

Distinctive Characteristics of Luke's Gospel

A. Luke's Gospel begins with an extensive prologue.

- dedication to Theophilus (1:1–4)
- announcement of births (John and Jesus) (1:5–56)
- birth of John and Jesus (1:57–2:21)
- presentation of infant Jesus in the temple (2:22–38)
- Jesus grows and at age twelve goes to the temple (2:39–52)

B. Luke's Gospel also has a sequel, the Book of Acts.

C. Events reported in Luke's Gospel are tied to their historical context.

- Herod the king (1:5)
- Caesar Augustus (2:1–2)
- Tiberius Caesar (3:1–2)

D. Jerusalem receives special emphasis in Luke's Gospel.

- Jesus makes childhood visits to Jerusalem (2:22–52).
- Ten chapters are devoted to Jesus's journey to Jerusalem (9:51–19:40).
- Jesus weeps over Jerusalem (19:41–44).

- Resurrection appearances occur in and around Jerusalem (24:13–43).
- Jesus tells disciples to stay in Jerusalem (24:44–49).

E. Luke’s Gospel emphasizes worship and prayer.

Luke’s Gospel begins (1:8) and ends (24:53) with scenes of worship.

Liturgical material:	1:46–55	Magnificat
	1:68–79	Benedictus
	2:14	Gloria in Excelsis
	2:29–32	Nunc Dimittis
Jesus at prayer:	3:21	at his baptism
	5:16	in deserted places
	6:12	on choosing his disciples
	9:18	alone, with disciples nearby
	9:28–29	at his transfiguration
	11:1	in presence of his disciples
	22:41, 44–45	in the garden
Also:	instruction in prayer (11:2–4)	
	three parables on prayer (11:5–8; 18:1–8, 9–14)	
	encouragement to pray (6:28; 18:1; 21:36; 22:40, 46)	
Even Jesus’s death is an occasion for glorifying God (23:47).		

F. Luke’s Gospel emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit.

- Jesus is conceived by the Spirit (1:35) and anointed with the Spirit (3:22; 4:1, 14, 18).
- People are filled with the Spirit (1:15, 41, 67) and inspired by the Spirit (2:25–27).
- God gives the Holy Spirit to all who ask (11:13).

- The disciples will be “clothed with power from on high” (24:49).

G. Luke’s Gospel seems to have an unusual interest in food.

- food for the hungry (1:53; 6:25)
- table etiquette (7:44–46; 14:7–14; 22:27)
- banquet parables (14:7–11, 12–14, 15–24; 15:25–32; 16:19–30)
- Jesus is present at nineteen meals; is criticized for eating too much and with the wrong people (7:34; cf. 5:30, 33; 15:2; 19:7)

H. Salvation is an important theme in Luke’s Gospel.

- Jesus is born as Savior (2:11; cf. 2:30).
- People are “saved” by faith (7:50; 8:48).
- Salvation comes to Zacchaeus’s house (19:9).
- The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost (19:10).
- A thief finds Paradise (23:42–43).

I. Luke’s Gospel emphasizes concern for the excluded.

- Samaritans (9:51–56; 10:29–37; 17:11–19)
- Gentiles (2:32; 3:23–38; 4:24–27; 7:1–10; 24:47)
- Tax collectors (5:27–32; 7:34; 15:1–2; 18:9–14; 19:1–10 [cf. 3:12])

- Women (1:26–56; 2:36–38; 7:11–17, 36–50; 8:2, 42–48;
10:38–42; 21:1–4; 23:27–31; 23:55–24:11)

The poor (1:53; 4:18; 6:20; 7:22; 14:13, 21; 16:20–22; 19:8;
21:2–3) (cf. the rich: 1:53; 6:24; 12:16–21; 16:1–9, 19–31;
19:1–10)