

Luke: Jesus' Mission

Memory Verse: Luke 4:18-19 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Background

Luke is the 42nd book of the Bible and the third Gospel and book of the New Testament. Luke was a Gentile physician and a missionary companion to the apostle Paul, being with him during his imprisonment in Caesarea and Rome as well as in his last days (Colossians 4:14 & 2 Timothy 4:11). It is believed that this book was written around 60 AD. Luke, not one of Jesus' twelve disciples, carefully researched and gathered information from eyewitnesses and "investigated everything from the beginning" in order to write "an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught" (1:1-4). Theophilus was probably a Roman or Greek of high rank as indicated by his title of "most excellent" (1:3). The book of Acts, a continuation of the book of Luke, is also addressed to him. Because of his thoroughness to details and historical accuracy, Luke's gospel is the longest book in the New Testament and the most comprehensive gospel.

The book of Luke is the least Jewish and most universal Gospel. Luke wrote his gospel primarily for the Greeks and emphasizes the perfect humanity of Christ. He gives the most complete account of Jesus' ancestry, birth, and childhood, and refers to Jesus as the "Son of Man" more than twenty times. Luke also records more on prayer, the Holy Spirit, and joyfulness than the other gospels. Like Matthew and Mark, Luke also gives prominence to the passion and resurrection of Christ, ending his book with Jesus' ascension into heaven.

The Short Story

Jesus Christ, Son of Man, came to bring salvation to all people, both Jews and Gentiles.

What's the Big Idea?

While Matthew presents Jesus as King and Mark portrays Him as the Servant, Luke focuses on the perfect humanity of Jesus, presenting Him as God's ideal Man who came to bring salvation to all. Luke traces the genealogy of Jesus all the way back to Adam, not only showing Jesus' human nature, but also showing Adam as the common ancestor to everyone. Luke's emphasis on the worldwide scope of salvation can be seen throughout, beginning with the angels announcement of Jesus' birth, "...I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." (2:10). Jesus would be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles" (2:32), fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy that "all people will see God's salvation" (3:6), and telling His disciples that "repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations" (24:47). Luke also focuses on Jesus' interactions with individuals and His kindness towards them, many of which were not part of "acceptable" society. Luke writes about Jesus' anointing by a sinful woman (7:37), Zacchaeus the wealthy tax collector (19:8), and the robber crucified next to Him who received the promise of paradise (23:40-43). In addition, Luke shows that Jesus valued women and children (7:12, 8:42, 9:38, and 18:16). Jesus' mission is the theme found throughout the book of Luke, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." (19:10).

So What? Why is this book so important? What was God's purpose for the book?

The gospel of Luke shows Jesus Christ's ministry and compassion for all of humanity, regardless of what they have done or their social standing. We are called to follow His example ministering and treating others with the compassion and kindness of Christ. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:3-8).

**Material taken from various sources.*

Teaching Text

Luke 4:18-19 “ ‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.’

Sermon-Based Discussion Questions

- What was Jesus declaring when He stood to read the scriptures from Isa 61? What was His point?
- What is the significance of Luke mentioning the Holy Spirit three times in this passage?
- What does “anointed” mean in this context? Can we be anointed as followers of Jesus? How?
- In your opinion, what was Jesus sent to accomplish for the glory of God? What was His mission?
- List ways and examples of how Jesus accomplished His mission stated above in Luke 4:18-19.

Practical Application

- What are some of your spiritual disciplines and practices that keep you grounded in your faith?
- Where have you sensed the anointing of the Holy Spirit? What did you experience?
- Which of the five ministry targets of Jesus appeals to you? How do you implement it into your life?
- Where do you need to personally experience the release and freedom of God?
- In light of this passage, what is the Holy Spirit asking you to do? How are you responding?

Hitting the Highpoints

- 12:34 “Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.”
- 15:7 “In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents”.
- 17:33 “If you cling to your life, you will lose it, and if you let your life go, you will save it.”
- 18:17 “I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn’t receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.” 19:10 “For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.”
- 23:43 “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise”

Bonus Features: The Commands of Christ

There are forty nine commands of Christ in the Gospels. This week we will look at those from the book of Luke. Here are a few: “Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross daily, and follow me. (Luke 9:23) Then he said, “Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own.” (Luke 12:15) And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.” (Luke 24:49)

Personal Takeaways and Notes