

LESSON 13



LUKE—PHYSICIAN AND HISTORIAN

Scripture Texts: *Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-12; 28:1-10; Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11*

The Gospel of Christ presents an appeal to men in all walks of life—rich and poor; doctors and lawyers and merchants; the down and out. This lesson is about a doctor who heard and accepted Christ's call to Christian service. He is referred to by Paul as "Luke, the beloved physician."

MEMORY VERSE: *"For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."*

Acts 1:5

Luke, the Physician

We do not know a great deal about Luke except that he was a companion of the Apostle Paul and writer of two books of the New Testament, the Gospel which bears his name and a part, if not all, of the Acts of the Apostles. Acts is a good history of how the Holy Spirit worked through the early Apostles.

The profession of physician implied a considerable amount of scientific knowledge and shows that Luke certainly belonged to the class of educated men. Because of his highly technical training, Luke recorded some interesting bits of history, which other writers of The New Testament have left out. His tracing of Christ's genealogy back to Adam and his description of Christ's physical reaction in the Garden of Gethsemane are two examples.

The Apostle Paul had no misgivings about taking Luke in company with him. Luke may have been Paul's personal physician in his travels; helping him to prepare for different climates, food, and water.

Luke, the Historian

The historical record left for us by Luke directs us on our course in facing hardships. Without it we would not know how the early church faced and overcame its difficulties and met the battles of life in an attitude of triumph. This man Luke, though highly trained in the sciences of his day, still recognized the power of prayer and recorded for us many miraculous answers that God gave to the early Christians as a surety that God will do the same for us. Luke's knowledge helped him to see more clearly the way in fulfilling the purpose of God. Notice that in Acts 16:10, he began to write in the first person, letting us know he was right there with them, recording what he saw. As the end of Paul's life grew near in the Roman prison, he wrote to Timothy that Luke alone was with him (2 Timothy 4:11). Is it possible that he had been a personal physician to Paul? At any rate he was proven faithful.

Let us tell the story of salvation, not as history only, but as something that we experience and are participating in. This is the way Luke served his Lord. What must we do to fulfill the purpose of God?