

A Glimpse into the Life of Luke

We only know a little bit about Luke. He was a Gentile and a physician. As far as we know he never met Jesus during His earthly life but probably became a believer in Jesus through the teaching of Paul. We see in the book of Acts Luke was devoted to Paul and worked tirelessly by his side for much of the book. During Paul's imprisonment and appeal to Caesar, Luke ministered to him, including surviving the ship wreck en route to Rome. There are conflicting reports of how Luke died but we know that eventually his body was buried in Padua, Italy.

Luke's Legacy

We may not know much about Luke's history but we know about his legacy. Luke went on to write the majority of the New Testament. To us he seems like an unlikely choice for this huge honor and responsibility. He was not one of the 12 apostles. He probably never met Jesus during His early life. He was not Jewish like all the other writers. Yet the Holy Spirit used Luke to pen the longest of the four Gospels and Acts, the book about the founding of the church. If you are a believer in Jesus no doubt your life has been impacted by the writings of Luke.

Luke's literary style and his vocabulary prove that he was well educated and equipped for the task the Lord called him to. In Luke 1:1-3 he explains how he undertook the job of writing the Gospel of Luke. He "investigated everything (about the life of Jesus) carefully from the beginning" in order to "write it out in consecutive order". Luke undertook intensive careful research, interviewing eyewitnesses, checking out their stories to make sure his account of the life of Christ was accurate. He organized the material, careful to put the facts into sequential order.

After the resurrection of Jesus Luke picked up his pen again and continued to record the events of the next thirty years covering the birth and early growth of the church. He was actually on the scene for much of Acts, recording personal insights and stories. Over the test of time, Luke's writings have proven to be a reliable historical account that inform us about the foundation of our faith.

Luke was Countercultural

Luke was countercultural. He had an appreciation for women. This comes out in both his Gospel and the book of Acts. In his Gospel, Luke alone gives focus to the life of Elizabeth the mother of John the Baptist. He also is the only one who tells the story of the annunciation to Mary. He gives us the details about Anna the prophet who blessed baby Jesus. Luke gives us the information that it was a group of women who “contributed to their (Jesus and the disciples’) support out of their private means.” Luke 8:3 Luke tells us that Jesus healed Peter’s mother in law, the woman who had been hemorrhaging for twelve years and raised from the dead the young daughter of the synagogue official. Luke singles out the poor widow whom Jesus celebrated when she gave her last two coins. Luke records the detail that women witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus and were entrusted with the privilege to be the first to hear and tell the good news of His resurrection.

Luke was on the scene in Acts 16 when Paul started the church in Philippi with a group of women who worshipped God on the Sabbath. This group was the beginning of the church that met at Lydia’s house. Luke is careful to record all these details unapologetic for the pivotal role women played in the early church. The culture of the first century minimized the importance of women but Luke does not. He honored and respected women reflecting the heart of His Lord.

Luke “Got” the Resurrection

One more thing we know about Luke, he never got over the fact that Jesus was resurrected. This astonishing truth permeates the book of Acts. Here are just a few examples,

- When the group in the upper room in Acts 1 were seeking to replace Judas as an apostle their job description was that whoever they chose would “become a witness with us of His resurrection.” Acts 1:22
- “With great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and abundant grace was upon them all.” Acts 4:33

- When Paul went to Athens the resurrection of Jesus was at the heart of his sermon. “He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.” Acts 17:31
- Paul before the Sanhedrin in Acts 23, “I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead.” Acts 23:6

Maybe it was because Luke was a physician and knew the certainty of death, the sorrows and suffering that come with those born into this life. Or maybe it was because he interviewed countless men who were cowering when Jesus was crucified but whose lives were radically transformed by the power of the resurrection. Luke knew Jesus was now alive. Luke also knew the implications of this, we will also be resurrected and therefore our lives matter, our choices matter. Luke did what he could to get the word out.

Action Points from the Life of Luke

Luke’s Legacy

What do you think God is calling you to do? Do you feel inadequate? How has He equipped you? Are you committed to the truth? How can you leave a legacy that will glorify the Lord?

Luke was Countercultural

Has following the Lord ever caused you to be out of step with your culture? If so tell how that feels. In your experience is it worth it to risk the approval of man in order to please the Lord?

Luke “Got” the Resurrection

Does the resurrection of Jesus make any difference to you? Why or why not? If it does how does His resurrection impact the way you live your life?