

# OpenTheo

## Luke Introduction



### Gospel of Luke - Steve Gregg

In this introduction to the book of Luke, Steve Gregg presents evidence for Luke being the author of the third gospel as well as the book of Acts. He notes that while Luke's profession as a physician is incidental, it is possible that he was the first physician in the Christian community. Gregg also explores the possibility that the book of Luke was written as a research project to aid in Paul's upcoming trial before Nero, and suggests that Theophilus, a new Christian, may have sponsored its writing. Throughout the lecture, Gregg highlights unique aspects of the book of Luke, such as its emphasis on historical connections and its inclusion of stories that are not found in the other gospels.

### Transcript

Alright, tonight I'm going to be giving an introduction to the book of Luke. In the next couple of weeks we're going to be studying the entire book of Luke through. I like, before I begin any treatment of a book verse by verse, to first give some background, some things about the authorship, maybe some information about the book that will help you make sense of it as you read it on your own.

And even some of the things that throughout history have been controversial about a book. And so I have some introductory things to discuss about the book of Luke, which I'd like to present before we start going into chapter one together. The book of Luke, like all the gospels, was written anonymously.

Even though our Bible gives it the title, The Gospel According to Luke, Luke didn't give it that title. Luke just started writing. And he didn't say who he was, he didn't say that he was writing it on a certain occasion or anything like that.

The reason we know it's Luke who wrote it is because of certain external reasons. Now some of them can be reasoned from the scripture itself, actually. But some of them have to do with the testimony of church fathers.

But we can look at the evidence within the book itself. And let me just say this, that Luke himself was a very obscure man. Even though the books he wrote, which are Luke and Acts, are some of the largest books in the New Testament, and therefore he's one of the

principal authors of the New Testament, if his name was not on these books, we would know very little about the man Luke, because he's not mentioned by name in the gospel or in the book of Acts.

And he's only mentioned a couple or three times in Paul's epistles, and they're only in lists, where Paul is listing some of the people who are with him, sending greetings along with him to the churches he's writing to. So if we didn't have Luke's name on the third gospel and know that he also wrote the book of Acts, we'd know almost nothing about him. We'd know only these passing references to him in the closing of some of Paul's epistles, along with other names of people about whom we know almost nothing.

But Luke's name has been associated with the gospel and with the book of Acts ever since it was issued. And the early church, I assume, had reasons to want to remember who wrote their sacred documents. Some people say, well, you know, it's just church tradition, why should we trust that? Well, I guess I'd want to know why would the early church want to deceive itself about who wrote the book? It's not as if they chose the name of someone illustrious to assign it to.

We do know that in ancient times, and even in biblical times, some books were in circulation that claimed to be written by important people but weren't. This is especially true in the second and third century with what we call the Gnostic Gospels. There's a gospel according to Philip, a gospel according to Thomas, a gospel according to Judas, a gospel according to Mary, a gospel according to Peter, none of which were written by any of those people.

They were written long after the deaths of those people, but it's clear that the names of those people were attached to them fraudulently in order to give those documents a credibility that they would not otherwise have. Because those names that were attached to them were the names of apostles or people close to Jesus about whom one would think, well, what they have to say is interesting and important and probably authoritative. And so people who wrote books that were not authoritative and that were fictions would put the names of very important people on them so that they'd get some credibility.

Now, the interesting thing is the Book of Luke is not a book like that. It was written anonymously. The author didn't claim to be anybody.

What's more, if it wasn't written by Luke, why would those who wish to give it credibility assign it to Luke, who was an unknown man? Again, without his name on this book, he's essentially one of the most obscure people in the New Testament. He was not an apostle. He never saw Jesus.

He is not the kind of person that if you wanted to falsely attribute a book in order to give it credibility on this subject, you'd choose him. Obviously, they'd choose someone else if

they were not telling the truth. The only reason that Luke's name is attached to the book is because he wrote it.

And the early church knew who wrote it, and they remembered who wrote it, and they passed down faithfully as they did with the other Gospels the name of the author. The author is very clearly the same person who wrote the Book of Acts. We can get that established right at the beginning.

In Luke 1, in verse 3, the writer, who we will speak of simply as the writer until we've established from evidence that it really is Luke, but the writer in chapter 1, verse 3, says, It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very beginning, or from the first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things of which you were instructed. Now, the important point here I want to pay attention to to make this point is that it's addressed to somebody called most excellent Theophilus. Nobody actually knows who Theophilus was, and there's some interesting theories that we will actually consider, but if you'll turn to Acts chapter 1, Acts 1.1, the author says, The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which he was taken up.

Now, that's exactly the contents of the Book of Luke. All that Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up. Luke's Gospel records Jesus' ascension, and Acts begins by telling the ascension of Christ again, and then taking the story on from that point, from the point of Jesus leaving, on through the ministry of many of the apostles.

And so, both books are addressed to somebody named Theophilus, and the Book of Acts refers to a previous book written to Theophilus. It's obvious that both books were written to the same man by the same author, and therefore, even before we know the name of the author, and before we can establish who this author is, we can say he wrote both of these books, Luke and Acts. They're like two volumes of a single history, and we will not be studying Acts in this course right now, but we will be studying Luke, and some of the things that tell us that Luke is the author are going to come from evidence within the Book of Acts, since we know it's the same author.

There has never been any reasonable dispute that the same author wrote the third gospel and the Book of Acts. Not only are both books addressed to the same man, but also both are written in the most cultured Greek of any New Testament book. Only the Book of Hebrews is on the same level of good Greek as these two books, Luke and Acts.

It's very clear that the author is the same man. Actually, there's quite a few things that we'll point out that are true of both Luke and Acts that make it abundantly clear we're talking about the same author in both places. But Irenaeus, who was one of the church fathers who wrote around 170 AD, and Clement of Alexandria, one of the church fathers who wrote in 195 AD, and Tertullian, another church father who wrote around 215 AD, all

quote in their writings extensively from this third gospel, and they say it was Luke who wrote it.

In other words, although these particular men lived in different parts of the world and probably didn't read each other's work, they all knew who wrote the third gospel. They all said Luke wrote it. Once again, it's hard to know why they would say Luke did if he didn't, since he's not the kind of person you would falsely attribute a book to in order to give it credibility.

So we don't have much reason to doubt that this is true. This is also the case with the Muratorian Fragment, which is a fragment of ancient manuscript that was found. It dates from about 170 AD, and it has certain book introductions to the books of the New Testament, and it also attributes this book to Luke.

So the earliest testimony is fairly unanimous of the fathers, in the second century anyway, and beyond, that Luke wrote this book. Now, why would anyone deduce that? Well, they might not have deduced it. They might have just known it because they received the book from people who received it from the author.

When a book is treated as a sacred book, and it's only a generation or two removed from the time it was written, it's not likely the authorship has somehow been forgotten or that some false attribution of authorship would have been attached to it. There's no reason to doubt that these church fathers knew very well who the author was, but who is Luke? And is there evidence within the books that he wrote these books? Well, if you look at the Book of Acts, which I said is going to yield some of the information about the authorship, in the Book of Acts, most of the chapters are written by the author in the third person when they speak about the apostles. They'll say, Paul and Barnabas went here, and then they went here, and then they did this, and then they did that.

But there's a few sections in the Book of Acts where the author changes to using we. We sailed here, and we sailed there, and we went there, and so forth. And these parts of Acts, they come in unannounced.

They're just suddenly there. And it's very clear that, very subtly, the author is letting the reader know that he happened to join them at that point, that he's usually talking about what Peter and Stephen and Philip and Paul did in the third person. But then there's a few sections, and scholars call them the we sections of Acts because the word we is used.

The author includes himself in the travels and in some of the things. He never says who he is. He assumes his readers know.

And he's never very ostentatious about it. It's just suddenly, they came to Troas, and then we sailed to Philippi. And it's obvious that the author joined Paul and his company

at Troas and went to Philippi with him.

And so these we sections tell us a lot about the author because we find that he traveled with Paul on a number of occasions. These we sections are in Acts 16, verses 10 through 17, and in Acts 20, verses 5 through 21. I'm sorry, Acts 20, verse 5 through chapter 21, verse 18.

And then in chapter 27 and 28, all the way through. Now, one thing we find out from these we sections is that when the book closes and Paul is imprisoned in Rome, the author is with him. The author made that trip to Rome with Paul and was with him at the close of the book of Acts.

Now, that's fairly important to know because there's a limited number of people who were with Paul in Rome that we know about. And certain names are listed as being with Paul at various times in the book of Acts. But the thing is, the names of people that are listed can't be the author because the author doesn't name himself.

And therefore, some of Paul's other companions, like Timothy, or Sopater, or Aristarchus, or Secundus, or Gaius, or Tychicus, or Trophimus, or Silas, all of whom are known to have traveled with Paul sometimes, they can't really be the author because they are named by name in the third person in the book of Acts. And the author doesn't speak of himself in the third person but includes himself in the first person. So certain persons who might be otherwise candidates for authorship are excluded from consideration because they are named as other individuals than the author in the book of Acts.

So it really limits it down. I mean, Luke is one of the very few candidates that could still be in the running. But there's good reasons even more than that.

We know that Luke was with Paul in Rome. Colossians 4.14, which most scholars believe was written by Paul from prison in Rome, although there are other theories about Colossians. Some think it was written from an imprisonment in Ephesus that the book of Acts doesn't mention, but there's other considerations.

Most scholars just assume, and it's the majority opinion, that Paul was in Rome in prison when he wrote Colossians and when he wrote Philemon. And in both of those books, he mentions that Luke was with him. But Luke is just in a list of names.

These are the people who are with me, and Luke is in there. Very little is said about him. But we know, therefore, he was with Paul when he was in that imprisonment.

And if that imprisonment was in Rome, then that confirms that he was with Paul in Rome. Now 2 Timothy 4.11 is almost certainly written from Rome, and Luke is there too with Paul. So we know that Luke was with Paul in Rome and that the author of Acts went with Paul to Rome.

And we've eliminated a number of other people who might have been with Paul, but who are named in the book. So it narrows very quickly down to one likely candidate as the author, and that is Luke, who was known to be a physician. In Colossians 4.14, Paul refers to Luke as the beloved physician.

Now why Paul was traveling with a physician has been a matter of speculation. We do know from some of Paul's writings that he was sick in some of his travels. In Galatians, he tells the Galatians, because of physical infirmity I came to you.

And he says that they were very sympathetic toward his condition, whatever it was. In 2 Corinthians 12, he talks about having what he called a thorn in the flesh, which seemed to be a chronic condition of some kind, that he was unable to be healed from. Although Paul healed and even raised the dead, in the case of other people, he was not able to get himself healed.

He said he prayed three times that God would take this condition from him. And the Lord said, no, my grace is sufficient for you. My strength is made perfect in your weakness.

And therefore, Paul said, okay, good, I'll rejoice in my weakness then, because when I'm weak, then God's strength is seen in me. And that's all good. Okay, so Paul was sick some of the time, and he may have asked Luke, a physician, to travel with him because of this.

He might have needed care. Luke might have volunteered if he had been a physician who was converted to Christ, and he may have insisted on going with Paul. On the other hand, the fact that Luke was a physician might have just been incidental.

He might have been converted and chosen to travel with Paul for his spiritual credentials and his ability as a fellow apostle teammate. And that he's simply referred to as a physician because that's what he did before he was traveling as an apostle. Luke is never called an apostle by name, but Paul does refer to his companions as apostles of the churches in general.

Over in 2 Corinthians 8, Paul says in verse 23, if anyone inquires about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you. Or if our brethren, and he means his co-workers, are inquired about, they are apostles of the churches, the glory of Christ. Now, if you actually looked at that verse while I was reading it, you'll notice it didn't say apostles, it said messengers of the churches.

But the Greek there says apostoloid, which is the Greek word for apostles. So, Paul himself never called himself an apostle of the churches because the word apostle means one who is sent. And if you're an apostle of the church, you're one who is sent by the church.

But Paul always said he was an apostle of Christ. He was sent by Christ, not by the

church. And therefore, even if Luke was included among those brethren that Paul referred to as apostles of the churches, that would not mean that Luke was an apostle of the same kind as Paul or Peter.

These men always referred to themselves as apostles of Christ, but Paul spoke of his companions as apostles of the churches. And therefore, in sort of a secondary sense, there was an apostolic label attached to Paul's fellow travelers, and I'm sure Luke would be treated as one of those as well. And therefore, it may be that Luke was first a physician before he was a Christian.

And then when he became a Christian, he kind of left that profession to go into the ministry. There have been many medical doctors in history who have left the medical profession in order to go into ministry. D. Martin Lloyd-Jones is a very famous case.

He's a medical doctor who gave up his practice in order to become a pastor in England, a great preacher, a great preacher and writer. And Luke could have done that. So, I mean, after D. Martin Lloyd-Jones gave up his physician practice and was preaching, his congregation always called him the good doctor.

You know, I mean, he's still remembered as the man who was a trained physician. And so, if Luke was no longer practicing medicine and was just traveling with Paul without any connotations of treating him for his sicknesses, he still might be referred to as the beloved physician in that case, too. And so, Colossians 4.14, Paul does refer to him that way.

It's interesting that Luke and Acts together contain what scholars have counted up more than 400 Greek words in the original Greek that are found in the ancient Greek medical journals and medical textbooks. Of course, when we talk about ancient Greek medicine, we're talking about a lot of herbal stuff and a lot of non-technical stuff, probably a little bit of old wives' tales stuff, too, because medical science was not a very exact science back then, not quite so much as now. But there are medical texts that have been discovered and scholars have read, and they say there's some technical terms in these medical texts of the ancient Greek world that occur in Luke's writings, or I should say in the third gospel in the book of Acts.

And the fact that Luke is known to have been a physician is often thought to be one of those confirmations that this technical medical language appears from place to place in these writings a great deal, certainly more than in any other of the New Testament books. And they say 400 different words that are found from the medical texts of ancient Greece are found in the books of Luke and Acts, which seems to indicate that the theory that Luke, the physician, wrote them is confirmed or at least underscored as credible by that fact. And I mentioned Luke, since he was otherwise pretty much unknown, would never have been assigned as the author of this if he wasn't the real author.

I mean, if this book was floating around anonymously and the early church didn't know who wrote it, and they said, well, it's assigned to somebody, anybody. Oh, I know Luke. He's the guy.

He was much more obscure than he, back in the early days, had been to us, at least until he wrote this. When he wrote this, it became one of the main records of the life of Jesus in circulation and obviously became part of the New Testament scripture eventually. But he just wrote as a historian anonymously, but obviously whoever first received the documents from the hands of the author preserved a knowledge of who that author was who gave them to him.

And that was apparently Luke. The church tradition is unanimous on it. The internal evidence is supportive of that.

Now, let's talk about the value of Luke and Acts, the unique value. I mean, all the books of the Bible have their own value, their own way they contribute to our knowledge of God and of Christ. Luke and Acts make their own special contributions, too.

Without them, the Bible would be much shorter. For one thing, Luke and Acts, if you take them together, make up over a quarter of the New Testament, making Luke the man who wrote more words of the New Testament than any other author. He only wrote two books, but they're big ones.

And he wrote even more than Paul did, unless Paul wrote Hebrews. If Paul wrote Hebrews, then he outstrips Luke just a little bit on that. But most scholars would agree that Paul didn't write Hebrews.

Now, whether he did or not, we can't be sure. But if Paul did write Hebrews, then he wrote more than Luke did. If Paul did not write Hebrews, then Luke wrote more than Paul did, fully a quarter of the New Testament.

You don't think of it that way. You don't think of Luke as writing so much because we only have two books by him, but they're big books, and he's obviously a major contributor to our knowledge of the life of Jesus. And when you add the book of Acts to that, he's the only source of knowledge in any kind of detailed history from the first century of the work of the apostles.

So his work really is very essential to our knowledge of the early church. He's actually, more than the other gospel writers, he's a historian. And I don't mean that the others were not historically accurate, but the other gospels were written more to inspire faith.

I mean, they were true. Their selection material was, I mean, they selected the true stories and sayings of Jesus, but they selected them for an evangelistic purpose. And therefore, the other gospels are not so much in the same category of, like, secular histories as Luke would be.



Luke, for example, connects the events of the story of Jesus and later of the apostles with the reigns of different known rulers, secular rulers that are known from history. In the book of Acts, there's many. There's Felix, and there's Festus, and there's Agrippa, and there's, you know, Gaius.

I mean, there's a whole bunch of different well-known, I mean, I guess known, I don't know how well-known, but they're known historical figures from secular history, Roman officials and so forth. And they have Paul talking with them and so forth. And in the book of Luke, we also have the events of Jesus' life connected chronologically with certain secular known important people.

If you look at Luke 3, for example, in verse 1, Luke 3.1 says, Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being the governor of Judea, Herod being the tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip the tetrarch of Aeturia, and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysenaues the tetrarch of Abilene. Now, it talks about all the surrounding region around where Jesus' ministry took place and who was ruling at that time. It was the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, and these other guys were ruling in these different places.

It is now known historically that this is entirely correct. These people were contemporary in these different places. And Luke is obviously tying the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus to that specific historical period that is referenced by these other characters who are known to have existed.

Now, sometimes people want you to believe that the Gospels are pure fabrications. It is very popular. One popular criticism of the Gospels is that many of the pagan myths about some of the gods of Egypt or Parthia or India have similarities with the story of Jesus.

It is commonly said that the myths about Horus in Egypt, or Mithras among the Parthians, or Bacchus, or Krishna even, have very close similarities to the life of Jesus as it is given to us in the Gospels, and that these myths are older than the Gospels. And the implication is, therefore, the Gospel writers were writing just another myth of the same sort. The stories of Jesus are not much different than the stories of these other gods.

In fact, they say some of the stories are exactly the same. About all those people I just mentioned, there is one video documentary on YouTube that says that all these characters were born of a virgin. All of them had twelve disciples.

They walked on water. They turned water to wine. They were called the Son of God.

They were crucified, and they rose on the third day. Well, that is a very striking set of claims. If the myths about Horus, hundreds of years before Jesus came to Earth, had all those features, and so did Mithras, and so did Bacchus or Dionysius or some of these

other pagan deities, if their mythology contained all these things, then we find those same things in the Gospels about Jesus.

It is very damning. It seems like, wow, the Gospels aren't anything else but just another myth. They just put another name on there.

Make up a guy and call him Jesus. Now, you don't have to be worried even for a moment that those claims are true. The people who made that video absolutely did no research of any responsible sort.

I have, and so have many others. Having seen that video, I went and researched the myths about Horus and Dionysius and Mithras and so forth. There's not a single thing they said about them that's true.

None of the mythologies say that the deity that they're talking about was born of a virgin. None of them had 12 apostles. None of them were crucified.

None of them rose from the dead the third day in their mythology. Bacchus, the god of wine, might have turned water into wine, but none of them walked on water. In other words, most of these claims are 100% fabrications just made up to make you think you can't trust the Gospels.

But one thing that the Gospels have going for them that none of those myths have is that nobody claims that these mythological gods ever interacted with real historical characters. The myths of the Greeks and of the Romans and of the Parthians and of India, Krishna never claimed to have met anyone that was historical. These are all mythologies like the myths of the Greeks about Zeus and so forth.

They're not connected with any historical events because those gods never existed. And there weren't any historical events for them to interact with. So the whole milieu in which the stories of the gods in mythology, everything about it is fictional.

But if the Gospels are telling a fictional story, they do what none of those others do. They interweave it with actual characters that Jesus was condemned by Pontius Pilate, a real guy. And he began preaching in the 15th year of Tiberius, a real guy.

And Paul converted a governor on the island of Cyprus named Paulus, Sergius Paulus. And he's a real known guy from history. And you have all this, Nero, Paul stood before Nero.

Festus and Felix, the governors that Paul stood before on trial, they're real people. They're known from Roman history. If this was a fabrication, it's an elaborate fabrication of a sort that no other mythology ever even dreamed of doing.

But you see, Luke will claim that he's certain these things really happened. Because he'll

say in the opening verses of his Gospels that he talked to the eyewitnesses. He doesn't claim to be one of the eyewitnesses, but he traveled with them.

He knew them. He knew they were telling the truth. And he was an eyewitness of much in the book of Acts, which is simply of one piece with the book of Luke, really.

So there's a historical connection in the Gospels that doesn't exist in the mythologies that are claimed to be like the Gospels. Those likenesses are greatly exaggerated. But even if there were similarities, by the way, most of those mythologies are not known to us by records as old as the Gospels.

Although those mythologies may have existed hundreds of years before Christ, we don't have records that old of them. The records we have of Mithras, for example, or Horace, come from the second or third century after Christ. And if there were similarities, many scholars say, well, they borrowed them from Christianity.

But there aren't similarities. The similarities are not that much. Very, very, very, very vague things that don't connect at all with it.

And to suggest that the Gospels would be written about a Jew who was treated as a deity, if he didn't really exist, it wouldn't catch on. It wouldn't catch on in Jerusalem. The Jews were not into human gods at all.

They weren't even into stone and wood gods in the time of the first century. They only believed in one god. And if Jesus hadn't really lived and done the things he did, he wouldn't have had any Jewish followers at all.

Of course, if he hadn't lived, he wouldn't have any followers at all either. Now, Luke is the most historical, or he is, in a sense, playing the role of a historian more than the other Gospels. Although all the Gospels are historically accurate, Luke is connecting the story with secular history in many more ways than the other Gospels ever were.

It is said that Luke's writings, Luke and Acts, are the only writings in the New Testament that are not written from a Jewish perspective. Now, Luke is believed by most scholars to have been a Gentile, and if so, the only Gentile who wrote anything in the Bible. All the other books of the Bible were written by Jewish people.

There are some who say Luke was Jewish also, but there's nothing in the Bible that suggests that he was Jewish. And as near as I can tell, the claim that he was Jewish comes from people who have just decided that all the books of the Bible had to be written by Jews for some reason, and therefore they have to make Luke a Jew. But if we have any evidence of his nationality, it certainly would be in Colossians 4. And there, the evidence seems to be that he was a Gentile.

Let me show you. In Colossians 4, one of the few places where Luke is mentioned in the

Bible by name, in verse 11, Paul is actually listing, he's in the middle of listing a number of people who happen to be with him and sending greetings along with him. And he says, I actually would start at verse 10.

He names Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, with Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, about whom you received instruction. If he comes to you, welcome him. And Jesus, this is not Jesus Christ, but another Jesus, who is called Justice.

These are my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision. That means Jewish. The list he's just given are the only Jewish co-workers with him, he said.

And they have proved to be a comfort to me. Then he says in verse 12, Epaphras, who is one of you, that he's a Colossian, a Gentile, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in his prayers that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. And then he says in verse 14, Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greets you.

Now, notice in verses 10 and 11 he says, these in verse 10 and 11 are the only Jews with me. And then he starts naming some Gentiles, a Colossian is among them, Epaphras, and Luke, who is definitely included in the list of not of the circumcision, which would mean not a Jew. Now, I've heard some arguments trying to say this is not necessarily saying that Luke was not a Jew, but frankly the most natural way to read it is that Paul is saying he had some Jewish and some Gentile associates.

And he names the Jews first, then Luke's listed with the Gentiles. And it is true that the third gospel and the book of Acts are said to tell the story from a very Gentile perspective compared to the other gospels. Now, Mark and John were also written to Gentiles, but they were written by Jewish men.

And they have a very Jewish flavor to them. Luke has a very Gentile flavor, it is said, in many respects, which we will perhaps observe as we study through verse by verse. The other gospels also, Matthew, Mark, and John, are the memoirs of individual apostles.

Matthew and John were apostles themselves. Mark was not, but he presented the memoirs of Peter, who was. And so Mark's gospel is considered to be the gospel according to Peter.

So you've got the gospel according to Matthew, the gospel according to Peter, which is written by Mark, and the gospel according to John, all apostles who were eyewitnesses and given their reminiscences. In a sense, those three gospels are simply the testimonies of individual men. Luke tells us, however, that he interviewed many people.

Luke's gospel contains information gathered from many sources. Luke was not privileged to have met Jesus, but he was privileged to have met all the apostles and to have traveled with some of them and spent time interviewing them, apparently, according to

his own testimony in the opening verses. And therefore, we have a broader range of information about the life of Jesus than you get from a single person, apparently.

And we have, therefore, the testimony of many sources in the book of Luke, where we have the testimony of one source each in the other gospels. One of the great things about Luke's writing, Luke and Acts, is that he connects the Christianity of the gospels with the Christianity of the epistles. Now, some people think there's a great difference between the Christianity of Jesus and the Christianity of Paul, for example.

The epistles have a certain developed theology that Paul presents, especially emphasis on justification by grace through faith, not of works. Whereas the teaching of Jesus seems to emphasize a lot of works. And Jesus is always talking about behavior and works and so forth.

Jesus doesn't really give much in the way of teaching on the subject of justification by faith alone. It is no doubt implicit, but it's not explicit in the teaching of Jesus very often. But you do find it.

And Luke's gospel, for example, tells a story about a publican and a Pharisee. Now, a publican is a word for a Jewish person who had sold out on his people and was collecting taxes from the Jews for the Roman oppressors. Publicans were hated and despised and shunned by the Jews, because they were turncoats, they were traitors.

And Jesus told a story about a Pharisee and a publican. Now, a publican was a despised turncoat. A Pharisee was a very religious Jewish leader.

And these two were praying in the temple. And the Pharisee congratulated himself about how he'd kept the law and done all these good works. And he was very proud of himself.

And the publican was very humble. He didn't dare even to look up to heaven. He just beat his breast with his fist and said, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

And Jesus said it was the publican, not the Pharisee, who went home justified. Now, Jesus actually used the word justified. And the man had done nothing but repent.

He'd done nothing but beg for mercy. Certainly, there's justification by faith, not works, there in the teaching of Jesus, although that story is only included in the Gospel of Luke. Likewise, the conversion of the thief on the cross, who was saved without works, obviously, a deathbed conversion, is in Luke.

So we do see that Luke introduces some of the Pauline emphasis in the ministry of Jesus, which the other Gospels don't so much. And then Luke's history of the book of Acts introduces Paul to us. In other words, Luke's writings really connect the teachings of Jesus with the teachings of Paul.

And, you know, if we didn't have anything that Luke wrote, we'd have the story of Jesus in Matthew, Mark, and John. Then we'd have the epistles of Paul. We'd say, who's he? We wouldn't have any way of knowing how he came to be important.

Why do we have letters from him? Luke's writings, of course, Luke was a big fan of Paul. Luke was a protege of Paul, traveled with Paul. And so he gives us this connection between the Gospels.

The Christianity of Jesus and the Christianity of Paul is connected by this transition of Acts and even some of the things that Luke includes in his Gospel that the others do not include. As Mark and Luke are the only Gospels not written by apostles, they are included because of the close association these two men had with apostles. Mark associated with Peter and is said to be the Gospel of Peter, according to Mark.

Luke is said to have written the Gospel according to Paul. Now, he didn't get it all from Paul, and Paul wasn't even there to see Jesus. But the presentation of the Gospel in Luke is influenced by Paul, and many of the Church Fathers believe that.

Irenaeus, for example, who wrote in 170 AD, in *Against Heresies*, he wrote, Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him, that is by Paul. So, Irenaeus felt that the Book of Luke was composed of sermon material that Paul preached, and that could be in very large measure so. Tertullian, another early Church Father in the early 3rd century, said, for even Luke's form of the Gospel, men usually ascribe to Paul.

So, there is a Pauline authority that is assumed to belong to the Book of Luke. The books that are included in the New Testament are usually included because of their apostolic origin. But Luke wasn't an apostle, yet he wrote a quarter of the New Testament.

So, why are his books included? Well, he wasn't an apostle like Paul was, but he was an associate of Paul's, an apostle of the Church's, and wrote, no doubt, his books under the eye of Paul. Since at the very time that Luke would have been writing these books, he was traveling with Paul. Can you imagine these two traveling together, and Luke's working on major literary works, much of which is about Paul himself, and he doesn't let Paul proofread it? He doesn't ask Paul, is this good, is this right, do you approve of this? I mean, they're traveling together, he's writing a book.

Of course, these books could never have been issued without Paul having read them and approved of them. In fact, Paul is almost certainly the source of most of the information about him, which is half of the book of Acts. So, the books that Luke wrote do have an apostolic stamp upon them, and therefore they are included for that reason in the Bible.

All right, let's talk about the possibility of knowing the purpose for writing. We don't have to know this. We don't have to know why Luke wrote it, but sometimes if you know an

author's purpose, you can sort of see why he included this and left something else out because something suited his purpose more than something else.

But no one's really quite sure about summarizing really what it was that influenced Luke to write this. It is possible that he's writing specifically to Theophilus because Theophilus might have been an important person. He might have been maybe the sponsor of the books.

Most people who wrote books didn't have the money to buy papyrus and pens and things like that, which were very hard to get in those days. They didn't have the time and the leisure just to sit around and write books. And so many of the books from ancient times have come down just because some rich sponsor hired somebody to write a book.

And Theophilus, some people think, might be that rich sponsor. It may be that Theophilus was a new Christian who was curious to know more about the beginnings of the faith, and Luke was somebody he had encountered, and he may have sponsored the writing of these books. So Luke may have written it just on an assignment from this donor or from this sponsor.

Another theory that is out there is that some feel that Luke wanted to, well, that Theophilus was actually somebody important in the Roman government and possibly someone important in Paul's trial. The Book of Acts, at least, was written when Paul was awaiting trial before Nero. Certainly Nero was a busy man, and he would have attorneys and so forth that he would assign to do research on cases before they would come to him.

And some feel that Theophilus may have been a lawyer, may have been an official that Nero had appointed to look into Paul's case pre-trial, so that when he would come to trial, Nero would have some background on it. And if Theophilus had that kind of a role, then some have said that Luke wrote the Book of Luke and Acts in order to vindicate Paul, to show what gospel Paul was preaching, how harmless it was to Nero, how innocent Paul was of any wrongdoing. And, of course, he'd have to start with the story of Jesus, so Volume I of his work is the story of Jesus, the Book of Luke.

Volume II would be the story of, well, essentially of Paul. But he'd have to span the distance from Jesus to Paul with the earlier chapters of Acts, but eventually it's about Paul. So some feel like it was sort of a research project that Luke did to help Paul in his upcoming trial before Nero.

There's no way to know if this is true or not. It's possible that he felt that he should, you know, tell how Christianity came to Rome. Many people think that the Book of Acts was to show how the gospel which started in Jerusalem ended up in Rome.

And if that's how Acts was written, it may be that Luke, as a prequel to that, was written

in order to show why there was a Christianity to leave Jerusalem at all and to go to Rome. It's really unknown the precise reason Luke made the effort to write. He may have just loved to write.

Some people just write for fun. But, after all, it was an expensive thing to write books in those days and time-consuming. And to be a historian required that you do a lot of research.

Obviously, for someone to do that much work when he didn't have to or didn't have a compelling reason to would be a very unusual thing. So we've talked a little about theories about who Theophilus was. Was he a rich patron? Was he a Roman official? Or does his name simply stand for every Christian? The name Theophilus in Greek means lover of God.

Theos is God and Theleo is love. And Theophileus means lover of God. Well, theoretically, every Christian is a Theophilus and every Christian is a lover of God.

And some think that Luke is simply using that as a nickname for his generic Christian reader. Oh lover of God, I'm writing you this story. However, as attractive as that suggestion may be, there's a couple of good reasons to reject it.

One is that Theophilus was a very common proper name in the literature of that time. There's many Theophiluses known to have lived at that time. And therefore, to use a very common proper name to be a generic for all Christians would be an unlikely literary choice.

But more than that, he calls him most excellent Theophilus. Now most excellent was an abbreviation you'd use in speaking to somebody important. For example, Claudius Lysias, who arrested Paul, wrote a letter to Felix, the Roman governor, and called him most excellent Felix.

Most excellent would be like saying your honor or your majesty if you're talking to a king or your honor to a judge. There's certain ways you'd speak to officials. And most excellent so and so is one of those titles.

Therefore, it doesn't seem like he's referring to Theophilus generically as every Christian, but rather an actual person, probably somebody of prominence in the Roman government. And that's really all we know. But it doesn't seem likely that the theory is correct.

It just means any lover of God will do. This is actually talking to somebody in particular. It's interesting, though, that when he writes in Luke to Theophilus, he calls him most excellent Theophilus.

Very formal. But in Acts chapter 1 verse 1, he just calls him O Theophilus, as if he's



writing to a friend or something like that. And many think that maybe Theophilus was an inquirer into Christianity when the book of Luke was written.

And as a result of reading the book of Luke, he became a Christian. And so when he wrote the second book to him, he wrote more casually, O Theophilus, instead of most excellent Theophilus. We don't know much.

These are speculations. But when was Luke written? This is worth considering, since many people claim that the Gospels were written much, much, much later than the time of Christ. And it is suggested from that that we can't really be quite sure how accurate they are.

I was listening to a lecture by N.T. Wright. Or it wasn't a lecture. It was a question and answer time.

And somebody asked him when such and such a gospel was written. I forget which gospel they asked about. And he said what is quite true.

He says no one really knows when any of the Gospels were written. There are people who place the Gospel of Mark as early as 50 AD, though it's not universal or even majority view. But some would place the Gospel of Mark as the first Gospel written around 50 AD, and Matthew and Luke written before 70 AD.

There are others who place all the Gospels almost in the second century and say these were not written by the men whose names are traditionally attached to them. These theories often represent the prejudices of the person's theorizing, because we don't have any dates on them. Almost any time in the second half of the first century or after, they could conceivably have been written.

However, Luke gives us some clues that seem to place logical limits on the lateness of how late he could have written it. First of all, Luke tells us in chapter 1 and verse 1 that many before him have written accounts of the life of Jesus, that he's not at all the first, and he's familiar with previous efforts. It's possible that Matthew and Mark were among those previous efforts.

In fact, many scholars believe so. So Matthew and Mark could easily have been written before Luke was. But when was Luke written? Well, we know this.

The book of Acts, Luke's second work, was written after Luke. We know that because he opens the book of Acts saying, in my former account, I told you the story of Jesus. He's talking about the book of Luke.

So the book of Acts was written after the book of Luke. But the book of Acts ends its story around 62 AD. Paul came to Rome to await trial in 60 AD.

At the close of the book of Acts, we're told that he waited two years awaiting trial. And it just ends. It doesn't tell us when that trial occurred, whether it happened immediately after those two years, or whether it was another two or four years before it happened.

We're not told whether Paul was acquitted or condemned to the trial. So we're left hanging. Here he spends 14 chapters or something like that talking about Paul, building up the suspense.

The last several chapters, maybe the last nine chapters of Acts, are all about Paul's journey and being arrested, journeying to Rome, and he's facing a death sentence. And certainly the reader is all eager to know, how does this turn out for Paul? And we get him to Rome, and the book closes, and he spent two years in his own hired house, obviously awaiting trial. And if it had been written after Paul had been tried, certainly Luke would have told how it came out.

The reader's dying to know. I mean, he's building up to this trial, and then the trial's not even recorded. It seems obvious that the book was written before the trial took place.

There ought to be no reason for Luke to leave it out. What's more, it seems obvious it was written almost exactly two years after Paul came to Rome. Because if it had been less than that, Luke couldn't say he was there for two years in his own rented house.

Because if it was written less than that, it wouldn't have been that long, and he wouldn't have given that figure. If it was more than that, he wouldn't say two years, he'd say three, or whatever the number was. In saying he waited two years, we don't know if he waited longer or not, because Luke wrote it at that point.

And if he'd waited longer, he would have said two and a half years, or three years, or four, or however many it was. It's clear that the reference to two years at the end of Acts tells us when the book was written, around 62 AD. Now, 62 AD, that's only like 30 years after Jesus died.

And there were other written accounts before Luke. And Luke wrote before Acts. I mean, the book of Luke was before Acts.

So if Acts was written no later than 62, the book of Luke probably wasn't written any later than, say, 60. And other gospels before that. So we really have probably, at least Luke and maybe some of the other gospels, written within 30 years of Jesus' death.

That's like nothing. Now, you guys here who are less than 30 years old, you might think, 30 years, that's a lifetime. How could anyone remember anything that happened 30 years earlier? When you're my age, you think, I can't remember what happened yesterday, but I remember lots that happened 30 years ago, and longer.

You lose your short-term memory, but you never forget your childhood, even when

you're 60. You never forget how you met your wife, no matter how many decades go by. You don't forget the birth of your children, even when they're 40, 50 years old.

You don't forget important things like that. Decades and decades don't erase memories, and especially when you retell the story on a regular basis all through that whole period of time. And the apostles were telling the story of Jesus every day of their lives, from the day of Pentecost until they died.

Therefore, they wouldn't have had any occasion to forget any of this material. And if these gospels were written within 30 years of the death of Jesus, there's absolutely no reason to believe that any of the material has suffered from lapse of memories at all. I mean, the things that Jesus did are much more memorable things than the things I remember that happened 50 years ago.

I remember things 50 years ago that aren't even that important, and I can vividly still see them. If I'd seen Jesus walk on water or raise a dead man, I think it'd even be more vivid in my memory. How could you forget such things? How could you forget the words of one about whom even his enemies said, no one spoke like this man before? There's certainly no reason to question the accuracy of the memories of those who wrote these books, the gospels.

Certainly Luke can't reasonably have been written much later than 60 AD. Okay, Luke differs from the other gospels in some ways, and so I want to talk a little bit about the special contents that are in Luke and not in the other gospels. First of all, the first two chapters of Luke are not found in the other gospels.

They are the birth narratives of John the Baptist and Jesus. The other gospels mention nothing about the birth of John the Baptist, but Luke tells us not only about his birth, but events before his birth, how that his father, a priest, encountered an angel in the temple, and it was announced to the father that he'd have a son, and it'd be John the Baptist. Then we have the record of the same angel coming to Mary and announcing to her that she's going to have a son also, and he's going to be the Messiah.

Then we read of the birth of John and the birth of Jesus, and then we read of the shepherds coming, and none of those stories are found in the other gospels. Now, the birth of Jesus is found in Matthew, but not the story of the shepherds, not the story of the circumcision of Jesus and the dedication of Jesus in the temple, and old Simeon and Anna coming and so forth. Those are all Luke's unique contribution to our knowledge of the early life of Jesus or the birth narratives of Jesus.

The birth narratives of Jesus in Luke's gospel are all from Mary's side. It's the angel's visits to Mary and her family that are recorded. Matthew's different.

Matthew gives the birth narratives from Joseph's side. It's the angel's visits to Joseph,

multiple visits to Joseph, and Joseph's decisions and so forth. So, Matthew apparently had access to Joseph's side of the story, and Luke access to Mary's side of the story, and the genealogies are different.

Matthew gives Joseph's genealogy. I believe Luke gives Mary's. In chapter 3, we have a genealogy of Jesus that does not appear in any of the other gospels.

At first glance, it looks like it's a genealogy of Joseph, but when we get to it in chapter 3, I'll explain why I don't think that is the case. I believe it's Mary's genealogy. Like the other synoptic gospels, the adult ministry of Jesus in Luke begins with his baptism by John and tells of his temptation in the wilderness.

Now, that's also true of Matthew and Mark. They tell of him being baptized by John, the Holy Spirit coming down as a dove upon him, and him going into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Then, all three of those gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, skip over several months of Jesus' ministry and tell us about his ministry in Galilee.

John's gospel fills in some of that missing material. In John chapters 2, 3, and 4, there's some material about Jesus' early ministry before he went to Galilee. But the synoptic gospels, as they're called, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they skip over much, and they just go directly to focus on the Galilean ministry of Jesus.

Luke tells us, and the other gospels do not, that one of the first things Jesus did when he came to Galilee is to go to his hometown in Nazareth, and he got himself in trouble, almost killed. He preached in the synagogue of his hometown, and they wanted to throw him off a cliff. But he got away from them, and that story's only found in Luke.

There's some other stories in the early part of Luke that are only found in Luke and not in the other gospels. It tells of Jesus raising a dead son of a widow in a town called Nain. And he also tells of a specially sinful woman notorious in town who Jesus forgives and is unashamed to be associated with her.

Only Luke gives us those particular stories. Then there's a long section in Luke, almost nine chapters, that is entirely unique to Luke. It's in chapter 9, verses 51 through chapter 18, verse 14.

That entire nine-chapter section is missing from the other gospels. This is sometimes called Luke's travel narrative because Jesus actually does some ministry in Perea, outside of Israel, and so forth, in this particular section. And there's another brief passage which is found only in Luke, and that's in chapter 19, verses 1 through 28.

Now these unique sections of Luke contain 16 of the 23 parables that Luke records. So more than half of Luke's parables are in this section that none of the other gospels relate. And so a lot of the parables of Jesus are found only in Luke, and many of the favorite ones.

The prodigal son, the Good Samaritan, and many other of the favorite parables of Jesus are only found in Luke in these sections here. In the trial narrative, after Jesus is arrested, only Luke tells us that Pilate sent Jesus to Herod. And Jesus was on trial before Herod for a while but disappointed him because he wouldn't do any miracles for him.

And then Herod sent him back to Pilate. From reading the other gospels, you might get the impression Jesus only stood before Pilate, but Luke gives us the information about Herod's having a chance to see Jesus as well. After the resurrection, there's a long story in Luke 24 about Jesus appearing to two men on the road to Emmaus who don't initially recognize him but who finally do recognize him, and when they do, he disappears.

And they are among the first to testify to the apostles, although the apostles already knew it, that Jesus had risen from the dead. That story is not found in any of the other gospels except a brief reference or allusion to it in what we call the long ending of Mark. When we studied Mark, I pointed out that Mark's gospel has several different endings in different manuscripts.

Most scholars favor the short ending, but there's a medium-length ending in some manuscripts and a long ending in some, and the long ending of Mark has an allusion to Jesus appearing to these two men on the road to Emmaus, but apart from that long ending, which many scholars don't even accept as genuine, though I'm inclined to, apart from that, that story is only in Luke. The Great Commission in Luke is different than the Great Commission in Matthew and the one in Mark, and interestingly, even different than the one in Acts, which is written by Luke also. This suggests that Jesus, on different occasions and in different places, gave different versions of it.

For instance, Matthew's Great Commission took place on a mountain in Galilee, and it's different in content than the Great Commission he gave in Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives, but just outside Jerusalem, which Acts records. Luke tells us the Great Commission took place also in Jerusalem, but Luke's version may have taken place on Resurrection Night, whereas in Acts, he mentions a commission given on Ascension Day. So Jesus, apparently, on different occasions, gave different versions of this commission to go out and to evangelize the world and make disciples.

Interestingly, Luke is the only author of the narratives in the New Testament that records Jesus ascending to heaven. Matthew does not record Jesus' ascension. It closes with him giving the Great Commission and does not record his ascension.

John does not record the ascension of Jesus. It records some post-resurrection appearances, but it does not go so far as to refer to his ascension. The long ending of Mark does mention his ascension right at the very end, but again, many scholars doubt the authenticity of the long ending of Mark, but I personally think it's probably genuine.

But apart from the long ending of Mark mentioning it briefly, Luke and Acts are the only

places that really record the ascension of Christ into heaven. All right, so these are some of the special contents in Luke that aren't in the other Gospels. I'll quickly want to go over some of the special features of the book, and then we'll be pretty much winding this down.

I mentioned it's the most literary Gospel. One of the features of Luke is it's written in really good Greek style and Greek grammar. Luke was apparently a very literate man, probably the most educated man who wrote a Gospel.

And apart from the book of Hebrews, his two books have the very best Greek in the New Testament. It's the most historical Gospel, as I said, because he connects the events of Jesus and the Apostles' lives with other known events and persons in secular history at the same time. In the book of Acts, for example, he records in chapter 11 of Acts that Agabus made a prophecy about a famine that was coming, a drought.

And that happened in the reign of Claudius. Claudius was one of the emperors. And so Luke likes to connect the sacred history with contemporary events in secular history, which makes it the most historical-oriented Gospel.

It's also the Gospel that emphasizes the inclusiveness of Jesus. Now, if Luke was in fact a Gentile, as most believe, he might be the most interested in bringing this out. Although all the Gospels point out that Jesus was not only the Messiah to the Jews, but that he also was here for the whole world and for the Gentiles, too.

But Luke tells stories and sayings of Jesus that underscore the availability of the Gospel and of Christ to different demographic groups, much more than some of the other Gospels. Now, by the way, in your notes, I've given references for each of these, and some of the references are in bold type, and some not. The ones that are not in bold type are in the other Gospels, too.

The ones in bold type are unique to Luke. And so among the groups that are specially identified as Jesus connecting with in the Gospels would be, of course, the Jews. There are references given in your notes which apply to the Jews, about how God has fulfilled his promise to Israel in sending his Messiah and so forth.

There's prophecies of Zacharias and of Mary about this. And then, of course, the Gentiles as a different demographic. Chapter 2, verse 32 says that he's a light to the Gentiles.

And Luke's writings, the two books, mention three cases of centurions, which were Roman pagan officers in the army, being godly. There's, of course, the centurion servant that was healed, and Jesus marveled at the man's faith. There's the centurion at the cross, who said, surely this was the Son of God.

And there's in Acts a centurion who's charged with getting Paul safely to Rome, and he protects Paul. He seems to be a God-fearing centurion, and he's very friendly to Paul,

though Paul's a prisoner, and the centurion's a guard. These centurions are all Gentiles, and therefore the mention of them, and Luke is pointing out that the gospel reaches Gentiles as well as Jews, and there are godly Gentiles too.

Of course, there's Cornelius also in the book of Acts, a centurion. A whole chapter is given to him in the book of Acts. So there's these Gentiles.

Then there's the Samaritans. The Samaritans come up for mention too. In one case, they're inhospitable.

Though Jesus wants to come and stay in their village in Luke 9, the Samaritans are not receptive to him. But it's not Jesus who's not reaching out to them. It's them not receiving him.

But there are other cases where Samaritans are mentioned favorably. The Good Samaritan, for example, is a parable that's only in Luke. Also, the story of the ten lepers that Jesus healed, and only one returned to thank him.

It specifically says the one who returned to thank him was a Samaritan man. So Luke mentions the Samaritans specifically as people that had some favorable connection with Jesus. Sinners in general.

The story of the sinful woman in chapter 7 and of the prodigal son underscores that people who are notable, scandalous sinners were received by Christ, and Christ spoke favorably on their behalf when they repented. Whereas the religion of the day would not countenance them at all, of course. Publicans, a special class of sinners that were despised by the Jews.

Levi, one of the apostles, is a publican before he's saved. Jesus tells that story about the praying publican, the publican of the Pharisee, in Luke chapter 18. And of Zacchaeus, the publican, the wee little man who climbed up into the sycamore tree to hear Jesus, and he got saved in Luke 19.

That's only in Luke. The story of these publicans. The publican praying in the temple and the publican Zacchaeus.

But not only the publicans, but the rich and powerful are mentioned specially. Not usually very favorably, but sometimes. Theophilus is almost certainly a rich and powerful man, and the gospel was written to reach him.

Also, the rich young ruler is not only in Luke, but in the other gospels, but Luke does include it. The story of the rich young ruler and Jesus inviting this rich man to be part of his kingdom, but only on Christ's terms. And the man rejects those.

Well, if the rich and powerful are included, so are the poor. Luke has good news

preached to the poor. In chapter 4, verse 18, Jesus in Nazareth says, The Lord God has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

In chapter 6 of Luke, the first beatitude is given as, Blessed are you poor. Whereas Matthew has it, Blessed are the poor in spirit. Luke just has, Blessed are you poor.

Also, the story of the beggar Lazarus, a very poor man, is found only in Luke. Lazarus and the rich man contrasted there. And, of course, the favorable assessment of the beggar and the poor is very much underscored in that parable.

Another demographic that is brought up as cared for by Jesus is children. As he tells the story, of course, of Jesus blessing the children, even when the disciples wanted to send them away. In chapter 18.

Now, women, in our society, we don't think of women as a separate demographic. Unless we're talking about, you know, what percentage the Democrats are getting of the vote, the women's vote or whatever. But in other situations, we're not allowed to talk about women as a separate demographic.

But in ancient world, women were definitely a different demographic. Men and women had very different roles. And in some cases, women were frowned upon.

Among the Jews, women were not considered to be equal with men, generally in the culture. But Jesus treated the women as equal to men. Jesus surprised people by not treating women differently than men.

And so, in the society, they were a separate demographic. But in Luke, he goes out of the way many times to point out that Jesus was, you know, he related to women too, just like men. In fact, the story of Elizabeth and Mary, two women, dominate the first chapters of the book of Luke.

These holy women, who were the mothers of John the Baptist and Jesus. There's the prophetess Anna, who is mentioned as being one of the faithful remnants who came up and saw Jesus when he was a baby and went out and evangelized, told people about Jesus. The widow of Nain, Jesus shows specific compassion towards.

She's lost her only son and she's a widow. And Jesus' heart goes out to her and he raises her son from the dead. Mary of Bethany, that's Mary, the sister of Martha.

She receives special commendation by Jesus in chapter 10. There's a crippled woman in chapter 13 that Jesus heals, even though it's a Sabbath and it got him into a lot of trouble. He knew it would.

But he healed her anyway because he valued her. And when he was criticized for healing her, he said, this woman is a daughter of Abraham. Why shouldn't she be healed too?



And so, I mean, Jesus didn't have any of this putting women down to a lower rank than men or anything that the culture of his time did.

And Luke brings this out. Also, all the Gospels point out that the first people to see Jesus after he rose from the dead were women. And the first evangelists were women.

Because the women who came to the tomb, the first to find it empty, they met angels there and the angels told them to go evangelize the apostles. So, the first evangelists were women and they evangelized the apostles. And so, women receive very favorable mention in the book of Luke.

And in our modern culture, reading it, we might not be sensitive to this because every, I mean, of course, in all modern literature, women are considered to be equal with men. We don't think anything of that. But when you realize how anti-woman the culture was, we see how unusual Jesus was and Luke is bringing that out.

Jesus was for the poor and for the rich, for the Gentiles and for the Jews, for the children and for the very old, like Simeon and Anna in the temple, both very old people that get special attention in the book of Luke. See, you just choose your demographic and they're in there. Luke shows that the gospel of Jesus is inclusive of all classes of people.

Now, just a couple other things I want to point out we've pretty much done here. One is that some people have called Luke the gospel of the Holy Spirit because Luke and Acts focus on and mention the Holy Spirit much more than the other historical writings of the gospels. Both in the life and activities of Jesus and in the teaching of Jesus and then of course in the book of Acts it's always Paul filtered the Spirit or Peter filtered the Spirit or the Spirit made them go or the Spirit led them and the Spirit wouldn't permit them to do this.

Luke is very mindful of the activity of the Holy Spirit much more prominently in his writings than those of Matthew and Mark and even John. And so sometimes Luke is called the gospel of the Holy Spirit. You can see in the notes I gave you several references to the Holy Spirit and most of them are in boldface type which means they're only in Luke.

They're not found in the other gospels. So this, you know, it's like in chapter 1 when Mary says, How can I have a child? I've not no man. The angel says, The Holy Spirit will come upon you.

And the power of the highest will overshadow you. And this will cause him to be conceived. In chapter 3 we have the Spirit coming down on Jesus at his baptism.

That's also found in other gospels. Chapter 4, verse 1 with reference to the temptation of Jesus it says, Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit went into the wilderness to be tempted. And after the temptation in Luke 4, 14 it talks about how Jesus came in the power of the Holy

Spirit.

Out of the wilderness and started his ministry. In one of the first preaching instances of his in chapter 4, verse 18 he said, The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he has anointed me. Now these are only found in Luke.

Lots of emphasis on the Holy Spirit. Likewise in some other places. Including the teaching of Jesus.

Now, additionally the gospel of Luke is emphasizes the prayer of Jesus both in his teaching and his practice more than any other gospel. Likewise, in these notes I've given you there's a lot of bold faced references which means they're only in Luke. But there's references to people praying generally in a number of places in Luke.

So the whole phenomenon of prayer is just kind of woven through it. There's other people besides Jesus who are said to be praying in it. But in the life of Jesus we find in Luke but not in the other gospels that when Jesus was baptized he was praying when the Holy Spirit came upon him in the form of a dove.

All the gospels mention that the Spirit came down upon him in the form of a dove and that he was baptized but only Luke mentions that he was praying at the time. As he prayed the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove. Likewise in chapter 5 in verse 16 we're just told that Jesus it's just a summary statement Jesus used to often withdraw from the people to pray.

In chapter 6 verse 12 it tells about his choosing of the twelve apostles as does Mark and Matthew but in Luke it says he prayed all night and in the morning he called his disciples and chose twelve. So it mentions his whole night spent in prayer before choosing the apostles. In chapter 9 in verse 18 Caesarea Philippi a story related in Matthew, Mark and Luke but only Luke tells us that Jesus was praying when his disciples approached him with a question or he approached them with a question after he prayed.

The prayer of Jesus Caesarea Philippi is only mentioned in the Transfiguration when Jesus took Peter, James and John up on the mountain and they saw Moses and Elijah. All three of the Synoptic Gospels tell the story that only Luke says that Jesus was praying there on the mountaintop when Moses and Elijah appeared. Likewise, we know from Matthew's Gospel that Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

We know that the Lord's Prayer is taught in Matthew 6 but in Luke the same prayer is taught to his disciples in a context where it says in chapter 11 Jesus was praying and when he had finished praying his disciples said Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples and then he taught them that prayer. So, Luke alone tells us that Jesus' own prayers were what elicited this request from the disciples. Lord, teach us to pray like that.

They were impressed with the way he prayed. So, the prayer life of Jesus is very pronounced in the Gospel of Luke. And likewise, there's a number of things in Luke where Jesus exhorts to pray, where he commands to pray, he teaches on prayer in one place in particular in chapter 18, verse 1 it says he told a parable to make the point that men ought always to pray and to never lose heart.

And so, there's a lot of emphasis on prayer, much more in Luke than in the other Gospels and especially the prayer life of Jesus. There's many times when the other Gospels tell the same story but only Luke mentions Jesus was praying when this happened. He was praying when this happened.

He was praying when this happened. And obviously, Luke is very concerned that we be aware of the focal role that prayer played in the life and teaching of Jesus. And it's not as if it's unimportant in the other Gospels, it's just that Luke really pours it on.

Luke really loads his Gospel with this kind of emphasis. So, we can see that Luke felt that the Holy Spirit and prayer were things that perhaps needed much more underscoring in the telling of these stories than maybe the other Gospels had thought. We'll close just by giving a very broad overview of the book.

It divides into sections and I have them here. The first four verses are what we could call a prologue and Luke does what none of the other Gospel writers do. He tells us the circumstances under which he wrote the book.

Luke does, but Matthew and Mark and John do not in their books. After that prologue, we have birth narratives. Essentially, most of chapter 1 and all of chapter 2 are the birth narratives that Luke gives, which again do not overlap much with the ones that Matthew gives.

Then, chapters 3 and half of chapter 4 or part of chapter 4 show how Jesus is prepared for ministry by baptism and by temptation. The other Gospels include that too. Then his Galilean ministry is largely chapter 4, verse 14 through most of chapter 9. Chapter 9, verse 50, that long section is his Galilean ministry.

That also is a focus of Mark and Matthew's Gospels, but the next section, which is Luke's travel narrative, which is Judean and Parian ministry of Jesus, is chapter 9, verse 51 through 19, 28, pretty much is mostly unique to Luke. Then we have, of course, the passion narrative. All the Gospels give a lot of attention to the last week of Jesus' life and of his death.

Chapter 19, verse 28 through chapter 23 take us up through his... Chapter 24 tells us of his resurrection and of his appearances after the resurrection and his ascension. So that's how the book is laid out. Now, I won't go over any of it, but in the notes that I gave you, there's another document called a detailed survey of Luke.

Now, this is for your own enjoyment. I'm not going to go over it, but I break the entire book down into individual pericopes. Do you know that word, pericope? Probably not.

Most people don't. I knew it, but didn't know how to pronounce it for many years. I'd only seen it in print.

It's spelled like it'd be pericope. P-E-R-I-C-O-P-E It sounds like it should be pericope, but it's actually pericope, and it's a Greek word. In Greek, it's pericope.

But a pericope is a group of verses that contain one complete thought or story. So an individual story about a healing, an individual teaching about forgiveness, an individual story about a miracle. Each of these would be called individual pericopes.

The different synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, have many of the same pericopes in them. But they sometimes arrange them in different orders. Sometimes they have different details in them than the other Gospels give.

But the point is, I've broken the Gospel of Luke down into all of its individual pericopes. You can see them here. I've given sort of a short title to each of them.

I did this on my own. I enjoyed every minute of it. It was really great.

But what I've also done is when, for example, if you look at the bottom of page 1, chapter 3, verses 1 through 6, it says, John's ministry begins, in parentheses it says, historical details, in verses 1 and 2, unique to Luke. In these parentheses, I tell you whether the material in this pericope is unique to Luke or whether it's found in Mark and Matthew or whatever. And then there's a few pericopes that have an asterisk by them.

And the asterisk means that that particular pericope is found in all the Gospels, all the synoptic Gospels. So just so you'll know what that means. But if you just look through this, I think it's about, I don't know, what is it, six pages or something like that, you'll get an overview of the whole book of Luke and some detail as to what is covered in each section.

Now, of course, in our next lecture on Luke, we'll be starting with chapter 1 and we'll be looking at every verse, not just every section. But this is our introduction to that book.