



The unique wonders of Luke's Gospel

Of the four Gospel accounts in our Christian Scriptures, Luke must win the award for most loved. Readers are endeared to the many gentle stories and unique passages. So let us enter into the wonderful world of Luke!

Our first stop is of course the infancy narrative, the very beginning, which of course is a very good place to start! Our dear evangelist offers a detailed birth narrative that captures the joy present at every birth. This birth has all the fanfare with wise men, angels, shepherds and practically the whole world celebrating. And then we are taken for a quick tour into the early life of Jesus. No other Gospel account provides this sentimental insight. We become endeared to the infant Jesus presented in the Temple (2:22-30) and the boy Jesus who at twelve is found debating among the Teachers of the Law in the Temple at Jerusalem (2:41-52), much to the consternation of his ever vigilant mother!

Speaking of his mother, Mary is an important player in Luke's Gospel and she is not the only female to draw our attention. Other women mentioned solely in Luke's account include the elderly Elizabeth (ch1) who reveals the enduring faith of women, the Prophet Anna (2:36-38) who reminds us of the call to dedication and prophecy, the women who accompany Jesus and provide for his needs (8:1-3) as women do in their vocation as nurturers, and Martha and Mary (10:38-42) who capture the varied ways of being woman.

The unique healings in Luke offer compassion and reveal the tender nature of Jesus. In his encounter with the Widow at Nain (7:11-17), Jesus is moved by her plight, restoring the one who was dear to her. In the encounter with the crippled woman (13:10-13), Jesus empathizes and responds with love. The cure of the Man with dropsy (14:1-6) sees a Jesus who would offer healing no matter the consequences and in Jesus cleanses ten Lepers (17:11-19), it is a reminder how far and wide his generosity extends.

Luke relates encounters of a gentle nature including Zacchaeus (19:1-9), who in the presence of Jesus discovers his own ability to give, the Widow's offering (21:1-4), where Jesus notices even the smallest act of generosity, the encounter with the Sinful woman (7:36-50), whose tears are washed away by Jesus and finally that hopeful post Resurrection narrative of the Road to Emmaus (24:13-35), where we rediscover once again how Jesus comes to us at the most needed moments.

Perhaps the greatest drawcard we find in Luke are his unforgettable parables that include the unexpected generosity of the Good Samaritan (10:30-35), the search and joy in finding a lost sheep (15:1-7), or lost coin (15:8-10) and the Father who wants so much to reconcile with his prodigal son and elder brother (15:11-32). We can't forget the Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19-31) where those who have least will find they have much more, and the Pharisee and Tax Collector (18:9-14) which raises the question of who is really justified before God.

And so our journey comes to an end for now. Of course Luke had a volume 2 in the Acts of the Apostles. However our focus is on the Gospel account and you can enjoy more of Luke's Volume 1 in the up and coming E-Conference in November.
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