

Sunday School Lesson

The Gospel of Luke

Author: Luke, the beloved physician, (Colossians 4:14) reputed author of Acts; both books being addressed to the same person. Luke was a close friend and traveling companion of Paul, as is shown in his personal allusions recording the journeys of the apostles. See in the book of Acts where the author changes the pronouns to “we” and “us,” indicating that he himself was present at these times, Acts 16:10; 20:6; 27:1; 28:16. Many students of the Bible see something of the stamp of Paul's doctrine in Luke's Gospel's.

Date written: Most likely before A.D. 70

Purpose: To get a connected and orderly narrative of the life of Christ as seen by eyewitnesses, (Luke 1:1-4)

To Whom Written: Addressed to Theophilus, though unknown to history, Luke writes both this Book and Acts addressed to him. His name means friend of God. One can only reason that he was a godly man. Internal evidence indicates that the book was written especially for the Gentiles. This is inferred from the fact that the writer takes pains to explain Jewish customs and sometimes substitutes Greek names for Hebrew.

Main Theme: Jesus of Nazareth is a perfect Son of Man who came “to seek and to save” that which was lost (Luke 19:10)

Key Words: Jesus the Son of Man

Key verse: Luke 1:4

Prominent people: Jesus, Elisabeth, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Mary the disciples, Herod the great, and Pilate

Introduction: The Gospel of Luke, as the other Gospels do, presents a picture of Jesus and his ministry from a particular viewpoint. Matthew viewed Jesus as King and Mark viewed Jesus as a Servant. Luke represented Jesus as a man. The humanity of Christ seemed to be his objective in writing this book. There may be no greater person to write such a picture of Christ than was Luke. Luke, a Gentile by birth, apparently became a friend of the Apostle Paul. He traveled with Paul and was mentioned by Paul in his writings. In Colossians 4:14, Luke was called the “beloved physician” by Paul. What a brilliant choice to write a book that would show Jesus as a Human Being. Too often, we believe that we cannot do things we are instructed to because we are “only human.” We often think that Jesus accomplished what He did because He was God. While it is true that Jesus was and is God, while He was on Earth, He existed as a Spirit-filled Man. Luke exposed Jesus’ humanity as only a physician could do. Luke wrote this book to the

highly-educated Greek mind, presenting Jesus as the perfect Man. The Greeks, who produced great thinkers like Aristotle, great philosophers like Plato and great leaders like Alexander, the Great, would only have been interested in a “Great Savior” Luke presented Jesus and such - a real Man with real physical needs that God used to pay for the sin-debt of all mankind! From the birth of Christ to His death, Luke presented a human side to the life of Christ that will help us to see that He was truly the God-Man

I. Jesus’ Humanity in His birth (Luke 1:5 - 24:13)

The book of Luke contains a unique view of the birth of Jesus, presenting him as a Human Being. As such, Luke began by giving a detailed account of the announcement of John the Baptist, Jesus’ forerunner. We are also allowed to see the beautiful story of Mary and Joseph learning of Jesus’ impending birth. This was followed by the great rendition of the actual birth of our Savior, including the events leading up to His birth. What a wonderful opportunity was afforded to us all as we go through the Christmas holiday and are reminded – oftentimes, by the world - of our Savior’s birth. This could not have happened without the detailed details of the story given by Luke, as they unfolded. We see in Luke the only picture of Jesus as an adolescent when, at 12 years of age, He went to the Temple. Jesus, as it was recorded, subjected Himself to his parents. Jesus appeared onto the scene again as John the Baptist baptized Him in the Jordan River. Next, He was lead of the Spirit to face-off with the devil. All of these events shown by Luke, from a human perspective, give us a picture of Jesus the Man.

II. Jesus’ humanity in His public ministry (Luke 4:14 - 19:28)

Jesus began teaching in his hometown but was forced out because of their anger at His teaching. He healed many who were infirmed as He continued on His way. He helped some fishermen in their fishing they followed Him, becoming his disciples. Over and over again, Jesus reached out to the infirmed and poor, the sick and outcast, and helped them. His compassionate heart actually should give testament that He was truly a Human Being Who love people and wished to help them!

III. Jesus’ Humanity in His Last Days (Luke 19:23 – 23:55)

The last days of Jesus began with a triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As Jesus rode the colt into the city, the same people that would shortly cheer for his execution were cheering His arrival. This truly was to be a grueling week for the Savior! It was one in which he cursed a fig tree and cleared out the Temple of money-changers. That was followed by a series of questions and parables, with plenty of teaching interjected, as the Savior made one last plea to the hearts and minds of the Israelites. Next, Jesus took part in the Passover meal, including the introduction to the Lord Supper. Then, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane where He prayed and eventually, was captured. Jesus stood before the Sanhedrin and faced false accusations without any retaliation. As a result of those accusations, Jesus was condemned by the Jews; who then force their will on the Roman government. Through Pilate, they passed their condemnation onto Jesus. Luke's description of the crucifixion is very difficult to read because of the agony that

one can feel through his record of the event. Jesus faced the cross as a Man. The agony felt by Jesus upon the cross was as if it would have been felt by any of us.

IV. Jesus' Humanity in the Resurrection and Ascension (Luke 24:1-51)

Jesus' resurrection was recorded beginning very early in the morning. Those who loved Jesus desired to properly bury Him because they had not been able to do so following his death, due to how rapidly the events of his death unfolded. When they went to care for Him at the tomb, they found it empty and reported that finding to his disciples. During that time, Jesus appeared to two men on the road to Emmaus and conversed with them, proving His resurrection was a bodily resurrection. Jesus appeared to the disciples and even ate with them, further proving that He was alive. As Jesus ascended, the people rejoiced and worshipped Him.

Conclusion: Jesus' humanity can be clearly seen in the book of Luke. We see Jesus in His life on Earth as a Man controlled by the Holy Spirit. This gives us the Perfect Example that we need to understand that we can contribute to the cause of Christ even though we are "only human." If only we will yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, as Jesus did, there is no telling what God can do and will do through us!