

**Table 1. Differences between Matthew 1:18-2:12 and Luke 1-2**

Differences	Matthew (Ch. 1 & 2)	Luke (Ch. 1 & 2)
<b>Announcement of conception</b>	Announcement from the Angel about the conception of Jesus was made to Joseph	Announcement from the Angel about the conception of Jesus was made to Mary
<b>Who accepts Jesus and who rejects Him.</b>	In Matthew's stories about Jesus' childhood the people that accept Jesus are sages from far away, presumably believers from a pagan religious tradition. The Magi spread word to anyone in the world who is willing to search for God with an open mind.	The Reign of God belongs to the poor, and the poor accept Jesus from the onset. The Gospel of Luke repeatedly emphasizes Jesus' concerns for the poor and the outcasts of society.
<b>Intimations of greatness</b>	Matthew does not include intimations of greatness as Jesus reached maturity.	Luke discusses the family's journey to Jerusalem as Jesus reached age of maturity where glimpses of Jesus' greatness are witnessed by people.
<b>Demonstration of humanity</b>	omitted from Matthew's gospel	Luke accounts for Jesus' missing for three days in the temple resulting in a declaration of independence from his family as his future greatness will come from within, which is from God and not his heritage (nurture) producing tension within his family.
<b>Different sequence of events, accounts of events, and omissions of information</b>	Matthew starts by accounting for Mary and Joseph's living arrangements; angel of the Lord appearing to Joseph; birth of Jesus in Jerusalem; frightened Herod; instruction for wise men to pay homage offering gifts	Luke starts giving the impression he is writing a report, almost like a newspaper. He provides accounts for Zechariah and Elizabeth's conception; message from angel Gabriel; visitation by Mary to Elizabeth; birth of John; birth in manger in Bethlehem; shepherd visit; Simeon guided by the Spirit in the temple; Passover; Jesus found after three days in the temple; Jesus' declaration of independence

***Write a paragraph about how these differences reflect the unique audiences of the respective gospels.***

**Gospels of Matthew and Luke: Respective Audiences**

At the time of the writing of Matthew's gospel the population of need seems to be the Jews. During Matthew's the gospel was written, the Jews had been looking for hundreds of years for the Messiah to come as this was promised in Genesis. Matthew, in his powerful birth account, presents Jesus, in fulfillment of the prophecies and hopes of the Hebrew Scriptures, as the King of the Matthew's audience, has a special appeal to the Jews because of the genealogy of Jesus Christ which he traces all the way back to Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel. Matthew wants the Jews to understand that not only is Jesus King but He is also the long awaited and prophesied Messiah. They had wanted a king to overthrow the Roman Empire. In Matthew we see Jesus, as Savior, King of the Jews, threat to the Roman Empire.

In Luke, Jesus emerges primarily as a teacher, a teacher of ethical wisdom, someone who's confident and serene in that ethical teaching. Someone who is very much interested in inculcating the virtues of compassion and forgiveness among his followers. Luke's gospel seems to be occupied by concerns of perception of the audience, the way that the church will be perceived by the Roman authorities. It appears that Luke's gospel is more humble and apologetic for Jesus' life and teaching and the starts of the Christian movement. In Luke's Gospel there more references to women, the sick, and the poor. In Luke 1-2 we see special attention to the role of the Holy Spirit and to the women. In Luke the angel appears to Mary (not to Joseph as recorded in Matthew) and it is Elizabeth and Mary who receive words of praise and blessings. Luke places further attention on the poor and the rejected of society, as the angels appear to humble shepherds, not to the privileged and powerful wise men or Magi as in Matthew's account. In Luke we see Jesus as bringer of peace and goodwill towards all on earth.

***Write an additional paragraph about how your new understandings reveal elements in your personal fifth gospel.***

Sad to say but I have never sat down and analyzed any Bible scripture. I am sure in high school we were asked to read, and "analyze" passages, however doing so today with more developed skills of research and inquiry provides new insight into the meanings which the Bible attempts to convey. It was an eye opening experience to just discover how the influences of the times which the Gospels were written had such influence from the population who was at most need at that time. Whether the audience was the Jews as in Matthew or the Gentiles in Luke, there was a common theme which correlates to my personal interpretation of the Gospel. To me the Gospel is living life on a daily basis with the intent to give to others your gift. Each of us is special, unique, creations of God, with our own strengths and weaknesses. Each of us has a God given gift to share and each of us has weaknesses in which we need assistance from others. Just as the Bible shows us, God provided a path of salvation for men through the gift of His son, who suffered for ours sins, through death and resurrection and now offers a share in His triumph to all who will accept it. Jesus, lived and showed us a new way to be human. When we follow and do as Jesus did we build a faith in action community, being demonstrably Catholic together building the Kingdom of God.