

# Introduction to Luke

## Sources

- The Bible
- William Barclay's daily Bible Study Series (Luke)
- Doug Olsen's WVC Series on the Four Gospels
- Chuck Swindoll's Bible study series on Luke
- IBS Send the Light Web Site
- Web site: [www.crystalinks.com/romemedicine.html](http://www.crystalinks.com/romemedicine.html)

## The Perspective

- Matthew – Jesus' disciple. Written **for the Jewish population**, emphasizing Jesus' Jewish lineage, the Jewish Messiah, Jesus' kingship. Generally thought to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Gospel written. Personal experience as primary source as well as Gospel of Mark.
- Mark – Nephew of Barnabus. Written more **for a Roman audience**, emphasizing the servanthood of Jesus. Generally thought to be the first Gospel written, perhaps heavily dependent on Peter as the primary source.
- Luke – Gentile companion of Paul. Written more **for the general Gentile audience** with a focus on Greeks. Emphasized the humanity of Jesus. Generally thought to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Gospel written. Paul likely one of Luke's primary sources as well as Gospel of Mark.
- John – Jesus' disciple. Written **for everyone**. Emphasized more the theology and the deity of Christ. Generally thought to be the last Gospel written. Personal experience as primary source as well as other Gospels.

## Luke (the person)

- Birthplace: We do not really know. Could have been from Philippi, Macedonia where women enjoyed more freedom. Luke seemed to join Paul in Troas on his missionary journey across to Macedonia (Acts 16:10). Antioch of Syria is another possibility some suggest for his birthplace.
- Started out as: Luke could have been a slave/bondsman of Theophilus. "Many doctors [see comment about occupation below] were freed Greek slaves" ([www.crystalinks.com/romemedicine.html](http://www.crystalinks.com/romemedicine.html)). Luke wrote the books of Luke and Acts to "most excellent Theophilus" (friend of God). The title "most excellent" in Greek is indicative of a title for high official in the Roman government. Theophilus may or may not have been a believer.
- Occupation: Luke was a **physician** (Col 4:14). See also the detailed physical/medical descriptions of the crucifixion. Tarsus, Athens, and Alexandria were the three key places for medical training at that time. He could have gone to medical school at Tarsus and met Saul of Tarsus there.
- Avocation. Historian and author. He was a **historian** (Luke 1:1-4), with incredible attention to detail. Compare Luke 3:1-2 with Mark 1:4a in describing the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry. He was also a great writer. His use of Greek was superb. The first four verses of Luke are perhaps the best Greek in all of the New Testament (Barclay). Luke is the only NT writer not a Jew. He wrote 28% of the NT, more than anyone else. What were Luke's likely sources? Mark, Matthew, Paul, other followers, eye witnesses. His authorship of Luke and Acts is supported by the uniform testimony of early Christian writings (e.g., the Muratorian Canon, A.D. 170, and the works of Irenaeus, c. 180).
- Citizenship: Greek. Colossians 4:11 concludes a list of Jews, implying all thereafter are NOT Jews; and Luke is mentioned in 4:14. Luke explained locations in the book of Luke in Greek terms (4:31, 8:26, 21:37, 23:51, 24:13). Luke also used Greek names versus Jewish (6:15 "*Zealot*" is Greek, and Luke 23:33 uses the Greek "*Kranion*" versus Hebrew "*Golgotha*"). Luke never uses the Jewish term, *Rabbi*, for Jesus, but rather the Greek term,

*Master.* Luke traces Jesus' lineage to Adam (Father of all men) versus Abraham (Father of Jews). Luke seldom refers to OT. His references to dating are to Roman dating, not Jewish.

- Unique Material. Between chapters 9 and 19, there are 30 sayings that are found nowhere else.
- Companion of Paul. To Paul, Luke was a **beloved physician** (Col 4:14), **fellow worker** (Phil 24), and **dedicated friend** [my words] (2 Tim 4:11). In Acts, Luke refers to "we" on several occasions with Paul (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; and 27:1-28:16). [There's probably a good "three-point" sermon or lesson here.]

## Themes

- **KEY: Jesus' Humanity.** See Luke 19:10, Phil 2:5-11, Acts 14:8-13 (Greek concept of the gods appearing in human form)
- Prayer. Some examples are 3:2, 5:16, 6:12, 9:18, 9:29, 22:32, and 23:40. Also parables 11:5-13 and 18:1-8.
- Praise. Luke uses "praising God" more often than other NT books. Key examples are Luke 1:46-55, 1:68-79, and 2:29-32.
- Status of Women. Examples...Mary, Elizabeth, Anna, Mary and Martha, Mary Magdalene
- For everyone. Written for all men/women, estimated about 40 references to the inclusive nature of "all" (e.g., 1:48, 1:66, 2:10, 2:31, 2:38, 2:47, 3:6, 3:15, 3:16, 3:21, and 6:26.)