

Luke: An Invitation to be Reassured

Sunday, August 18, 2013

Luke 1:1-4

I. Introduction

The Gospel According to Luke is unique among the four gospels because it is the only gospel that has a sequel...The Book of Acts

Those two volumes (Luke and Acts) make up 28% of the entire New Testament – more than all of the epistles of Paul combined.

Both Luke and Acts are dedicated to a man named Theophilus even though the greetings are different in each book. Luke calls him 'most excellent Theophilus' and Acts calls him 'Theophilus.'

Luke's Gospel is an accurate, orderly, historically true account of the life and ministry of the Savior, we can believe it with confidence.

II. Luke, the man (v.1)

Luke is not one of the 12 and was not an eyewitness of Jesus Christ. Luke is a Gentile who became a follower of Christ (2nd generation Christian) and was a companion of the Apostle Paul on many of his missionary journeys. Tradition also indicates that he lived a long life!

Luke was a physician and Paul calls him 'the beloved physician.' (Col. 4:14). Luke was a very loyal and loving companion to Paul. He was a dear friend to him and experienced many trials and turmoil with Paul (2 Tim. 4:11).

III. Luke, the historian (v.2,3)

"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..."

Luke as a historian was careful with his material. Others had written accounts of the life of Christ and he uses some of their documents, but he was permitted the opportunity to interview some of those who had known Jesus personally.

"Luke is a sensitive observer of the events he describes. He is interested in both history and theology. He writes not just about the time sequence of events and teaching, but about their topical and theological relationship as well. He writes as a theologian and pastor; but as one whose direction is marked out by the history that preceded him. To underemphasize any element in the Lucan effort, whether pastoral, theological, or historical, is to underestimate the depth of his account."

IV. Luke's Purpose (v.4)

*"...that you may have **certainty** concerning the things you have been taught."*

Luke believed that the proper telling of the story of Jesus would certainly produce belief in its truth. **Luke believed in the power of the gospel!**

Certainty – *asphaleian* - this word is positioned at the end of the sentence for emphasis. It is the key term. Luke wants Theophilus and others like him to be certain of the teachings' truth.

Questions being asked

- 1) Is Christianity what I believed it to be, a religion sent from God?
- 2) Why should a Gentile suffer frustration for joining what was originally a Jewish movement?
- 3) Can one really be sure Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise and that he brings God's salvation both now and in the future?

By the emphasis on fulfillment in Jesus and the truthful character of the tradition, Luke intends to answer these questions with a resounding 'yes.' The gospel of Jesus is from God and is available for all, Jew and Gentile!

1:31-34 – "...and of his kingdom there will be no end."

V. Conclusion

The purpose and goal of Luke's gospel is to reassure Theophilus and others about salvation's fulfillment in Jesus, a salvation that involves even the Gentiles!

Food for Thought:

- 1) Do we believe in the power of the gospel like Luke?
- 2) Can we share our faith with the lost with hope that they will come to know Christ?
- 3) Do you have that 'certainty' that Christ is Lord of All?