

1. Who was Luke?

Luke—the author of the third Gospel and the book of Acts—is of special interest for several reasons.

- He was the only Gentile who wrote any of the books of the Bible. Furthermore, he was the only scientist among the writers.
- He is also recognized as a great historian, with his excellent accounts of the key events of the most important era in the history of the world.

Zealous for the Gospel

A devoted Christian and the first Christian apologist!

- He also was undoubtedly a devoted Christian, a truth especially demonstrated by his unselfish service and companionship to the apostle Paul.
- Finally, he was probably the first Christian apologist, zealously concerned to defend and establish the absolute truth of the gospel of Christ.

Scientist and Medical Doctor

Col 4:14
***Luke, the
beloved
doctor, sends
his greetings,
and so does
Demas.***

- We know nothing for certain about Luke's background or his medical training.
- He was called "the beloved physician" by Paul (Colossians 4:14), and undoubtedly one reason for his ongoing association with Paul was the latter's need for frequent medical care.

Historian

even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud.

11 Cor. 12:7

- Paul spoke of his "thorn in the flesh," (II Corinthians 12:7), for example, and his "infirmities" (II Corinthians 12:9).
- We don't know what these were, although they affected him "in the flesh," and thus presumably needed a doctor's care from time to time.

Ministered to needs

“...I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned...”

11 Cor. 11:23b-25a

- Paul had also suffered much actual physical persecution during his ministry (see II Corinthians 11:23-27), and undoubtedly needed Luke's medical help on many occasions.

Servant

*Only Luke is
with me. Bring
Mark with you
when you
come, for he
will be helpful
to me in my
ministry.*

11 Timothy 4:11

- We can assume that Dr. Luke could have built up a comfortable practice in such a city as Antioch (where he probably met Paul), but he chose instead to serve the Lord in this sacrificial and much-needed capacity of helping Paul.
- As a scientist, it is interesting that the only one of Paul's followers who stayed with him to the end was also a scientist (II Timothy 4:11).

Author

Luke-Acts is beautifully written, with far more skill than Mark's rough and ready Greek.

Luke varies his style to suit different occasions (e.g. sometimes formal prose, sometimes Semitic idiom), and is a gifted writer.

- We have good evidence that he was both the author of this gospel as well as the Book of Acts as supported by second century external evidence as well as biblical evidence that supported the fact that he was a physician (Col 4:14).

Part of the Travelling Band

So we decided to leave for Macedonia at once, having concluded that God was calling us to preach the Good News there.

Acts 16:10

- Luke was apparently a Gentile and accompanied Paul on his missionary travels throughout much of the Roman Empire.
- This is supported by the manuscripts in the Book of Acts as the “we” which was spoken in the third person (16:10; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16).

A Disciple

**The scripture
does not
document
Luke's
conversion**

- Luke is not listed among the 12 Disciples or Apostles so it is believed that Luke later came to faith after Jesus' resurrection and he accompanied Paul during his evangelizing of Judea and into parts of Asia-Minor.

Accurate Historian

**Secular Scholars
have tried to
discredit Luke's
historical
accuracy but the
more the
archaeologists
find the more
they confirm
Luke's facts**

- Modern historians consider Luke's writings to be one of the greatest historical books in history.
- Luke wrote the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, and at one time, it was all one book but was later separated into two books for ease of reading.

Co-Worker

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings. So do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my co-workers.
Philem. 1:23-24

- The name Luke is only mentioned three times in the New Testament.
- From these three occurrences, it is evident that Luke was a physician (Col 4:14) and a companion of Paul (2 Tim 4:11; Philem 1:24).

Characteristics of Luke's Writings

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As he finished, one of his disciples came to him and said, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

Luke 11:1

- Prayer (*proseuxomai*) is central to Luke (19 times) and Acts (16 times)--especially around revelatory moments.
- Luke has a universal emphasis for the Gospel:

Characteristics of Luke's Writings

*These were the
marginalised –
people with no
status in first
century
Palestine*

- Samaritans
- Gentiles
- Sinners
- Poor
- Outcasts
- Women
- Children

Characteristics of Luke's Writings

*Women were
marginalised
with no status
in first century
Palestine*

- Luke gives women a prominent role in his story. He names several female followers of Jesus (8:1-3), makes them the first witnesses of the empty tomb (24:1-8), and affirms that they, too, should attend to the teachings of Jesus (10:38-42).

Soon afterward Jesus began a tour of the nearby towns and villages, preaching and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom of God. He took his twelve disciples with him, along with some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases. Among them were Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's business manager; Susanna; and many others who were contributing from their own resources to support Jesus and his disciples.

Luke 8:1-3

Luke 8:1-3 Soon afterward Jesus began a tour of the nearby towns and villages, preaching and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom of God. He took his twelve disciples with him, along with some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases. Among them were Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's business manager; Susanna; and many others who were contributing from their own resources to support Jesus and his disciples. Cf. 10:38-42, Mary and Martha; 24:1-8, the women at the tomb.

Luke Pro Women

*Luke placed
great emphasis
upon all those
stories
concerning
Jesus' dealings
with those who
were the
marginalised!*

- Luke is living in a Greco-Roman cultural world, where there are plenty of debates about whether women even have the capacity to learn at all and whether they can properly hold a job like, say, philosopher.
- It's pretty easy to see which side Luke seems to have come down on.

Key Verse

For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.”

Luke 19:10

- Most famous among the people unique to Luke’s gospel is the tax collector Zaccheus. When Zaccheus expressed his regret over his former way of life and vowed to make restitution, Jesus responded with what became the theme of Luke’s gospel: “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Luke portrayed Jesus as God’s ideal Man, who offers salvation to all humanity—Jew and Gentile alike.