

Series Introduction

Luke 1:1-4 ESV

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.

Introduction

- Luke's Gospel is the longest and the only one with a sequel
- Luke-Acts covers from before Christ was born until after he returned to heaven after his resurrection *into the beginnings of the early church*
- It could take upwards of 90 sermons to get through this book
- Likely written with 30-40 years of Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection
- The author was a companion of the apostle Paul, possibly a doctor, likely from the town of Antioch, and most likely not a Jew
- Most accept that Luke is the writer of this Gospel; hence its name
- Luke has written this letter to Theophilus who we can surmise is a man of rank in the Roman world and connected to the church
- The Gospel focuses on 4 issues:
 - What is the scope of God's salvation?
 - Why were God's people hostile towards Jesus?
 - How does Jesus fit into God's plan both while he was on earth and after he left?
 - What is the response required in regards to God's plan?
- This leads right into the Trinitarian overview of the Gospel which will be the main idea of this sermon

unique to Luke:

- angels announced to Mary
- Conversion of Zacchaeus and the penitent thief
- The Parable of the Prodigal Son, Lazarus & the rich man
- the disciples and the Holy Spirit

Main Idea:

The Gospel of Luke is the biblical account of God's plan of salvation for all those who humbly trust Christ. Therefore, we ought to avail ourselves of this salvation.

More thoroughly, and with the Trinitarian emphasis, we might say:

An expansive salvation—planned by God the Father, fulfilled by God the Son, empowered by God the Holy Spirit—is received by all those—regardless of race, gender, religion, wealth, health, history—who humbly repent of their sin and trust in the God-man Jesus Christ.

We will consider this Trinitarian summarization of Luke by ^{considering} ~~consider~~ this book in regards to the plan of God, the plan fulfilled, and the plan empowered, ^{and see} that this is a ¹ plan for all ² ³

The Plan of God – “a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us”

If you grew up in the 80's, the idea of a plan might get you thinking of the TV show The A-Team – *it got me thinking about the A-TEAM*

One of the oft-repeated lines from the show was spoken by one John “Hannibal” Smith who, at the end of a show, would often declare, “I love it when a plan comes together!”

For those unfamiliar with the show, it was essentially about a special commando unit that was tried unjustly ^{for} of a crime they didn't commit. After escaping prison, the group, consisting of John “Hannibal” Smith, Templeton “Face” Peck, “Howling Mad” Murdoch, and BA Baracus, peddle their services as soliders of fortune called The A-Team.

Mayhem, chaos, and pandemonium would ensue and at the end of the show, when against all odds and logic, the A-Team would come out on top, Hannibal would light up a cigar and say, “:I love it when a plan comes together!”

This isn't the type of plan that God has; unlike Hannibal and the A-team, who never where in control and only accidentally or surprisingly ended up on top, God is utterly in control of his plan for the world and the salvation of his people; Luke makes this clear throughout the gospel and the book of Acts as well.

God has a plan which he will see fulfilled.

The Gospel of Luke is the report of...

- Commentator **Darrell L. Bock** declares: "The center of Luke's concern is a detailed discussion of God's plan."
- Major elements of God's plan:
 - The career of Jesus
 - The hope of the spiritually humble and needy
 - The offer of God's blessing
 - The coming of a new era
 - The defeat of Satan
 - The suffering of Jesus
- We see the plan of God through the repeated declaration of Jesus "I must" *throughout the book*
 - 2:49 – I must be in my Father's house
 - 4:43 – I must preach the good news
 - 9:22 – The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected
 - 13:33 – I must go on my way today (*Jerusalem*)
 - 17:25 – The Son of Man must suffer many things
- *These "I musts" indicate what theologians call "divine necessity"*
- **Leon Morris**: "Until recently very little attention seems to have been paid to the remarkable fact that Luke is the only one of the four Evangelists to write a sequel to his Gospel. Why did he do it? ... His second volume, of course, takes us on into the history of the early church. It tells us of those first days in Jerusalem and of the way the preachers went abroad with the gospel ... The great thought Luke is expressing is surely that God is working out His purpose. This purpose is seen clearly in the life and work of Jesus, but it did not finish with the earthly ministry of Jesus. It carried right on into the life and witness of the church. The church does not represent a new, completely unrelated act of God. Luke seems to be saying that the work of Jesus led, and in the plan of God was meant to lead, to the life of the church."

Application

- Find your confidence in life in the revealed purpose of God in his Word, and in particular the Gospel of Luke

V4 - that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught

The gospel is for certainty, so let's find our certainty there

as seen in VI

In regards to the word “accomplished” we again hear from Morris this: “The word ^(accomplished) has about it the air of fulfillment.” This leads us into our next part of our Trinitarian overview: The Plan Fulfilled

The Plan Fulfilled -- “have been accomplished among us”

- Four parts to the book of Luke:
 - 1-4:13 – Introduction to Jesus and his preparation for ministry
 - 4:14-9:50 – Galilean ministry
 - 9:51-19:44 – Journey to Jerusalem
 - 19:45-24:53 – Jesus’s death and resurrection
- Towards the end of his ministry in Galilee and towards the end of his Jerusalem journey that fulfillment word “accomplish” is heard again:
 - **Luke 9:30-31 ESV** ³⁰ And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to **accomplish** at Jerusalem.
 - **Luke 18:31-33 ESV** ³¹ And taking the twelve, he said to them, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be **accomplished**. ³² For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. ³³ And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise.”
- What was accomplished? Those things which were delivered by the eyewitnesses and ministers of the Gospel and those things Theophilus had been taught.

major segments

Mount of Transfiguration

12

- Eyewitnesses and ministers of the Gospel = the ones who saw Jesus and preached the Jesus they saw
- One group held that two-fold role – the early witnesses who became ministers of the Word were the apostles
- The apostolic deposit, the things delivered and taught, are summed up in **1 Corinthians 11:23 ESV** For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread,
- The fulfillment of the plan of God is found in the Son of God and in what he performed; it’s the Gospel

1 Cor 15:3
 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures

Christ accomplished God's plan
 Luke indicates this as a major aspect of the book

In 2003, then-President of the United States George Bush delivered an infamous speech in which he declared American war operations had ended in Iraq. With a banner draped behind him saying "Mission Accomplished," Bush delivered the televised address from the warship USS Abraham Lincoln. "Major combat operations in Iraq have ended," he told the crowd. "In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed." While the speech was well-received at the time, the war lasted another eight years. It was a regrettable speech by the president of the United States. It was a premature declaration of fulfillment which some argue never materialized. This couldn't ^{be} farther from the fulfillment of God's plan that Jesus accomplished. The Gospel of Luke reminds us that Jesus's mission was truly and completely accomplished. Jesus fulfilled all the Father desired. *Jesus, among other titles, could be called the Great Fulfiler!*

Application

Where do you find fulfillment?

work, relationships, possessions, fame, family, sex, power, education, health

The Plan Empowered

• we were made in God's image to be in a creature/creator relationship → only God can satisfy... only God can fulfill our deepest longings but we look elsewhere

• Christ is the only one who fulfilled God's plan... he is the only one who can fulfill our desires

The third part of our Trinitarian overview of the Gospel of Luke pertains to the working of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is what empowers and enables the plan to be fulfilled.

- The HS occurs more often in Luke than the gospels from Matthew and Mark
- We see his impact early on in the birth narrative filling the major characters: John, Elizabeth, Zechariah, and Jesus's mother Mary

John

○ 1:15 – for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

Mary

○ 1:35 – And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

○ 1:41 – And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit,

○ 1:67 – And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

- Throughout Luke we see the Holy Spirit's active connection to the ministry of Jesus:
 - 1:35 Gabriel informs Mary the Holy Spirit will come upon her and she will conceive the Son of God
 - 3:16 John prophesied Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire
 - 3:22 The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus when he was baptized
 - 4:18 Jesus applied the words Of Isaiah to himself: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
 - 10:21 Jesus rejoices in the Holy Spirit
 - 11:13 Jesus tells his disciple the Father would give the Holy Spirit to those who asked
- Leon Morris: "It is abundantly clear, then, that one of Luke's great emphases is the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit empowers the fulfilling of God's plan and the accomplishments of Jesus

Application

Pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit = God's blessing and enablement

Ephesians 5:18 ESV And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

The command in Greek (*plērousthe*) is a present imperative and does not describe a onetime "filling" but a regular pattern of life. The blessing and enablement of God by the filling of the Spirit is seen most significantly in the fruit of the Spirit.


The Plan for All - , to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus

Theophilus represents the expansiveness of the new community whose Jesus's salvation was extended to. Jesus's salvation would know no boundaries.

- Luke's gospel emphasizes Jesus's love, concern, and care for many who were overlooked, ostracized, and unnoticed:
 - Woman such as Mary, Elizabeth, Anna, and Mary and Martha
 - The poor such as Jesus's teaching on
 - Immoral women – the prostitute who poured oil on Jesus's feet x2
 - Samaritans – the story of the good Samaritan
 - Lepers – the ten lepers who were healed x2
 - Tax collectors – like the ones Jesus baptized or fellowshiped with
 - Criminals – the two thieves
 - Rebellious family members – the teaching on the prodigal son
- The make-up of the new community that Jesus is making, and that Luke makes special attention to highlight, knows no boundaries – all who will humbly come
 - **Luke 24:44-49 ESV** ⁴⁴Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Application

Repent and believe

The message of Luke - 
 we intend this to be our message
 this message is for you
 this message is what we celebrate at communion

- expansive gospel - planned, fulfilled, imposed
- for all who will come
- repent and believe