

LUKE

AUTHOR:

Luke was a doctor, a Gentile (a non-Jew), well-educated in Greek culture, and a companion of Paul.

DATE:

Most scholars believe Luke was written sometime between the years of 59-79 A.D.

RECIPIENTS:

The original recipient was Theophilus, whose name means ‘friend of God’, and who Luke appears to have known well. It has even been suggested that Theophilus was a publisher who was responsible for making sure Luke’s letters were distributed to local bodies of believers (churches). Though addressed to one man, it is obvious that Luke is aware that it will be read by a larger audience—mainly Christians and especially new converts, both Jews and Gentiles.

CONTEXT:

Luke was written approximately 30-40 years after the cross, and the concept of Gentiles being inheritors of the kingdom of God was a radical new way of thinking. (In the Old Testament, the Jews were God’s chosen people.) Many false religions were flourishing, and Christians were being persecuted, making the need to understand the details of the Christian faith all the more critical.

PURPOSE:

The Gospel of Luke “explains who Jesus was, what He did, why He came, and how he prepared the disciples for the role they would have in that plan”.¹ It served as a means to advance the Gospel and to address and correct misconceptions about the Christian faith. Luke wanted to show that Gentiles, *as well as Jews*, had a place in the kingdom of God. The main purpose, interestingly enough, can be found in Acts 1:1-2 (Acts was also written by Luke). Luke states that he wanted to accurately recount the story of Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, burial, appearing to the disciples, and then finally His ascension into heaven.



¹ Darrell L. Bock, *NIV Application Commentary, Luke* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 17.