

## OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

October 10, 2018

### Lesson 27 – Luke

*Purpose:* The author tells us his purpose in the introduction to the gospel. He set out to write an orderly account (a reliable history of Jesus' life and work) so that people may know the certainty of the things that were taught. The scope of his work is complete (from the birth of John the Baptist to the ascension of Christ into heaven). Luke firmly places Christ within the context of the secular world.

#### *Unique Aspects of the Birth of Christ*

An angel appears to Zechariah and tells him that he and his wife, Elizabeth, will have a son.

An angel appears to Mary and foretells the birth of Jesus.

Only in Luke do we hear about the census of Quirinius.

Only in Luke is the account told that Jesus was born in a stable.

Only in Luke is the news proclaimed to the shepherds.

Only in Luke do we have accounts concerning his infancy and boyhood.

Good Samaritan: Complete devotion to God is reflected in love towards others

Rich Fool: We are to rethink our priorities

Narrow Door: It is not enough to recognize Jesus without some kind of response

Cost of Discipleship: We must be willing to forsake everything for Christ

Lost Sheep, Coin, and Son: We are filled with joy when the lost are found

Rich Man and Lazarus: We are to respond to the Word of God revealed to us in Scripture

Pharisee and Tax Collector: Jesus desires a contrite heart and humility

*Passover:* Christ was fully human to identify with humanity and to suffer death as the penalty for our sins. Christ was fully divine so that his sacrifice would be perfect and would cover the sins of all people for all time. He became the perfect Passover lamb.

*Volume I:* More than any other gospel writer the author of Luke reveals the work of the Holy Spirit. During the time of Christ we see John the Baptist filled with the Spirit from the time of his birth. The Spirit descends upon Jesus and he ministers by its power. The active work of the Spirit is the continuum between Luke and the book of Acts.



### **Authorship / Date / Context**

None of the Gospels make a direct reference to its author.

Second-century Christians were sure that John was written by John, the son of Zebedee.

It identified this *John* as Jesus' most intimate disciple – the disciple whom Jesus loved.

It is believed that the beloved disciple did not long live after the death of Jesus.

John seems to have undergone more extended and thorough interpretations than the other three.

Some of the practices (those excluded from the synagogue) were not in place until 90 AD.

Direct mention of the destruction of the Temple did not occur until 70 AD (Matthew 24).

It appears the gospel is the end result of two or more generations reflecting on these accounts.

Purpose was to assure believers of the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Jesus is compared with the leading figures of Jewish history (especially Moses).

Parallels in John have been found in rabbinical and sectarian Judaism.

### **The Uniqueness of John**

Jesus is publicly proclaimed the Messiah at the outset of his ministry.

There is no baptism or temptation narrative and no exorcisms in John.

Jesus does not proclaim the near advent of the kingdom.

There are no parables in this gospel and Jesus' discourses are unlike those in the Synoptic.

### **John 1**

Prologue recalls the Genesis story of creation and the historic missions of the Hebrew prophets.

The man named Jesus was for the Johannine community the eternal Word.

Ministry of Jesus begins with the witness of John the Baptist.

### **John 2:1-12:50**

Section is known as the *Book of the Signs*

In the Synoptic miracle stories and exorcisms indicate the coming of the reign of God.

In them the purpose of God's creation will be accomplished in an eschatological context.

They are signs of the advent of the age to come.

In John the miracle stories (the signs) have different meanings and interpretations.

### **2:1-11**

Miracle takes place at a wedding feast.

It implies that joyous fulfillment is taking place already.

For John the best wine is available now and not in an age to come.

The joys of the new age are already available to the faithful.

### **4:46-54**

Narrative most resembles the miracle stories of the synoptic tradition.

His capacity to heal is an indication of his authority received from God.

Only those who trust him and respond to him in love are true children of God.



In John 3 the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus stresses newness of life as a new birth.  
It can occur only where the divine provision is accepted in faith.  
To those who look in faith, the tragedy of the cross will become the instrument of divine love.  
Relationship with Jesus to God is defined in 5:18.  
Jesus points to the identity of what he is doing to what God is doing.  
Unity between Father and Son is functional in John.  
Jesus is carrying forward the work of God in the world.  
It is the explanation he offers for the wonders (signs) he is able to perform.

Divine activity that the people see now will continue into the future.  
Jesus as Son of Man will judge the living and the dead.  
John comes closest to the apocalyptic role of the Son of Man found in Daniel and Mark.  
Link with God is seen in the love he manifests, in the light he reveals, in the works he performs.  
Right reading of Scripture will provide additional confirmation to the faithful.

In John 6:49-51 Jesus affirms his own preexistence.  
He was with the Father, he has now come down to earth, and he will return with the Father.  
Recognition of who Jesus is enables one to share in the life of the community that never hungers.

Relationship of God to his people is commonly represented as that of a shepherd and his flock.  
Important feature of John is that participation is a result of a human response (not divine decree).  
Rejection by the religious leaders is put alongside the opening of the invitation to all the world.



Images that John used for Christ and his people described a new reality (eternal life).  
Once Jesus announced his rejection and death he focused on life within the community.  
Washing of the feet demonstrated that disciples were to take on any task for the benefit of others.  
They were to be models for the sake of the whole community.  
Love bound the community together and pride (Judas) attempted to dissolve it.

The resources of the community are embodied in Jesus.  
He is the way to God, the truth about God, and the life that God calls his people to live.  
Trust in him enables his followers to perform works similar to his.

The Spirit will continue to work in all people as we grow to understand God and his purpose.  
The power that binds the community together and to God is love.  
The most vivid image for the unity of the community is that of the vine.  
For John the vine is a metaphor for vitality, productivity, and mutual support.

In John 17 his impending death is regarded as the accomplishment of his earthly work.  
It is also the prelude for his return to his Father.  
Jesus' prayer is not for them to distance themselves from the world but to be preserved in it.  
It is the hope that through their testimony others will be brought into the community.  
Ultimate achievement of God's purpose is unity.  
And once again the most effective bond of that unity is love that originates with God.  
In the end the community asserts its faith in a resurrected person.  
It is the bodily presence of Jesus after his death that evokes peace and faith to the community.

More than likely the gospel ended at 20:31.  
The epilogue makes even more concrete the resources and responsibilities assigned to them.  
They are to gather into the community all who will respond to the gospel message.  
They are to provide sustenance to the new members and nurture them in their new faith.  
A profession of faith is not enough. It must be followed through with loving care.

We will see the Christian communities become more and more stressed and under pressure.  
John provided a framework to deal with both the death of Jesus and the delay of the Parousia.  
The life outlined in John offered people internal strength and a focus on outreach to others.

### **Old Testament Connection**

Some see in John a connection between the sacrifices of the Temple and that made by Jesus.  
Bronze altar: John describes Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.  
Basin for cleansing: Jesus cleanses the temple and speaks of a new birth.  
Table for bread of presence: Jesus' food is to do the will of his Father and to finish his work.  
Golden lampstand: Jesus is the light and the perfect reflection of the glory of God.  
Altar of incense: Obedience and humility are prerequisites for communion with God.  
Ark of the Covenant and atonement: Jesus' death restores our relationship with God.

### **Assignment for October 17**

Complete the Exercises from Lesson 28 on Pages 149-154  
Read the *Book of Acts* or the portions outlined on Page 154