

I. Introduction to Luke.

A. What was Jesus really like?

B. Who is the author of Luke?

1. Whoever wrote Luke also wrote Acts. 1:3 Acts 1:1
2. There is a very strong tradition in the church that Luke is the author.
3. What we know of Luke from the New Testament supports this assumption.
4. Luke is a close companion of Paul. Acts 16:10-17 20:5-15 21:1-18 27:1-18:16
2 Tim. 4:11 Phm. 1:24
5. He is a physician – an educated man of science. 4:28 5:12 8:43 Col. 4:14
6. He is probably a Gentile. Col. 4:14,10-11 Acts 1:19
7. He is loyal and brave. 2 Tim. 4:11

C. When was Luke written? Probably in the early 60s AD.

D. For whom was Luke written? v. 3b Acts 1:1

1. Who is *most excellent Theophilus*?
2. Luke is written for anyone who wants to know more about Jesus.

E. How does Luke's gospel compare to the other three canonical gospels?

1. Luke's gospel is the most thorough.
2. Luke's gospel is the only gospel with a sequel (Acts).

F. What are some of the special emphases of Luke's gospel?

1. God is working out His eternal plan of salvation. 1:47,32-33 2:11 3:6 24:44,26-27
2. The salvation message of Jesus is meant for everyone – even outsiders (the poor, the wayward, women, non-Jews). 1:52 2:325:32 10:30ff 17:11-19 4:25-27 7:9
3. The work of the Holy Spirit is emphasized. 1:15,35,41,67 2:25-27 3:16,22 4:1 12:12

G. A simple outline of Luke's gospel.

1. Prologue. 1:1-5
2. He comes – the inauguration of Jesus' ministry. 1:5-4:13
 - a. Birth and childhood. 1:5-2:52
 - b. Preparation for public ministry. 3:1-4:13
3. He seeks – Jesus' public ministry (teaching and miracles). 4:14-19:44
 - a. Ministry in Galilee. 4:14-9:50
 - b. From Galilee to Jerusalem. 9:51-19:44
 - c. Jesus in Jerusalem. 19:45-21:38
4. He saves – crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. 22-24

II. Luke writes so that you will know the truth about Jesus. v. 1-4

A. Luke explains his method and purpose in a formal prologue. v. 1-4

B. Luke is not the first to record God's revelation in Christ. v. 1-2

1. God has accomplished (fulfilled) great things among us. v. 1b
2. These great revelatory acts of God must be recorded in Scripture. Heb. 1:1ff
3. The source of what has been handed down is eyewitnesses (who are now servants of the Word). v. 2 Acts 1:21-22,8 2:22ff Heb. 2:3-4 1 Jo. 1:1 2 Pe. 1:16
4. Mark's gospel was probably one of Luke's sources.

5. There were also other oral (and perhaps) written traditions circulating.
 6. Were some of the inspired gospels (tragically) lost? 2 Pe. 1:19-21
- C. Luke wishes to make his own unique contribution. v. 3-4
1. Luke is a careful researcher whose work is thorough, accurate and trustworthy. v. 3a,4a 3:1-2
 2. Luke writes an orderly account. v. 3b
 3. Luke writes with a purpose – not merely to inform, but to lead the reader to know Jesus personally through repentance and faith. v. 4
 4. The gospel of Luke is of great value to those who, like Theophilus, want to know the truth about Jesus.

III. Conclusion: Know the truth.

- A. Application – we, like Luke, need to be very careful about handing the truth. Eph. 4:25 Col. 3:9 Mt. 5:33-37 Ex. 20:16 Prov. 12:22 Js. 3:1 Acts 17:11
- B. Only God is infallibly true. Romans 3:4
- C. How did Luke, who is a fallible man, produce an infallible record of Jesus' life? 2 Tim. 3:16-17 1 Th. 2:13 2 Pe. 1:19-21
1. We see in Luke's preface the process of the divine inspiration of Scripture.
 2. The Scriptures were not given by dictation.
 3. The Holy Spirit works through the personality, experience, research and effort of the human author. 2 Pet. 1:19-21
 4. The Holy Spirit superintends the process in order to ensure that the book is perfect and without error – exact truth. v. 4
 5. The Lord has also guided the process of the Scriptures being preserved through history.
 6. Application -- the Holy Spirit works through our effort and faithfulness.
- D. God has given us a reliable record of the most important message.
1. We too need to know more completely about Jesus.
 2. We too are called to be servants of the Word who proclaim the Truth.
 3. God's Word is powerful. 1 Pet. 1:23 Js. 1:18 Isa. 55:11 Heb. 4:12

Discussion questions

1. Why do we think Luke wrote this gospel?
2. Who is the intended audience of the gospel of Luke?
3. What is the purpose of Luke?
4. What contribution does the book of Luke make to Scripture?
5. How should we imitate Luke's commitment to carefulness with the truth?
In what areas do you need to be more careful with the truth?
6. What do we learn from Luke 1 about the process by which Scripture is inspired by God?
7. How can you be certain about the things Jesus did and taught?
8. What do the people with whom you work and live think of Jesus?
How can you help them come to a more accurate knowledge of the truth?