

SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Author: Luke. He is the author of both the gospel and the record of the church in Acts. He was not an “eyewitness” of Jesus’ ministry based on Luke 1:2, and was a Gentile (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 3.4.6, says Luke was “by race an Antiochian and a physician by profession”; Paul notes he is a physician in Colossians 4:14). Seeing as Luke traveled with Paul (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16 & more specifically referred in Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; & Philemon 24), this Gospel was received as having apostolic endorsement and authority from Paul and as a trustworthy record of the gospel that Paul preached (Eusebius reports that Paul quoted from Luke by saying, “According to my Gospel” [*Ecclesiastical History* 3.4.8]).

Date Written: 59-63 AD. This is the best time frame to consider the completion of Luke’s gospel when considering that Luke & Acts are a 2-volume set, Acts ends with Paul being in prison with no word on his trial nor his result and no mention of the persecution of Christians under the Roman Emperor Nero. There is a very real potential that Luke wrote his gospel while Paul was in prison in Caesarea (Acts 24:27) as this location would be a prime central hub geographically for Luke to travel interviewing eyewitness accounts of Jesus’ life and ministry.

Theme: Written by a Gentile for a new Gentile believer, Theophilus (Luke 1:3), Luke’s gospel is meant to be as complete a record as possible to encourage and disciple believers on who Jesus is and His ministry and message providing a very balanced emphasis of Jesus as fully divine and fully human as dwell as challenging misconceptions unbelievers may hold concerning Jesus of Nazareth.

Quick Outline:

- I. Preparation for Jesus’ Ministry (1:1-4:13)
 - a. Dear Theophilus (1:1-4)
 - b. Births of John the Baptist and Jesus (1:5-2:20)
 - c. Jesus’ childhood and early adulthood (2:21-52)
 - d. John the Baptist’s Ministry (3:1-22)
 - e. Jesus’ Family Tree (3:23-38)
 - f. Satan tests Jesus (4:1-13)
- II. Jesus in Galilee (4:14-9:50)
 - a. Jesus’ early preaching (4:14-44)
 - b. Jesus calls disciples then selects the apostles (5:1-6:16)
 - c. The Beatitudes (6:17-49)
 - d. Have faith; the Twelve sent out (7:1-9:17)
 - e. Peter’s confession and Mount of Transfiguration (9:18-50)



Outline Continued

- III. Jesus' Ministry in Judea and Perea (9:51-19:44)
 - a. Leaving for Jerusalem (9:51-13:21)
 - b. While on the way (13:22-18:30)
 - c. With Jerusalem in sight (18:31-19:44)
- IV. Apex of Jesus' Ministry in Jerusalem (19:45-24:53)
 - a. Overcoming controversies and additional instructions (19:45-21:4)
 - b. Temple's destruction predicted (21:5-38)
 - c. Jesus' final Passover (22:1-46)
 - d. The betrayal, arrest, and trial of Jesus (22:47-23:25)
 - e. Jesus' crucifixion and burial (23:26-56)
 - f. The resurrection, Great Commission, & ascension (24:1-53)

Summary:

Providing a powerful amount of information, Luke's gospel covers many aspects of Jesus' life and ministry the other gospels do not cover. Nearly 60% of Luke's gospel is unique to the gospel itself. Readers would not be aware of several aspects of Jesus' life and ministry without Luke's attention to 1) John the Baptist's and Jesus' births, 2) the only biblical focus on Jesus' childhood and pre-ministry early adult life, 3) a genealogy that differs from Matthew's account providing more depth, 4) the coverage of Jesus' teachings while on his journey to Jerusalem, 5) a different take on the destruction of the temple from the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24-25 & Mark 13, & 6) additional coverage of Jesus' post-resurrection activity and ministry ranging from fresh perspectives on Jesus' appearances, including the account on the Emmaus Road, a distinctive statement of the Great Commission, and the only description of Jesus' ascension into heaven (Luke 24:13-53).

When Luke writes on events we find recorded elsewhere, we find Luke retelling the events in his own way with a unique presentation. In the opening words of his gospel, Luke says he write of things that "have been fulfilled" (1:1), not simply that have happened. His narration and retelling of Jesus' life and ministry are intentionally focused on the purpose of God made evident in all events. One of Luke's focuses is bringing out truths that are of most importance in the life of the church and believers. Another focus is Luke's view of salvation in linking God's salvation with historical events. Luke sets out God's plan of salvation being clearly laid out in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus and in the ongoing life of the church. Luke tells us when in history events happen (see 2:1-2; 3:1), and he spotlight God at work in all that Jesus said and did.



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

This list is not intended to be exhaustive but a starting point to provide additional study tools should you desire to dig deeper. ~Bro. Mark

STUDY BIBLES

Life Application Study Bible (NIV), Tyndale House Publishers, 2005.

The Literary Study Bible (ESV), Crossway Bibles, 2007.

ESV Study Bible, Crossway Bibles, 2008.

The Disciple's Study Bible (CSB), Holman Bible Publishers, 2017.

CSB Study Bible, Holman Bible Publishers, 2017.

Archaeological Study Bible (NIV), Zondervan, 2005.

OTHER RECOMMENDED READING

Devotional Style Commentaries

The Bible Exposition Commentary, Volume 1: Matthew-Galatians, Warren W. Wiersbe, Chariot Victor Publishing, 1989.

Luke: Holman New Testament Commentary, Trent Butler, Author; Max Anders, Editor, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.

NIV Application Commentary: Luke, Darrell L. Bock, Zondervan Publishers, 1996.

Deeper Digging Commentaries

An Introduction to the New Testament, D.A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, & Leon Morris, Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.

The New Testament: Its Background and Message 2nd Edition, Thomas D. Lea and David Alan Black, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003.

Luke-Acts, Revised: The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Editors: Tremper Longman, III & David E. Garland, Zondervan Publishers, 2005.

Luke: That You May Know the Truth Updated 2 Volumes in 1 (Preaching the Word Commentary), R. Kent Huges, Crossway Bibles, 2014.

