

Lesson 4: Luke's Purpose and Style Part 1

Acts Intro

WWW.SHARIEKING.COM

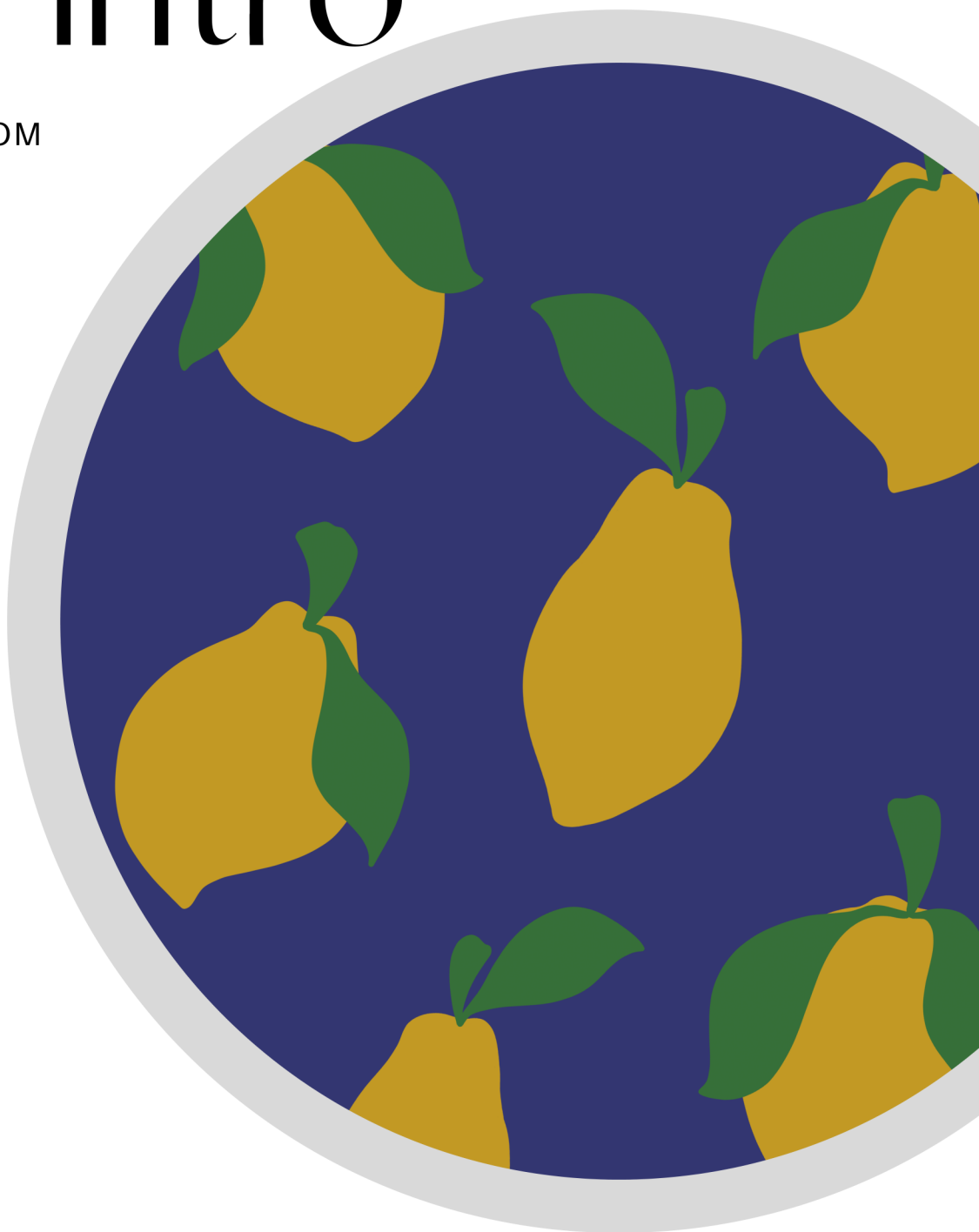


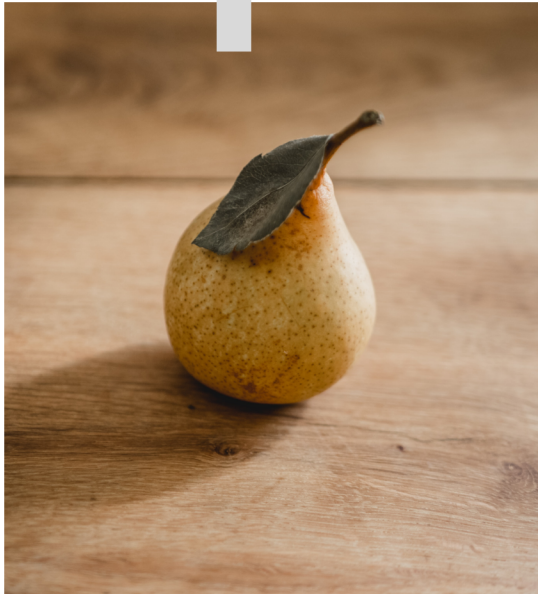
Table of Contents

Luke's Purpose: The Gospel	3
Luke's Purpose: Acts	4
Luke's Style: Why Should We Trust Luke?	6
Luke's Style Part 1: Is Luke a Valid Source?	8
Study Time	9
Congratulations	11
Credits	12
Copyright and Biblio	13

4

Acts Intro Lesson 4 Part 1

Luke's Purpose



*1 "Inasmuch as many have undertaken to **compile** a narrative of the things that have been **accomplished** among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, 3 it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4 that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught."*
(ESV)

The Gospel

Luke explains the **PURPOSE** of his gospel in Luke 1:1-3 (see sidebar)

Luke explains that many before him had recorded "**the things**" that had "**been accomplished**" among them. According to Thayers Greek Lexicon, the word "accomplished" means "to carry through to the end" and refers to "things that have been accomplished (STRONGS NT 4135, Itala and Vulg.completae).

Luke's **purpose** was to create a narrative that would show how Jesus' birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension to the throne were fulfillments of God's Old Testament covenantal promise not only to Israel but now to the Gentiles (all people). Luke believed it would be good to record Jesus' works from his "beginning" in the same manner that the writings of the Old Testament narrate the story of God's relationship with humanity until the time of Christ.

Luke's Purpose . . . *continued*



1 "In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, 2 until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. 3 He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. 4 And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." 6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
(ESV)

The Book of Acts

The **Purpose behind Acts** is found in verses 1-11, but today we will only look at 1-8,

In verse 1, not only do we see that Luke is addressing Theophilus again, but that he also uses the phrase "In the first book." This is evidence that The Gospel should be considered Luke's first volume and Acts his second. The composite of the two is often labeled Luke-Acts.

Additionally, Luke reminds Theophilus that The Gospel was a narrative of "the things Jesus **began to do and teach**" (Jesus' birth, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension) but after this reminder, Luke provides some new information about Jesus' interactions with the disciples before his ascension which he did not include in The Gospel. (See the following page.)

Luke's Purpose . . . *continued*

Luke begins Acts where he ended his gospel, but he provides new details and a new perspective as well. I have listed some of these new details in Acts 1:1-11 below.

New Information in Acts 1:1-11

3	Jesus presented himself alive after he suffered (crucifixion).
3	Jesus provided many proofs that he was alive.
3	Jesus appeared to them and taught them about the KOG for 40 days.
4	Jesus stayed with them.
4	Jesus ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem.
4-5	Jesus ordered them to wait for the promise of the Father (the baptism of the HS).
6	Jesus instructs them not to worry about the timing of God's restoration.
8	Jesus tells them they will receive power from the HS to be witnesses.
8	Jesus tells them how this witnessing will spread: from Jerusalem, to all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.
9-10	Jesus is taken up into heaven (ascension).
11	An angel assures them Jesus will return in the same manner one day.

By studying Luke 1:1-3 and Acts 1:1-11 closely, we discover the unity and diversity of Purpose between The Gospel and Acts.

- The Gospel addressed how **Jesus began to fulfill God's covenant promises** through his birth, ministry, death and resurrection while Acts will address how **Jesus continues to fulfill God's promises** from the throne room of God as the resurrected King and Priest.
- The book of Acts confirms that God has fulfilled, is fulfilling, and continues to fulfill his promises. God has not abandoned, and will never abandon his people, but currently rules and reigns by the Holy Spirit through his people all over the earth.

Luke's Style *part 1*

Can we trust Luke as a valid source?

Luke was not a disciple so he was not an eyewitness of Jesus' life, words or works. Consequently, why should we trust Luke's writings? How do we know he is a valid source?

Luke provides his reason in his introductions. Luke 1:3 indicates that "it seemed good" to him to provide an "orderly account" of Jesus' life, works, and words. Because Luke is not an eyewitness himself, he explains that his narrations are not only products of his research of other writings, but also a compilation of the testimonies of "eyewitnesses and ministers of the word" which were delivered to the early church (Luke 1:2; "the word is both Jesus and the story about him, Levine, 23). Luke does not provide the names of these sources he used, but from the language, layout, dating, and tradition, scholars suggest these possibilities: scholars suggest these possibilities: Mark, Matthew, and other





Luke's Style *part 1*

"quasi-canonical" sources which were already in circulation (Bock 39). In addition, Luke does not furnish a list of his eyewitnesses, but we will discover some as we carefully study careful his writings.

I want to conclude Part 1 on Luke's Style Part 1 by pointing out three reasons Luke 1:1-3 gives us to trust him.

1. He is honest with the reader. Luke does not claim to be an eyewitness, but is forthright with the reader, explaining how he gathered the information for his narrative.
2. He used primary sources. Luke authored his account using the testimonies of companions and eyewitnesses of Jesus.

3. He references writings from these eyewitnesses and ministers.

Luke 1:4 provides a fourth we can trust Luke- His Goal. Luke's intention was to provide Theophilus with an "orderly account" so that he would "have certainty of what he had been taught."

Who is Theophilus? Let me provide you with a few scholarly options. The name, Theophilus, could have been used as a **universal reference to all Christians** because it means "lover of God" or this could have been **one, actual person**. Powell suggests, "we should not imagine that this entire Gospel was written for the benefit of one person. Most likely, Theophilus was the person responsible for commissioning the project, a wealthy patron who has put up the money to cover the considerable cost that the production and distribution of a work such as this would entail" (Powell 165).

I consider it reasonable to conclude that Luke authored Luke-Acts a generation after Jesus (70-90 AD, see Keener p.383-401) to provide believers with an account of Jesus' life and ministry in his gospel, as well as the first disciples and their message and mission of preaching the gospel to the ends of the earth in Acts. In light of this, I believe we must conclude that Luke understood his writings would not only reach the ears of Theophilus but also other believers who needed a narrative

continued

that would "address the whole sweep of God's covenantal fulfillment in Jesus" (Brown, 44). I would like to suggest to you that Luke's intention to author with the purpose of strengthening other's faith is a motivation which can be trusted. He is not writing to make a name for himself but to magnify the name of the Lord (we will discuss this more when we study Luke's use of speeches.)

Darrell Bock elaborates on this concept beautifully in the quote below.



"'Most excellent' does not necessarily indicate someone rich or politically well positioned, but the term gives the impression that Theophilus is a patron, and so someone who would reward or patron for the written text. Here the term is more than a compliment: anyone who loves God and wants more details about the object of this love-who wants to be "instructed" (vs. 4) - is already, for Luke, 'most excellent.' All readers become invited to hear the Gospel again, this time from Luke's perspective. Nor will Luke's version be the only one they encounter, for it will be followed by John's, and then Paul's, and so on through the centuries" (Bock 23).

Application for Us

Bock's thoughtful words invite us all to receive Luke-Acts in the same manner as Theophilus- for surely every Jesus follower needs "certainty concerning the things we have been taught!" **Luke can be trusted** because he is **forthright** about his process, he uses **eyewitness testimonies and writings**, and his **goal is to provide Theophilus with the assurance** that "the whole sweep of God's covenantal fulfillment" was accomplished in and through Jesus," not to make a name for himself (Brown, 44). If we have the heart to be instructed by Luke, I am confident that the Holy Spirit will use Luke-Acts to dispense the same assurances to us- as modern believers.

Acts Introduction Lesson 4

Study Time *instructions*

I believe I have given you enough to read and ponder in this lesson. However, if you want a challenge, here is a question to ponder.

Do you believe Luke can be trusted? Do you believe he is a valid historian? Answer your questions by looking back over your notes from Luke 22 (Lesson 3). Search specifically for clues (phrases, words or ideas) that provide evidence that Luke sees himself as a legitimate historian. Here are some possible clues:

- References to an eyewitness (whether human or supernatural).
- References to dates, times, places in history.
- Phrases like: it was necessary, so that, in order that, to fulfill.
- Quotes or intertextual references to the OT
- Phrases which address authority (Jesus', the disciples, Pharisees, etc.)



Congratulations!

You have completed Lesson 4 of the Acts Study! I am so proud of you and would love to hear from you. Please share what you are learning with me so I can share it with others on the Overcoming Monday Podcast!



JOIN THE OVERCOMING
MONDAY COMMUNITY ON
INSTAGRAM



Credits



Caylee Collins
Editor and Creator

Caylee has been a huge help in helping me gather, consolidate, brainstorm and create this study.



Joseph Pope
Podcast Producer

Joseph records and uploads the podcasts for this study and deserved a big mention.



The King Family: Joseph,
Sharie, Clayton, Jacob

The King family lives in Anderson, SC.



David Fartek
Photographer

The photos in this lesson are by David Fartek on Unsplash

Acts Intro Lesson 4

Copyright

Copyright: ©2022 All rights reserved. Author and Creator, Sharie King reserves the right to the content of this Acts Study, both the eBook, podcasts and homework sheets..

Cover design template purchased from Created Market website and designed by The Blog Creative. Template Design is called Minimalist Mega Workbook Canva

Guest Photography by Photo by David Fartek on Unsplash

Bibliography

- Bock, Darrell L. *A Theology of Luke and Acts: Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. Edited by Andreas J. Kostenberger. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.
- Brown, Jeannine K.. *The Gospels as Stories: A Narrative Approach to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*. Edited by Andreas. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020
- Levine, Amy-Jill, Ben Witherington, and Cambridge University Press. 2019. *The Gospel of Luke*. Cambridge Cambridge University Press.
- Padilla, Osvaldo. 2016. *Acts of the Apostles : Interpretation, History, and Theology*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press.
- Pinter, Dean. *The Story of God Bible Commentary: Acts*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Group, 2019.
- Powell, Mark Allen. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary and Theological Survey*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Publishing Group, 2018.
- Thayers Lexicon: STRONGS NT 4135, Itala and Vulg. completae accessed from BibleHub.