

Why Trust the Doctor Luke 1:1-4

ETS: Luke shared his reasons for writing his Gospel

ESS: We can be confident in what Luke wrote for many reasons

OSS: I want people to be confident in the Gospel account of Luke

PQ: Are you confident in the Gospel?

UW: Investigative Journalism

ME

How many like the detective shows?

- Does anyone remember Perry Mason?
 - Perry Mason is an attorney who specializes in defending seemingly indefensible cases. With the aid of his secretary Della Street and investigator Paul Drake, he often finds that by digging deeply into the facts, startling facts can be revealed.
- Does anyone remember Ironside?
- Does anyone remember the Pink Panther?

We like detective stories

In the journalism world, similar to a detective is an investigative journalist.

- Investigative journalism is a form of journalism in which reporters deeply investigate a single topic of interest, such as serious crimes, political corruption, or corporate wrongdoing.
- Interestingly, A 2002 study concluded "that investigative journalism has all but disappeared from the nation's commercial airwaves."
 - REASON: The growth of media conglomerates.

It is sad that "that investigative journalism has all but disappeared from the nation's *commercial* airwaves."

- How do you know what is being sold to you as fact, is really fact?
 - How deep has the journalist read into the story?
 - Are they just parroting talking points?
 - Are they just promoting a narrative that the corporate bosses are telling them to report?

WE

If someone reports something, you want to know that it is true!

- You assume a journalist has dug into the story, but in today's "rush to be the first to break a story" that is not happening

We believe Christ is the Savior of the world

- Don't you want that belief based on fact? YES!
- Do you want what you know about Christ to have been thoroughly investigated? YES
- Do you want to hear from eyewitness accounts about Christ? YES!

IF we are going to stake our eternal destiny on Jesus—we want to know the TRUTH about Jesus!

- We want unbiased reporting
- We want investigative journalism
- We want a detective to search through the material
- We want the facts

GOD

There is a popular **argument** on **social media** claiming that Matthew, Mark, Luke or John **DO NOT claim** to be the authors of the Gospels—and they are correct.

- We are used to hearing at the beginning: **“Paul and apostle of Jesus Christ...”** but **none** of the Gospels start that way.
 - NO... **“Matthew, an apostle of Jesus Christ...”**

WHY do we say **Luke** wrote this gospel?

- **Irenaeus** lived about 100 years after Christ and he knew **Polycarp**
 - **Polycarp** knew the **Apostle John**
- **Irenaeus**, was an early **defender** of **Christianity** and he was the **first** who **claimed** that the **Apostle Paul's traveling companion, Luke** wrote the Gospel of Luke.

Another indicator that LUKE wrote this Gospel came from an early **HERETIC: Marcion**

- **Marcion**, who lived **shortly after** Christ's ascended to heaven, was a church **theologian** and **evangelist** who began teaching that the ***God of the Old Testament was NOT the true God but rather that the true and higher God had been revealed only with Jesus Christ***—in other words, he **denied** the **Trinity!**
 - (**Trinity**: God exists as three persons yet is One God)

Since he **denied** the **Trinity**, he was **deemed** as a **heretic** and **excommunicated** from the church.

- One thing good that Marcion did was give us the **earliest list** of New Testament books.
 - In his list was a **shortened, *edited* version** of the ***Gospel of Luke*** and **10 of the *apostle Paul's letters***.

In the 1700's **Ludovico Antonio Muratori** discovered a manuscript in the **Ambrosian Library** in **Milan, Italy**.

(Show Picture) This manuscript was missing the beginning part, thus it is referred to as a fragment.

- Because it was discovered by Muratori, it is called the **Muratori Fragment**
- Because it mentions **Pope Pius 1** as having just died (he died in A.D. 157) scholars date this manuscript from **A.D. 170**.

What is the big deal?

- The **Muratori Fragment** is the **first list** of the *majority of the books* we have in the New Testament.
 - (Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter were not listed)
- Here is what is written in the Muratori Fragment about the **Gospel of Luke**, “The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. Luke, the well-known physician, after the ascension of Christ, when Paul had taken with him as one zealous for the law, composed it in his own name, according to [the general] belief. Yet he himself had not seen the Lord in the flesh; and therefore, as he was able to ascertain events, so indeed he begins to tell the story from the birth of John.”

Conclusion:

- According to early church leaders such as **Irenaeus**
- According to an early church **heretic**, such as **Marcion**
- According to an early church list, the **Muratorian Fragment**
 - *This Gospel was written by a man named Luke.*

WHO is Dr. Luke?

- Sometime between the second and fourth centuries, a series of prologues were attached to each Gospel. These became known as the **Anti-Marcionite Prologues**. According to the prologue to the Gospel of Luke, Luke was the author and he is described as *“... a Syrian of Antioch, a Syrian by race, a physician by profession. He had become a disciple of the apostles and later followed Paul until his (Paul's) martyrdom, having served the Lord continuously, unmarried, without children, filled with the Holy Spirit he died at the age of eighty-four years in Boeotia.”*
- Paul tells us in **Colossians 4:14** *“Luke, the dearly loved physician, and Demas send you greetings.”*
 - According to Paul, Luke was a traveling companions and a *“dearly loved physician”*

WHY did Luke write this Gospel?

Luke 1:1-2 Many have undertaken to compile a narrative about the events that have been fulfilled among us, 2 just as the original eyewitnesses and servants of the word handed them down to us.”

Another common argument I see on the internet is the claim that Jesus was a **myth**

- Some argue that Jesus was simply a **made-up character** created by men who were trying to create a name for themselves.
 - PROBLEM: It seems odd that “Many have undertaken to compile a narrative about the events that have been fulfilled among us...” if what was being proclaimed to have happened never happened.
 - Notice, Luke doesn’t say “*The apostles have undertaken to compile a narrative about the events that have been fulfilled among us*”
 - *Apparently, whoever was writing these narratives about the events, were not those who claimed to be eyewitnesses.*

Notice the **description** Luke give us:

- *“events that have been fulfilled”*
 - Luke is claiming that what happened was the **fulfillment of prophecy!**
- Since these are called **“Events”** that means that they have the **ability** to be **verified**
 - Luke **doesn’t say** *“Many have undertaken to compile a narrative about the sayings and stories that supposedly occurred”*

Notice **WHERE** these *“events that have been fulfilled”* occurred: *“Among us”*

- Luke *doesn’t begin* his gospel with *“A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away....”*
 - NO! He says these *‘events that have been fulfilled happened “among us.”’*
- When **Paul** presented his **defense** before **King Agrippa**, he said *“For the king knows about these matters, and I can speak boldly to him. For I am convinced that none of these things has escaped his notice, since this was not done in a corner.”* (**Acts 26:26**)
 - Contemporary Christian defender, **Josh McDowell** noted: *“Contrary to the myths, legends, and mystery religions of the ancient world, the events recorded in the Bible “were not done in a corner”.*

- Luke **doesn't say** *“Many have undertaken to compile a narrative that occurred a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...”*

WHY did Luke feel **compelled** to write this Gospel?

- Clearly, he felt that there was a **problem** with what he was **reading** about Christ
 - Remember, **Satan** is **fighting** against God
 - **Satan** has always sought to **destroy, disrupt** and **derail** God's plan and purpose for the salvation of humanity.
 - Remember, it only takes a **drop of poison** in a cup of water to kill you.
 - If **Satan** can **inject false teaching** into the early church, he thought he could destroy, disrupt and derail God's plan.
 - From the beginning Satan has always sought to cast doubt on God's Word
 - **Garden of Eden: “Has God really said?”**

I can't prove this by I **imagine** that...

- **Luke** was **traveling with Paul**
- **Luke** was **reading** some of the **narratives** (stories) that were starting to be circulate about Christ

- Luke would go to the **Apostle Paul** and ask, “Did this really happen?”

Remember, we have a tendency to **exaggerate!**

- No doubt there was a lot of **exaggerating** going on about what happened when Jesus was ministering.
- One area that many were trying to “**fill-in-the-gaps**” was the **birth of Christ** and the years before His ministry.
 - *Luke is going to give us a lot more **detail about the birth of Christ and the early years of Jesus than any other Gospel.***

I can't prove this by I imagine that...

- Luke was traveling with Paul
- Luke was reading some of the narratives (stories) that were starting to be circulate about Christ
- Luke would go to the Apostle Paul and ask, “Did this really happen?”
 - Paul would say “*No, I've never heard the apostles or any eyewitness talk about Jesus making animals out of mud or Jesus flying around, etc. That is all fanciful imaginations!*”

Luke was **NOT** one of the **12 Apostles** of Jesus

- **No evidence** that Luke **traveled with** or **knew Jesus.**

- In fact, Luke was **likely** a **Gentile** who was **converted** as a result of **Paul's missionary journey**.
 - *Luke didn't grow up or live in the area where Jesus did ministry.*

HOW was Luke going to get to the bottom of WHO Jesus was and WHAT Jesus did?

- Luke was a **Doctor!**
 - He wanted to **know** the facts—*not fanciful exaggerations!*

There was another thing that drove Luke to write this Gospel...**Luke 1:3-4** “So it also seemed good to me, since I have carefully investigated everything from the very first, to write to you in an orderly sequence, most honorable Theophilus, 4 so that you may know the certainty of the things about which you have been instructed.”

- We don't know WHO **Theophilus** was exactly, but the fact the Luke calls him “**most honorable**” speaks to the fact that this man was a **royal, Roman official**.
 - Luke was **Physician** and a **Gentile** so he likely **rubbed shoulders with royal officials**.

I can't prove this by I imagine that...

- Luke was traveling with Paul

- Luke was reading some of the narratives (stories) that were starting to be circulate about Christ
- Luke would go to the Apostle Paul and ask, “Did this really happen?”
 - Paul would say “No, I’ve never heard the apostles or any eyewitness talk about Jesus making animals out of mud or Jesus flying around, etc. That is all fanciful imaginations!
- Luke is asked to meet with **Theophilus**—perhaps it was a “house call” to attend to an illness
 - **Theophilus** begins to ask **Luke** about his **faith in Jesus** and his **travels** with Paul
 - Theophilus states, “Luke, there is so much swirling around out there about Jesus, *I’d really like to know what is the truth!*”

Luke now has **2 reasons** to write this Gospel

1. To set the **record straight**
2. To share the **gospel** with a **high-ranking official**

However, because his **first audience** is going to be a **high-ranking Roman official**, then he’d better have his **facts straight!**

- The last thing Luke wants is to **LEAD Theophilus astray** or give him **false information** about Jesus

- Luke could be in **serious trouble** if **Theophilus** later finds that **Luke led him astray** and **presented false information** as fact!
 - He could be sued for MALPRACTICE!

Luke is a **doctor**.

- He knows how to **research**
- He knows how to **crunch the data**
- He knows how to **make a diagnosis based on facts**

Luke takes his **skills** and **puts** them into **use!**

Notice what Luke did....**v. 3** “**carefully investigated everything from the very first**”

- HOW did he go about “carefully investigated everything from the very first”?
 - He went to the **sources!**
 - **Luke 1:2** “...original eyewitnesses and servants of the word handed them down to us.”
 - Luke went to the “**original eyewitnesses**”—not second-hand accounts!

HOW did Dr. Luke KNOW who were the “**original eyewitnesses?**”

- His travelling companion: **Paul!**
 - **Paul knew the eyewitness** (Paul was also an eyewitness of Jesus!)

Listen to this timeline:

- **A.D. 30-35** Jesus was crucified and ascended to heaven
- **A.D. 54-57** Paul wrote **1 Corinthians**
 - Paul was preaching/teaching about Christ about **27 years after Jesus**
 - Paul explicitly says at **1 Cor. 15:1-3** that he's reminding the Corinthians of what he taught them when he resided there
 - Paul lives in Corinth around **A.D. 50.**
 - So, the interval is now **15 to 20** years after Jesus walked the earth
 - **1 Corinthians 15:1-9** contains the **oldest known Christian creed. 1 Cor. 15:3-8** *“For I passed on to you as most important what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. 6 Then he appeared to over five hundred brothers and sisters at one time; most of them are still alive, but some have fallen*

asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one born at the wrong time, he also appeared to me.”

- Paul explicitly says that he “*passed on to you*” a message and a story to the Saints at Corinth that he himself had “*received*” before his arrival there.
 - Many indications in the text suggest that **Paul is citing something older**, something not his own.
 - The message Paul was passing on, was **older** than **A.D. 50**.
- Paul gives us a list of *original eyewitnesses*
 - Peter (Cephas)
 - James
 - The apostles (the 11)
 - 500 brothers and sisters
 - Paul

WHEN did Paul “*receive*” what he later “*passed on*” to the **believers** in **Corinth** some **15 years** after **Christ**?

- He probably “*received*” what he later “*passed on*” to the believers in Corinth during the visit to **Jerusalem** described in **Galatians 1:18-20**, when he met with **Peter** and **James** and stayed with Peter for **15 days**.

Gal. 1:18-20 “Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem *to get to know Cephas*, and I stayed with him fifteen days. 19 But I didn’t see any of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother. 20 I declare in the sight of God: I am not lying in what I write to you.”

- WHO were Peter and James? **Original Eyewitnesses!**
- WHY did Paul go to meet Peter and James?

Gal. 1:18 Do you see the phrase: “*to get to know Cephas*”

- Translation of the Greek word: *Historio*
 - What does the word “historio” sound like?
History!

The word “*historio*” = *to enquire into, examine, investigate*

Paul didn’t go to Galatia to have a BBQ with Peter and hang out for a few days getting to “know” him. Paul went to meet Peter (of course) but also to “get information from him”—to learn more about Jesus.

- **Galatians 1:18** “Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit *Cephas and get information from him,* and I stayed with him fifteen days.” (NET)

WHEN did Paul first met Peter?

- Probably around **A.D. 37**—just a few years after Jesus’ death!

WHAT IS THE POINT?

- A.D. 37: Paul meets/interviews Peter (and possibly James)
- A.D. 51: Paul returns to Jerusalem and also met John
- A.D. 51-52 Paul moves to Corinth
 - When Paul was in Corinth, he “*passed on to you*” the teachings of Christ (the Gospel) that himself had “*received*” when he met Peter

POINT: What Paul “*passed on*” to the Corinthians was what Paul learned from the “*original eyewitnesses.*”

WHAT does this have to do with Luke?

- **Luke** was a **traveling companion** with Paul
 - Paul knew the **original eyewitnesses**
- Paul knew **who** to have **Luke interview!**

FACTS:

- LUKE knew **WHO** to Interview
- LUKE knew **WHAT** was at stake—he was investigating for **royal official!**
- LUKE know **HOW** to investigate: “*I have carefully investigated everything from the very first...*”
 - When you go to a doctor what does she ask
“*WHEN do you start experienced the symptoms*”

- She starts at the **beginning**.
- Like a good doctor, LUKE starts at the beginning—
V.3 “I have carefully investigated everything from the very first...”

A good doctor—a good researcher—is **METHODICAL**

- They work through the data in an **orderly, methodical** way!
 - Luke does the same thing **V.3** “I have carefully investigated everything from the very first, to write to you in *an orderly sequence....*”

LUKE knew **WHY** he was undertaking the project in the first place: **vs. 4:** so that you may know the **certainty** of the things about which you have been instructed.”

- He wanted to put **Theophilus’** mind at ease!

YOU

WHAT does this all mean for us?

LUKE’S GOSPEL IS UNBIASED

If you are looking for an account of Jesus’ life that has been **thoroughly investigated** with no reason for **cultural biases**, then LUKE’S Gospel is your first stop!

- Luke is was likely **NOT a Jew**—so he had no “**skin in the game**” to make a Jewish man Jesus out to be the Messiah!
- You may want to argue that **Matthew and John’s gospels** toward Jesus because they were **Jews** and they were **companions** of Jesus, but you **CANNOT** make that assertion about Luke!
 - *He didn’t travel with Jesus*
 - *He didn’t know Jesus*
 - *He wasn’t a Jew who was looking for a Jewish Messiah!*

LUKE’S GOSPEL IS ACCURATE

You may want to argue that **John** was an **uneducated fisherman** (at least when Jesus called him, he was) and he didn’t know how to investigate—*which is not a true assertion*—but some people might want to argue that point.

- You might attempt to argue the same for **Mark**
- You might have **a more difficult time** arguing that for **Matthew**—*since he was a tax collector and presumable good with being methodical.*

However, you cannot argue that with **LUKE!**

- Luke knew **HOW** to research

- Luke knew **WHERE** to start
- Luke knew **WHO** to go to
- Luke knew **HOW** to compile his findings

LUKE'S GOSPEL IS MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO KNOW THE TRUTH

- Luke had a **POWERFUL MOTIVATION**
 - He was **investigating** for a **royal official** who was **seeking** to know Christ
 - He was investigating for a **royal official** who had the ability to **imprison** Luke if he deemed Luke was trying to “pull the wool over” his eyes!

WE

We can be **CONFIDENT** about Dr. Luke's Investigative reporting

- His Gospel has been carefully researched
- He has interviewed multiple eyewitnesses
- He is motivated to be accurate

PQ: Are you confident in the Gospel?