

Jesus' Birth and Childhood
Luke 1–2

Memory Verse: *"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased"* (Luke 3:22 ESV).

Background Helps

For a master schedule of the our 6-month study of “The Writings of Dr. Luke,” see the attachment at the end of this forecast.

The Holy Spirit inspired four men to record the gospel history of our Lord Jesus Christ—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. While relating the same good news about the same person, each author gives a distinct portrait of the Lord Jesus with his own unique emphases. Over the next three months, we will be looking at Luke's picture of Jesus. Since his special emphases were inspired by the Holy Spirit, it would seem right that, in your weekly study of Luke's Gospel, you should often guide your class to the discovery of these unique features of our Lord's person and work.

Luke's special characteristics can be discovered by your own observation, especially through use of a Harmony of the Gospels. You can also find help from any good Bible dictionary or a standard introduction to the New Testament books. For example, the following characteristics of Luke's Gospel are presented in the *NIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1985), 1533:

1. Universality, recognition of Gentiles as well as Jews in God's plan
2. Emphasis on prayer, especially Jesus' praying before important occasions
3. Joy at the announcement of the gospel or "good news"
4. Special concern for the role of women
5. Special interest in the poor (some of the rich were included in Jesus' followers, but he seemed closest to the poor)
6. Concern for sinners (Jesus was a friend to those deep in sin)
7. Stress on the family circle (Jesus' activity included men, women and children with the setting frequently in the home)
8. Repeated use of the title "Son of Man"
9. Emphasis on the Holy Spirit.

No doubt there are more, but these are features you should look for as you study through the book. It is widely acknowledged that Luke was writing primarily for a Gentile, or even a Greek, audience. His portrait of Christ presents him as the ideal man, the perfect human, the Son of Man (while also insisting, of course, that he is the Son of God—see this week's memory verse). As such, he is the Savior of all mankind. Luke 19:10 is often cited as a theme verse for the entire book.

Lesson Helps

Introduce the entire Gospel of Luke, using material from the Background Helps above. Then teach the familiar Christmas story in Luke 1 and 2. For this first lesson, we will leave you on your own with the Holy Spirit's help! Remember to write a lesson aim, to prepare a lesson outline, and to devise some creative methods for your lesson.

Home Assignment:



Read Luke 3:1–4:13



Memorize Luke 3:22

THE WRITINGS OF DR. LUKE
A 6-month Study of Luke and Acts

The Gospel According to Luke

- I. Jesus' Birth and Childhood (1–2)
 - 1. Luke 1–2

- II. Preparation for Jesus' Public Ministry (3:1–4:13)
 - 2. Luke 3:1–4:13

- III. Jesus' Ministry in Galilee (4:14–9:50)
 - 3. Luke 4:14–6:11
 - 4. Luke 6:12–7:50
 - 5. Luke 8:1–9:50

- IV. Jesus' Journeying Toward Jerusalem (9:51–19:27)
 - 6. First Stage: Luke 9:51–11:36
 - 7. First Stage (cont.): Luke 11:37–13:21
 - 8. Second Stage: Luke 13:22–17:10
 - 9. Third Stage: Luke 17:11–19:27

- V. Jesus' Ministry in Jerusalem (19:28–21:38)
 - 10. Luke 19:28–21:38

- VI. Jesus' Passion and Resurrection (22–24)
 - 11. Luke 22:1–65
 - 12. Luke 22:66–23:56
 - 13. Luke 24

The Acts of the Apostles

- I. The Church's Witness in Jerusalem (1–7)
 - 14. Acts 1–2 Coming of the Spirit and Birth of the Church
 - 15. Acts 3:1–4:31 Witness of Peter and the Apostles in Jerusalem
 - 16. Acts 4:32–6:7 Witness of Peter and the Apostles in Jerusalem (cont.)
 - 17. Acts 6:8–7:60 Stephen's Witness and Martyrdom

- II. The Church's Witness in Judea, Samaria, and Beyond (8–12)
 - 18. Acts 8–9 Philip's Witness and Saul's (Paul's) Conversion
 - 19. Acts 10–12 First Gentile Converts and Peter's Escape from Prison

- III. The Church's Witness to the World (13–28)
 - 20. Acts 13–14 Paul's First Missionary Journey
 - 21. Acts 15:1–16:5 Jerusalem Council
 - 22. Acts 16:6–18:22 Paul's Second Missionary Journey
 - 23. Acts 18:22–21:16 Paul's Third Missionary Journey
 - 24. Acts 21:17–23:35 Paul's Arrest and Defense in Jerusalem
 - 25. Acts 24–26 Paul's Defense and Imprisonment in Caesarea
 - 26. Acts 27–28 Paul's Voyage to Rome and Imprisonment