

Title: **LUKE — *Christ the Man***

Text: Luke 1:1-4

Introduction:

As we have seen in our studies of Matthew and Mark, each of the four gospels were written by divine inspiration, each revealing the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, but each one was intended by the Holy Spirit to set forth a particular, distinct aspect of our Savior's person and work. Neither of the gospel narratives give us a complete view of Christ; but all four, taken together, tell us plainly and fully who the Lord Jesus Christ is, what he did, why he did it, and where he is now.

1. Matthew was written to show us that our Lord Jesus Christ is the divine Messiah, the Redeemer-King promised in the Old Testament Scriptures.
2. Mark was inspired to present the Lord Jesus as Jehovah's righteous Servant.
3. John's gospel sets forth the glorious divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ as God the Son, the second person in the holy trinity.
4. Luke's gospel was designed and written to show us the perfect and glorious humanity of our Savior. Just

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as John shows us that our Redeemer is the Son of God, Luke shows us that he is the Son of Man.

SON OF MAN

Luke was inspired of God to present our Savior distinctly as “*the Son of man*”. That is the title our Lord used to describe himself more than any other. As we read the Gospel of Luke, the One we meet here is, the Redeemer-King Matthew described, the Righteous Servant Mark portrayed, and the incarnate God John declares. He is the same Person; but Luke presents him primarily as the Man who is God, while John presents him as the God who is also man.

Luke gives us more details than either Matthew or Mark about our Savior’s birth. Luke alone tells us a little bit about our Lord’s childhood. He stresses, more than the other gospel writers, our Redeemer’s dependence upon his Father in prayer, his poverty, and his sympathy with men. He does this because it is his purpose to show us that our Savior’s perfect humanity is just as essential to his saving work as his divinity. He could not accomplish his mission, were he not both God and man in one glorious person (19:10).

(Luke 19:10) “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

THINGS MOST SURELY BELIEVED

Let's read Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1-4.

(Luke 1:1-4) “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, (2) Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; (3) It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, (4) That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”

(Acts 1:1-4) “The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, (2) Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: (3) To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: (4) And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me.”

Luke specifically wrote his gospel to a man named “*Theophilus*”. This is the same man to whom he addressed the Book of Acts. Both Luke and Acts were written specifically for this man Theophilus (Acts 1:1-2). We know nothing about him, except what Luke

himself tells us. This Theophilus was a man of rank and honor. Luke calls him “*most excellent Theophilus.*” Not many noble are called (1 Cor.1:26), but some are. God has chosen some of all ranks. **The name, Theophilus, means either “lover of God” or “loved of God”.**

In Acts 1, Luke describes his gospel as “*a treatise of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up.*” Though they did not record every word and deed of Christ (John 21:25), Luke and the other gospel writers did record all that the Holy Spirit inspired, all that we need to know, particularly all that Christ did and said relating to the salvation of his people; his obedience to the Father, his conformity to the law, and his death as our Substitute, by which he brought in everlasting righteousness and obtained eternal redemption for us.

Then Luke tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ gave his commandments by the Holy Spirit to chosen apostles, and by them to his church. All the doctrines and ordinances, faith and practice of the church are, by the commandment of Christ, laid down in the Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16).

Both in Acts and here, at the very outset, Luke tells us that his intention in writing this gospel narrative was “*set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us*” (1:1).

Contrary to popular opinion, believers are people who believe something, something specific, and all believers believe them. All Christians do, most assuredly, believe some specific things. We believe those things revealed in the Book of God. Anyone who does not believe that which God reveals in the Inspired Volume of Holy Scripture is not a Christian, is not a believer, and does not know God, no matter what he may profess.

“The church is a community of faith, a community that tenaciously holds with overpowering conviction to a distinct body of truths.” (Roger Ellsworth)

YES, THERE ARE SOME THINGS ALL TRUE CHRISTIANS BELIEVE. Luke makes no bones about this. Neither should we. Let men accuse us of being narrow-minded dogmatists, out of step with the rest of the religious world, and heap upon us whatever ugly names they choose, the Word of God plainly declares that some things are vital. Some things must be known and believed. Those who do not believe these things are not saved.

Luke tells us that he wrote his gospel, “*to set forth in order those things which are most surely believed among us.*” All who are, like Theophilus, *lovers of God* love those things most surely believed among us. **What are those things?** Let me show you some of those things most assuredly believed by all who know and love, trust and worship the God of Glory, as they are set before us in Luke’s Gospel.

1. **Luke shows us that all men are sinners in need of God's salvation**, lost, ruined, dead in trespasses and sins, under the curse of God's holy law, and totally incapable of changing their condition. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, like the lost coin, the lost sheep, and the lost Son (chap. 15).
2. Jesus Christ is the incarnate God. **The Son of God came in the flesh** (1:35; 9:20).

(Luke 1:35) “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

(Luke 9:20) “He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.”

3. **The Lord Jesus Christ has effectually accomplished and obtained salvation for sinners by his obedience and death as the sinners Substitute** (1:68).

Remember, that which Zechariah spoke here concerning the accomplishments of Christ, he spoke being filled with the Holy Ghost. He tells us that Christ accomplished redemption and explains exactly what that means (1:67-79).

(Luke 1:67-79) “And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, (68) Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, (69) And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; (70) As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: (71) That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; (72) To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; (73) The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, (74) That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, (75) In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. (76) And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; (77) To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, (78) Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, (79) To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

4. **This salvation which Christ obtained for his elect by his blood atonement, by effectual, accomplished redemption, comes to sinners by the gift of God,** according to his own sovereign, eternal purpose of grace in Christ, as a matter of pure grace (4:25-27).

(Luke 4:25-27) “But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; (26) But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow. (27) And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.”

5. God’s grace in Christ is so abundantly free that every sinner in this world who needs it has it (9:11).

(Luke 9:11) “And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.”

LUKE’S DISTINCTIVES

As we read the Gospel of Luke, we cannot help noticing that Luke tells us many things, precious things, which are not even mentioned by any of the other inspired writers.

- The Histories of Zechariah and Elizabeth
- The Birth of John the Baptist
- The Angel’s Announcement to Mary of our Savior’s Birth.
- Simeon and Anna in the Temple

- Mary’s Song
- The Childhood of our Master.
- The Conversions of Zacchaeus and the Dying Thief
- The Parables of The Good Samaritan, The Pharisee and the Publican, The Prodigal Son, and The Rich Mann and Lazarus
- The Walk to Emmaus

How thankful we are for these things. For these things we are indebted to Luke, “*the beloved physician.*”

LUKE HIMSELF

Who was this man, Luke? As we have seen, both this gospel narrative and the book of Acts were written by the pen of Luke. Both were addressed to Theophilus. In fact, the book of Acts is really just a continuation of Luke’s gospel, as Luke himself indicates in the opening verses of Acts. But who was Luke.

He was a man of such modesty that he never mentioned his own name, even when he wrote about events in which he played a prominent role. Yet, he was, obviously, a man of remarkable usefulness in the early church.

Paul calls him, “*Luke the beloved physician*” (Col. 4:14). Not many of the wise and noble of this world are called, but some are; and Luke was one of them. He was Paul’s constant, faithful companion. He accompanied

Paul on his second missionary journey as far as Philippi. There, after the Lord raised up a gospel church, Luke stayed behind, probably to take care of and further instruct the young saints at Philippi in the things of God.

Seven years later, while Paul was on his third missionary journey, he and Luke joined up again at Philippi. As Paul went on his way to Jerusalem, Luke went with him. When Paul was arrested at Caesarea, Luke was with him. Luke was still by Paul's side when they sailed for Rome. He went with his friend through the perils of the sea and stayed by his side when he was arrested at Rome. Luke alone stayed with Paul to the end. When Paul was about to lay down his life as a martyr for Christ, he wrote, "*only Luke is with me*" (2 Tim. 4:11).

Luke was a Gentile, as his name indicates, the only Gentile who was chosen of God to write a portion of the Inspired Volume of Holy Scripture.

THE SON OF MAN

Luke gives us a portrait of the Son of Man, the Man Christ Jesus. All the gospel writers show us both the divinity and the humanity of Christ; but John was distinctly written to set forth our Lord's eternal deity; and Luke was distinctly written to show us his perfect humanity. **Let us never forget that our Lord Jesus Christ lived upon this earth as our Surety, Representative, Mediator, and Substitute the life of a perfect man, completely obedient to the will of God,**

without sin in nature, thought, word, or deed. Had he not been a perfect man, he could not have been our Savior. Therefore, Luke was inspired of God to show us the perfection of our Savior as a real man.

1. **The Lord Jesus Christ was a Man of great courage.**

He was not a hard, abrasive man; but he was a courageous man. This boldness and courage is seen most distinctly in our Lord's preaching. He knew that he was his Father's servant. Therefore, he spoke the Word of God with unflinching courage (chapter 4). When he was advised to flee from Herod, he said, *Go tell that old fox that I am doing what I came here to do, and that he can't stop me* (Fortner paraphrase - Luke 13:32).

When the time came for him to lay down his life as our sin-atonement Substitute, our Savior set his face like a flint to go up to Jerusalem, that he might accomplish the will of him that sent him (9:51).

(Luke 9:51) "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,"

Fearlessly and unfalteringly, our Savior steadily walked, step by step, with determinate resolution, up to Mt. Calvary, to lay down his life for us, according to the will of God, not to defeat but to victory, not to be pitied but worshipped!

2. **Our Lord Jesus Christ was also a Man of great tenderness, compassion, and sympathy.**

He declared, in his very first sermon, that he came here to preach the gospel to the poor, to set the captive free, and to give sight to the blind (4:18-19).

(Luke 4:18-19) “The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, (19) To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

Luke constantly portrays the Lord Jesus as a man full of compassion, drying the tears of sorrow, pitying the outcast, entertaining despised publicans, receiving sinners, healing all who had need of healing.

Let every man here learn from the Master. Manhood, real manhood involves courage and compassion.

3. Moreover, and this is very, very important, **as the perfect Man, our Lord Jesus Christ was a Man of implicit faith.**

He believed God perfectly. He lived in constant fellowship with God, as a Man. What an example of consecration and faith he gave us! His very first recorded words were, “*I must be about my Father’s*

business” (2:40). His last words before his final breath of mortality were, “*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*” (23:46). On at least eight other occasions, Luke describes our Lord Jesus as a Man of faith, calling upon God his Father, our Father, in prayer.

- At His Baptism (3:21)
- After Healing The Leper (5:16)
- Before Choosing His Disciples (6:12)
- Before Peter’s Great Confession (9:18)
- At His Transfiguration (9:29)
- Before Teaching His Disciples How To Pray (11:1)
- In Gethsemane (22:42)
- As He Hung Upon The Cross (23:34)

As God’s servants in this world, we all must confess with, shame and sorrow, that we are often weak, hard hearted, and unbelieving. But, blessed be God, that Man who is our Divine Savior lived before God in the perfection of manhood for us – Perfect In Courage, — Perfect In Tenderness, Mercy and Compassion, — Perfect In Faith! But he is more than an exemplary Man...

4. **Luke presents this holy Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, to us as God’s Salvation.**

He brought salvation to sinners. He won it by his obedience. He bought it with his blood. He secured it by his ascension into heaven. He gives it by his grace. But

Luke tells us more. He tells us that **the Lord Jesus Christ himself is Salvation.**

Luke 2:25-32 “And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. 26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, 28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: 30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, 31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; 32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”

We rejoice I the blood and righteousness of Christ and adore his doctrine, but it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself that we trust, love and worship. — “*Unto you that believe, HE is precious.*”

The gospel we preach is the good news of salvation accomplished and secured by the obedience and death of the God-man, Christ Jesus. Luke, speaking in perfect harmony with all the prophets and apostles, tells us that this salvation is...

- God’s Salvation. — His Work, His Property, His Gift.
- A Finished Work.

- For Sinners Everywhere, Jews and Gentiles!
 - A Salvation That Demands Faith In Christ. — A Faith That Only God Himself Can Give, — A Faith That Willingly Bows To Christ As Lord!
 - A Salvation To Be Preached To All The World!
5. Luke's object is to show us the humanity of our Savior; but his humanity would be of no value to us, all that he is was and did as a man would be totally without benefit to us, if he is not God. So Luke shows us that this great man is much more than that. **He shows us that this great man is the almighty God.**

He has all power over all things and exercises it all the time. The God-man, our Mediator has complete authority over all evil (Lk 4:12, 35, 9:38, 11:14). He controls all of what men call "the elements of nature" (Lk 8:22-25, 9:12-17, 5:4-11). He has total dominion over life and death (Lk 8:41-42, 7:11-15). He has total dominion over sickness, disease and trouble. (Lk 5:12-13, 7:1-10, 4:38-35, 5:18-25, 6:6-10, 18:35-43). He has power in heaven and in earth to forgive sins (Lk 5:24, 7:48). He has the power and authority to bless people (Lk 6:20-22) and the authority to give people eternal life in heaven (Lk 23:43; 24:50). All things are in his hands (John 17:2).

GOSPEL FOR SINNERS

The gospel of God is a gospel for sinners, the good news of redemption obtained and salvation finished, for poor,

needy, lost sinners. And Luke's Gospel is just that. It is good news for needy sinners. Luke shows us the compassionate love of Christ in becoming Man to save us. He traces our Lord's descent back to Adam, and shows him as the Son of Man and the Son of God, the Savior of men. He is both the "*Son of the Highest*," and the Son of the lowest.

Like Matthew, Luke gives us our Lord's genealogy (3:23-38); but it is not the same. Matthew's account of the genealogy begins with Abraham and traces the Savior's lineage up to Joseph. Luke begins with the Savior himself and traces his lineage back to Adam, and then to God himself. Matthew shows us our Savior's lineage through Joseph, him "*being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph*" (Luke 1:23). Luke traces his lineage through Mary.

THE SHEPHERDS

Instead of the visit of the Magi, Luke tells us of the common shepherds to whom the Savior's birth was announced the glad-tidings of peace to all people, "*to you is born a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.*"

SIMEON AND ANNA

Aged Simeon said, "*Mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation*," as he took the Holy Child in his arms. And Anna "*spake of him to all that looked for Redemption in Israel.*"

Luke records his compassion to the Widow of Nain (7:11-18), and the depths of his mercy to the woman that was a sinner (7:36-50). Luke tells us the story of Zacchaeus with the murmuring of the Pharisees because he had gone to be a guest with a man which was a sinner (19:1-10).

THE PARABLES

The parables recorded in Luke's Gospel are intended to display both our Redeemer's compassion and his saving power and efficacy.

- The Good Samaritan
- The Pharisee and the Publican
- The Importunate Widow
- The Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son, in which we see his great joy over the lost one that is found so marvellously represented
- In the parable of the Great Supper (14:16-24; Mat 22:1-14), it is Luke who tells us of the Lord's command to go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in. And the words "*Yet there is room*" seem to echo throughout these 24 chapters.

Luke alone tells us that when our Lord beheld the city, He wept over it (19:41-44). It is Luke who describes the Savior's bloody sweat in Gethsemane (22:39-46). Luke tells us of the saving power possessed by our Savior as he hung upon the cursed tree, displayed in saving the

dying thief even in His agony, gathering as it were, even in his agony, the first-fruits of his atonement (23:39-43).

Luke alone gives us the account of our Lord's walk along the Emmaus Road with two of his troubled disciples after his resurrection (chap. 24). It may be, as some have suggested, that Luke was one of those two disciples.

He tells of our Lord eating a piece of broiled fish and some honey to show us his perfect humanity even after his resurrection. Yes, blessed be his name, that Man who is risen and exalted is still a man, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, full of sympathy and the omnipotent God, able to help in time of need!

Now, watch the last scene in the Gospel of Luke, again, a scene that Luke alone gives us (chap. 24). First, in verses 43-47, the Savior **condescends to confirm the shaken faith of his fearful disciples and opens their understanding, to understand the Scriptures.**

(Luke 24:43-47) "And he took *it*, and did eat before them. (44) And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. (45) Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, (46) And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the

third day: (47) And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Then, **he issues his commission** to his church, assuring us of the power of his Spirit to do his work (vv. 48-49).

(Luke 24:48-49) "And ye are witnesses of these things. (49) And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

And, in verses 50-53, **the crucified, risen Son of Man ascends to Glory** to take his place on his throne as the God-man, and blesses his people as he ascends his throne.

(Luke 24:50-53) "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he **lifted up his hands**, and **blessed them**. (51) And it came to pass, **while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven**. (52) And **they worshipped him**, and **returned to Jerusalem with great joy**: (53) And **were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God**. Amen."