

LUKE'S GOSPEL

What happens when a wealthy benefactor funds a costly and lengthy investigation by an educated medical doctor and historian of the life of a man who claimed to be God? The Gospel of Luke.

In the opening lines of Luke's gospel we are told that Luke is aware of other biographies written about Jesus Christ, but that he was compelled as a historian to have personally "investigated everything carefully" (NASB) so that there would be "an orderly account" (1:1-4).

For Luke to undertake his investigation, he needed to be financially freed up to spend perhaps a few years personally interviewing the eyewitnesses to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Practically, this means that Luke personally interviewed Jesus' mother Mary, Jesus' brothers and sisters, any of Jesus' disciples who were living, Jesus' personal friends like Mary and Martha, and those who were among the crowds that were eyewitnesses to his preaching, miracles, and resurrection, along with individuals Jesus ministered to and healed.

A man named Theophilus underwrote Luke's investigation and thereby paid for his few years of travel and salary. He is mentioned at the beginning of both Luke and Acts. Both books are historical accounts written by Luke, tracing the history of Jesus and the early church respectively as a prequel and sequel of sorts. Theophilus' title "most excellent," a title of nobility in Luke's day, likely indicates that he was a successful business and/or political leader.

During his earthly life, the man Jesus Christ clearly, repeatedly, and emphatically declared himself to be the only God. This claim is without precedent or peer in the history of the world. Today, a few billion people who worship Jesus Christ as God believe that claim, making him the most significant person who has or will ever live. Luke's gospel gives us the most detailed, historically accurate account of the man who is God.-----By Pastor Michael Reis-----