

The Gospel of Luke Part 1 and Part 2

Introduction to the New Testament

Class 2–3

I. Why begin with Luke?

- A. Luke-Acts a single work in two parts
- B. Way that Luke understands the “history of redemption”
- C. Helpful to focus on one gospel and fit the others around what you know; helpful to focus on Acts and fit the epistles around what you know.
- D. If get Luke-Acts, you get a lot of the New Testament, since “of the 7,947 verses in the NT, Luke-Acts comprises 2,157 verses, or 27.1 percent. By comparison, the Pauline letters have 2,032 verses and the Johannine writings have 1,407.”⁵

II. What is a Gospel?

- A. Why use this title? Mark 1:1 helps give us a name for this type of work
The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (Mark 1:1)
- B. Gospel means “good news,” and each of the four authors tells the “good news” of Jesus in a slightly different manner.
- C. What are they?
 - 1. History – True accounts of things that actually happened
 - 2. Theology – Truth about God and what God asks of us
 - 3. Preaching – They are *God preaching to us...individually!*
- D. What is their goal? John 20:30-31
Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:30-31)

III. Why We Love Luke

- A. The birth narratives of John and Jesus (What’s often called “the Christmas Story” is in Luke 2:1–20)

⁵ Darrell L. Bock, *A Theology of Luke and Acts: God’s Promised Program, Realized for All Nations*, Biblical Theology of the New Testament, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 27.

- B. The Parables – the extended travel narrative includes parables like the Prodigal Son (Luke 15)
- C. His emphasis on the Holy Spirit, the poor, salvation available to all (Gentiles!)

IV. Luke the Author

- A. How do we know that Luke wrote *Luke*?
 - 1. Most books give the author's name in the opening verses (all the epistles with the exception of 1-3 John). With the gospels and Acts we have to determine it through other means.
 - 2. Evidence from the Bible (*Internal Evidence*)
 - a. Luke and Acts are written by the same author: Style and structure of both books too similar to be from different authors. One example of many is Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-2.
 - b. Author was with Paul in latter half of Acts: Clear from Acts 16:11; 20:13; 21:1; 27:1; 28:10 that author was with Paul at each of these moments. All use the pronoun "we."
 - c. Luke is named as one of these men: Colossians is written from Rome during Paul's house arrest there (Acts 28:10) and in Colossians 4:14 Paul writes, "Luke the beloved physician greets you."
 - d. Thus, a likely candidate is Luke.
 - e. Since he wrote Luke and Acts and Acts ends with Paul in house-arrest in Rome in Acts 28, it seems likely that he wrote Luke-Acts at this point. He didn't write of Paul's death, because it hadn't happened yet. I think that's the most reasonable explanation. Thus, he wrote Luke-Acts in the early 60s AD.
 - 3. Evidence from church history (*External Evidence*) – sources that claim Luke as author:
 - a. Marcion – mid-2nd century (though his canon is suspect, it provides useful historical perspective)
 - b. Muratorian Canon (2nd century fragment with list of NT books)
 - c. Irenaeus (130-202 A.D.) and Tertullian (160-220 A.D.) have no doubts about Luke
 - d. Oldest Luke manuscript (A.D. 175-225) includes "Luke" in the title.

- e. No other name is ever given as the source.
- B. The man Luke
- 1. Physician: “Luke the beloved physician” (Colossians 4:14) – primitive medicine, but by this time a respected profession.
 - 2. Co-laborer with Paul (as missionary to the Gentiles)
 - a. With Paul for 2nd (e.g., Acts 16:10-17) missionary journey following Jerusalem council.
 - b. And 3rd missionary journey beginning Acts 18:23 (e.g., 20:13).
 - c. And final journey to Rome as a prisoner (e.g., 27:1; 28:10).
 - d. And then with Paul in the 2-year house arrest in Rome.
 - e. He’s also with Paul as the apostle writes 1 Timothy and certainly 2 Timothy, where he writes, “Luke alone is with me” (2 Tim 4:11).
- C. The author Luke
- 1. A Historian
 - a. Careful research of eyewitnesses, existing accounts (Luke 1:1-4)
 - b. Detailed historical references (Luke 2:1-3; 3:1-2)
 - c. Well-trained author (much attention paid in scholarly works to his excellent Greek and his command of literary techniques—e.g., Luke 1-3 presents John and Jesus in a back-and-forth manner that establishes John but elevates Jesus)
 - 2. An Evangelist
 - a. A burden for certainty in our faith (Luke 1:4)
 - b. A burden for his readers to see Christ as the promised good news for all people (Luke 2:10-11)
 - c. Sees Christ’s purpose as saving: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10)
 - 3. A Theologian
 - a. Traces Old Testament promises fulfilled (Luke 1:31-33 and Davidic king; 4:18-19 and Messiah from Isaiah 61:1-2)

- b. Sees God's unfolding plan of redemption (24:44-47; Acts 1:8; 2:17-21). A history controlled by God that sweeps up all his people in a grand storyline. In Luke's writings it begins with Adam (Luke 3:38) and ends with final judgment at Christ's return (Acts 2:21; 17:31). The big events in this unfolding plan of redemption:
- **Adam** - the first man, the first sinner (esp. Gen. 1-3) – mentioned as "son of God" in 3:38.
 - **Abraham** - God made his promises about a nation, a land, and a blessing to him (esp. Gen. 12:1-3) – mentioned extensively in prophecy by Zechariah (Luke 1:67-79)
 - **Moses** - Israel became a nation with a divine law under Moses (esp. Exod. 1-24) – mentioned throughout Luke and Acts especially in connection to giving of the Law.
 - **David** - The great king who has given a promise that he would have a son that would reign forever (2 Sam. 7) – Jesus prophesied by Gabriel, "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32) – numerous other references.
 - **Jesus** - God's Son who is the fulfillment of the Old Testament hopes – Throughout Luke 1-2 Jesus is the fulfillment of OT prophecy and OT hopes; High point of Luke 1-9 is when Peter declares Jesus to be "the Christ of God" (9:20).
 - **Pentecost** – The beginning of the church (Acts 2) – Luke sets up this events as prophetically, historically, and theologically important. The great new covenant era.
 - **Return of Christ** – When Jesus comes back to judge and to begin the final stage in God's plan (Rev. 19) – Christ's return prominent in Luke 9:51ff. and in Acts (2:21; 17:31).
 - **New Heavens and New Earth** – When God's promises to his people are fulfilled and they know only sinlessness and joy forever in his presence (Rev. 21) – Hinted at in Luke-Acts, but rarely specific.

V. "Most Excellent Theophilus" (1:3)

- A. In Luke's prologue he identifies "most excellent Theophilus" as the one he's writing for (1:3). He is simply "Theophilus" in Acts 1:1, also the intended reader.
- B. His name means "friend of God," and so it could be symbolic.
- C. **However, David Garland makes a good case that this is unlikely.** His main clues are (1) there are others by the name of Theophilus in the

papyri and so it was “a common name,” and (2) the addition of “most excellent” would be odd if the name was symbolic.⁶ Thus, “In my view, Theophilus is the patron who provided funds to publish and distribute Luke-Acts. I assume, then, that he is a Christian, and the gospel and Acts will convince him (and others) of the reliability of what he has been taught and believed.”⁷

VI. Luke a “Synoptic” Gospel

- A. “Synoptic” is from a Greek word means “seeing together.”⁸
- B. Refers to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, since they resemble each other so much.
 - 1. The organization of the material is geographical: Jesus begins in Galilee and then travels to Jerusalem for his crucifixion.
 - 2. John organizes his material more chronologically, with many visits to Jerusalem included.
 - 3. There is much overlap in the material included in the Synoptics: sending out of the Twelve, Olivet discourse, Last Supper. These are in the Synoptics but not John.
- C. The order of when the Gospels were written isn’t an easy question to answer.
 - 1. The basic consensus is that Mark was first.
 - 2. But then the question is whether Luke had Matthew’s gospel when he wrote his own.
 - 3. Carson and Moo think this is unlikely and that more likely is that Matthew and Luke had access to a source (“Q”?) or a collection of materials now lost to us.⁹ This would explain the occasional places where Matthew and Luke line up but differ from Mark.

VII. Outline of the Gospel of Luke

- A. (1:1-4) The Prologue
- B. (1:5-4:13) The Birth and Preparation of the Christ
- C. (4:14-9:50) The Galilean Ministry
- D. (9:51-19:27) The Journey to Jerusalem
- E. (19:28-21:38) The Jerusalem Ministry
- F. (22:1-24:53) The Cross, the Resurrection, and the Ascension

⁶ David E. Garland, *Luke*, ECNT (Zondervan, 2011), 56.

⁷ Garland, 56.

⁸ Carson, Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Zondervan, 2005), 77.

⁹ Carson, Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Zondervan, 2005), 213.

CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

- I. (1:1-4) The Prologue
- II. (1:5-4:13) The Birth and Preparation of the Christ (Answers the question: *Who is Jesus?*)
 - A. (1:5-2:52) The Births of John the Baptist and Jesus
 - 1. (1:5-25) Annunciation of John
 - 2. (1:26-38) Annunciation of Jesus
 - 3. (1:39-56) Mary and Elizabeth (and *Magnificat* in 1:46-55 from Latin at v. 46, “magnifies” (*magnificat*))
 - 4. (1:57-80) Birth of John
 - 5. (2:1-20) Birth of Jesus – “Glory to God in the highest!”
 - 6. (2:21-40) Presentation of Jesus – “A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel” (2:32).
 - 7. (2:41-52) Jesus in his “Father’s house” at “twelve years old”

Question: *Luke fills the birth of Jesus with visits from angels (1:8-23; 26-38; 2:8-14), Old Testament prophecies (1:17; 31-33), spontaneous prophecies (1:46-55; 67-79; 2:29-32), vivid historical details (1:5-7; 2:1-7), and seven references to the Holy Spirit (1:15, 35, 41, 67, 80; 2:25-27). What are some things these elements tell us?*

- B. (3:1-4:13) The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus
 - 1. (3:1-14) Ministry of John the Baptist (Fulfillment of Isa. 40:3-5)
 - 2. (3:15-22) Baptism of Jesus (**a promised baptism for disciples in 3:16; the Trinity on display in 3:22**)
 - 3. (3:23-38) Genealogy of Jesus—notice the order of generations and where Luke ends: “Adam, the son of God” (3:38).

On the difference between Matthew’s genealogy and Luke’s, Machen examines in detail the differences and major views. His conclusion is a helpful one. In summary, he thinks it most likely that Matthew is giving the kingly Davidic line while Luke is giving the family line of Joseph. Thus, he says Matthew is answering the question, “Who is the heir to David’s throne?”, where Luke is

answering the question, “Who is Joseph’s father?”¹⁰ Both questions are extremely relevant. He writes,

“We are not endeavoring to discuss the intricate question of the genealogies with even the slightest approach to completeness. But enough, we think, has been said to show that the differences between the two genealogies are not irreconcilable. Reconciliation might conceivably be effected in a number of different ways. But on the whole we are inclined to think that the true key to a solution of the problem (however the solution may run in detail) is to be found in the fact that Matthew, in an intentionally incomplete way, gives a list of incumbents (actual or potential) of the kingly Davidic throne, while Luke traces the descent of Joseph, back through Nathan to David. Thus the genealogies cannot properly be used to exhibit contradiction between the Matthæan and the Lucan accounts of the birth and infancy of our Lord. Here, as in the other features of the two accounts, there is complete independence, but no contradiction.”¹¹

4. (4:1-13) Temptations of Jesus (“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit... led by the Spirit,” v. 1)

Question: *In his temptations, Jesus quotes three Old Testament Scriptures. Use your cross-references and find out where they are from. Why do you think it’s important that all three quotations are from that particular book of the OT?*

III. (4:14-9:50) The Galilean Ministry (Answers the question: *Who do the disciples think Jesus is?*)

- A. (4:14-15) Return to Galilee “*in the power of the Spirit*”
 B. (4:16-30) Initial ministry (Isaiah 61:1-2 prophecy in 4:18-19)

Question: *Look at Luke 3:16–22 and 4:18–19. What do we learn about Jesus’ ministry from Isaiah 61:1-2, which is quoted in 4:18–19?*

- C. (4:31-41) Demon cast out, healing Simon’s mother-in-law and many in Galilee
 D. (4:42-44) Retreat to prayer, preaching to “other towns as well”

Question: *What should we learn from Luke 4:42-44 and 6:12?*

- E. (5:1-6:16) Calling disciples, miracles, Lord of the Sabbath

“The Twelve” are called in 6:13–16. They are specially commissioned as apostles” (6:13). Eleven of them will go on in Acts to serve as the definitive eyewitnesses to Jesus’ life, suffering, suffering, and ascension (see Acts

¹⁰ Gresham Machen, *The Virgin Birth of Christ: A Classic Defense of the Supernatural Birth of Our Lord* (orig. 1930; repr. Pelham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2011), 207.

¹¹ Machen, *The Virgin Birth*, 209.

1:21–22). They are called simply “the Twelve” in Acts 6:2 and also Luke 8:1; 9:1; etc.

F. (6:17-49) Sermon on the Plain

The “Sermon on the Plain” is so named because 6:17 says, “He came down with them and stood on a level place,” where Matthew 5 says, “He went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him” (5:1). The *ESV Study Bible* on Matt 5–7 says the prevailing theories on Sermon on the Plain vs. Mount are: (1) same sermon summarized differently by the two authors, (2) two different sermons on two different occasions, (3) both authors took excerpts of Jesus’ teachings and assembled them in these ‘sermons.’ They say view 3 creates a problem because both authors present the sermon as a single historical event. Choosing between 1 and 2 they say is “difficult” since both are “possible.”

Leon Morris: “The differences between the two [sermons] are such that it is not easy to regard them as variant accounts of the same sermon. It is better to think that Jesus used similar material on more than one occasion.”¹²

G. (7:1-17) Healing, resurrection

H. (7:18-35) John the Baptist’s question and ministry—note especially 7:22–23 and the myriad Old Testament passages implied there:

And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. 23 And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” (Luke 7:22-23)

Regarding 7:28 and 16:16, “These two texts are the most important passages when it comes to showing the structure of Luke’s view of eschatology” (Bock, *Theology of Luke and Acts*, 390). John is the pinnacle of the old era, but “since then” (*ἀπὸ τότε*) a new era has dawned.

“I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” (Luke 7:28)

“The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it.” (Luke 16:16)

But the picture isn’t complete until after Pentecost. That’s where we get Peter’s statement about “the beginning” of a new era: “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning” (Acts 11:15).

¹² Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, PNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 93.

“Through the lens of Luke’s Christology, then, we can indeed identify (1) the old age; (2) the age of Jesus (which begins formally at his baptism); and (3) the age of the Spirit (which begins formally at Pentecost and continues until the Parousia).”¹³

- I. (7:36-50) Woman “who was a sinner” and loving much who is forgiven much
- J. (8:1-56) Women with him, parables, storm calmed, Gerasene demoniac, Jairus’ daughter
- K. (9:1-6) The Twelve (6:13-16) sent out
- L. (9:7-9) Herod’s puzzlement
- M. (9:10-17) Feeding of Five Thousand
- N. (9:18-27) “Who do you say that I am?” (Peter’s confession, passion prediction, taking up our cross)

Question: *Luke 9:18–27: What is significant about Jesus’ question and Peter’s answer?*

In some ways this is the culmination of Luke 1:1–9:50. The answer in this last section was, “Who do the disciples think Jesus is?” Now we have a definitive—and right!—answer.

- O. (9:28-36) Transfiguration—not Moses, not Elijah, but Jesus is “my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!”

Question: *9:28–36. Note 9:31, “departure” is the Greek word “**exodus**”: Why is that relevant here? Who are the two men talking with Jesus in v. 30? What is significant about God’s word in v. 35 with these two men present?*

- P. (9:37-50) Healing, cross prediction #2, the greatest is the least

IV. (9:51-19:27) The Journey to Jerusalem (Answers the question: *What does it mean to follow Jesus?*)

- A. (9:51-62) Following Jesus to Jerusalem (“The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head”)
- B. (10:1-24) Following Jesus in his ministry – Sending out the 72
- C. (10:25-42) Following Jesus means serving others (good Samaritan) and listening to him (Martha and Mary)
- D. (11:1-13) Following Jesus means persevering prayer
- E. (11:14-13:9) Following Jesus means responding to who he is
 - 1. (11:14-23) Jesus accused of being acting for Beelzebul

¹³ From my article on Acts 2 for *Pneuma*.

2. (11:24-26) Teaching: Unclean spirit cast out, but seven more come
 3. (11:27-28) Teaching: Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it
 4. (11:29-32) Queen of the South, men of Nineveh will rebuke this generation
 5. (11:33-36) If body full of light, you will see clearly
 6. (11:37-12:3) Woes to Pharisees, leaven of the Pharisees
 7. (12:4-12) Acknowledge Christ without fear
 8. (12:13-21) Be rich toward God, not yourself
 9. (12:22-34) Do not be anxious
 10. (12:35-13:5) Be ready for Christ's return
 11. (13:6-9) Fruitless trees will be cut down
- F. (13:10-17) Healing: Following Jesus means loving others as we can—even on the Sabbath!
- G. (13:18-30) Following Jesus means life in the Kingdom of God (mustard seed, leaven, narrow door)
- H. (13:31-35) Lament over Jerusalem
- I. (14:1-6) Healing: Following Jesus means loving others as we can—even on the Sabbath!
- J. (14:7-35) Following Jesus means the lowest seat, inviting those cannot return the favor, being part of the great banquet, bearing our cross
- K. (15:1-32) Following Jesus means knowing that you are lost (lost sheep, lost coin, prodigal son)

Question: Read 15:1-32. How do these three parables reveal what God is like?

- L. (16:1-13) Following Jesus means serving God, not money
- M. (16:14-18) Following Jesus means using the Law and the Prophets rightly
- N. (16:19-31) Following Jesus means following reaping in the next life what we sow in this one
- O. (17:1-10) Following Jesus means not being a cause of the sin of others, having faith as a mustard seed, knowing that we are unworthy
- P. (17:11-19) Healing: Following Jesus means praising God for his goodness to us (ten lepers)
- Q. (17:20-37) Following Jesus means preparing for his return (kingdom of God is in your midst, rapture)
- R. (18:1-30) Following Jesus coming with faith, knowing that we are sinners, coming as children, giving him everything

Question: Read 18:9-14. How should we respond to this passage?

- S. (18:31-34) Following Jesus...to his cross (third passion prediction)
- T. (18:35-43) Healing: blind beggar healed for his faith
- U. (19:1-10) Following Jesus means repentance (Zacchaeus)
- V. (19:11-27) Following Jesus means using our talents as we can

V. (19:28-21:38) The Jerusalem Ministry (Answers the question: *Why did the leaders want Jesus crucified?*)

- A. (19:28-40) Triumphal entry

Question: Read 19:37-40. What is wonderful and right about these verses? What is ironic about these verses?

- B. (19:41-48) The sinful city: weeping over Jerusalem, cleansing the temple
- C. (20:1-47) The sinful leaders (Pharisees, priests, scribes, Sadducees all challenge Jesus)
- D. (21:1-4) The contrast – widow giving all she has
- E. (21:5-38) The coming of the Son of Man

VI. (22:1-24:53) The Cross, the Resurrection, and the Ascension (Answers the question: *Why must Jesus be crucified?*)

- A. (22:1-38) Last Supper (note vv. 20, 37)
- B. (22:39-46) Prayer in Gethsemane
- C. (22:47-54) Arrest
- D. (22:54-62) Peter's denials
- E. (22:63-23:25) Trials: Jerusalem council to Pilate the governor in Judea to Herod the tetrarch of Galilee back to Pilate for condemnation
- F. (23:26-49) The Crucifixion

Question: Read 23:26-43. What is wonderful and sobering about these two thieves?

- G. (23:50-56) The Burial
- H. (24:1-12) The Empty Tomb (note vv. 5-7)
- I. (24:13-35) The two on the road to Emmaus (note vv. 25-27)
- J. (24:36-49) The disciples (note vv. 44-48)

Question: Read 22:37, 24:6-7, 24:25-27, and 24:44-47. What is Luke (Jesus!) trying to tell us?

- K. (24:50-53) The ascension