

**duplicating  
discipleship**

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● **lesson twelve**

the studiousness of luke

# Lesson 12: The Studiosness of Luke

**"In our prayers, we talk to God, in our Bible study, God talks to us, and we had better let God do most of the talking." Dwight L. Moody**

Luke, Paul's companion and dear friend, and the author of the Gospel of Luke and Acts, is second only to Paul in the scope and depth of his writing in the New Testament. While others wrote Gospel accounts, only Luke covers such a broad expanse of time, beginning with the birth of John the Baptist and ending, in the book of Acts, with the Gospel of Jesus Christ reaching Rome. It is strange then, that we know very little about Luke; but there is much to be surmised when we examine that which we do know.

**Background** – Luke is mentioned by name only three times, each in Paul's writings. The following three passages provide us with the specific information we do have about Luke.

- Read Colossians 4:11, 14
  - What can you learn about Luke from verse 14, in the light of verse 11?
  
  
  - What else can you learn about Luke in verse 14?
  
- Read 2 Timothy 4: 6-7, 10-11
  - Verses 6 – 7 will help you understand the context within which Paul is writing.
  - What can you understand about Luke in reading verses 10 – 11?
  
- Read Philemon 1:25
  - What can you know about Luke from Paul's mention of him in his letter to Philemon?

In the “we” passages in Acts, you can learn about Luke’s participation with Paul on some of his missionary journeys.

- Acts 16:10-17
- Acts 20:5-15
- Acts 21:1-16
- Acts 27:1 – 28:16

**Actions** – Even with the limited amount of specific, direct information we have about Dr. Luke, we can begin to understand the mind and actions of this man by reading the introductions he wrote to his Gospel and to the book of Acts.

- Read Luke 1:1-4 and answer these questions:
  - Luke acknowledges that others have already written narratives of Jesus’ work. Why does he choose to undertake the task of writing yet another Gospel account?
  - What sources did Luke use as he compiled information (yes, always under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit) to include in his Gospel?
  - What do you think it says of Luke that he wanted to write an “orderly” account?
  - In light of verse 3, in which Luke talks about having “followed all things closely” and having done so “for some time past” what can you understand about Luke’s approach to gathering material and information for his Gospel account?
- Read Acts 1:1-2

- What does Luke claim to have covered in his first account – the Gospel of Luke?
  
- Since Luke was not present with Jesus, and in fact does not seem to have joined Paul until sometime during Paul’s second missionary journey, what can you understand about his preparation to cover “all” that Jesus began to do and teach, right up to the time that He was “taken up”?

We learned in Colossians 4:11-14 that Luke was a gentile Christian. As such, we are able to understand that his audience – the excellent Theophilus, whomever he may have been, and all who would read his Gospel account and the book of Acts – is primarily a gentile audience. How does this show up in Luke’s writing?

- Read Luke 2:21
  - Circumcision was a Jewish practice, and not a gentile practice. Luke included important detail about circumcision, specifically that it was performed after eight days. A Jewish audience would have assumed that Jesus had been circumcised after eight days, but Luke was writing for a gentile audience.

Even as a doctor, circumcision would not have been part of Luke’s education and training. What can be inferred from this brief reference to the circumcision of Jesus regarding Luke’s care and attention to detail?

- None of the other Gospels refer to Jesus’ circumcision. Why do you think this was included by Luke, but omitted by the other three, Jewish Gospel writers?

- Read Luke 6:44
  - This passage is a clear reference to the creation story in which God commands each tree to bear fruit “after its own kind” (Genesis 1:11-12). This creation

account was a deeply ingrained part of Jewish history, passed down orally and in writing from generation to generation, but was not part of the creation narrative among gentiles. As a gentile, this story would not been part of Luke's formal education. What can be inferred from this brief, yet specific reference to the Genesis creation account regarding Luke's preparation to write this "orderly" account for the recipient of his Gospel account?

- Read Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38
  - Each of these passages contain the genealogy of Jesus Christ. What do you notice that is different between the genealogy written by Matthew and the one written by Luke?
  
  - Did you notice that while Matthew's genealogy goes back to Abraham, Luke's goes all the way back to Adam? Where might Luke have found this information?
  
  - What can be inferred from this detailed and comprehensive genealogy regarding Luke's preparation to write this "orderly" account for the recipient of his Gospel account?

**Outcome** – While we do not know much about Luke himself, the passages referenced above reveal several important things about his handling of the information he included in his Gospel account and the book of Acts.

- Luke embarked on his writing journey with the goal of writing an *orderly* account.
- Luke read what had been written by others, namely Mark and Matthew, whose Gospel accounts had already been written when Luke wrote his own.
- Luke interviewed eye witnesses to the works and words of Jesus.
- Luke took the time he needed to gain complete understanding of what he was reading and hearing about all that Jesus said and did.

- Luke sourced his material from other reliable material, i.e., Old Testament accounts regarding creation and circumcision, even though that material was not contained in the sphere of his native religion, or tradition.
- Luke prepared his material to speak clearly to the audience for whom he was writing, leaving nothing to chance recognition or recollection.

In addition to these passages, we see that Luke exhorted others to give the same care and attention to studying and learning about God. “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, ***examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.***” Acts 17:11 (ESV)

#### **Application – Discipleship Time**

**How can you apply what you have learned about the studiousness of Luke in your own devotional life?**

- What role does “order” play in your handling of the Word of God? (See Acts 11:4)
- Do you seek to reconcile that which you hear from others with that which you read in God’s Word?
- When you engage with extra-Biblical material such as books and sermons, how do you determine that the material is reliable and faithful to the Word of God?
- How do you distinguish God’s truth from your current cultural context?
- How much time do you give to the studying of God’s Word? How do you prioritize it?

- What are you willing to give up in order to have the time and resources you need to be able to effectively study God’s Word?
- Do you consider it your responsibility to study God’s Word? Do you rely on others to study for you?
- Do you know how to study the Word of God? Do you have a plan, a system, or a process that works for you?
- If you don’t know how to study the Bible, are you willing to invest the time, energy, and attention required to learn how?

Because of the studiousness of Luke, we have a Gospel written for us as gentiles, and a rich history of the early church.

**Meditate on these verses as you consider your own devotional life in the light of what you have learned about the studiousness of Luke.**

Ezra 7:10 “For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.” (NAS)

2 Timothy 2:15 “Study and do your best to present yourself to God approved, a workman [tested by trial] who has no reason to be ashamed, accurately handling and skillfully teaching the word of truth.” (Amplified)

1 Timothy 4:6 “If you point out these instructions to the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished [through study] on the words of the faith and of the good [Christian] doctrine which you have closely followed.” (Amplified)

Romans 12:2 “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (NAS)

**Modern day example: Leslie Swindle**

Leslie is one of those people who delights in her books and learning new things. Her dream is to be able to spend extended periods of time doing her Bible study and learning from the Lord. She takes the things she is learning and shares them with people on all levels. She loves to discuss things she has read and then be able to process them further with others. Her commitment to the Lord and His diligence and discipline in studying the Word is challenging to others. She wrote this chapter of Duplicating Discipleship!

