

LUKE

SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

I remember hearing in Seminary preaching class that a sermon without an introduction is like a house without a porch or entryway, having just a door on the wall. You want your house to be inviting. And you need an address on the front because you want people to know where they are going.

So, also, a sermon should have an introduction.

Now, imagine each passage in Luke is an incredible house, with rooms filled with untold riches and treasures, in the most amazing giant mansion you can imagine, 100,000 ft²

→ The magnificent mansion of **The Gospel According to Luke**

We will begin our expositional walk through The Gospel according to Luke this morning with an **Introduction and Summary**. We are embarking on a great adventure!

The sermon this morning will have more the flavor of a classroom lecture, to better position us as students for the sermons to follow 😊

Proposition: We're going to answer **5 Questions** in this Introduction and Summary of The Gospel According to Luke:

- I. **Who?**
- II. **What?**
- III. **Whom?**
- IV. **How?**
- V. **Why?**

So That: We will become a more Gospel-saturated church, a more Gospel-centered, Gospel-pre-occupied, and Gospel-proclaiming church.

1st Question to Answer, ...

I. Who is Luke?

Point – The Gospel According to Luke – This is the title given to this section of Scripture. In the New Testament Epistles, the writer identifies himself, with exception of Hebrews. Unlike these epistles, all of the Gospels come to us internally anonymous, including Luke.

From a historical standpoint, the titles were added very early to all the Gospels by the early church. They are in the earliest manuscripts for all the gospels by A.D. 125, such as the ancient manuscript, the Muratorian Fragment and Canon of A.D.170.

The external evidence for Luke is early, broad, and very strong. Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement, Origen, Jerome all attest to Luke as the author. This Gospel is most universally understood and agreed upon, and there could hardly be stronger external testimony or agreement from the early church that this gospel is written by Luke.

The early church lived much nearer to the age of the apostles than we do. When modern scholars try to challenge the authorship of the Gospels, it is really unscholarly depraved arrogance seeking to undermine the Bible.

What can we say about Luke?

→ Not much is written **about** Luke in Scripture.

Luke is only mentioned by name in 3 places in the Bible:

Col 4:14 – “Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and also Demas.” – Col 4:10-11 those of the circumcision, Gentiles 4:12-14

→ Luke is a Gentile

Philemon 24 – “Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers.”

→ Luke is beloved worker

The “we” passages in Acts → Luke is with Paul

→ 3rd person narrative until Acts 16:10-17 – **“they”** in 16:7
then **“we”** in 16:10

- part of **2nd missionary journey** at Troas and Phillipi
- Luke is not there in 17:1
- comes back → 20:5-21:18
- part of **3rd missionary journey** in Macedonia at Phillipi again

→ 27:1-28:16 – with Paul on his **voyage to Rome**

- Luke is a ministry companion of Paul

Mark was Peter’s companion

Luke was Paul’s companion

2 Tim 4:11 – “Only Luke is with me.”

→ Luke is always loyal – to God, to the Gospel, and to Paul

Luke is a:

- Physician (Col 4:14)
- Historian (Luke 1:3)
- Theologian
- Pastor

What else can we say about Luke? Not much is written about Luke, but a whole lot is written by Luke.

2nd Question to Answer, ...

II. What did Luke write?

Point – **Gospel** = Good News of Christ’s victory over death, disease and sin.

Divine Humanity

- Matthew focuses on Jesus as King.

- Mark's emphasis is Jesus as Servant.
- John focuses on Jesus as God.
- Luke's emphasis is Jesus as Man. → Jesus is "the Son of Man" → **2:41-52; 24:36-43**

Divine Sovereignty

- The Sovereign Plan/Purpose of God – all that has taken place in the Life and Ministry of Jesus → His birth, life, persecution, crucifixion, resurrection, and His ascension is according to God's Plan

There are a few ways that Luke brings this out:

Divine Necessity

- 1) The *dei* motif – from the original Greek word which indicates 'this must occur', 'must take place'. Luke uses this word 18 times in the gospel of Luke and 22 times in Acts - *Divine Necessity*
 - **4:43** – "He said to them, 'I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.'"
 - **13:33** – "Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next *day*; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem." → I'm not afraid of Herod. For prophets don't die in Galilee. Prophets die in Jerusalem.
 - **24:26** – "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" – If you go back to Moses and the Prophets, ... it had to happen this way.
 - **Acts 1:16, 21** → Judas was the one predicted in the Old Testament. It had to work out that way. It was necessary. It must take place. (Yet still!!! ... "it would have been better for that man if he had not been born" → he IS responsible for his sin → concurrency) Man acted,

but behind man's actions is the sovereign plan and purpose of God. **Nothing** takes place outside this!!!

- 2) The Sovereign Determination of God
 - **22:22** – “For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined;”
- 3) The Sovereign Appointment of God
 - **Acts 13:48** – “when the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.”
- 4) The Fulfillment of Scripture
 - **4:21** – “He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’”

Divine Energy

- **Power** of God – not only does God have a plan, He has the power to implement this plan!
- Luke uses the Greek word *dunamis* (from which we get the English word dynamite) 45 times in the Gospel of Luke; 37 times in Acts – more than any other author – for emphasis
- **1:35** – “the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.’”

Luke emphasizes that **Jesus is Lord** (*kurios*), perhaps more than any other Gospel writer.

Divine Deity

- **Proof** – Title/name “**Lord Jesus**” appears multiple times in the Epistles. The first and only appearance in the New Testament and in any of the Gospels is in **24:3** – “when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.” Doesn't appear in the other Gospels.

“**Lord Jesus**” appears 18 times in **Acts**.

Jesus the Messiah’s role to Israel is emphasized in both **Luke** and **Acts**.

- Mary’s Song – **1:54** – “He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy,”

Jesus comes to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant → **1:73**
Jesus comes to fulfill the Davidic Covenant – **1:30-33, 69**
And Jesus comes to fulfill the New Covenant – **1:76-78**

→ The seed is a blessing first to Israel ... but then in you, Israel, all the families will be blessed → **Gen 12** 😊😊

Luke is the **longest book** in the New Testament. Even though it only has 24 chapters compared to both Matthew and Acts which have 28 chapters, Luke has more verses and more words.

Luke is also the largest contributor to the New Testament. wrote about 28% of the NT – **Gospel and Acts of the Apostles**

- **Paul** 24-25%
- **John** 21-22%

Luke is a book that bursts with riches.

Point – Luke and Acts go together → a 52 chapter two-volume book! You really can’t fully understand Acts without Luke.

Luke/Acts is the most extensive comprehensive history of the New Testament.

- Historical narrative spans across almost 70 years
- from 6 B.C (Zacharias and Elizabeth) to A.D. 61 (Paul’s 1st imprisonment in Rome).
- This gives us great and divinely enabled insight into the whole of this era.

His Gospel spans from the announcement of John the Baptist to the ascension of Jesus the Christ.

Luke goes back farther historically than any other Gospel author AND he goes further forward → **Ascension!**

The other Gospels end with something about Jesus' resurrection.
→ Luke ends with the ascension and the apostles.

Luke ties his two volumes together with the overlap of the ascension.

Illustration - I remember when this really crystalized in my mind in a seminary class, thinking I would preach Acts immediately after Luke ... I don't think I will do that though.

I'm not sure how long it will take us to go through Luke.
And I REALLY don't know how long it would take us to go through Luke and Acts, 28% of the entire New Testament ☺

I do think we will go faster than John MacArthur and Grace Community Church where it took 10 years to go through Luke.

Application – I will say this, in your own personal study, it is beneficial at some point, in some way, study them together.

3rd Question to Answer, ...

III. To Whom did Luke write?

Point – Unique to Luke as a Gospel author, he writes first to a particular individual.

Proof – “**Theophilus**” – Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1 – his name comes from the Greek words *theos* and *phileo* which literally means ‘lover of God’ or ‘friend of God’

Luke, as a Gentile himself, emphasizes how the gospel reaches the Gentiles.

Proof –

- Luke uses Septuagint when he quotes Scripture more often than the other gospel writers would do.
- He avoids using Hebraic expressions. For example, whereas Matthew, Mark, and John all use the Jewish address of “Rabbi,” Luke does not use it once.
- Luke explains Jewish customs and locations.
- He has much greater emphasis tying in the historical narrative of Christ to the larger Roman historical situation – **2:1; 3:1**

Matthew traces Jesus’ genealogy back to **Abraham**. When **Luke** gives his genealogy, **Luke** traces back to **Adam**.

All 4 Gospels quote from **Isa 40:3-5**, but only Luke extends to include from the last phrase “all flesh will see *it* together”

Application – In some ways, **Luke’s Gospel**, among the four, is best suited for most of you, most directed at the majority of you.

<p>Matthew – has focus on Jewish Believers Mark – has focus on Gentile Unbelievers Luke – has focus on Gentile Believers John – has focus on Jewish Unbelievers</p>
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Luke has wide views and broad sympathies on the **outcasts of society** at the time - the poor, children, tax gatherers, the sick and the handicapped.

➔ and especially **women**

His gospel is full of affection and esteem for women. **8:1-3**

In this gospel, we meet:

- the widow of Nain
- a sinful woman who anoints the Lord
- the sisters Mary and Martha
- the persevering widow.
- And in the last chapters, Jesus first appears to three other women after He rises from the dead.

4th Question to Answer, ...

IV. How did Luke write?

Point – First, Luke never directly mentions himself in Luke or in Acts. The only places where he indirectly mentions himself are the “we” passages of Acts.

In his Gospel, the only time Luke uses the 1st person is in his opening prologue **1:1-3 – “Us ... us ... me”**.

- From this point, Luke never uses the 1st person in the rest of his Gospel
- In his human frailty, there is a tremendous amount of humility, as is the case with all 4 gospel writers.

Luke had the largest vocabulary of any New Testament author

- There are some 800 words that only appear in his writing

Most educated Greeks would have the vocabulary seen in Luke/Acts. However, Luke was a master of the Greek language. He employs a wider variety of expressions and grammatical constructions than any other New Testament author and he had a fondness for compound words.

What he wrote was meticulously researched – **1:3**.

What he wrote was accurate.

It was accurate because it is inspired, God-breathed.

But it is also accurate because it was carefully researched.

Application – remember Gideon - Judges 7:20- “a sword for the Lord” and a sword for Gideon – divine sovereignty and human responsibility

5th Question to Answer, ...

V. Why did he write this Gospel?

Illustration – Many people who profess Christ perceive the doctrines of Scripture as fluffy clouds. Viewpoints about God and the Bible float in people’s minds ready at any moment to be blown away and replaced by another cloud.

Luke wants us to know the doctrines of grace as fixed immovable mountains, not as clouds that can be blown away by every wind of doctrine and gust of the reigning cultural shifts and fads.

Point – **1:4** – purpose statement - “so that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.”

19:10 – “the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

The Gentile Christians receiving the Epistles could know with certainty the Word taught to them was absolutely true.

Point → In His Gospel and in Acts, Luke shows again and again that the ministry of Jesus is mirrored in the ministry of the Apostles ... in message and in action.

Proof – In Luke, Jesus is seen **praying**.

In Acts, significant movements in the church are seen when the Apostles are praying.

In Luke, Jesus **breaks bread**.

In Acts, the Apostles break bread.

In Luke, Jesus’ ministry opens with a sermon.

In Acts, Peter’s ministry opens with a sermon.

→ The Word of the Apostles is the same as the Word of Jesus
→ What begins in Luke continues in Acts!

The **Temple** and **Jerusalem**

Where does Luke begin?? → In the Temple (1:9)

Where does the Old Testament end?? → In the Temple (2 Chr 36:7 (Hebrew); Mal 3:1)

You read the historical narrative of the Old Testament and you pick it right up with Luke/Acts. The plan and purpose of God works out in life and ministry of Jesus and the Apostles just like it worked out in the Old Testament → there is **continuity!**

Application – Luke/Acts is foundational to understanding the Epistles! 😊

- Acts is the historical anchor and foundation
- Luke is the theological anchor and foundation

CONCLUSION

Illustration -Steven Curtis Chapman song – *The Great Adventure*, released in 1992, early in our marriage, my most beautiful wife Margie and I loved this song and kind of looked at it as what we thought our marriage in the Lord was going to be. I believe it is a picture of what God has for us as we begin to study the Gospel Luke.

*I opened up the Bible and I read about you and me
Said we'd all been prisoners and God's grace had set us all free
Somewhere between the pages it hit me like a lightning bolt
I saw a big frontier in front of me and I heard somebody say "let's go"!*

*Saddle up your horses, we've got a trail to blaze
Through the wild blue yonder of God's amazing grace
Let's follow our leader into the glorious unknown
This is a life like no other, whoa whoa this is the great adventure*

Beloved, The Gospel According to Luke is a BIG frontier 😊.
There are many trails to blaze in front of us. I invite you to join me as we embark on this Great Adventure 😊