



THE GOSPEL OF
LUKE
#NT18

#NT18
LEADERS GUIDE

NT LEADER'S GUIDE

LUKE

JOHN D. MORRISON, PHD



GOSPEL TRAINING CENTER
AT LAKEWOOD



NT Leader's Guide: Luke

Copyright © 2018 John D. Morrison

Published by Lakewood Baptist Church

2235 Thompson Bridge Road

Gainesville, Georgia 30506

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the ESV© Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version©), copyright © 2001 by Crossway.

NT18

Welcome to NT18!

Authentic Community is more than a slogan or pithy phrase It is really about LIFE TRANSFORMATION.

I am so excited about our NT18, especially as I consider the Life Trans- formation that I know will occur as you read God's Word.

God's Word is strong, powerful, and provides Truth and Light for every aspect our lives.

This Leader's Guide will be extremely helpful to each of our community group leaders as Authentic Community occurs in and through the local church.

I am so very thankful for your love of God, HIS Word, and HIS Church.

Blessings, Dr. T

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

Author & Audience

The Gospel According to Luke was written by Luke, the physician and traveling companion of the Apostle Paul (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 24). Luke's Gospel is the first volume of his two-part history of Jesus and his followers that concludes with the book of Acts.

Luke set out to write “an orderly account” of the ministry of Jesus (1:3). Most likely, Luke wrote in the early 60s. The need for a written account of the life of Jesus was becoming more pressing as many of the eyewitnesses of Jesus's earthly ministry were coming to the end of their lives. Luke's account was accepted as authoritative because of his close connection with Paul's apostolic ministry.

It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

Luke 1:3–4

Luke addresses both the Gospel and Acts to “most excellent Theophilus” (Luke 1:3). Theophilus could have very well been an actual person as “most excellent” was a respectful form of address that Luke uses in Acts with the Roman governors Felix and Festus (Acts 23:26; 24:2; 26:25). The name “Theophilus” means “lover (or friend) of God,” and because of that meaning some argue that Luke wrote his work to Christians in general who are all “friends of God.” Like much of the New Testament, even if this work were addressed to a single individual, it would have been meant for public distribution throughout the churches.

Purpose

In 1:4, Luke states his purpose in writing the Gospel: “that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.” He desires Theophilus's faith - and by extension, the faith of all his

readers - will be strengthened by the assurance of the historical reality of the life, teaching, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Two lessons stand out for us in our day from Luke's purpose. First, he speaks of "certainty." We can be tempted to think of faith as something outside of what we can know. We might "feel" it is right, or "hope" for it to be true. Luke, however, implies that we can know with confident assurance the truth about Jesus Christ. This certainty stems from the second lesson we see in Luke's statement: our faith is grounded in the historical reality of Jesus. The Son of God entered into life on earth as Jesus the God-man. He was born. He lived. He died. He rose again. These things actually happened, and it is Jesus's acting in history that has changed the course of human existence. The facts of the person and work of Jesus form our faith.

Themes

Three key themes in this Gospel should be noted from the outset. First, the good news of Jesus Christ is for all people. Salvation through Jesus Christ is for Jew and Gentile alike (20:9-18). Salvation is for both the religious and irreligious (15:11-32; 18:9-14). Salvation is not only for the rich and influential, but God particularly has a heart for the poor, needy, and marginalized (6:20-26; 13:30).

Second, Luke demonstrates that the kingdom of God has come in Jesus Christ. In Luke 11:20, Jesus declares, "If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." Jesus does indeed cast out demons, and so the kingdom of God has come. God is now ruling and making all things new through Jesus. And yet, the kingdom has not come in its complete fulfillment. Earlier in Luke 11, when Jesus teaches his disciples to pray, he teaches them to pray for God's kingdom to come (11:2), which indicates that it has not yet arrived in its entirety. In line with the rest of the New Testament, Luke helps us to see that the kingdom of God has already come, but it has not yet been completely consummated. The complete fulfillment of God's kingdom will be when Christ returns (1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Revelation 21:1-27).

Third, Luke emphasizes the Holy Spirit more than any other Gospel. This focus on the the third person of the Trinity comes through especially clearly in Luke's writing in Acts, but this theme also is prevalent throughout his Gospel. In the the two birth narratives that begin the Gospel - John the Baptist's and Jesus's - the Spirit plays a significant role (1:15-17, 35). The Spirit inspires Simeon to prophesy about Jesus when he is presented at the Temple as a newborn (2:25-35). Likewise, the Holy Spirit is prominent at Jesus's baptism (3:16-22), and it is the Spirit who leads and sustains Jesus during the wilderness temptations (4:1-15). Jesus announces his ministry by reading from Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. . ." (4:18, cf. Isaiah 61:1-2). During his ministry, Jesus "rejoiced in the Holy Spirit" (10:21), and he taught his disciples that the Father would give the Holy Spirit to all who asked (11:13). Jesus also warns about blaspheming the Spirit, but he encourages the Apostles that the Spirit would teach them what to say (12:10-12). Jesus concludes his earthly ministry with the promise of the Holy Spirit who would come at Pentecost (24:49).

Discussion Questions

Week One | Luke 1-3

Luke 1 | Why does Luke include the account of John the Baptist's birth? How does his birth compare with Jesus's? Do these birth narratives call to mind any miraculous births in the Old Testament? What do these surprising births, both in Luke and the Old Testament, reveal to us about God? Consider how Mary interprets Jesus's birth in Luke 1:46-55.

Luke 2:22-52 | What is the significance of Jesus's two Temple visits at the end of chapter 2? Why is it important that Jesus fulfilled all the requirements of the Mosaic law? What impact does Jesus's perfect obedience have on your Christian life today? Consider what Paul means by "the righteousness *from* God" in Philippians 3:9. What does the fact that this righteousness comes *from* God mean for how we are accepted by God?

Luke 3:1-22 | Why was Jesus baptized? What do verses 3:21-22 reveal about God? What does it symbolize for a believer to be baptized

today? Why is this an important step in your Christian journey after you have trusted in Christ?

Week Two | Luke 4-8

Luke 4:22-30 | Why was Jesus rejected at Nazareth? Why did they find his message and ministry unacceptable? What should we expect if we follow a rejected Savior?

Luke 5:16 | Why would Jesus withdraw to desolate places? Do you need times of silence and solitude like Jesus? Why is it helpful to take time away to seek the Lord? What steps do you need to take in order to have regular time alone to read Scripture and to pray?

Luke 6:27-36 | Who in your life do you find difficult to love? How can we love the unloveable? Consider Luke 10:25-37, Romans 5:8, and 1 John 4:19: were you lovable when God demonstrated his love for you in Christ?

Luke 7:1-10 | Why was the Centurion's faith so remarkable? What encourages you to pray with faith like the Centurion's?

Luke 8:1-3 | Why would Jesus's interaction with these women have been surprising in his day? Consider the different types of people Jesus spends time with

during his ministry: what does the kind of people he cared for tell us about the inclusivity of his ministry? To whom can you be inviting and welcoming?

Praying for the Hard to Love

“A Christian community either lives by the intercessory prayers of its members for one another, or the community will be destroyed. I can no longer condemn or hate other Christians for whom I pray, no matter how much trouble they cause me. In intercessory prayer the face that may have been strange and intolerable to me is transformed into the face of one for whom Christ died, the face of a pardoned sinner. That is a blessed discovery for the Christian who is beginning to offer intercessory prayer for others. As far as we are concerned, there is no dislike, no personal tension, no disunity or strife that cannot be overcome by intercessory prayer. Intercessory prayer is the purifying bath into which the individual and the community must enter every day.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Week Three | Luke 9-13

Luke 9:23-27 | What does it mean to take up your cross and follow Jesus? Where is this particularly challenging in your life? How has God been faithful to help you obey this calling?

Luke 10:25-37 | Who is your neighbor? To whom do you need to show kindness and care? Consider praying that the Lord would open your eyes to the needs of those around you.

Luke 11:5-12 | What do these verses teach us about prayer? How does knowing God's good character help us persist in prayer even when we are not seeing an answer?

Luke 12:13-33 | How do the parable of the rich fool and Jesus's teaching on anxiety fit together? How does what we believe about God influence our anxiety? What promises of Scripture help you when you are anxious?

Luke 13:22-30 | Why does Jesus describe the way of salvation as narrow? In light of verse 26, is it possible to share fellowship with God's people and regularly to hear teaching from Scripture and not be saved? What is genuine, saving faith?

Week Four | Luke 14-18

Luke 14:12-14 | To whom is Jesus calling you to show hospitality and to welcome them into your home? How can sharing a meal show someone Christ's love?

Luke 15:1-32 | What do these three parables have in common? Consider these three parables as a whole. What is Jesus teaching about God through these three accounts? How can we share the Lord's concern for the Lost?

Luke 16:1-13 | Why does Jesus commend someone who was dishonest? Verse 9 summarizes Jesus's point in this parable: what does this verse mean? How do verses 10-13 complement Jesus's teaching in verses 1-9? How can you use your finances to glorify God?

Luke 17:7-10 | In what sense are followers of Christ "unworthy servants"? Where do we need to embrace the role of a servant to serve the Lord and others? How does Philippians 2:5-11 inform our

understanding of what it means to be a servant and how we can go about it?

Luke 18:9-14 | Why would Jesus's original hearers have been shocked by his commendation of the tax collector rather than the Pharisee? What did the tax collector see about himself that led him to call out for God's mercy? Must we recognize this about ourselves in order to be saved?

Week Five | Luke 19-23

Luke 19:45-48 | What do Jesus's actions reveal about his character and his concerns? How are we tempted to make the worship of God about something other than glorifying him?

Luke 20:19-26 | What does Jesus's answer teach us about how Christians should interact with government? How is this a challenge for you in today's world?

Luke 21:1-4 | What does Jesus commend about the widow? How can we practice this kind of generosity?

Luke 22:7-23 | What does the Lord's Supper signify? Why is regular participation in the Lord's Supper important for your spiritual life?

Luke 23:44-56 | What was the purpose of Jesus's death? As you answer, consider Romans 3:21-26.

Week Six | Luke 24

Luke 24:25-27 | What does it mean that there are things in all of Scripture concerning Jesus? Keep in mind that in this context Jesus is talking about the Old Testament. Why is it important for Christians to read and understand the Old Testament? How can we read the Old Testament with a focus on Jesus?



Dr. Tom Smiley, Senior Pastor • 2235 Thompson Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30501
LakewoodLife.org • (770) 532-6307