**The Gospel of Luke**

**Lesson 1** Luke 1:1-25 The Evidence Demands a Verdict!

**Questions:**

1. What important truth did you learn from the lecture? How does it apply to your life or, how will you apply it?
2. Skim over Wiersbe chapter 1 read pages 17- 21.
3. Why did Luke write his gospel?
4. After 400 years without a prophetic word from God, He reveals wonderful news   
   to His people. According to Wiersbe, what four ways did people receive this   
   good news?
5. Read Luke 1:1-4. Luke begins to relate the story of Jesus Christ to his friend Theophilus.
6. To whom were some of the eyewitnesses Luke was referring? (Hint: With whom did Luke travel according to Acts? See the “we” sections in Acts 16:10-17; 20:4-15: 21:1-18; and 27:1 to 28:16).
7. What do you learn from the following verses, and how important are eyewitness accounts in a court of law?

Numbers 35:30

Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; 30:19

Hebrews 10:28

F.F. Bruce, the former Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at the University of Manchester, says, concerning the primary-source value of the New Testament records:

The earliest preachers of the gospel knew the value of … first-hand testimony, and appealed to it time and again. “We are witnesses of these things,” was their constant and confident assertion. And it can have been by no means so easy as some think to invent words and deeds of Jesus in those early years, when so many of His disciples were about, who could remember what had and had not happened.

And it was not only friendly eyewitnesses that the early preachers had to reckon with; there were others less well disposed who were also conversant with the main facts of the ministry and death of Jesus. The disciples could not afford to risk inaccuracies (not to speak of willful manipulation of the facts), which would at once be exposed by those who would be only too glad to do so. On the contrary, one of the strong points in the original apostolic preaching is the confident appeal to the knowledge of the hearer; they not   
only said, “We are witnesses of these things,” but also, “As you yourselves also know” (Acts 2:22). Had there been any tendency to depart from the facts in any material respect, the possible presence of hostile witnesses in the audience would have served as a further corrective.[[1]](#endnote-1)

1. Read 1 John 1:1-4.
2. Give three physical/tangible senses used by these eyewitnesses to assert   
   their testimonies.
3. What was the ultimate desire of John for his readers (See 1 John 1:3 and 5:13)?
4. Do you know beyond a shadow of death that you have eternal life? If not,   
   what should you do (See John 3:16, Rom. 10:9-10 and 13)?

4. Read Luke 1:5-25. The birth of John the Baptist Foretold.

1. How does Luke provide the time frame for the birth of John the Baptist, which   
   will lead to the time frame for the birth of Jesus Christ? Why is this important

as evidence?

1. Zechariah, the soon-to-be father of John the Baptist, was visited by an angel of the Lord, Gabriel.

God breaks through after 400 years of silence. Chronologically Dr. Luke beings the New Testament. He goes back to the birth of John the Baptist, to where the angel Gabriel appeared to John’s father as he served in the temple. John’s parents were Zacharias and Elisabeth. ‘Zacharias’ means “God remembers,” and Elisabeth means “His oath.” When did God take an oath? Psalm 89:34-37 records God’s oath: “My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.” God swore an oath to David that one of his descendants would have an eternal reign. Christ is that descendant. “God remembers His oath!” God is ready to breath through into human history after 400 years of silence.

Notice that the Scripture tells us that both Zacharias and Elisabeth were righteous. That is, they were right. How were they right! How were they right? They recognized they were sinners and brought the necessary sacrifices.[[2]](#endnote-2)

1. Have you ever experienced a time when you felt God was silent, that He was not listening to your prayers? Perhaps you felt distant from God? What should you do during times like this?
2. What do you learn from the following verses?

Psalm 22:1-2

John 9:31 (What prayer DOES God hear from any sinner? See 1 John 1:9)

1 Peter 3:12

1 John 5:5

Jeremiah 29:12-13

Psalm 66:17-20

1. Why does the Scripture say that both Zechariah and Elizabeth were “upright (righteous) in the sight of God?
2. Read Romans 1:16-17; 3:19-25; and Ephesians 2:8-9.

* How do most people, particularly very religious people, attempt to become righteous in the sight of God?
* How does one become truly righteous in God’s sight?

1. What did this angel explain to Zechariah would be the purpose for John’s life   
   (See verses 14-17)?
2. Who prophesied concerning the appearance of a forerunner of the Messiah   
   (See Mal. 3:1, 4:5-6; Matt. 3:3, 17:10-13) Why is this significant as evidence?
3. What happened to Zechariah due to his lack of faith? Will you share a time when you failed to believe the whole counsel of God’s Word? Were there any consequences? What should we do when we lack faith (See Mark 9:24; 1 John 1:9)?
4. How did the Lord remove Elizabeth’s disgrace (See verses 7 and 24-25)?   
   Has God blessed you in a special way? If so, please share.
5. What is the most important truth you have learned in Luke chapter 1?

1. F.F. Bruce as recorded in Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), p. 51-52. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. J. Vernon McGee, THRU THE BIBLE COMMENTARY SERIES: LUKE, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 20-21. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)