**Wednesday Night Bible Study**

**Wednesday 01 December 2021**

**Queens Chapel UMC \* 7410 Muirkirk Road \* Beltsville, MD 20705**

**Instructor: Rev. Dr. Will Butler**

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**The Gospel of Luke**

**Key Verse**: **Luke 1:4**

“So that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

**Luke’s Introductory Statement**

**Luke 1:1-4**

 1 Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us,

 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us,

 3 it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus,

 4 that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.

 Luke is writing as a Greek Historian. He begins his book with a prologue that begins with the first four verses of his Gospel.

**Verse 1**

* “Inasmuch as many”
* Even though Luke was under the divine revelation of the Holy Spirit, he gives credit to those who sat down with him and gave him testimony of actual events of Christ’s life.
* It’s believed that Matthew and Mark’s Gospel was already written by now. Therefore, it is highly likely that either one of them was one of Luke’s primary sources
* Scholars believe that Luke used sources that were eye-witnesses to the accounts he writes about.
* About 60 to 70 percent of the material we’ll find in Mark’s Gospel is repeated in the Gospel of Luke—in fact, Luke follows Mark’s sequent of events
* “Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order”
* Luke made sure his readers knew that his narrative of Jesus Christ was logical and is a factual order
* “a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us”
* The Old Testament messianic promises would be confirmed in Luke’s narrative of Christ

**Verse 2**

* just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us,
* Luke’s primary sources were the apostles themselves who stated facts about Jesus’ life and ministry—orally and memoirs

**Verse 3**

* it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus
* It is likely that Luke spent more than two years during Paul’s imprisonment consolidating eyewitnesses and first-hand accounts of Jesus’ ministry while in Caesarea
* We know for example, Luke talked with Philip, who was one of Luke’s sources. **Read Acts 21:7-8**

 *7 And when we had finished our voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day.*

 *8 On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.*

* Luke’s understanding was perfect because He was under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. **Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17**

 *16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*

 *17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

**2 Peter 1:19-21**

 *19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;*

 *20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,*

 *21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

**Verse 4**

* that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.
* Luke addresses Theophilus as “most excellent” which was a title used to address governors and dignitaries worthy of respect.
* Yet, Theophilus was not only a person of high esteem but he was an undercover/secret Believer in Jesus Christ.
* Theophilus was schooled in the apostolic tradition—probably by Paul. Therefore, Luke’s Gospel confirms what he had learned and heard about Jesus

**The Birth of Jesus Christ**

**Luke 1:5 – 2:28**

**Luke 1:5-7**

 5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

* Who was Herod?
* Herod was known as Herod the Great. He was the first of several rulers from the Herodian dynasty who are named in Scripture. He ruled from 37-4 BC. Herod was believed to be the offspring of Esau. He was ruthless and cunning.
* “a certain priest named Zacharias of the division of Abijah”—his name means, *Jehovah has remembered*.
* The division of Abijah—speaks of the temple priesthood that was organized into 24 divisions. A priest would serve each division twice a year for one week. ***(1 Chronicles 24:4-19)***
* “His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.”
* Both husband and wife were from the priestly tribe

**Verse 6**

 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

* “They were both righteous before God”
* Which mean they were believers justified in God’s sight—Luke uses this line because his theology was influenced by Paul.
* What does it mean to be Justified by faith?
* Pronounced
* An Act
* Act of Imputing—attributing, placing on

**Verse 7**

 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

* Elizabeth was barren—She was seen as one who was denied favor from God—in this culture, blessings were tied to birthrights and family lines.

**Luke 1:8-10**

 8 So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division,

 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

 10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

* God waited for just the right time for Zacharias to go into the temple.
* “His lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.”
* This was a high honor because He was going into the presence of God—**Read Exodus 30:7-8**

 *7 "Aaron shall burn on it sweet incense every morning; when he tends the lamps, he shall burn incense on it.*

 *8 "And when Aaron lights the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.*

* It was a high honor because there was a large number of priest waiting to go in before the presence of God—some had never been chosen nor received the opportunity.
* The priest was to keep the incense burning in front of the veil that divided the holy place from the most Holy Place
* This was to be done every morning and evening while the other priest and worshippers stood outside in prayer

**Next week**

**An Angel Announces the Birth of John the Baptist**

Jeremiah 1

 4 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

 5 "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

 6 Then said I: "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth."

 7 But the LORD said to me: "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak.