

## INTRODUCTION:

1. [Image] If you have a Bible with you open it up to the gospel of Luke. We are going to begin a new sermon series in this book and we are going to be in it for awhile. Don't worry we are going to take a few breaks here and there to study other things. But I want us to begin our study with a birds-eye view. We will actually begin with an overview of the entire book of Luke.

2. [Need] One problem with slowly going through a book is that you can lose focus. You get lost looking at trees and forget you are in a forest. So today we are going to quickly fly over the book and look down at it from 40,000 feet. I want to do this so that we don't get lost in the middle. And I think it will help prepare us for our studies.

3. [Subject] Today in our overview we are going to focus on the main theme of the book of Luke. There are a lot of ways to preach overview sermons. But I don't want this to just be a lecture. I want to help you get the book, but I want you to see why it matters.

4. [Text] Luke 1:1-4

5. [Preview] I'm going to give you one point with a lot of blank spaces. And we will slowly walk through it because I think that this is the central message of the gospel of Luke.

The first part of your blank is **The message of the gospel of Luke. The message of the gospel of Luke**

If I asked, you who wrote most of the New Testament?

Most of you would say the Apostle Paul.

Or you might answer God if you were feeling cheeky.

And you would be right if you are just going by who wrote the most books.

However, if you are counting by sheer length or word count, then the answer is actually Luke.

He only wrote one gospel, but it is the longest.

It has more parables and more of the teachings of Jesus than any other gospel. Some of the best-known stories, like Christmas, are here.

And It is also only volume one. The book of Acts is volume two.  
Luke and Acts are meant to flow seamlessly into one another.  
Luke is about the message and mission of Jesus  
While Acts is about how the mission continues in the life of the Church.

But who is Luke?

Unfortunately, we know little about the author of this book.

We know that he is not Jewish, but a gentile.

In Colossians 4 Paul lists a number of people who are working with him.

And he particularly points out who is Jewish and who isn't.

Colossians 4:14 also describes him as **"a beloved physician."**

Which is why we call him a doctor.

He frequently worked alongside Paul, but he was not an apostle himself.

He is mentioned to be traveling with Paul in Philemon 24

He probably accompanied Paul on some of his missionary journeys.

At the end of Paul's life in 2 Timothy 4:11, Luke is the only one still there.

And he wrote this book.

That is basically all we know about him.

Even church history/tradition tells us nothing more.

It can also be helpful to understand the book's basic structure.

The book is organized into 4 sections.

The first section begins in chapter 1 and continues through 4:15.

This section follows Jesus' birth and life before His ministry begins.

The next section follows Jesus' ministry in Galilee (4:16-9:50).

This is the region surrounding Christ's birth

Then near the end of Chapter 9 his focus shifts.

From (9:51-19:27). Jesus begins to head towards Jerusalem.

The rest of His ministry is inching closer and closer to the cross.

Everything climaxes in (19:28-24:53) with the death, resurrection and ascension.

So it can be helpful to picture the book in these four basic geographical regions, or 4 sections

The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus. The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus.

This entire book is about Jesus.

Luke 1:1 says **"Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us."**

This entire book follows the story of Jesus.

And it is about the things that Jesus has accomplished.

It is important for us to recognize the genre of this book.

It is not a dry biography listing dates and each event.

It also is not a theology textbook.

It is filled with theology and doctrine,

But it gives us theology through narrative, not through lectures.

He tells us the story of Jesus and all He accomplished.

He writes this account in verse 4 **"that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught."**

Some take this to mean that Luke is compiling the gospel as an apologetic work.

That is somewhat true,

But I think it is misleading to think of this book as something just written to prove to skeptics that Jesus was who He said He was.

I think this misses the depth and beauty of the book.

This book's beauty is that it is true and truly happened.

But the beauty of the gospel is in what it means and primarily in the person of Jesus.

He writes this account so that we can know the Jesus you hear preached about 2000 years later across an ocean is the same Jesus who walked on water.

His words have not been changed or corrupted.  
And they are written that you can have an encounter with Jesus.  
And be changed by Him.

**[transition]** That we might have certainty about what? Well first about who Jesus is.

**The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus is the promised King. The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus is the promised King.**

Luke is actually bookended by Old Testament promises.  
The first two chapters begin with prophecies of John the Baptist and who Jesus will be. More detail on the births than in other gospels.  
The gospel ends in Luke 24 with the two disciples going to Emmaus.  
And Jesus walks through the whole Bible to show it is all about Him.  
Then He tells His disciples that He came to fulfill everything in the law.  
Luke arranged his book to hammer this home.

The primary promise was that one day a king would come.  
A king in the line of David whose Kingdom would rule forever.  
David's name will be mentioned 8 times in the first 3 chapters.  
Why spend so much time in these opening chapters on birth and genealogies?  
Because Jesus is from the royal line.  
These are His papers and proof of Kingship.

Luke spends more time on the birth of Jesus than any other gospel.  
There's a reason that Luke is usually what we read a Christmas.  
Because it has the most vivid details.  
And it does this not just because Luke has a certain biographical Style.  
It does this in an effort to help us see the Jesus was born as our promised King.

So much of the opening few chapters feature John the Baptist because he is the prophet who prepares the way for the Messiah.

John is repeatedly referred to as Elijah.

Next week Rob is going to introduce you to John the Baptist and remind us and help us see how significant he is as a prophetic figure.

And the most important thing John the Baptist does is point to Jesus and say that is the king we've been waiting for.

Jesus' first public declaration when His ministry begins in Luke 4:18 is to quote from Isaiah 61.

And He declares that He is the king the prophets promised.

Jesus refers to Himself throughout the gospel as the "Son of Man."

Remember in the book of Daniel this is a Kingly title.

That is the title of the God King who is to come.

Every time Jesus says this, He is proclaiming that He is the Messiah.

And by Messiah, Jesus means that He is the promised King.

But in one of the many reversals in the gospels, and there will be many His Kingship is not what they expect.

This king is born to a poor family.

Keep this in mind throughout the rest of the book.

Jesus is not just a traveling Rabbi.

He is the promised King.

And all of His actions are kingly ones.

Even though they do not look like what everyone expected.

But what does this King come to do?

**The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus is the promised King who came to preach and enact His kingdom. The message of the gospel of**

**Luke is Jesus is the promised King who came to preach and enact His kingdom.**

Jesus did not begin his earthly ministry by gathering up an army.

He simply started preaching.

Jesus came to preach the gospel and the news of the kingdom.

In Luke 4:43 **"I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose."**

And His preaching was about the gospel and His kingdom.

And Jesus had a lot to say.

Luke has more of Jesus' words than in other gospels.

The Gospel of Luke has more of Jesus teaching in any other gospel.

It has more of his ethics and his commands for us.

As more of his parables.

Some of the most famous parables Jesus are only found in Luke.

Like the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10

or the parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15.

Jesus did a lot of preaching.

This gospel is the longest because of all the teaching.

And Jesus' message was not just "believe in me that you may be saved."

The gospel is so much deeper in its implications than we can imagine.

And the words of Jesus are often challenging.

His preaching ran off the crowds.

The very first time that Jesus preaches in Luke 14 the synagogue is filled with wrath and they drive him out of town and try to kill him.

The preaching of Jesus is not just offensive in our day it is been offensive since the first time that it left Jesus' mouth.

Jesus came to do both of these things.

He was not just a teacher with good ideas on morality.

He is a king who came to establish his kingdom.

And His Kingdom is not just something far off into the future.  
The kingdom of heaven began to invade the world when Jesus was born.

Another reversal in the Gospel of Luke is the kingdom of God.  
Is the upside-down kingdom.  
Because the kingdom of God is completely unlike the kingdoms of this world.

They wanted the kingdom that was going to give them independence.  
They wanted the kingdom that led to Israel being its own nation-state again.

They want a kingdom that would conquer Rome.  
And Jesus brought a kingdom but the kingdom was not exactly what they expected.

They wanted a kingdom that destroyed its enemies, but Jesus says to love them.

They wanted a kingdom they could touch, but Jesus said in Luke 17 that the Kingdom is already here.

The reversal is not that they thought the kingdom would come but it's delayed until weigh in the future.

Jesus says know the kingdom is here now.

The kingdom is establishing itself and it is expanding it is growing and it is Conquering.

But it's not doing so how you thought.

So Jesus came to preach and enact his kingdom.

He is establishing and starting it.

But who can join?

Who is welcome in the kingdom of God?

Look at our next blank.

**The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus is the promised King who came to preach and enact His kingdom, which is for all people.**

This idea that Jesus came for all people is such a prominent theme in Luke that some believe it is the primary theme of the book.

Jesus is not just the king and savior of the Jews.

He is the king in the savior of all people.

The kingdom is for gentiles.

To the Jews, a gentile was anyone who is not a part of your people.

That Jesus comes not just to save Israel but the world.

You especially see this theme and Luke's writing in the book of Acts.

The primary conflict in the book of Acts is between the church that is now made up of Gentiles and Jews.

But the kingdom does not expand to Gentiles only at Pentecost.

Jesus paves the way throughout most of the Gospel.

Over and over Luke points out that the kingdom is for all people.

Jesus makes this point in his first public sermon in Luke chapter 4.

When he mentions that Elijah and Elisha preached and healed people in other nations.

And he says this to him says they know he is not here just for his hometown.

He is here not just for Israel, but for all people.

In the kingdom of God is actually for those who you least expect.

The kingdom of God is for the least of these.

The kingdom is for the people that you least expect.

In Luke 13 Jesus tells the story of the narrow door.

How do you say sit in the kingdom of God the last shall be first and the first shall be last.

Are there will be Jews who thought they were first because of their heritage,

but they will find themselves last behind the people from all over the world I've been welcomed into the kingdom.



And Luke 10 the Samaritan is the one who enters the kingdom,  
all the Levites and the priest do not.

The kingdom of God is for the poor and not for the rich.

In Jesus' day, wealth was seen as a sign of righteousness and God's blessing.

In The Sermon on the Mount in Luke 6 Jesus says blessed are the poor.

And Luke 11 the rich are fools,

in Luke 16 is the rich man who dies and goes to hell while poor Lazarus inherits the Kingdom.

in Luke 18 the Rich Young Ruler misses out on the kingdom because he loves his wealth more than Jesus.

Those in poverty are welcome and can come for free.

The kingdom of God is also for the sick.

Jesus spent much of his time especially in the first several chapters of Luke Healing The Sick.

And he did not just do that to prove that he was God and that he had power.

Is it because he loved them and because the kingdom came to give sight to the blind.

Jesus came to be with those who are unclean.

The kingdom of God is for women not just men.

It's not an accident to the people with the most faith in the first two chapters of Luke are women.

In Luke 8 it's mentioned that not just were there many women that Jesus disciples, but they financed his ministry.

Luke is the only one who gives us that detail.

When all the disciples fall away, the women still follow Jesus even to the cross

the women are the first Witnesses of the Resurrection.

The women are the first ones to announce that Jesus has come back.

Because the kingdom is for them to.

The kingdom is also for children and infants.

In Luke 18 people are bringing their newborn babies to come see Jesus and spend time with him.

And Jesus' own disciples try to stop them and say hey "kingdoms not for babies they're going to grow up a bit."

but Jesus says no don't keep them from coming for the kingdom belongs to them too.

The kingdom is for sinners.

Throughout this gospel we will see Jesus get into trouble for how much time he spends with sinners.

Eating with them when no one else would.

Luke 18 the tax collector has His prayer praised.

Luke 7 the prostitute washes His feet and he doesn't send her away.

The kingdom is not for those who think they have it all together, the kingdom is for those who know that they don't.

The kingdom of God is for men on death row.

That man who died next to Jesus asked about the kingdom.

in Luke 23 he asked Jesus "remember me when you come into the kingdom."

And Jesus' response is that you will be with me in the kingdom.

Luke is the only one who mentions this story.

Because the kingdom of God is for all people.

And no sinner is too far gone.

The kingdom is for any who comes

Luke 14 is one of my favorite parables

It is the parable of a great banquet.

He tells the story of someone who invite all of the Rich and important people and all of their friends to a great banquet, but nobody, so they all have excuses.

The master then says go out in the streets bringing the poor the crippled the Blind and the lame bring anyone who wants to come.

It's a parable about the kingdom of God.

Because the kingdom is for all.

Anyone who trusts in Jesus can come.

**The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus is the promised King who came to preach and enact His kingdom, which is for all people, through His life,**

The Life Death resurrection and Ascension of Jesus cannot be separated from each other.

They are all an intricate part of the story of Jesus.

The story of who he is and a story of what he has done.

People are tempted to pick and choose their favorite parts and ignore the others.

But the story of the Gospel of Luke makes no sense unless you have each piece.

Much of the gospel is about Jesus' life.

His life shows us that He is who he says He is.

He did live a perfect life.

He was the worthy sacrifice for our sins.

He truly was God.

But Luke also writes about His life so we can get a picture of Jesus.

We can see His compassion to children and infants in Luke 18.

We see His brilliance as He repeatedly eludes the Pharisees who try to trick Him with questions.

Jesus did not just come to die.

He lived as well.

And His life has many lessons to teach us.

We don't just get quotes of Jesus his wisdom and ethics.

We get a portrait of who He is so we can understand who we worship.

Jesus did not just come to live he also came to die.

Everything in Luke is heading on the trajectory toward Jerusalem.

Because Jerusalem is where Jesus will die.

Jerusalem is the location of the cross.

Jesus is not just geographically heading toward the cross

He is theologically heading toward the cross.

Every moment of his life since the angel Gabriel talked to his mother Mary has been heading towards the cross.

Jesus repeatedly tries to prepare his disciples for the suffering that is to come.

He tries to get them to realize their King and Messiah came to die.

He tells them over and over and they don't get.

Two separate times and Luke chapter 9 Jesus tells them he is going to die.

In Luke 13 the Pharisees try to warn Jesus that Herod wants to kill Him.

And Jesus laughs and says no I'm not in Jerusalem yet.

I won't die until it's time for the cross.

But the climax of the story it's when we get to Christ's death.

The King came to die.

Because everything that he preached was revealed and made possible through the cross.

Because the kingdom is realized at the cross.

And because all are made welcome because of what Jesus does at the cross.

An incredible reversal.

The cross is not the defeat of Jesus but the victory of Jesus.

The cross is not the end of the story.

It is not a tragedy,

it is what makes everything that Jesus said possible.

We cannot be saved if the King does not die.  
His spilled blood is what secures our salvation.  
All the promises of God throughout the Scriptures.  
And all of the sacrifices are void unless Jesus dies.  
It all builds and points towards Christ's death.

And the cross is such good news because of what comes next because of the Resurrection.

Because Jesus comes back to life.

Not because the Romans weren't very good at killing people.

He comes back because he is God.

He is resurrected because God has accepted the sacrifice.

He is resurrected because he has the keys of hell and the grave.

He is resurrected because he's the king who conquers not the kingdoms of man but the kingdoms of death.

The resurrection is the reason that Jesus life and death are not just nice stories.

The resurrection is the reason that we follow Jesus.

The resurrection is our only hope in life and death.

We will all die, but because of Jesus we will live again.

And following the resurrection we have Christ's Ascension up into the heavens.

The Ascension can be one of those things that we tend to skip over.

It tells us what Jesus is doing.

It tells us where he went.

Jesus came back to life and was resurrected so what?

Well he ascended into heaven and now we wait for him to descend back down again.

The Life Death Resurrection Ascension are all an essential part of what Jesus did and accomplished.

It was all a part of God's plan from the beginning of time.

The Gospel of Luke tells us the story.

Jesus could not be the promised King if he did not fulfill all those scriptures which he did through his life death resurrection and Ascension. Jesus could not have enacted the kingdom, he could not have preached the kingdom, if not for the way that he lived died was resurrected and ascended. The kingdom of God would not be for all people if not for how Jesus lived died resurrected and ascended. It's all part of the story and you can't skip anything.

**The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus is the promised King who came to preach and enact His kingdom, which is for all people, through His life, death, resurrection, and ascension.**

So why are we going to study this book? Well I have a couple of hopes for us.

My Hope isn't that you'll have this nice statement all memorized. Although by the time we finish studying the Gospel of Luke you might. Small part of my hope is that you have a good understanding of the Gospel of Luke by the time we're done. That you'll feel confident in it then you can open it up on your own and you'll be able to continue digging deeper into the riches that are found there.

I didn't use the Gospel of Luke because I thought it would be fun or interesting for us to learn some new things.

My hope is that as we study this book better vision of the Gospel will grow. That we won't hear the gospel just to believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sins. But that we will realize how much Jesus himself had to teach us about what the gospel and what the kingdom of God means.

I also hope that our image of Jesus will be adjusted.  
We need to encounter the Jesus of the Bible.  
Jesus as he really was and is.  
Everybody has their own version of Jesus in their heads.  
What we think he was like or what he would say or what he would do.  
But all of us need to read the gospels again to see if our image of Jesus  
that we have on our heads is right.  
Because what I find is as often as everything else was Jesus someone  
different than I imagined him.

My Last Hope is that I hope studying The Book of Luke will cause us to  
grow in our love for King Jesus and his kingdom.  
Hope that when we finish the series we are all more enamored and more  
captivated by Jesus.  
I hope that we find him more beautiful.  
I hope we realize more and more than Jesus is worth everything that we  
have.

I hope that when we're done it doesn't make us want to never read a  
gospel again,  
but it leaves us wanting more of Jesus

#### CONCLUSION:

1. [Summary] The message of the gospel of Luke is Jesus is the promised King who came to preach and enact His kingdom, which is for all people, through His life, death, resurrection, and ascension.
2. [Challenge] I hope that when we finish this series we are all more in love with Jesus than when we began.