

## The Gospel of Luke Week 1- Introduction

### Background:

- Luke is part one of a two-volume work. (Luke/Acts) Ancient sources attribute the work to Luke. (Muratorian canon 170 AD, Irenaeus 180 AD, Clement of Alexandria 170 AD, Origen 200 AD, Tertullian 175 AD)
- It is the most literary of the gospels.
- 700 words found nowhere else in the N.T.
- It is popular to refer to Luke as “historiography” because of its concern for technical historical detail. (cp. Herodotus)
- Writes around 68 AD (Like you and me writing about the 60’s)
- Written to Theophilus who had already been instructed in the faith. (That’s all we know of him!) “Most Excellent” is an official title. (cp. Acts 23:26)

### Questions:

#### 1. Who is Luke?

- A companion of Paul (Luke writes 28% on N.T, Paul 24%) Col.4:14 “Our dear friend Luke the doctor and Demas send greetings.” Paul might have needed a doctor for either his blindness or to treat his malaria. 2 Tim.4:11 “Only Luke is with me.” He is a faithful and compassionate man. Philemon 24 “Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus sends you his greetings as do Mark, Aristarchas, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.” (Could Luke have been teamed with Demas the lawyer?) Some have speculated that the name is a hypocorism, a “pet name,” derived from the master who manumitted him, Lucius.
- Not an eyewitness 1:1

- Probably a freedman. Luke is a slave name. The task of physician was often a slave's work in the Hellenistic world. He uses a lot of technical medical and nautical vocabulary as well. (a ship's doctor?)
- He loves songs: Benedictis, Nunc Dementis, Ave Maria, Gloria in Excelsis, only in Luke. These are not reflected in his sources. (Paul and Mark)
- Astonished by the life of Jesus: Look for the word "amazed" or "astonished"
- Some think he might have been the brother of Titus (cp. Cor.8:18, 12:18, also Luke never mentions Titus in Acts.)

## 2. What would we expect to be the indications of his being a doctor?

- Medical language (precise and technical) "Many have taken up..." also the opening statement of one of Hippocrates' works on medicine.
  - 1:3 "I have carefully '*autopsied*'"
  - 1:63 "Zechariah asks for a *prescription tablet*."
  - 3:3 John baptizes for the '*remission*' of sin.
  - 4:53 the demon '*convulsed*' him
  - 4:38 Peter's mother has a '*great*' fever. (Doctors in the ancient world differentiated between great and small fevers).
  - 8:43 The woman with the issue of blood. Other writers tell us that she suffered many things at the hands of other doctors. Luke leaves that detail out!
  - 9:38 '*Examine*' my son
  - 14:2 man with '*dropsy*'
  - 22:50 Malchus loses his '*little ear*'
- Concern for healings of Jesus and other medical details.
- Compassion of a doctor reflected in Jesus' life.
- Focus on prayer.

### 3. What would we expect from a slave writer?

- “Those who should don’t, those who shouldn’t do.”  
Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist and Mary. (Lk. 1)  
Simon the Pharisee and the “sinful” woman. (Lk.7)  
The Good Samaritan (Lk.10)  
Rich man and Lazarus (Lk.16)  
Tax collector and Pharisee (Lk. 18)  
The Rich men and the poor widow. (Lk. 21)  
The 11 and “the women.” (Lk.24)
- Compassion for the marginal people, the poor.

### 4. What was the life situation of his writing?

- Uncertain. Since it was written to a specific person and not a church or group of people. One opinion is that Luke/Acts is a cover letter for a collection of Paul’s letters to be used at his final trial in Rome.

### 5. How might Luke have been impacted by being a companion of Paul?

- Travel narrative (on the road with Jesus) great central section 9:51-18:14
- Concern for universality of the gospel. Genealogy begins with Adam. Angels speak of “all the people.” Simeon refers to Jesus as a “light to the Gentiles.” Only Luke quotes this. Story of the Good Samaritan, only in Luke, Faith of the Centurion (7also in Mt. 8) Sending out of the 72 Parable of the Banquet 14:15
- Special emphasis on the innocence of Jesus. Pilate pronounces Him innocent 3 times, Herod pronounces Him innocent, the thief on the cross does as well, as does the Centurion. Rome dominates the scene.
- Many words and phrases are common to the Gospel of Luke and the Letters of Paul; compare:

Luke 4:22 with Colossians 4:6.  
 Luke 4:32 with 1 Corinthians 2:4.  
 Luke 6:36 with 2 Corinthians 1:3.  
 Luke 6:39 with Romans 2:19.  
 Luke 9:56 with 2 Corinthians 10:8.  
 Luke 10:8 with 1 Corinthians 10:27.  
 Luke 11:41 with Titus 1:15.  
 Luke 18:1 with 2 Thessalonians 1:11.  
 Luke 21:36 with Ephesians 6:18.  
 Luke 22:19-20 with 1 Corinthians 11:23-29.  
 Luke 24:34 with 1 Corinthians 15:5.

## 6. How does the Gospel of Luke function in the cannon of the NT?

As a bridge into the writings of Paul.

## 7. What does Luke add to our picture of Jesus?

Jesus' concern for prayer, the prayer life of Jesus

5:16 Jesus goes to the wilderness to pray, often all night

6:12ff prays before the calling of the 12

9:28 mount of Transfiguration, to pray

11:1 Jesus often goes to a particular place to pray, gives a parable on prayer (1 of 2 in Luke)

19:46 the purpose of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple expulsion was to reestablish a place of prayer.

\*What we might expect to find in Luke is Jesus praying for someone to be healed, we never see this. After a long wait, when we finally get to actually hear Jesus pray, it is a prayer that can be spoken in a single breath, the *short form* of the Lord's prayer.

What we do see is long solitary prayer sessions. Prayer is woven into the fabric of Jesus' life.

Developing a lifestyle of listening.

8:18 "Consider carefully how you listen."

Emphasis on the poor the outcast and women. Women play a significant role in the ministry of Jesus. Mary, Elizabeth, Anna, Martha and Mary, Joanna, Susanna. In 8:1-3 we discover that Jesus' ministry was financially supported by this group of women. (Modern scholars are beginning to push for the idea that the writer of Luke was a woman. Assumption: no man would ever give women so much credit!)

### **8. What ever happened to Luke?**

Leadership of the church at Philippi. Acts 16:40 "they left" before beginning with verse 10 "we" rejoins 20:5. Paul had left Luke behind to help start the church at Philippi.

Tradition says he wrote his gospel in Greece (Thebes?) Never married and died in Bithynia at the age of 84.

Was beheaded; his head is interred in a high altar which stands over the grave of Peter. His body was first buried in Thebes the original sarcophagus is still there. It was then moved to the church dedicated to the apostles in Constantinople

Assignment: Read the entire gospel of Luke *outloud* this week.

Those Who Should, Don't. Those Who Shouldn't Do.  
Week 2

- Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist and Mary. 1:5-56 (67ff)
- Centurion and the Jews. 7:1-10
- Simon the Pharisee and the "sinful" woman. 7:36-50
- Jesus' family and the listeners. 8:19-21
- The possessed man and the unpossessed Gerasenes. 8:26-39
- The Good Samaritan 10:25-37
- The parable of the Banquet 14:15-24
- The parable of the lost son. 15:11-32
- Rich man and Lazarus 16:19-31
- Healing of the 10 lepers 17:11-19
- Tax collector and Pharisee 18:9-14
- Zacchaeus and the people 19:1-10
- The Rich men and the poor widow. 21:1-4
- The Crucifixion 23:35, 47
- The 11 and "the women." 24:8-12
- The Joy of Jesus LK. 10:21!!! God has a hand in this!

## An Unimaginably Paradoxical Prototype

### Week 3

“We have seen *paradoxical* things today.”

Intro \*Levels of structure.

Intentional (parallel nativity narratives chaps 1-2, contrasting stories of “those who should...,” travel narrative (9:51-19:27) collections of parables, (6 panels in Acts). For others it is not so clear.

“Unintentional” structures. The block we will look at tonight (5:1-7:29) cannot be conclusively proven to be intentional. But does it need to? It represents a segment of the life of Jesus that was dominated by a central theme of unorthodoxy. (Or perhaps it is a small window into a life that was continuously dominated by it.)

**Paradoxon** (hapax legomenon) lit. “contrary to opinion,” “against all expectations” “*contrary to what might otherwise bring glory*”

- The choice of a tax collector. 1-30
- The “choice” of sinners. 32
- Unorthodox observances (don’t fast and pray(?) 33
- Parable of incompatibility of old and new. 36-39
- Sabbath violations 6:1-11
- Radically reversed blessings and woes. 17-26
- Impossible command! 27-34
- \*Climax: The heart of hesed- the fundamental character of the gospel. (the defining characteristic of God) 35f
- A gentile asks for what he does not deserve. 7:1-10
- Jesus power over the death impregnated world wins praise for God. 11-18
- The stagger effect of the “inadequacy” of Jesus. The most staggering question in the New Testament. 18-21
- Closing scene. A glimpse of the new reality. 29

Introduction: The Flow of the Ministry Thus Far

## Week 4

### Phase 1: The Beginning

- Jesus is baptized (3:21f), tempted (4:1-12), *driven from Nazareth* (13-30).
- He moves to Capernaum (31) and calls the “core” of the disciples (Simon, Andrew, James and John)(5:1-11).
- During his movement through the villages he heals and preaches. *He adds Matthew, the tax collector* (27-31).
- The band of “followers” grows. In 6:12f, He designates “apostles.”

### Phase 2: A Difficult Indoctrination

- Jesus introduces the disciples to the “paradoxical” nature of His ministry. (6:17-49)
- Luke provides *the first unexpected fruits, a gentile Centurion.*(7:1-10)
- *John the Baptist is portrayed as stumbling over this “scandalous” Messiah, who fails to meet everyone’s expectations.*
- Jesus affirms John. Neither of them as willing to “dance to the worlds’ tune. (7:32-34)
- The next fruit of His ministry, *a “sinful” woman.* (7:36-50)
- Jesus tells a parable (8:5-8) which the disciples fail to understand. (9)

### Phase 3: Early Headway and Rising Opposition

- *Jesus’ mother and brothers come to “take Him away.”* (8:19-21, cp Mk. 3:21)
- After He calms the furious storm the disciples ask, “Who is this?” (8:25)
- *The frightened Gerasenes beg Jesus to leave.* (8:37)
- Ministry continues, heals unclean woman, raises a dead girl. (8:40-55)
- The Twelve are sent out on their first mission. (9:1-6) they return, try to find rest but are confronted with the 5 thousand. (9:10-17)

### Phase 4: Uninformed Confession and Prideful Confusion

- Peter makes his great confession, Jesus is Messiah. (9:20)
- *Jesus explains the Messiah in terms none of the disciples could grasp.* (cp. Mt. 16:22)
- Transfiguration (9:28-36)



- *Again Jesus tries to explain his coming suffering. They do not understand and are afraid to ask Him to explain. (9:45, cp 18:31-34)*
- *The disciples argue about who is the greatest. (9:46ff)*

#### Phase 5: The Point of No Return

- *The final journey to Jerusalem begins. (9:51)*
- *Samaritans oppose Jesus. (9:53)*
- *The 72 sent out on successful mission. (10:1-24)*
- *Parable of the Good Samaritan. (10:25-37)*
- *Martha and Mary contrasted. One does the other listens. Amazing paradigm shift for women.*
- *Jesus provides disturbingly simple prayer. (11:1-4)*
- *Encourages his disciples to be "shameless" when they pray. (11:8)*
- *Crowd asks for a sign, but none will be given... (11:29)*
- *More "woes" on the Pharisees. (11:42-53)*

#### Phase 6: A Desperate Time Calls Forth a Radical New Value System

##### Values and Maxims

Given the rising tension due to the unorthodoxy and scandal of Jesus' ministry, in chapter 12 we see a shift in the direction of His teaching. The emphasis will shift to the new value system of the Kingdom; what matter and what does not, what has value and what does not, what you should fear and what you should not. Hand in hand with this modest shift, Jesus begins to speak more maxims, short encapsulations of His teaching that will make them easier for the disciples to remember. Though they appear through out Jesus' teaching, (6:31, 45b, 7:35, 47,8:18, 9:48, 62, 11:9, 41) they are concentrated in chapters 12 though 16. In form, they tend to appear at the end of a block of teaching and summarize what has gone before. This is only a partial list:

- "Don't be afraid, you are worth more than many sparrows." (12:7)

- “A man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” (12:15)
- “Life is more than food and the body more than clothes.” (12:23)
- “Seek first His kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.” (12:31)
- “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (12:34)
- “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.” (12:48b)
- “Indeed, there are those who are last who shall be first, and first who will be last.” (13:30)
- “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (14:11, cp.Phil.2:6-11)
- “Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.” (14:27)
- “Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?” (14:34)
- “There is more rejoicing over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.” (15:7)
- “There is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” (15:10)
- “We had to celebrate and be glad because your brother was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found.” (15:32) (The maxim is contained within the parable.)
- “No servant can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and money.” (16:13)
- “What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight.” (16:15)
- “If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.” (16:29) (Maxim contained within the parable.)
- “Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather.” (17:37)
- Maxim from 4:11 repeated in 18:14

- “Anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” (18:17)
  - “What is impossible with men is possible with God.” (18:27)
  - “Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.” (20:18)
  - “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” (20:25)
- (From this point they virtually disappear from the narrative)

## Parables

### Week 5

**What is a parable?** *para*, (beside) *bole* (to throw) *comparision*, to throw something beside something else for the sake of comparison.

**How do they work?** The process of identification. By means of the imagination, I am drawn into the story where I identify with one or more characters. (cp. Mt. 13:10ff)

**\*\*Luke usually gives a context.** (eg. The Stubborn Widow (Lu. 18:1-8), The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Lu. 18:9-14)) (cp. Mt. 13:3, Mk. 4:2 “Then Jesus told them many things in parables...”)

**Luke’s example of them working:** Simon the Pharisee, The Two Debtors (7:16-21) , Lawyer, The Good Samaritan (10:25), The Expectant Crowd, The Minas (Lu. 19:11-27)

### Parables of Jesus

1. The wise and foolish builders (Mt.7:24-27, Lu. 6:47-49)
2. **The Debtors** (Lu. 7:41-47)
3. **The Rich Fool** (Lu. 12:16-21)
4. **The Waiting Servants** (Lu. 12:35-40)
5. **The Barren Fig Tree** (Lu. 13:6-9)
6. The Sower (Mt. 13:3-9, 18-23, Mk. 4:1-9, 14-20, Lu. 8:5-8, 11-15)
7. The Tares (Mt.13:24-30, 36-43)
8. The Secret Seed (Mk. 4:26-29)
9. The Mustard Seed (Mt. 13:31f, Mk. 4:30-32, Lk. 13:18f)
10. The Leaven (Mt. 13:33f, Lk. 13:20f)
11. Hidden Treasure (Mt. 13:44)
12. Pearl of Great Price (Mt. 13:46f)
13. The Net (Mt. 13:47-50)
14. The Unmerciful Servant (Mt.18:23-35, rare exception of context)
15. **The Good Samaritan** (Lu. 10:30-37)
16. **The Friend at Midnight** (Lu. 11:5-8)

17. **The Great Supper** (Lu. 14:15-24)
18. The Lost Sheep (Lu. 15:3-7, Mt. 18:12-14, note Matthew gives no context))
19. **The Lost Coin** (Lu. 15:8-10)
20. **The Lost Son** (Lu. 15:11-32)
21. **The Unjust Steward** (Lu. 16:1-9)
22. **The Rich Man and Lazarus** (Lu. 16:19-31)
23. **The Stubborn Widow** (Lu. 18:1-8)
24. **The Pharisee and the Tax Collector** (Lu. 18:9-14)
25. The Laborers in the Vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16)
26. **The Minas** (Lu. 19:11-27)
27. The Two Sons (Mt. 21:28-32)
28. The Tenants (Mt. 21:33-44, Mk. 12:1-12, Lu. 20:9-18)
29. The Wedding Feast (Mt. 22:1-14)
30. The Fig Tree (Mt. 24:32, Mk. 13:28f)
31. The Long Journey (Mk. 13:34-37)
32. The Ten Virgins (Mt. 25:1-13)
33. The Talents (Mt. 25:14-30)

#### Some Rabbinic Parables

Judah ha-Nasi said: "Unto what is the matter like? It is like a king who was judging his son, and the accuser was standing and indicting him. When the tutor of the prince saw that his pupil was being condemned, he thrust the accuser outside the court and put himself in his place in order to plead on his behalf. Even so, when Israel made the Golden Calf, Satan stood before God accusing him, while Moses remained without. What then did Moses do? He arose and thrust Satan away and put himself in his place." (J267; *Ex. Rab.* 43:1)

R. Simeon b. Yohai taught: "A parable. It is like men sitting in a ship. One took a drill and began boring beneath his seat. His fellow-travelers

said, 'What are you doing?' He responded, 'What does it matter to you? It's my seat I'm boring under!' They said, 'The water will come in and drown us all!'" (J271; *Lev. Rab.* 4:6)

A philosopher asked R. Gamaliel, "Why is your God jealous of idol-worshippers rather than of the idol itself?" He answered, "I will tell you a parable. To what is the matter like? It is like a king who had a son, and his son raised a dog whom he named for his father. Whenever the son took an oath, he said, 'By the life of this dog, my father!' When the king heard of it, with whom was he angry, his son or the dog? Surely his son!" (J174; *Mek. Bahodesh* 6:113ff.).

Unto what is the matter like? It is like a fox who was walking alongside a river, and he saw fish going in swarms from one place to another [fleeing the fishermen]. He said to them, "Would you like to come on to the dry land . . . ?" They said to him, " . . . If we are afraid in the element in which we live, how much more in the element in which we would die!" So it is with us. . . . If we go and neglect the Torah [which is our life], how much worse off we shall be. (J148; *b. Ber.* 61b)

A king had a vineyard for which he engaged many laborers, one of whom was especially apt and skillful. What did the king do? He took this laborer from his work and walked through the vineyard with him. When the laborers came for their hire in the evening, the skillful laborer also appeared among them and received a full day's wages from the king. The other laborers were angry at this and said, "We have toiled the whole day, while this man has worked but two hours; why does the king give him the full hire, even as to us?" The king said to them, "Why are you angry? Through his skill he has done more in two hours than you have all day." (*y. Ber.* 2:5)

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The Heart of the “Problem” of Jesus  
Hesed in Luke: week 6

An Ancient Word:

The stork and the ostrich: Job 39:13, Lamentations 4:3

An ancient pictograph: chet “a fence, an inner chamber, samech “a prop or support,” dalet “a door or a page”

(chasah, “refuge” sad “support for the door”)

Key OT refs.

- God declares is as a part of His character. Ex.20:6 (34:6f, Dt. 5:10, Num. 14:18f). (cp. Lk. 6:35)
- Seen between David and Jonathan. 1 Sam. 20:8-17 (2 Sam. 9:1f)
- Key concept of worship in the psalms. Ps. 23:6, 25:6-10, 51:1, 89, 107, 136
- Prophets. Isa. 54:8, 63:7, Jer. 32:18, \*Lam. 3:21f, \*Hos. 6:6, \*Jon. 4:2 (hater of hesed), \*Mic. 6:8

NT concepts:

Mercy (*eleos*) (used for hesed most often in the LXX) Rom. 11:28ff

Grace (*charis*) Rom. 3:21f

In Luke

- The Theme of a New Song 1:50, 54, 58, 72, 78
- “Enemy love” 6:36
- “A right to expect nothing” 7:6, 13, 16
- Haters of Hesed 10:33, 15:30
- The Cry, “Do hesed!” 16:24, 17:13, 18:38f
- What “doing hesed” ultimately looks like. 23:3

## The End of the Long Journey to Jerusalem Week 7

The great central section of Luke (the travel narrative) which began in 9:51, now comes to an end in chapter 19. 18:31ff provides a well known Lucan literary contrast, “those who should don’t while those who shouldn’t do.”

18:31-34 The disciples, who should by now understand what is going to happen, fail to grasp what Jesus’ coming to Jerusalem means.

18:35-43 The blind man sees because of his faith.

19:1-10 The radical new value system Jesus has presented along the way is embodied in a tax collector, Zacchaeus.

19:11-27 “Because he was near Jerusalem,” Jesus tells a parable of judgment.

19:28-44 The “Triumphal” Entry

19:41 Luke describes the powerful effect that finally seeing the city has on Jesus.

19:45-48 The Second Temple Cleansing

Passion Week

Monday (10<sup>th</sup> Nisan, 33 AD) Enters Jerusalem

Tuesday (11<sup>th</sup>) 2<sup>nd</sup> Expulsion

Wednesday (12<sup>th</sup>) Teaching and testing/Judas’ plot begins

Thursday (13<sup>th</sup>) Last Supper/Gethsemane/Arrest

Friday (14<sup>th</sup>) Crucifixion/Burial

Sunday (16<sup>th</sup>) Resurrection



## The Innocence of Jesus

### Week 8

Remembering that Luke-Acts might have been a cover letter for a collection of Paul's writings presented at his trial before Nero, Luke focuses on the non-Jewish pronouncements of Jesus' innocence.

#### ◎ Jesus' trials (22:66-23:25)

##### Jewish trials

1. Held at Anna's courtyard (Jn 18:13ff) preliminary investigation.
2. To the house of Caiaphas. (Mt. 26:57) The principle Jewish trial. Jesus condemned on the charge of blasphemy for his own acknowledgement that he was the Son of God. (Mk. 14:61)
3. Trial before the Sanhedrin. (Mt. 27, Mk. 15:1, Lk. 22:66) So he could be charged before the Romans the charge of sedition is concocted. The main reason was envy. (Mt. 27:18)

##### Roman trials

1. Early morning (between 6 and 7 AM) before Pilate at the Praetorium.
2. Before Herod. (Lk. 23) Jesus refuses to answer his questions.
3. Back to Pilate (Mt. 27:15, Mk. 15:6, Lk. 23:13)

#### ◎ Pilate's pronouncements of Jesus' innocence (23:4, 14, 20, 22)

1. Pilate tells the priests there is no basis for a charge against Jesus. (4)
2. Pilate reiterates that neither he nor Herod find a reason for a charge. (14f)  
(Mt. 27:19) Pilate's wife sends word not to have anything to do with this "innocent" man. She has been having dreams about Jesus.
3. Pilate appeals again to the crowd. (20)
4. Again, Pilate appeals to crowd. He will "punish" Jesus and

release him. (22) (Cp. Peter's statement in Acts 3:13

- ⊙ The thief's pronouncement of Jesus' innocence (23:41)  
"This man has done nothing wrong."
  
- ⊙ The centurion's pronouncement of Jesus' innocence (23:47)  
"Surely this was a righteous man."