



ROSE GUIDE TO THE GOSPELS

Side-by-Side Charts and Overviews



CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

The Four Gospels 5

CHAPTER 2

The Life of Jesus 31

CHAPTER 3

A Harmony of the Gospels 53

CHAPTER 4

Who's Who in the Gospels 73

CHAPTER 5

Understanding the World of Jesus 95

CHAPTER 6

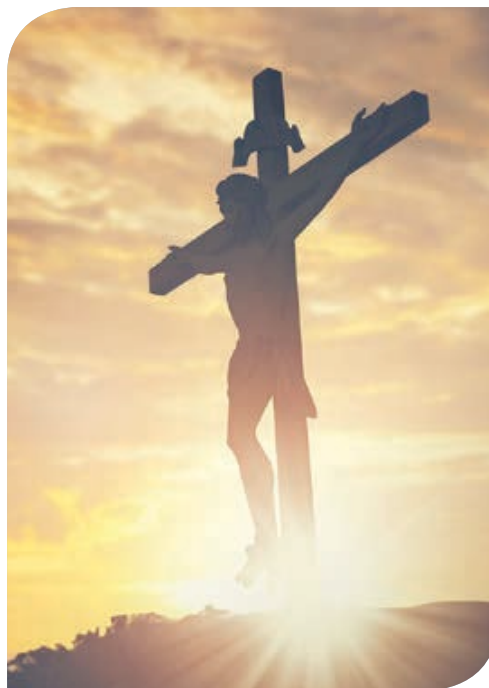
Evidence for the Resurrection 115

CHAPTER 7

How We Got the Gospels 129

Why, two millennia after his crucifixion, is the world still so fascinated with Jesus?

Do a search for his name on the internet and you'll be given anywhere from 330–880 million links to browse! Just for fun, consider that lower number. Who could ever read so many web pages? At one per minute—and skimming nonstop for sixteen hours a day—you're looking at a project that would take more than 950 years. (Of course, no one *should* try to read most of those links; contrary to popular belief, not everything we find on the internet is true!)



A better plan would be to set aside a few hours to carefully read the New Testament gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Together, these four biographies of Jesus (as they've been called) give us an accurate, breathtaking portrait of the most extraordinary life ever lived.

WHAT IS A GOSPEL?

The Greek word *euangelion*, translated as *gospel*, means “good news.” In ancient times, royal heralds would be dispatched to travel from village to village, announcing the *gospel* of a king's military triumph or impending visit, or the birth of a royal heir. In the Bible, the term *gospel* refers to the heavenly good news announcement that God has, in Jesus, fulfilled his messianic promises to Israel and supplied a Savior for the world. *Gospel* also refers to any of the first four books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These four gospels each proclaim—in different ways, as we shall see—who Jesus is and what he has done to make salvation possible.

The four gospels can be described as short *biographies* of Jesus, but they differ from most contemporary biographies. A modern biography usually presents a detailed, chronological, and comprehensive summary of

someone's life. It tries to shed light on all aspects of its subject—his/her personality, character, accomplishments, etc.—from the cradle to the grave. The Gospels don't exactly do this. In fact, it's estimated that, between the four gospels, only about fifty days of Jesus' three-year ministry are highlighted! It's also been suggested that reading all the recorded words of Jesus found in the Gospels would only take the average person about three hours. Clearly, the gospel writers—and behind them, the Holy Spirit—were highly selective in the material they chose to include.

We can also think of the Gospels as verbal *portraits* of Jesus. Each gospel writer views Jesus from a different perspective. We could also say they are *messages* about Jesus, each one built around carefully selected events and themes from Jesus' life and designed to show the significance of his life to a different audience.

Though the Gospels weren't the first New Testament books written, they appear first because they link the story of Israel in the Old Testament with the birth of the church in the New Testament. The followers of Jesus were convinced that he was (and is) the Messiah, the anointed one foretold in the Old Testament. They saw Jesus, the carpenter from Nazareth, as the fulfillment of the Jewish law and the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). They believed that his death on the cross for sin made the Jewish sacrificial system obsolete. They saw Jesus as the personification of all God's glorious promises. Given these breathtaking beliefs, it's no wonder the Gospels make up almost half (46 percent) of the New Testament. In the eyes of the earliest Christians, the entire Old Testament anticipates the life of Jesus, and the entire New Testament celebrates and builds on that life.

WHY FOUR GOSPELS?

Why not just write a single comprehensive book about Jesus' life, teachings, miracles, death, burial, and resurrection? One answer is that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were writing to different audiences and emphasizing different aspects



THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Author

Luke never “signed” his gospel, but the missionary-doctor has long been regarded as the author of the third gospel, which is the longest of the four gospels (Col. 4:14). (The gospel of Luke also wins the prize for being the longest book in the New Testament!) Luke is therefore the only gentile among the writers of the New Testament.



St. Luke the Evangelist
by Josef Kastner

Luke was a close and trusted associate of the apostle Paul. This is evident from his use of the first-person plural pronoun *we* in the book of Acts (16:10–18; 20:5–21:18; 27:1–28:16). This close relationship is what gives his gospel authority and credibility. Also, in the book’s prologue, Luke describes the meticulous research he undertook in compiling his gospel. He mentions other accounts (probably both written and oral) of the life of Christ that “were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses” (Luke 1:1–2). From these, and no doubt from extensive interviews with other eyewitnesses, Luke “decided to write an orderly account” (1:3).

Date

Some scholars speculate that Luke may have composed his gospel while in Rome with Paul who was awaiting trial, perhaps as early as AD 60. Others suggest a later date, reasoning this way: Luke clearly wrote the book of Acts as a sequel to his gospel (we know this because the Acts begins with Luke’s statement, “In my former book . . .”). In Acts, Luke doesn’t mention the death of Paul, which is believed to be around AD 66–68. Thus, the book of Acts would have been written before that date. This means the book of Luke was also written in the AD 60s.

Audience

Evidence in Luke's writings suggest that Luke, a gentile, wrote for gentiles. He addressed his gospel (and the companion book of Acts) to a man named Theophilus, a Greco-Roman name that can mean "beloved of God" or "lover of God." Luke's gospel doesn't include many distinctively Jewish terms found in the other gospels. For example, there is no use of *hosanna* in the account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Luke 19:28–44). Luke mentions Roman emperors, a detail not especially important to a Jewish audience (2:1; 3:1). Luke's gospel also definitely appeals to the idealistic Greek mind, which valued virtue and character.

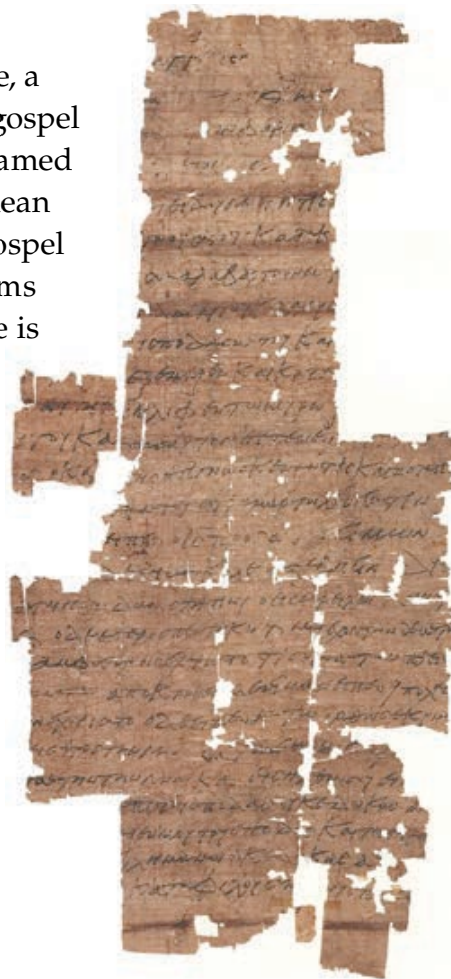
More specifically, Luke was writing for gentile believers in Jesus so that they could, as he told Theophilus, "know the certainty of the things you have been taught" (1:4).

Outline

- ✧ Prologue (1:1–4)
- ✧ The Son of Man Is Born and Grows to Manhood (1:5–2:52)
- ✧ The Son of Man Begins His Ministry (3:1–4:13)
- ✧ The Son of Man Ministers in Galilee (4:14–9:50)
- ✧ The Son of Man Journeys to and Ministers in Jerusalem (9:51–21:38)
- ✧ The Son of Man Is Crucified and Resurrected (22:1–24:53)

Unique Features

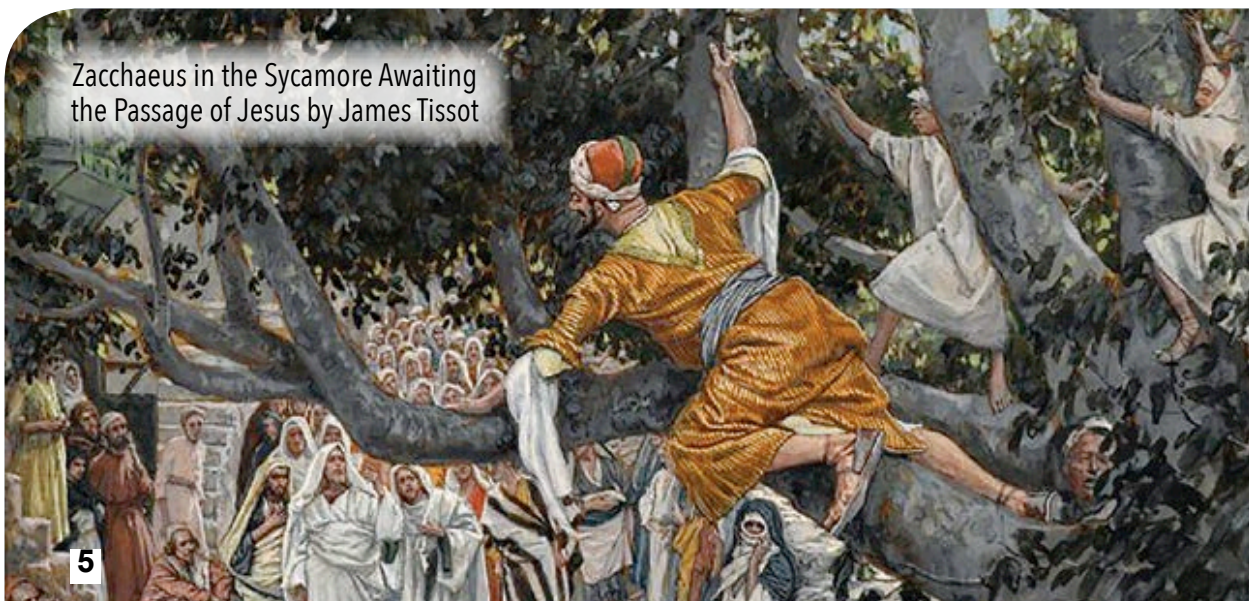
- ✧ The book of Luke has been described as the gospel for the nations, the historical gospel, the gospel to the outcast, and the gospel to the Greeks.



Papyrus 3, a fragment of Luke dating to the 6th/7th century

- ✧ Scholars of ancient Greek note that Luke has a more sophisticated literary style than the other gospels.
- ✧ About 60 percent of Luke's gospel is unique; material not found in the other gospels. Luke mentions a number of important details from the life of Jesus that the other gospels omit: Jesus' birth (2:1–20); his encounter at the age of twelve with the rabbis at the temple (2:41–52); his beloved parables of the good Samaritan (10:25–37) and the prodigal son (15:11–32); the story of Zacchaeus (19:1–10); Jesus sweating drops of blood in Gethsemane (22:44); and the exchange with the repentant thief while on the cross (23:39–43).
- ✧ According to Bible Gateway, the gospel of Luke is the seventh most read book in the Bible.
- ✧ Unlike Matthew, who traced Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, Luke traced Jesus' genealogy back to Adam, the father of all humanity.
- ✧ Luke places a huge emphasis on Jesus praying: at his baptism (3:21); in the wilderness (5:16); before choosing his disciples (6:12–13); at Caesarea Philippi (9:18); before the Transfiguration (9:28–29); when teaching his followers to pray (11:1–4); when praying for Peter (22:31–32); in Gethsemane (22:41); from the cross (23:34); and when blessing the food in Emmaus (24:30).

Zacchaeus in the Sycamore Awaiting the Passage of Jesus by James Tissot



5

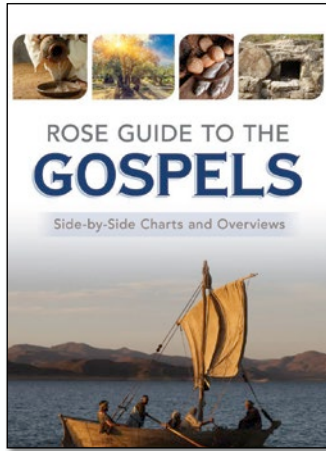
- ✧ Luke highlights the way Jesus noticed and engaged with all kinds of ordinary people, especially women and children—unheard of among rabbis of the day! Jesus paid attention and care to: a sick mother-in-law (4:38–39); frustrated fishermen (5:1–10); a grieving widow (7:11–15); an upset sister (10:38–42); a bent-over woman (13:10–13); a group of lepers (17:11–19); a curious tax collector (19:1–10); and a poor but generous widow (21:1–4).
- ✧ Luke mentions “the Holy Spirit” more than any of the other gospels.
- ✧ Luke devotes about a fourth of his gospel to Jesus’ final week (19:28–24:49).
- ✧ Miracles and signs that are unique to the book of Luke:
 - » Large catch of fish (5:4–11)
 - » Widow’s son raised from dead (7:11–17)
 - » Crippled woman healed (13:10–13)
 - » Man with dropsy healed (14:1–4)
 - » Ten lepers healed (17:11–19)
 - » High priest’s servant healed (22:49–51)

Key Verse

Only the gospel of Luke contains the beloved story of Zacchaeus. Remember him? The chief tax official in Jericho who climbed a tree in order to catch a glimpse of Jesus and ended up being radically transformed by the experience? At the end of that amazing encounter, Luke records a statement by Jesus that summarizes perfectly his earthly ministry/mission:

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

LUKE 19:10

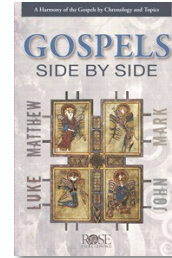


 [Learn More](#)

Rose Guide to the Gospels

See how everything in the Gospels reveals Jesus as the divine Messiah, Savior, Servant, Healer, and Risen Lord! Rose Publishing introduces *Rose Guide to the Gospels*, your quick-reference guide through the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. With over 100 pictures, charts, and timelines, this user-friendly introduction to the four Gospels helps you explore over 150 key people, places, and stories in the life of Jesus. Add context to any Bible study with in-depth summaries of how the Gospels were written, the key people and events in each of the four books, why you can trust them, how Jesus fulfilled prophecies of the Old Testament, and much more!

Softcover978-1-62862-811-1 \$17.99

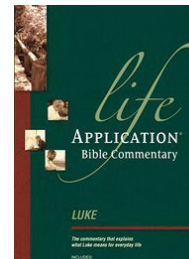


 [Learn More](#)

Gospels Side by Side

Easily compare Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John with more than 10 comparison charts, simple summaries, illustrations, and more! This pamphlet compares 100 events across the 4 Gospels side by side with this quick-reference pamphlet! See the miracles, events, and parables included in each of them at a glance! Quickly discover how the gospels support—not contradict—each other.

Pamphlet 978-1-59636-277-2 \$4.99



 [Learn More](#)

Life Application Bible Commentary: Luke

This book is part of the bestselling Life Application Bible Commentary series, which offers sermon and lesson applications alongside stirring commentary. Each volume in the series provides in-depth explanation, background, and application for every verse in the text. Perfect for sermon preparation and lesson planning.

Softcover 978-0-8423-2852-4 \$24.99



 [Learn More](#)

Life Change: Luke

We all fear being left out or exposed as outsiders. Jesus constantly encountered people—like us—who were longing to belong. Luke himself was an outsider to Jesus' community, and yet there he found a new family and a new future. In his Gospel, we discover how Jesus responded to people like us. Study Luke's Gospel and see how God made room—for everyone.

Softcover 978-0-89109-930-7 \$14.99

ROSE
PUBLISHING

www.tyndale.com/rose-publishing

csresponse@tyndale.com

or call 1-855-277-9400



Money Back
Guarantee!

ECPA
EVANGELICAL
CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS
ASSOCIATION