

Preaching, Praying, and Teaching the Gospel of Luke

Pacific Lutheran University, October 28, 2021

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A. The Structure of Luke-Acts

1. "Luke-Acts"

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed. (Luke 1:1-4)

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. (Acts 1:1-4)

2. Geography of salvation: Jerusalem-oriented

B. Some Themes in the Gospel of Luke

1. Prayer

- At critical moments of Jesus' life

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying... (Luke 3:21)

But [Jesus] would withdraw to deserted places and pray. (Luke 5:16)

Now during those days [Jesus] went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. (Luke 6:12)

Once when Jesus was praying alone... (Luke 9:18)

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. (Luke 9:28)

"... but I have prayed for you [Peter] that your own faith may not fail..." (Luke 22:32)

- Parables unique to Luke (11:5-8; 18:1-8; 18:9-14)
- Only in Luke do the disciples ask Jesus to teach them to pray (11:1); Jesus then teaches them the Lord's Prayer (11:2-4)
- Frequent encouragement to pray (18:1; 21:36; 22:40)

2. The Holy Spirit
 - Jesus was conceived by the Spirit (1:35) and anointed with the Spirit (3:22; 4:1, 14, 18)
 - People are filled with the Spirit (1:15, 41, 67) and inspired by the Spirit (2:25-27)
 - God will give the Holy Spirit (11:13)

3. Compassion for particular groups
 - a. The poor
 - Jesus' inaugural sermon (4:18-19)
 - Parables about the rich and the poor (12:13-21; 14:7-24; 16:19-31)
 - Jesus' birth (Matt 2:1-12 vs. Luke 2:8-20)
 - The beatitudes (Matt 5:3 vs. Luke 6:20b; Matt 5:6 vs. Luke 6:21)

 - b. Tax collectors and other sinners (18:9-14; 19:1-10)

 - c. Gentiles (especially Samaritans)
 - Jesus' birth (2:10)
 - Jesus' genealogy (3:23-28; cf. Matt 1:1-17)
 - Samaritans (10:25-37, cf. Ezra 4:1-5; 17:11-19)

 - d. Women
 - Mary, the mother of Jesus (Matt 1:18-25 vs. Luke 1:26-38)
 - Jesus' women patronesses (8:1-3)
 - Jesus' visit to Mary and Martha (10:38-42; cf. 2:19, 51)
 - Luke pairs stories about men with stories about women (2:25-35 with 2:36-38; 13:10-17 with 14:1-6; 13:18-19 with 13:20-21; 15:3-7 with 15:8-10)