

LUKE



Welcome to our journal for the Gospel of Luke. Our aim is to empower readers by clarifying the Bible's message and building confidence in their understanding. While there are in-depth courses available on extracting detail and nuance from both literature and Scripture, this journal offers straightforward insights for Christians seeking greater confidence in their personal Bible reading journey.

Luke, a physician and companion of Paul, wrote both the Gospel of Luke and Acts to provide an orderly, reliable account of Jesus' life for Theophilus and other readers. He emphasizes the historical context of Jesus' life within the Roman Empire, often detailing settings, names, and places to anchor the narrative in real events.

This journal provides a structured journey through a single book of the Bible. The introductory insights are designed to prepare you for a five-week learning experience, offering tools and ample space for daily practice in reading, understanding, and applying Scripture to your life.

How to Use This Journal

The opening pages offer guidance on approaching Bible reading to draw out deeper meaning and insights. They also provide tools to help you gain confidence in the depth of your understanding. Acknowledging that interpreting a text written 2,000 years ago can be challenging, these early resources are designed to build your assurance as you study Scripture.

Most pages in this journal outline our recommended reading pace and provide space for your observations. While church sermons often move quickly through details to reach meaning and application, this journal encourages you to slow down and focus on the details. A clear understanding of meaning emerges best through a careful, deliberate approach.

Each day, with the exception of the last two days, you'll be assigned two chapters to read, with one being a repeated chapter. This repetition is intentional, as it supports better retention and deeper understanding. The structure is purposefully designed to foster these two outcomes.

After reading, you'll have space to engage with the passage through three steps:

1. OBSERVATIONS:

Write down all your observations from the day's passage. Take the time to record what you read before feeling pressured to figure out why it was written. You'll be amazed at how much meaning surfaces when you pause to observe the passage's details. In addition to gaining confidence by noticing the details, also think through

how God presents Himself through what you read.

If you would like some coaching on what to observe, check out this special session we recorded for you by visiting hcbc.com/luke or scanning the QR Code.



2. SUMMARY (OPTIONAL):

If you'd like, attempt to summarize the passage in a single sentence. This exercise aids retention and helps sharpen your focus on how the passage may speak to your everyday life.

3. APPLICATION:

Reflect on how the passage might relate to your day. Was it encouraging in a current situation? Write down how it uplifted you. Then pray about that. There are very few things that help prayer more than spending some time in God's Word before praying for His provision or direction in your life. Did it challenge you toward a new step of faith? Note how you sense God might be calling you forward. Did it convict you of sin in your life? Confess that to God and move forward with His forgiveness and freedom.

REPEAT THIS PROCESS EACH DAY.

For the next five weeks, you have the opportunity to immerse yourself in a Gospel account. Take time to dwell on a firsthand narrative of the life that changed the world. Document your insights, hear Jesus' words across the centuries, and apply the Gospel's truth to your daily life.

Insights to Help

The English word “gospel” means “good news.” We use it to describe the message of Jesus and to refer to the four New Testament books that record His life. In the Bible, a Gospel is one of four unique accounts of Jesus’ life. Simply put, a Gospel is a narrative that follows characters through a story. And God uses story to reveal eternal truths about Himself, about us, and how we connect to Him in faith.

Since Luke is a story, its meaning unfolds like any other story. Characters can be good or bad. Teachings, dialogue, events, and even locations convey meaning.

The characters in Luke highlight two main questions: “How does God see us?” and “How do we see God?” As you read Luke, you’ll see that characters reflect either God’s view of humanity or humanity’s view of God. To clarify, Luke presents Jesus as God. Many characters represent the Jewish religious leadership, such as Pharisees, Sadducees, High Priests, Chief Priests, and Scribes. Luke often uses these figures to depict people who oppose or reject God. On the other hand, figures like tax collectors, Roman officials, and Samaritans represent Gentile cultures. Through these characters, Luke shows that the way people respond to God matters more than any external label.

Teachings and dialogue in Luke add further clarity. When Jesus speaks, He offers insight into how He wants us to see the world and understand God. Other characters’ words demonstrate belief or disbelief.

One of the ways Jesus teaches is by using parables. A parable is a story designed to teach a lesson, often described as “an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.” Parables offer insights into how God views life and invite personal reflection on their meanings. Here are some tips to understand parables:

- Luke includes many of Jesus’ parables, like the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, and the Rich Man and Lazarus, which reveal the kingdom of God, ethical teachings, and God’s grace.
- Sometimes, Jesus explains a parable’s meaning to His disciples (e.g., the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4), helping guide the interpretation of similar parables.
- Most parables focus on a single main idea. Avoid overanalyzing details, as this can obscure the story’s simple message.

The events in Luke center around significant moments in Jesus’ life, leading to the crucifixion and resurrection—the most important events in Luke and every Gospel account.

Location also plays a role in the story. From chapter nine onward, Luke highlights Jesus’ journey toward Jerusalem, the heart of Israel. While many Jews believed Jerusalem set them apart, Jesus taught that God chose them to be light to others. Luke shows tension as Jesus moves toward Jerusalem, especially as He teaches about God’s love for all people.

Location continues to matter in the second book Luke wrote, the Book of Acts, which you can explore further in the accompanying tool for that book.

Luke’s Gospel highlights Jesus’ compassion for social outcasts,

including women, the poor, and the sick, underscoring that Jesus' mission is for everyone, including Gentiles. In Jewish tradition, Gentiles—non-Jews, such as Greeks and Romans—were outsiders. While God originally set Israel apart to be a “light to the nations” (Isaiah 42, 49), by Jesus' time, many Jews had lost this purpose. Luke and Acts echo this call, showing that God's love extends to all people. You will even read that Paul and Barnabas preach using Isaiah 49 as a text in Acts 13.

We also recommend the following resources.

“The Bible Project” is a helpful resource to deepen your understanding of different types of biblical literature.

Types of literature in the Bible:

Bibleproject.com/explore/video/literary-styles-Bible/

How do the Gospels fit into the whole Bible:

Bibleproject.com/explore/video/how-to-read-gospel/

Deeper digging on how to read a narrative book:

Bibleproject.com/explore/category/how-to-read-biblical-narrative/

Deeper digging on the Gospel of Luke:

Bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-luke/

A graphic representation of the Gospel of Luke:

hcbc.com/luke

And if you would like even more resources on how to study the Bible on your own, consider our free online course:

Bible Study Methods and Rules of Interpretation

hcbc.com/biblestudymethods

WEEK 1



WEEK 1 | DAY 1 – LUKE 1-2

Observations:

Summary Sentence:

WEEK 1 | DAY 2 – LUKE 2-3

Observations:

Summary Sentence:

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WEEK 1 | DAY 4 - LUKE 4-5

Observations:

Summary Sentence:

