

and sick (7:22; 14:13), tax collectors and “sinners” (15:1-2), women (10:38-39; 13:10-13), Samaritans (17:14-19); and Gentiles (7:6-9).

How then shall we live?

As we recognise that Jesus is the Saviour for the world, how should we respond?

Come to the feast

“At the time of the banquet, he sent his servant to tell those who were invited, ‘Come, because everything is now ready.’” (Luke 14:17)

“Then he became angry and didn’t want to go in. So his father came out and pleaded with him.” (Luke 15:28)

Rejoice at the feast

“But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” (Luke 15:32)

Invite to the feast

“‘Master,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, and there’s still room.’” “Then the master told the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges and make them come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, not one of those people who were invited will enjoy my banquet.’” (Luke 14:22-24)

THE BIG READ – LUKE

Introduction

The New Testament begins with four books that tell the story of Jesus’ earthly life and together paint a beautiful portrait of who Jesus is.

The third Gospel is Luke, which is not only the longest of the four Gospels, it is the longest book in the New Testament.

It was probably written no later than AD62.

Luke’s Gospel, along with Matthew and Mark, are sometimes known as the ‘synoptic gospels’ because they include many of the same stories, often in the same sequence, and with similar wording.

But Luke is unique among the synoptic gospels because it has a sequel – the book of Acts.

The author of Luke’s Gospel

“The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. Luke, the well-known physician, after the ascension of Christ, when Paul had taken with him as one zealous for the law, composed it in his own name, according to belief.” (Muratorian Canon ca. 180)

He was a Gentile. Luke is listed among the Gentile companions of Paul in Colossians (see Colossians 4:10-12, 14). He is the only Gentile contributor to the New Testament.

He was doctor. Luke was a doctor by profession (see Colossians 4:14). Some passages indicate his medical interest. This might also explain his interest in all the different kinds of people that Jesus met.

He was a traveller. Luke was one of the apostle Paul’s travelling companions (see Philemon 24).

He was a historian. Luke was not an eyewitness to the events of his Gospel. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he wrote his Gospel based on his own investigation. He was a careful researcher who talked with eyewitnesses, read other accounts, compared stories, compiled and investigated data before writing his own orderly account of what took place (see Luke 1:1-4).

“Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy... this author should be placed along with the very greatest historians.” (Sir William Ramsay)

The story of Luke’s Gospel

Luke presents the story of Jesus’ life according to five journeys that He made.

Chapters 1:1-4:13: Jesus’ journey to earth

Luke writes an orderly account of the events surrounding Jesus’ birth and early years.

Chapters 4:14-9:50: Jesus’ journey throughout Galilee

Luke writes an orderly account of Jesus’ actions as He travelled throughout Galilee, presenting Him as a preacher, healer, and prophet.

Chapters 9:51-19:44: Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem

Luke writes an orderly account of the teaching Jesus gave as He travelled to Jerusalem.

Chapters 19:45-23:56: Jesus’ journey to the cross

Luke writes an orderly account of the final week of Jesus’ life which included His arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

Chapter 24:1-53: Jesus’ journey back to heaven

Luke writes an orderly account of Jesus’ resurrection, post-resurrection appearances, and ascension.

The purpose of Luke’s Gospel

Luke wrote his Gospel to someone called Theophilus (name means ‘lover of God’). Theophilus was a person of rank who appears to have contributed money to sponsor Luke’s research and the cost of publishing Luke and Acts.

Luke wrote his Gospel, so that Theophilus and everyone else who would read it “may know the certainty of the things about which you have been instructed.” The inclusion of historical markers (see Luke 1:5; 2:1-2; 3:1-2) is to increase our confidence that everything he has written down is true and really did take place.

Jesus in Luke

He is the Saviour

Luke wants Theophilus, and all who would read his Gospel after him to know what it is that Jesus came to do. After carefully investigating His life and ministry, he concludes that Jesus came to be the Saviour.

Luke uses the language of salvation more than any of the other Gospel writers – ‘salvation’, ‘saviour’, ‘save’ appear 17 times throughout the Gospel (for example 1:46-47, 76-77; 2:10-11, 28-30; 9:24; 19:10).

Salvation involves both the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit (5:23-25; 7:44-50; 11:13; 15:21-24; 24:46-49).

He is the Saviour for the world

Luke wants Theophilus, and all who would read his Gospel after him to be convinced that this salvation is for all. He has a particular concern for the universal scope of the salvation Jesus brings (2:10-11, 30-32; 3:6).

He shows that Jesus is for all sorts of people, not just the religious and the respectable, those who were marginalised by society as well: the poor