

Thus if a man were to say that last year he made a trip from New York to Los Angeles the statement might be absolutely true but would certainly not be complete. It would not tell whether he had made the trip by air, by train, by bus, by private car, or by ship through the Panama Canal. The addition of one of these features would still leave the statement incomplete, for it would not tell what precise route had been taken, or what airline, steamship, or bus line had been used. If these facts were given, the question could then be asked whether the trip had been made continuously or whether there had been a stopover at some point. The statement that one had stopped to see friends in Omaha would not indicate whether he had or had not made a similar stop in Pittsburgh, unless it were specifically mentioned that only one stop-over had been made.

Almost any statement can give rise to many questions that it does not answer. Answers to some of these questions may be inferred but such inferences must be handled with great caution.

John ended his gospel with the words: "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written" (John 21:25). Thus John makes it clear that his gospel is not a complete account of the life and doings of Christ.

Failure to realize that a statement, even though entirely true, is still only a survey, has led to the finding of seeming contradictions in the gospels. Thus Matthew 28:1 says that when Jesus rose from the dead "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb," while Luke 24:10 says that there were additional women with them. Matthew 28:2-6 says that "an angel of the Lord" invited the women to see the place where the Lord had lain, but Luke 24:4 says that "two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them."

Neither of these differences is actually a contradiction. Mention of an angel does not mean that there was only one, and mention of two Marys need not mean that other women