

Introducing Jesus Christ – Part 3

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:1-4

How can we introduce Jesus Christ to others? There are many ways to answer that question. We have been looking at the four Gospels to get some “first impressions” about Jesus Christ. We offer again a basic outline of the general emphasis of each of the four Gospels:

- Matthew – The Messiah: The King of the Jews
- Mark – The Ministry of God’s Righteous Servant
- Luke – The Ministry of The Son of Man
- John – The Ministry of The Son of God

We have already looked at the opening statements in the first chapters of Matthew and Mark. Now let’s get some “first impressions” from the first chapter of Luke’s Gospel.

Luke – The Ministry of The Son of Man

“... A declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us... that thou mightest know the certainty of those things...” (Luke 1:1,4 – KJV)

If you look carefully at Luke 1:1-4, and compare other translations, you can’t help but sense the excitement and thorough attention to details that characterizes Luke’s writings. Something really important happened. Events were “fulfillments” / “accomplishments” of divine and eternal significance. Luke gathered eyewitness accounts and connected them to the grand narrative of God sending His Son to change, not only the course of this world, but to change us, personally, forever. Luke wanted his friend Theophilus and many others to know, to understand, and to respond properly to the story of Jesus Christ.

Luke chapter one is very long! We must summarize, focusing on **one main theme: Testimony!** The knowledge of the Son of Man must move us to glorify Him and testify of Him. In plain words, knowing Christ should make us want to make Him known. Our major functions in life should be interwoven with worship, edification, and evangelization. We are going to look at how three people handled the announcement of the coming of the Messiah – which includes the announcement of Christ’s forerunner, John the Baptist.

Zachariah – Luke 1:5-25, 57-80

Zachariah was a priest who was taking his turn to serve in the temple. He experienced an angelic visitation and was told that his wife was going to have a baby. This baby is very important. He will be the one who announces the Messiah. He will guide people to follow the Lord. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit right from conception. Because Zachariah and his wife Elizabeth were very old and never had children, Zachariah doubted the angel and asked for a sign. The sign would be that Zachariah could not talk until the birth of his son, who would be named John. See Luke 1:5-24. John, of course, was speechless the whole time of his wife's pregnancy. He couldn't tell anybody anything about his wonderful angelic visitation and the promises about his son. When the baby was born, and it was time for the child to be named, God released Zachariah from his silence and he not only named his son John, but he began to praise and glorify the Lord. See Luke 1:57-80.

Mary – Luke 1:26-56

Mary was a young virgin, engaged to be married when she was also visited by an angel. She was told the amazing fact that she had been chosen to be the mother of the Messiah. She was going to have a baby without the normal relationship with a man. The Holy Spirit was going to come upon her and give her a baby directly from God. Mary, understandably, asked a question, but she did not doubt the angel. She faithfully, humbly, and gratefully submitted to her calling. See Luke 1:26-38. Mary immediately traveled to visit her relative, Elizabeth (Zachariah's pregnant wife). The two met and immediately began to praise and honor the Lord. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. They worshipped the Lord, edified each other, and prepared for the births of their children. See Luke 1:39-56. [Note vs. 46-55 has been called "*The Magnificat*" (from the phrase, "*My soul doth magnify the Lord.*") It has been a source for musical worship.]

Elizabeth – Luke 1:24-25, 41-45

When Zachariah's wife knew that she was pregnant, she immediately thanked and praised the Lord. The house must have had a constant atmosphere of joy! See Luke 1:24-25. Elizabeth had a baby who was filled with God's Spirit while in the womb. So, when Mary showed up with the Christ child within her, Elizabeth was able to start announcing Christ and praising the Lord immediately, without being told by Mary. What a time those two had! See Luke 1:39-45.

Testimony – Zachariah's testimony was delayed by doubt. Mary's testimony was immediately a source of blessing because she believed immediately and shared her faith with joy. Elizabeth, too, could recognize the greatness of what was going on and could testify to the truth and be an encouragement to Mary. Jesus Christ has also given us a testimony (Luke 24:44-48). We are to behold the truth of Christ, in both Old and New Testaments, and declare it to others with assurance. See also Luke 24:13-35; Acts 1:1-8 cp. Matthew 10:32; I Thessalonians 1:1-10.