

Two Men and Truth

Luke 1:1-4

What each of us needs is to meet Jesus, and Luke's gospel is all about Jesus. But sometimes our preconceptions of Jesus are wrong: in the company he kept, what he taught and what he came to do. This morning we are going to begin studying Luke's gospel by looking at its introduction.

Luke: a man like us

Whilst the gospel does not mention Luke by name we can know he wrote it. The introduction suggests it wasn't anonymous (Theophilus knew who wrote it), and the earliest manuscripts have Luke's name on them. The early church had no doubt it came from Luke. Also, Acts forms the second volume of the gospel, and we can work out that Luke must have been the author of the Gospel as well.

Who was Luke? He was a gentile, a doctor and a travelling companion of Paul. This should encourage us. God can use ordinary people, and take their educations, skills, gifts, abilities, and the circumstances of their lives, and use them to spread the name of Jesus. You don't have to be the apostle Paul to do that!

The gospel was passed on to Luke, he has passed it on to us, and we must now pass it on to others. It's like a relay race. Keep running the race and pass on the baton.

Theophilus: a man like you?

Theophilus probably wasn't a Christian, but he had heard about Jesus. Maybe he had also heard bad things, so he wanted to know more. So Luke sits down to tell him. Maybe you're like Theophilus: you're not yet a Christian, but you're drawn. If that's you: read Luke's gospel and ask God to show you the truth about Jesus.

There is such a thing as certainty:

There is a difference between uncertainty and humility. The danger is we mistake the two. But you can be absolutely certain of the truth and be humble. Conviction and certainty are not the same as arrogance.

Luke tells Theophilus that having gone back to the original sources Theophilus can be certain of the things he has been taught. He can trust it and build his life on it. And so can we.

But what if you doubt? We all doubt, and when we face doubts we need to wrestle with them not run away from them. That might involve doing some study, talking to a friend, getting involved in a home group.

For those who aren't Christians, they should doubt their doubts. Many of our questions fall into place after we have met Jesus. The reason is the gospel is not sterile facts: it's life-changing truth about Jesus. It changed the apostles, it changed Luke and it can change us.