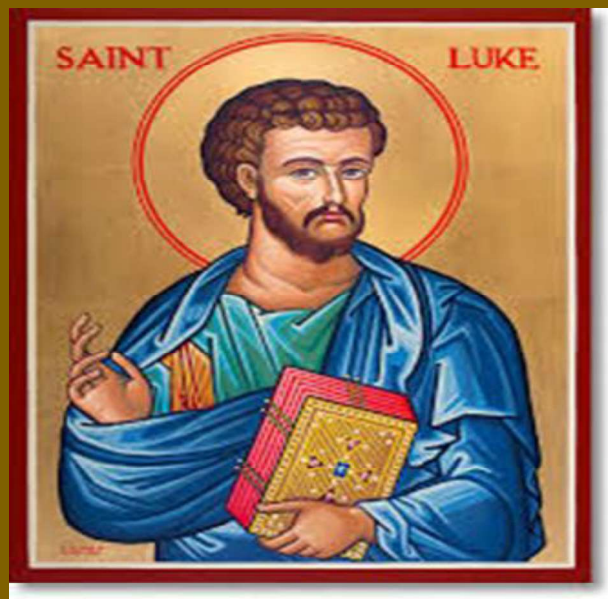


The Gospel According to St. Luke

Middle school Ministry



Introduction

The 4 Gospels comparison

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
To whom it was written	Jews	Romans	Greeks	Christians
Subject	The Messiah the king	The Messiah the conqueror of Satan	Christ the lover of mankind	Christ the Incarnate Word
Main message of Jesus	Fulfills the Law	Performs wonders	Saves mankind	Dwells among us
Gospel content	Focuses on prophecies	Focuses on deeds	Focused on history	Focused on theology
Symbol	The human face	The lion	The Ox	The Eagle

Symbols of the Four Gospels

Matthew
Winged Man
Mark
Winged Lion
Luke
Winged Ox
John
Eagle

1- Servant's preparation:

- 1) Explanation of the gospel of St Luke chapters 1-12 and an introduction for Bishop Yousef
<https://www.suscpts.org/diocese/bishop/bible-study/holy-gospel-according-to-st-luke/>
- 2) A link for Fr. Doud Lamei 's bible study in Arabic
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHedjI0_e2nk5yEwV9kLxOBn-oJwCt5OK
- 3) The reference book for Fr. Tadros Malaty → see separate attachment
- 4) Upper room app → Sermons → Bible study → Luke , you will find sermons for each chapter, links provided at the beginning of each lesson below.
- 4) Two illustrative videos that could be used by servants to prepare or to show at the beginning of each unit.
 - Part 1 [chapter 1-9]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIb_dClxzo0
 - Part 2 [10-24]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26z_KhwNdd8

2- Book introduction:



A- Who is St. Luke?

- ❖ The word “Luke” is probably an abbreviation of the Latin word “Lucanus” or “Lucuis”, which means ‘the carrier of the light’ or ‘the enlightened’.
- ❖ He is the only one among the writers for the Testament who was not a Jew, but a Gentile
- ❖ St. Luke was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle and became his companion on his numerous journeys.
- ❖ He met St. Paul on his second missionary journey in Troas and accompanied him to Philippi. Then, he joined him again on his third journey heading to Jerusalem. It appears that he may have stayed in Palestine during the two years’ imprisonment of St. Paul in Caesarea. They also travelled to preach in Rome together (Acts 28:30).
- ❖ He was not one of the disciples, nor one of the apostles.
- ❖ It came by oral tradition that he had painted the first picture of the Virgin Mary.
- ❖ He departed in Bithynia at an old age. Some say that he was martyred during the reign of Nero at age 84.

B- Characteristics:

- ❖ He wrote this Gospel and the Book of Acts to an Alexandrian nobleman named **Theophilus** (Luke 1:3), calling him “most excellent”, which is a special title for one who holds an important position within the Roman Empire. Some say that Theophilus is one of these three:
 1. He might be someone whose name the apostles did not want to mention, instead, calling him Theophilus which means ‘he who loves God’ in order not to reveal his identity and cause him harm.
 2. Or someone who truly bore this name. The apostle wrote him the Gospel of truth (the Gospel of St. Luke) to understand the Church and its mission (the Acts), in order to attract him to the faith rather than resist the Church.
 3. Luke was a doctor and a servant; he may have treated his own master before setting him free. In order to show his gratitude and give the most precious thing he could offer; he wrote him the gospel of our Lord Jesus and the history of the first Church
- ❖ St Luke did not meet Jesus in person but believed later when he met St Paul. In order to record accurate details about the whole story of Jesus, he interviewed eyewitnesses like St Mary and the disciples and may be main characters he wrote about like the Samaritan and Zacchaeus to be able to collect accurate and reliable understanding of all things and document them for all generations in a perfectly historical way.
- ❖ Picture a scientist going about some great work. He or she is searching for the cure for some horrible disease or making some marvelous new discovery. First the scientist digs for facts, looking deeply, studying carefully, investigating every clue, relentlessly hunting for any and every fact that will make the discovery deeper, richer, and more accurate.

- ❖ Similarly, in this study, we are going to look at Jesus through the eyes of those who actually witnessed Him, and then told their story. That is what a witness is: a person who sees or experiences something, then tells others what he or she has seen.

C- The Time for his writing

- There is no sure tradition regarding the time of this writing or its site. St. Irianus thinks it was written before the martyrdom of St. Paul.
- Since the gospel was written before the book of Acts, and the book of Acts was written before the martyrdom of St. Paul the apostle, therefore many believe that it was written between the **year 63 and 67 AD.**

D- Its Aim:

- ❖ ***This Gospel was recorded for the Greeks***, who are known for their own philosophy and literature, which is why it was written in a refined and poetic style.
- ❖ ***He offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind***, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child. St. Luke presented Christ to the Gentile world as a Mean to find their inner happiness and joy. He began the Gospel with joy with announcing [the birth of Jesus] and concluded it with joy [Jesus rose from the dead]; something the Greek legends and philosophies lacked.
- ❖ Jesus Christ came as a Friend to support us; praying in many places: (3:21; 6:12; 9:18, 29; 22:39-46), and teaching about praying (Our salvation is not philosophy).



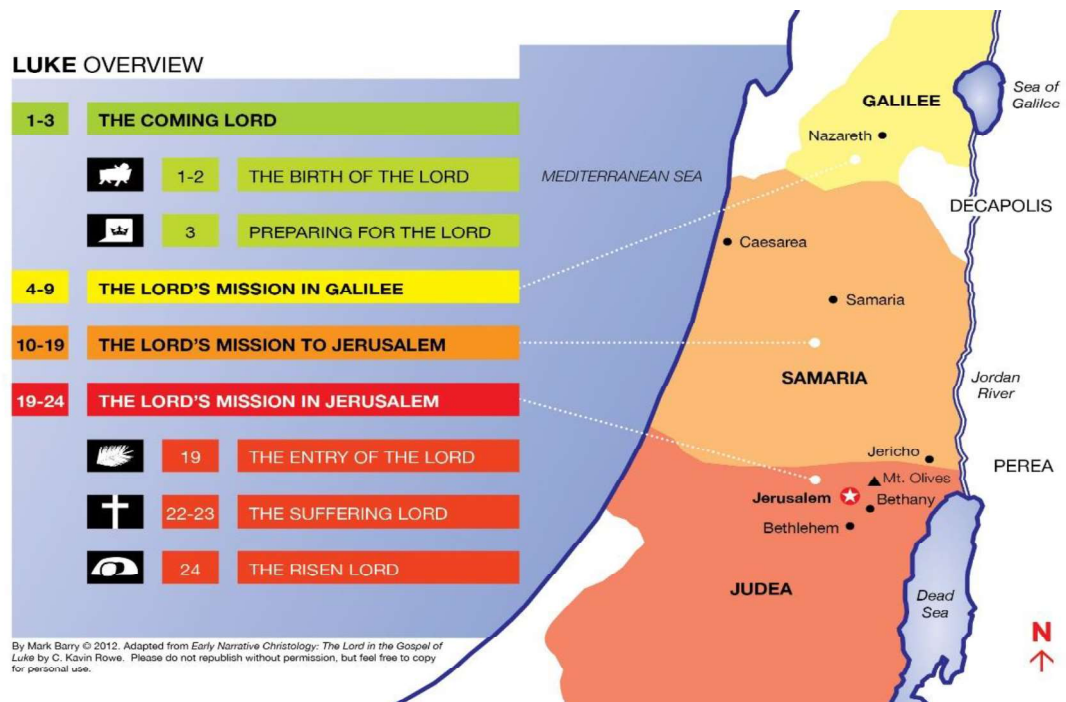
E- Why do we symbolize this gospel as an OX?

The ox associated with the Gospel of Luke fits well since it speaks to the great sacrifice of Jesus, and the ox was an important animal for sacrifice as required in the Torah.

3- Book outline

Its sections:

1. Unit 1: Our Friend became like us and was tempted like us, **chapters 1-4**
2. Unit 2: Our Friend feels our suffering, **chapters 5-18**
3. Unit 3: Our faithful Friend, **chapters 19-23**
4. Unit 4: Our Friend, the Risen from the dead, **chapter 24**



Unit 1: [3 lessons]

Our Friend became like us and was tempted like us chapters 1-4

St Luke presents the Son of God as a Friend, One that we can befriend not fear.

1. Introduction (**Chapter 1** v 1-4).
2. The promise of the Baptist to Zachariah and Elizabeth (v.5-25).
3. Meeting Elizabeth (v.26-38).
4. The birth of John (v.57-80).
5. The birth of Christ (**Chapter 2**)
6. The shepherds meet Him (v.8-20).
7. The circumcision of Jesus (v.21).
8. His entrance to the temple (v.22-40).
9. Jesus challenging the Jewish elders (v.41-52).
10. His baptism (**Chapter 3**) and the genealogy of Christ (v.23-37).
11. Jesus was tempted before beginning His ministry at Galilee (**Chapter 4**)

Chapter 1

Servant's preparation:

A sermon from Upper room app bible study about chapter 1

<https://subsplash.com/upperroommedia/lb/mi/+nkahjqy>

Brief introduction:

At the beginning of each lesson, please mention this book overview.

- ✓ Who is St. Luke? He was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle later after resurrection.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Greek after collecting testimonies from eyewitnesses to accurately record all details of Jesus's life.
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? ***St Luke offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind***, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child.

Main points in the Chapter:

1. An introduction to the book 1-4
2. The good news to Zacharias of John's birth 5-17
3. Zacharias' dumbness 18-25
4. The Annunciation of the Divine Incarnation 26-38
5. Mary's Encounter with Elizabeth 39-45
6. The Virgin's hymn of Praise 46-56
7. John's Birth and the Circumcision 57-66
8. Zacharias the priest's Prophecy 67-80

Lesson overview:

Please go over main events of the chapter briefly as follows

The gospel of St. Luke started with a short introduction that mentioned how, why and to whom was the book written. We explained that in the previous introduction.

John the Baptist's birth: 1-25

- Because St. Luke was a man of science, being a physician, he clearly defined the date of the event of John's birth
- Even though that time, there was corruption and there were no prophecies for 3 centuries, God saw Zacharias and Elizabeth, noticed their righteousness, and honored them to get John the forerunner before the Christ.

- In this conversation that occurred between the archangel Gabriel and Zacharias the priest inside the Altar, we notice that Zacharias did not believe the angel's words, in spite of seeing the angel and listening to the angelic voice in a tangible way which made him blameworthy of it, particularly because the holy history mentions living examples of elderly people who begot children whereas their wives was barren, such as Sarah, Abraham's wife for not having children.
- In (Luke 1: 17) "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah". The Scholar Oreganus comments on this statement saying, "He did not say in the soul of Elijah, but rather 'in the spirit of Elijah and his power'. The spirit that dwelt in Elijah also dwelt in John, and the power in Elijah was also in John.
- The archangel declared himself that he is Gabriel, he came carrying the divine promise and the good news, but he also had to discipline Zacchaeus with dumbness as God commanded.

The Annunciation of the Divine Incarnation 26-38

- God chose a virgin who is betrothed to a man [engaged but for the Jews, it is like married without physical union]. God's choice was perfect because Jesus had to come from a virgin but if she were seen pregnant without being married, people would stone her thinking she was a sinner.
- The Holy Spirit came on her to sanctify her womb and start her conception, this happened the minute she agreed to accepting the assignment of being the mother of God. Her obedience opposes Eve's disobedience. She was more obedient than Zacchaeus who questioned the angel.

Mary's Encounter with Elizabeth 39-45.

- The virgin St. Mary has now carried in herself He who carries the burdens of the world, and He who provides for everything, she did not worry about what is hers, but rather in the receiving spirit, she hastened to the hills to the city of Judah, so as to serve Elizabeth.

The Virgin's Hymn of Praise 46-56

- When Elizabeth's tongue was released in blessings to the Virgin because she has believed the promises and has carried the Word of God in her womb; likewise did the Virgin's tongue began do praise God.

John's Birth and the Circumcision 57-66

- John's birth became a preaching sermon, though it had begun mysteriously, but the Lord has become a companion to him so as to support him; for God took John to the wilderness while young, and there He took care of him and raised him, so that he appears to Israel at the appropriate due time.

Goal we learn: [Submit to God's will]

In this chapter, we have many points to learn from, but we will focus on St Mary and her submissive response to the angel. **"Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word."** Luke 1:38

Chapter 17

Servant's preparation:

A sermon from upper room app about Luke 17

<https://subsplash.com/upperroommedia/lb/mi/+atjkpfm>

Brief introduction:

At the beginning of each lesson, please mention this book overview.

- ✓ Who is St. Luke? He was a doctor, a painter, and a Gentile from Antioch. He accepted Christianity at the hands of St. Paul the apostle later after resurrection.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Greek after collecting testimonies from eyewitnesses to accurately record all details of Jesus's life.
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? **St Luke offered Jesus to the Greeks as a Lover of mankind**, who cares for the educated and uneducated, the philosopher and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the man, the woman and the child.

Remember:

Last lesson we talked about 3 parables of the lost and found in chapter 15 then 2 parables about using money in chapter 16. We realize that money is not sinful but the way you deal with it matters a lot. You could be distracted by money like the prodigal son who needed repentance or you may look religious like his older brother but still love money or you might do what Jesus says and use the money wisely to make rewards in heaven. We examined some examples on how we should be careful when we think about money to avoid a wasteful life like the rich man who regretted his carelessness at eternal life.

Main points in the Chapter 17:

1. Avoiding obstructions in our conduct 1- 2
2. Having a forgiving heart for those who have wronged us 3- 4
3. Increase our faith 5- 10
4. Gratitude and the faith- the ten lepers 11- 19
5. Faith in the inward kingdom 20- 21
6. The inward kingdom and the eternal one 22- 37

Lesson overview:

Please go over main events of the chapter briefly as follows:

Avoiding obstructions and having a forgiving heart for those who have wronged us 1- 4:

Chapter 17 begins with some commands. Jesus says:

- Don't cause someone else to sin.
- Forgive an offending brother every time he repents.

Increase our faith 5- 10

The disciples asked Jesus to increase their faith, but His answer was that even little faith as a mustard seed is all what you need. We should always pray for bigger faith but not take it as an excuse not to do good things as little faith can move mountains.

Jesus is emphasizing our responsibility to do what He commands us to do. Our focus cannot be on our feelings, but rather we must focus on our duty. I can't picture the tired and messed up slave coming in from the field feeling like getting his master's dinner. He felt like taking a bath and being served a nice dinner. But he had to focus on his duty as a slave. I would venture to say that if you show up at work on time, your boss does not say, "Thank you so much for being here on time! It's just wonderful how you do that day after day!" But, because of the human propensity toward pride, we're all prone to get puffed up when we do our duty, especially if we start thinking how difficult it was. We think, "I'm so spiritual! forgave my brother seven times yesterday!" Jesus said remove the limit on how many times you forgive.

Gratitude and the faith- the ten lepers 11- 19



We find Him healing 10 lepers. It is interesting to note that they were healed "as they went" (v. 14) on their way to the priests (to be declared clean, according to the Law). They had enough faith to begin moving even before they were actually healed. But if they were examples of faith, they were not examples of gratitude. Only one returned, apparently a Samaritan (v. 18). This one had received heavenly rewards in addition to earthly healing because of his gratitude. We have a lot of things that we take for granted but we should think how to thank God for our many blessings.

Faith in the inward kingdom 20- 21

In response to a question from a group of Pharisees, Jesus talks next about the kingdom of God. As we know, most Hebrews expected the Messiah to establish a political and military kingdom when He came. But Jesus told His listeners, "The kingdom of God is within you" (v. 21).

The inward kingdom and the eternal one 22- 37

Jesus did not invent the term "kingdom of God." It was a term used by the Jews to refer to the time when the Messiah would come and establish His kingdom in Israel. One of Jesus' tasks was to help the people

understand that this common understanding was in fact a misunderstanding. Jesus begins teaching His disciples about His second coming, the advent that we today are still awaiting. He refers to two Old Testament incidents, the flood during Noah's day and the destruction of Sodom during Lot's day. Both of those disasters happened quickly and took people unaware. "It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed," Jesus tells His disciples in verse 30.

Goal we learn: [Don't make other stumble but forgive your brothers]

In this lesson, we will focus on the first few points in this chapter. Jesus warns us not to be a stumbling stone for others. We should not be the cause for others to sin. We should also forgive those around us even if it was a repeating issue as long as they repent so we don't make them stumble.

Lesson delivery idea

- Don't cause someone else to sin.
Jesus, through the story of Lazarus and the rich man, has made it clear that eternity is for real, and no one from beyond will come back to warn us. It is all the more imperative how we live and show Jesus to others on this side of eternity, because right now counts forever.
God does not indicate that life would be free from hardships and temptations because they make us stronger, just like a caterpillar coming out of the cocoon, it suffers on her way, but this suffering is necessary to build enough muscles to fly as a butterfly.
Don't be the one causing the temptations to others by being a bad example or by not forgiving like your father taught you. You should be a reason for others to praise your God when they see your good actions.
- Forgive an offending brother every time he repents.
When you see your brother doing something wrong, do not embarrass him in front of others but wisely and with a lot of love, go tell him his mistake to fix it. When he repents, forgive him. Don't make it harder on him by saying " what would your [sorry] do to me? Would it fix what was broken?"
Be gentle to others and put yourself in their position. The devil hates to see people treating each other with forgiveness so he makes it extremely hard for you to forgive. He brings every bad memory to make you hate your brother, but you should be smarter.

Jesus gives His disciples stern warning in verses 1-2. What are some ways that a person could cause another person to sin?

In verses 3-4 Jesus teaches about how to deal with someone who wrongs you. If you take Jesus seriously, how difficult do you think this would be?

What does "stumbling block" mean?



If we are causing another person to do a mistake or if, because of us, some conflicts or divisions happen, then, we are causing an offense or a stumbling block to others. Let me give few examples from daily life.

1. One day your close friend misunderstood your words and made fake stories about you and spread the news to many of your friends. When you came to know about this, you were hurt. You never expected that from your friend. Now your mind became stressful. Here, this friend caused a stumbling block in your life.
2. Your close friend betrayed you, or you were cheated by someone whom you trusted a lot. Here, your friend offended you.
3. In your team, everything was peaceful and smooth, suddenly two people started quarreling and made the situation stressful. This caused a stumbling block to other team members as well. If you don't wish to stumble, go try to make peace between those 2 so that no one stumbles.
4. There was a situation in your life, where arose a disagreement among your family members, and disputes broke out, which caused the other members or relatives to gossip or fight among themselves. Here, the one who started the gossip, and the people who contributed to the fight became the stumbling block to other family members.
5. You are in a public place. Suddenly you see an uproar or a fight between people. Someone caused a problem and others joined them and made it a public uproar. Here, the people who were involved in the conflict created a situation which became an offense for others who witnessed it.
6. Somebody starts a conversation with you, speaking evil of a third person. You provided more supporting evidence and the conversation slowly started becoming a gossip. Here, you and the person involved in the gossip indirectly paved way for an offense.

This is how different kinds of offenses or stumbling blocks takes root and destroys family lives, relationships, and the society as a whole. Whatever prevents your way towards success is the stumbling block in your life.

But what can we do for this?

- Let not YOU be that 'person who causes trouble'! OR Let not that offense come THROUGH YOU!

- Let the people who wish to cause trouble do it, you cannot stop them, but at least you can make sure that you are not the reason for another person to stumble or to sin!
- Many times, we tell unpleasant things about our friends to others, when we do that, those will change their attitude towards their friends and might keep away from them. What would you benefit when you make them stumble?
- Sometimes, people talk badly about the church or servants, causing others to stumble and step away, do you think God would be happy to see you do that? Even when you realize you were mistaken and that your thoughts were wrong, you may like the church again but those words you told others could not be wiped off. They would still keep away because of YOU.
- Will you try? Just imagine, if we all take a decision not to cause a stumbling block in another person's life, how good our society would be!

What will happen to the person who causes to stumble?



- It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. Luke 17:2
- Jesus warns us that great sorrow or judgement is awaiting the person who causes another person to stumble. So, don't allow yourself to be in trouble later. God's judgement is just and fair. He will punish those who cause offense. Beware!
- The one who causes stumbling block, not only causes one individual to err, but it will adversely affect the future of a family or the society or an entire generation. A wise person stays away from causing trouble to others.
- If you, by any means, cause another person to lose his faith in God or make him sin, you are definitely going to be in trouble.

A peace 'maker' not a peace 'breaker'!

- "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God". Matt 5:9
- **It is easy to cause chaos or confusion, but it really takes a lot of effort to make peace.** If your nature is to make peace, God calls you as His children, because God is love, and He loves peace.
- If you have true love, you will try your best to make peace. Even if you find someone doing wrong, if you have love, you will handle it in a better way, without causing a stumbling block to others.
- Do you want to be a peace maker or a peace breaker? God calls you to make peace wherever you are!



Let's examine ourselves

- How many conflicts happened just because of me?
- Did a fight or an argument breakout because of the information which I gave?
- Am I the reason for their fight?
- Do I have a part in that conflict?
- Did I cause any problem in another person's family life?

Now remember the words of Jesus:

It is inevitable that offenses will come, but let it not be through you.

Take home Prayer

God, thank you for teaching me that causing offense deserves a great punishment from you. Therefore, help me not to cause an offense or be a stumbling block in my brother's way. Please help me to make peace wherever I go. I'm sorry for all the troubles which I have caused in many people's lives. Please forgive me and make me pure. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Memory Verse: "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!" 17:1