

A Faith Worth Having

Luke 1:1-4

There are a few things about Luke worth remembering as we begin our study from the gospel of Luke:

- (1). He was a physician.
- (2). He was just a boy when Christ died.
- (3). He was a friend to Paul and traveled with Paul on many missionary journeys.
- (4). He was a Gentile from Syria.
- (5). Luke wrote two books in our Bible, Luke and Acts.

The goal of our study is that through reading Luke, we might look to Christ and live. We saw last week that Luke wrote *"in order that"* we might be *"fully persuaded"* of what we believe. Faith is a theme throughout the book. Luke was a physician, not an apostle, not a clergyman - just a man of real faith.

- I. **A faith worth having is always initiated by you - "...it seemed fitting to me."**
 Luke is writing to a nobleman named Theophilus about faith in Christ. Theophilus was most likely a Jewish nobleman whose Greek name means either "lover of God" or "loved by God." Luke's faith was his own faith and he wrote Luke to help Theophilus with his faith as well
(A). Faith cannot be inherited... nobody is a believer in Christ because one's parents are.
 Likewise, mom and dad, you can't force somebody you love to walk with Christ.
(B). Faith cannot be imitated... A person can have no more of religion, no more holiness, no more love, no more of God, than he has in his own heart. The Kingdom of God consists entirely in the state of the heart. Therefore God can give nothing else and grant nothing less than a true heart. The grace of God is a spark that causes the flame of faith, but it is
- II. **A faith worth having should be investigated by you - "having investigated carefully."**
 One might say, "But how do you investigate faith? Isn't it the opposite of factual evidence?" No. In the gospels, Christianity is called **"the faith"** as in **"the faith once delivered to the saints"** (Jude 1:3) Paul says, *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith"* (2 Tim. 4:7). We to be workmen who *"rightly divide the word of truth."*
 When it comes to the decision to be followers of Jesus Christ:
 (A). We have investigated the course of our life and believe something needs changing.
 (B). We have investigated the claims of Christ and believe He is sufficient to remove guilt.
 (C). We have investigated what Christ offers to us and believe His Kingdom to be supreme.
- III. **A faith having must be invested by you - "...to write it out for you ...Theophilus."**
 If Theophilus is a Jew and *"most excellent"* is an indication that he is a high official, then he is most likely Theophilus, the high priest that Josephus mentions ruling from AD 36 to 41. During that time Messianic Jews were persecuted by the Jerusalem Jewish government. Luke may have been warning the officiating high priest, that if he doesn't repent, God would bring judgment on Jerusalem and the Jews. It was during Theophilus' tenure that Caligula became mad and attempted to place a statue of himself in the Temple at Jerusalem. Rome and Jerusalem were on the brink of war. **Acts 9:31** may indicate that Theophilus relaxed his position of persecuting the Messianic Jews, specifically due to Paul's and Luke's influence. Luke is evidence that a follower of Christ can change one's environment by his own faith.