

New Testament Foundations: Session Five

Luke: The Gospel to the Gentiles

Authorship

1. Luke was a _____, the only one with an entry in the New Testament canon.
2. Luke was the “beloved physician” (Colossians 4:14), and his writings display his _____ training in the terms he uses and the subject matter he covers.
3. Luke was a close friend and companion of _____, although he was probably not one of his converts.
4. The authorship and _____ of Luke’s Gospel was never doubted (even though he was not an apostle or eye-witness) because of his close companionship with the apostle Paul.
5. If Acts was written before Paul’s first trial in Rome (62 AD), then Luke was written before that date—probably the late 50’s or early 60’s.
6. Luke was written for the Gentile world.
 - He frequently explains Jewish _____ (4:31; 8:26; 21:37; 23:51; 24:13).
 - He traces Jesus’ genealogy (3:23-38) beyond Abraham to _____.
 - He references important dates to Roman _____—the only New Testament author to even name one of the emperors.¹
 - It is addressed to the “most excellent Theophilus,” who very likely was a Roman _____ of some rank—possibly a patron, an inquirer, or a new believer.

Style

A.T. Robertson

“This scientific physician, this man of the schools, this converted Gentile, this devoted friend of Paul, comes to the study of the life of Christ with a trained intellect, with an historian’s method of research, with a physician’s care in diagnosis and discrimination, with a charm of style all his own, with reverence for and loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.”²

1. Luke’s Gospel is a carefully _____ and documented writing in the style closest to what would be called today “investigative reporting.”

Sir William Ramsay

“Luke is an historian of the first rank... (who) should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.”³

¹ Augustus: Luke 2:1 / Tiberius: Luke 3:1 / Claudius: Acts 11:28; 18:2

² A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, vol. 2

³ W.M. Ramsay, The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament, p. 222

Luke 1:1-4

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

- It has a clear and organized structure.

Prologue	(1:1-4)	This is the only Gospel with a formal introduction characteristic of the biographies found in first century Greek literature.
Births of John & Jesus	(1:5-2:52)	This section focuses on the parallel miraculous births of John and Jesus. It also includes the only story about the childhood of Jesus.
Preparation for Ministry	(3:1-4:13)	Luke follows the pattern in Mark but adds more detail.
Ministry in Galilee	(4:14-9:50)	Includes characteristic ministry (exorcisms, healings, preaching), teachings, calling of disciples, and rejection of religious leaders.
Journey to Jerusalem	(9:51-19:44)	Contains many of Jesus' teachings, often in contrast to controversies with religious leaders.
Ministry in Jerusalem	(19:45-21:38)	This section covers Jesus' deeds and words leading up to His crucifixion.
Death and Resurrection	(22:1-24:53)	Follows Mark through the passion account (adding details); then diverts from him in the resurrection and ascension narrative.

2. Luke _____ eyewitnesses and researched written material.

Ray Summers

*"The opening lines of the Gospel of Luke are without parallel in the New Testament. They are the only instance in which a Gospel writer indicates his method of research and the nature of his research sources."*⁴

3. Luke far surpasses the other three evangelists in his _____ skill, composition, culture, vocabulary, and command of the Greek language. His style is clear, animated, picturesque, and unpretentious.

Joseph Renan

*"The Gospel of Luke is the most literary of the Gospels. He displays a genuine skill in composition. His book is a beautiful narrative, well contrived, at once Hebraic and Hellenic, uniting the emotion of the drama with the serenity of the idyll."*⁵

Themes

1. The first theme is the _____ of the Gospel account.
 - Luke's Gospel answers the questions: "Why should Theophilus continue to believe that Jesus was God's definitive revelation of Himself and that Christianity was the one true religion when there were so many alternatives?"
2. The second theme is the culmination of God's _____ of Himself in Jesus.

"In the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God is pursuing a plan revealed in the Old Testament, brought to its decisive point in Jesus' death and resurrection, but only finally fulfilled in the proclamation of this Gospel throughout the whole world."

⁴ Ray Summers, Commentary on Luke, p. 19

⁵ Joseph Renan, Quoted in Vincent's Word Studies, vol. I

3. The third theme is the provision of _____ that God has made in Christ.

Luke 19:10

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

- This salvation begins with the Jews, then quickly moves to all nations.
 - This salvation provides for the forgiveness of sins.
 - This salvation centers on role-reversal.
4. The fourth theme is the _____ of the Gospel. The Gospel is shorn of any cultural or national exclusivity and is manifest as available to all people of all cultures in all times (even women and children).
- Luke records Jesus' enrollment as a participant in the Roman Empire (2:1-5).
 - Simeon greets him as a light for revelation to the Gentiles (2:28-32)
 - John the Baptist declares Isaiah's prophecy that all mankind will see God's salvation (3:5-6)
 - Only Luke mentions the mission of Elijah to the heathen widow (4:25), the Gentile Naaman's cleansing by Elisha (4:27), and the parable of the Good Samaritan (10:30-37).
 - Luke emphasizes the role of women beyond their accepted role in the first century.
5. The fifth theme is praise, worship, and _____. Luke records the prayer life of Jesus more than any other Gospel writer (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 11:1; 22:41).
- The Benedictus, the song of Zacharias (1:68-79).
 - The Magnificat, the song of Mary (1:46-55).
 - The Nunc Dimittis, the song of Simeon (2:28-32).
 - The Gloria in Excelsis, the song of the angels (2:13, 14).
 - The shepherds praised and glorified God (2:20).
 - The people of Nain glorified God (7:16).
 - Jesus praised His Father (10:21).
 - The people of Jericho who witnessed the blind man's healing gave glory and praise to God (18:43).
 - The whole multitude of Jesus' disciples rejoiced and praised God as Jesus entered Jerusalem (19:37-38).
 - The apostles were continually in the temple praising God after Christ's ascension (24:51-53).