

Luke
See Jesus
The Purpose of Luke's Gospel
Luke 1:1-4

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Sept. 20, 2020

[Read Luke 1:1-4]

I. What Did Luke Intend to Do as He Wrote this Book?

Dr. Luke is trying to persuade and convince a friend named Theophilus that everything he's heard and read about Jesus is true.

Luke doesn't just pray for his friend to believe. He sets out to write a two-volume, 52-chapter book that we now have as the books of Luke and Acts!

The Gospel of Luke was written:

- For people who've never met Jesus before
- For people who need to see in a fresh way His compassion for broken sinners
- For people who aren't quite sure about Jesus
- For people who are just starting to trust Him and need to be more secure in their faith

II. How Did Luke Do It?

A. He Did Careful Research

Luke 1:3 "It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you..."

NASB "I have followed all things accurately from the beginning"

Luke was a medical physician who understood the importance of being careful and thorough.

Luke did his research with the rigors of a prize-winning journalist, asking the questions: Who? What? When? Where? How?

B. He Took an Historical Approach

Luke 1:2 "Just as those from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us"

Luke wrote his Gospel on the basis of existing sources and eyewitnesses.

Acts 26:26 "...I am sure these events are all familiar...for they were not done in a corner!"

Wherever modern scholarship has been able to check on the accuracy of Luke's work, the judgment has been unanimous – that he is one of the finest historians of the ancient world.

"Luke is a historian of first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy; he is possessed of the true historic sense; he seizes the important and critical events...In short, this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians."

~ William Ramsay, *The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament*

C. He Included Outrageous and Culturally Offensive Details

If you had wanted to create a hoax and convince people to believe something that was not true, you would not have included many of the things that Luke records in his Gospel!

Luke records these details because it actually happened that way - and he's recording history, not creating a legend.

III. Why Did Luke Go to the Effort to Record His Gospel?

Luke 1:4 "That you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught."

A. Luke Wrote His Gospel So that You Could Be Sure of What Matters Most

Luke is not writing to entertain or move us emotionally. He's writing to persuade this Roman official, Theophilus, that the things he's heard and been taught about Jesus are absolutely true!

Unlike fiction, fantasy, or comic book heroes, Jesus took on flesh and came into this world at a real point in history to do something for us that we could never do for ourselves.

Luke 1:1 "...undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us."

B. Luke Wrote His Gospel So that You Could Be Saved by What Christ Has Accomplished for Us

The only sufficient payment for sin that was separating us from a holy God was made once-and-for-all when Christ died on the cross. It never needs to be done again because a merciful and perfect Savior—who was fully God and fully man—drank the cup of God's wrath for us, so that we would never taste it for ourselves.

John 19:28-30 "After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, 'I thirst!' Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!' And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit."