One might say that for the ancient Egyptians, there wasn't really "a portal" opening between the pyramid and the stars, when these were aligned at a particular time and in a certain way.**

**But there was an enormous effort made in setting up a "conduit" to the eternal through the pyramids.**



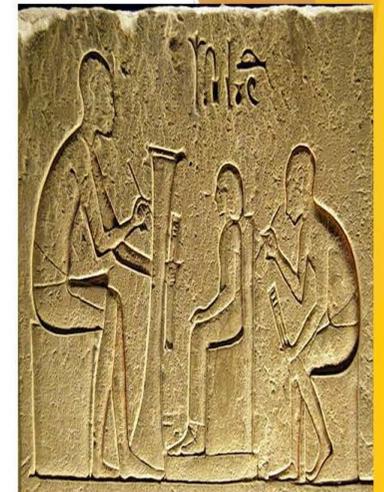
Page 72

No. 286

- ▶ **Is there a parallel here with what the ancients were trying to do?**
- ▶ **That is, does the structure of the Eucharist have parallels with ancient attempts to align time and place?**
- ▶ **It was believed such alignments would lead to a "portal" into the "ground of being", that exists beyond the "bubble" of time and place.**

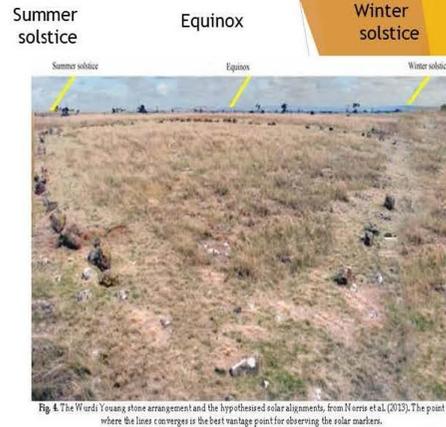
No. 288

- ▶ **The efforts made in doing this, would have been an on-going reminder to people that they themselves should try to pattern their lives on the laws of the universe and in harmony with the universe.**



No. 289

- ▶ The same would hold for other people who celebrated constructions in order to “capture” a particular time in a particular place e.g. in South America, in England and Australia.



11,000 year old alignment near Geelong Victoria

- ▶ If something similar holds for Christians who celebrate the Eucharist, how are they supposed to know how to “align” their sense of place with their sense of time and in harmony with the cosmos?



No. 290

## The Gospels provide a framework of "DO's" and "DONT'S" for alignment

No. 291

- ▶ Consider the structure of the gospels as described in a sociological analysis which has been set out in previous slides (cf. [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au))
- ▶ This analysis explores the planning and methods used by the gospel writers in order to help people take part in a process of alignment.



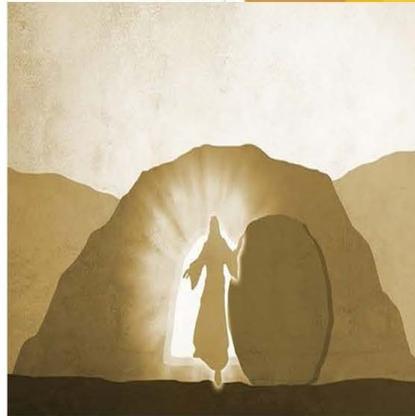
No. 292

- ▶ The gospel of Mark gives an outline of the basis of two differing societies types of society – that is, Judaism and Hellenism.
- ▶ Matthew describes the best aspects of Judaism along with its weaknesses in a time-based paragraph framework. Judaism is a society that relies heavily on the sense of time.
- ▶ Luke on the other hand describes the best aspects of Hellenism (cf. Greek philosophy) along with its weaknesses, in a framework of paragraphs based upon place and also those parties in the text that are being addressed.

# People are Challenged to identify with

No. 293

- ▶ Participation in the Eucharist provides a ritual of commitment to strive for the best aspects of each society as set out in the gospels.
- ▶ People are challenged to endorse the “Living Word” and to endorse the “Living Authority” of the gospels
- ▶ Thus, there is an alignment of the sense of place and the sense of time.



No. 294

The ritual helps people to “align” their lives with the person of Jesus Christ who is the “Authorised, Living Word”.



## Jesus Christ who is the “Living Word”

No. 295

What happens in the Third Major Section of the Eucharist?

Through their participation, in the Proclamation of the Word and the Offertory Procession and Offertory, the Congregation have already contributed to an alignment of the sense of place and the sense of time.

## Jesus Christ who is the “Living Authority”

No. 296

The celebration of the Eucharist goes beyond what the ancients were trying to do.

This is because the priest exercises the “Living Authority” that has been given to him by Jesus Christ, through the church.



In the “Consecration” the priest re-enacts what happened at the last supper.

A “portal” is opened into the “ground of being” beyond time and space

The bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ, who is the living word and the living authority.



**Jesus Christ lives on in the "Body of Christ" which consists of the people who identify with him**

The Fourth Major Section of the Eucharist is the Communion

We are reminded here of the claim made by John in his gospel “And the Word was made flesh”

This claim is physically continued on into the lives of the people who are there



No. 301



Thinking back over slides (or pages) in this collection are there any thoughts about the identity of Jesus Christ that had not occurred to you in the past?

Does the idea of "aligning" the sense of time and place within a society and one's personal life make that much sense to you? How?

In a traditional understanding of the Mass there has been an emphasis on the "sacrifice" of Jesus Christ.

At the same time if we are talking about efforts to "align" one's sense of time and place there would also be sacrifices to be made at a personal level. What do you think?

No. 302



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## Some Questions

### 1. Re: Latin Mass

If you are familiar with a Latin Mass, do you think there is a over-emphasis on authority in the ritual and not enough emphasis on the participation of the congregation?

### 2. Re: Sacrifice

Do you think at times some apparently good things need to be sacrificed in order to carry through a balance in one's life?

### 5: Israel 2025

In the gospel analysis described above it is argued that Christian morality is based upon Judaism. But in 2025 the state of Israel is showing (many would say) anything but morality. Would the characteristics of their present behaviour fit in with the warnings in Matthew's gospel (cf. above) about. this type of society and its tendency to over-stress external law?

Are there lessons for Christians here?

### 6. Wokism

In Luke's gospel there are warnings (cf. above) about over-stress on idealism, living in the "now" and a lack of direction. Can you think of examples of this in our present society?

### 3. time/place alignment

In an explanation of the Eucharist ritual shown above, affirmation of the Living Word (cf. place) comes before affirmation of Living Authority (cf. time). Yet in ordinary language (and the analysis described above) the usual sequence is time (and law) then place (and order). Would the ritual switch these emphases in order to dramatically work up towards a climax (that is, "the consecration")?

### 4 Opening of a "portal"

What do you think of the idea of the Eucharistic ritual involving a "place then time" alignment in people's lives which leads into the opening of a "portal" at the consecration?

### 7 Living Word

Can you think of ways in which people try to carry through the "living word" e.g. efforts to support democracy, efforts to reveal the truth and even in scientific efforts to reveal realities about our universe?

### 8. Living Authority

Do you think there is a cumulative effect of people trying to express goodwill and do God's will "throughout the ages"? Does a "mandate" to do this reach beyond human beings into the natural world as well? In such case does this give the natural world its own rights? Would this require human beings to exercise a role of "stewardship" in the natural world?

## Some Summary Points about Part 2 of *Is Christian Morality Unique?*

### **Gospel of Mark**

*Recognise Law and Order*

- a. Law is Based on authority
- b. Order requires a sense of direction

- c. Jesus Christ --- the "adult child"
- d. The Challenge to respond

### **Gospel of Matthew**

*Internalise the law (cf. time)*

- a. Jesus - a child of history
- b.c. Individual attributes needed,
- d. An environment of internalised law
- e. Avoid overstress on external law
- f. Forgive

### **Gospel of Luke**

*Give Direction to Order (cf. place)*

- a. Jesus - a child of the world
- b. Individual attributes needed
- c. Improve on democracy
- d. Avoid overstress on idealism
- e. Act with Direction like a Kingdom Figure
- f. Forgiveness overcomes narrowness and the loud voice

### **Luke's Acts of the Apostles**

*Launch the Society*

- a. Intro
- b. Recognise outside authority
- c. cope with opposition to outreach
- d. the "Word" acting as a subject
- e. "Anonymous goodwill" acting as a subject
- f. Challenge the social centre of the world

### **Gospel of John**

*Pass on the Power of One*

- a. Intro. "and the word was made flesh"
- b. Heed characteristics of Living Authority
- c. Heed characteristics of the Living Word

- d. Identify with the Authorised, Living Word
- e. Allow the Authorised, Living Word to set Direction
- f. Epilogue

### **The Eucharist**

*Align Place and Time - A Portal Opens*

- a. Proclaim the Living Word (cf. Place)
- b. Offer authorised, daily labour (cf. time)

- c. The Last Supper is re-enacted

- d. Commune with the Authorised Living Word

"and the Word was made flesh"