

**“KNOW THE CERTAINTY OF THE THINGS
YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT” (v4)**
LUKE CH1:1-25

ILLUSTRATION

How do we counteract the materialistic consumerism that our culture thrives at this Christmas?

BACKGROUND

Luke is only mentioned three times in the New Testament and each time through the apostle Paul's writings we learn something about the qualities of Luke, Colossians Ch4:14 (my dear friend Luke the Doctor), Philemon 24 (my fellow worker) and 2 Timothy Ch4:11 (Only Luke is with me). What do we learn about Luke? He is a dear friend to Paul and others, along with being a medic! He is regarded by Paul as a fellow worker in the gospel and remains a faithful friend, helper and encourager to the end, as he was present in Rome for both of Paul's imprisonments!

Along with the above references, in the Book of Acts also written by Luke, he is mentioned in the we/us accounts, during Paul's second missionary journey covered from Acts Ch15:36 – Ch18:22. Finally he is mentioned once on the third missionary journey of Paul in Acts Ch20:15, where we can gather that Luke was part of the team that Paul had assembled to spread the gospel, making Luke an evangelist!

The volume of writings contained in both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, not only makes the Gospel of Luke the largest, but combined with Acts, Luke in terms of volume is the single biggest contributor of the entire New Testament.

THE CAREFUL INVESTIGATION! VI-4

V3 – Luke is writing to his friend the “most excellent Theophilus” *and is so concerned about his spiritual well-being*, he sets out clearly the gospel of Jesus Christ.. It's probable at the time of writing the Gospel that Theophilus is not yet saved, notice the way that Luke refers to him, as it is highly unlikely that Luke would greet a Christian in the same way. However, look at how Luke addresses Theophilus in Acts Ch1:1, it's so different. It is probably different because Theophilus is now born again!

So how did Luke go about his investigation? He kept pure what was “handed down” from the eyewitnesses (v2), and the word “eyewitnesses” is only found in one other place in the New Testament, in 2 Peter Ch1:16.

What does Luke mean by the phrase “from the beginning” (v3)? I want to suggest that if we consider Luke's genealogy in Ch3:21-38, from Jesus right back to Genesis and the Garden of Eden, Luke has investigated, carefully, all of the documents, testimonies, and facts concerning Jesus and now provides in terms of volume, the largest gospel account!

What light will this Gospel shed for us and our lives today?

- The Gospel is truth and therefore tells us what to believe!
- The Gospel is truth and tells us how to live!
- The Gospel is truth and tells who will comfort us!
- The Gospel is truth and tells what is going to happen in the future!

THE COUPLE! V5-22

What do we know about the couple?

- v5 Zechariah was a priest
- v5 both were descendants of Aaron (Moses' older brother)
- v6 both were upright, followers and obeying the Law
- v7 both getting on in years, and Elizabeth was barren

Whereas fertility was seen as a blessing from God – Deuteronomy Ch7:14 + Psalm 113:9, the trouble was that barrenness was seen as punishment by God for not obeying Him! How many sleepless nights might this couple have had hoping for favour from God, but now not only barrenness was an issue, they were both advanced in years! All hope was gone!

So God performs a miracle in answering prayer!!!! How did we stop in Matthew Ch7:7-12? ***PRAYER MAKES IT POSSIBLE!***

Angel Gabriel turns up with amazing news v11-19!

THE CONCEPTION! V23-25

What kind of “supernatural activities or miracles from God” have occurred so far?

- The couple are levites v5
- Zechariah is a Priest v5
- His division is on duty at the Temple in Jerusalem v8
- Zechariah was chosen by lot v9
- an angel appears v10
- his prayer has been heard v13
- he was to have a son v13
- a name was given v13
- the task for his son was set out v14-17
- he was struck silent v20
- his wife became pregnant v24
- Elizabeth's disgrace is dealt with v25

The miracles show the sovereignty of God over their lives! God's divine purposes being worked out in the ordinary lives of human beings!

Just like God has shown Elizabeth favour and dealt with her disgrace v25, how could we apply this to our lives?

APPLICATION

What do we make of the “supernatural signs” or “miracles of God”, concerning the appearance of Angel Gabriel v11 + v19, Zechariah's answered prayer v13, his muteness v20, and the conception (pregnancy) v24, in spite of their old age v7 + v18 and Elizabeth's barrenness v7?

What kind of impact should Luke's “careful investigation” and “orderly account” have on us as we prepare for Christmas?

Should Luke's Gospel challenge us once again to see the glory of God in Christmas?

How do we counteract the materialistic consumerism of Christmas? By making it again about Christ!

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| US | - | Pray and talk to God about allowing us once again to see the glory of God, in Christ, this Christmas, restoring our joy! Also make a plan with regards to time, treasure (money) and talents (gifts from God). |
| THE CHURCH | - | Pray and talk to God for all the Church, especially, our marginalised! |
| NON CHRISTIANS | - | Pray and talk to God for opportunities with your family and friends, neighbours, that are yet to accept Christ! |
| THE WORLD | - | Pray and talk to God for our World, that God's Holy Spirit would be poured out into the lives of unbelievers. |