

ACTS

Acts 1:1-5 (KJV)

**“1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,
2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:
3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:
4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.
5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence”**

*** Theophilus: "friend of God" - To whom Luke addressed his Gospel and the book of Acts**

Note the words "former treatise" or book

- * Luke was referring back to his gospel**
- * He was now writing to the same man to whom he had written his gospel, Theophilus [Friend of God]**

He was reminding Theophilus that in his gospel he had covered the life and the ministry of Jesus Christ on earth

Acts 1:1-5 (KJV)

“1 The former treatise [book] have I made, O Theophilus [friend of God], of all that Jesus began both to do and teach”

- * Note the word "began"**
- * Jesus' life and work on earth was only the beginning!**

Although He is in heaven, He continues to work and minister through the presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and lives of believers

- * The Lord is ever present, He is all knowing, He is all powerful!**

The book of Acts could well be called...

- The acts (works and teachings) of believers; or
- The acts (works and teachings) of Christ; or
- The acts (works and teachings) of the Holy Spirit

Luke was saying that the life of Jesus Christ continues on!

- * The book of Acts is the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ
- * [Acts 1:1-5](#) is a summary of the ministry of Jesus Christ on earth, a summary of the ministry of Christ covered in Acts

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Luke wrote to Theophilus, reminding him of the former gospel which he had written, the gospel which covered the life and ministry of Jesus

Who is Theophilus [whose name means ‘friend of God’]?

1. Theophilus is called "most excellent Theophilus" in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1: 1-4)

Luke 1:1-4 (KJV)

“1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

3

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed”

* The Gospel of Luke is a written proclamation of the truth about Jesus Christ.

* This is the message, the driving force of this first passage in Luke's gospel

Luke is writing to declare the glorious news that the Son of Man, God's Son, has come to earth to seek and to save all who are lost

* Luke's gospel is an accurate, orderly account of the truth about Jesus Christ

Note

This introduction of Luke is the very form used by the historians of his day.

This points strongly to the fact that Luke intended it to be circulated among churches and believers

Luke 1: 3-4(KJV)

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Luke felt led to record the life of Christ

1. Luke had "perfect understanding of all things"

The word "understanding" means:

To study, to follow up, to search out diligently, to investigate, to trace accurately, to become acquainted with

* Luke says that having been acquainted with and having investigated all things, he was determined to record the facts himself

* Same is true with us today – having ourselves acquainted with [experienced] and having investigated [studied and tried] all things – we can determine that the facts are true – Gods Word is True!

2. Luke says he had perfect understanding (investigated all things) "from the very first"

The word "first" (anōthen) can and often does mean *from above*

* Most understand Luke to be saying that he had investigated the things from above

The prophets are said to have proclaimed things from above

1 Peter 1:10-12 (KJV)

“10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into”

Scripture also says:

2 Peter 1:21

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"

Luke is writing to a man named "Theophilus"

- * He was called "*most excellent Theophilus*"
- * "**Most excellent**" (kratistos) is a title of rank and honor in **Luke 1**

He was a person who desired or needed to know about Jesus Christ. He was probably a convert for whom Luke deeply cared

- * Some feel he was a man investigating the validity of Christianity
- * Theophilus is the immediate reason Luke felt led to write

Note two critical points

1. A person must be prepared to serve Christ, they must study, investigate, search out, and become acquainted with the truth of Christ

2 Timothy 2:15

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"

2. A person must be led to serve Christ, no matter the task they must be led by the Spirit of Christ

Romans 8:14

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"

John 15:16

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you"

My friends we can have great confidence in the truth and accuracy of the written record of Christ

2 Timothy 3:16

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"

Note the tremendous challenge to us

- * Luke cared so much for one man that he dedicated himself to writing not a long letter, but a whole book in order to instruct the man
- * Imagine the dedication and the days and months required!
- * All for one person (initially)!

This one man was a man of influence, a mover and a shaker in his society, a man of stature and man that could touch many with the Gospel of Christ

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- * The words - "most excellent Theophilus" are a title of rank and honor

It is the same title used of Felix and Festus, two high ranking Roman officials (Acts 23:26; Acts 24:3; Acts 26:27)

Theophilus must have been a Roman official of high rank

- * Theophilus was a personal friend of Luke - close enough to correspond with Luke about the Lord Jesus

He was either a man interested in knowing the truth about Christ or else a new convert who needed to be grounded in Christ

7.

Perhaps Luke himself had led *Theophilus* to Christ

- * Luke did not address *Theophilus* as "most excellent" in Acts 1:1-5
- * Luke and *Theophilus* were close friends, close enough to be on a first name basis.

Theophilus was a man who sought to grow and mature in the Lord

- * Imagine!
- * Luke and Acts were written to him!

Two of the greatest books ever written!

And why?

Because he had such a deep hunger to know the Lord, to learn all he could about the Lord

What a legacy and testimony—*to be known as a man who so* hungered to know the Lord that God had two of the greatest books ever written addressed to him!

- * May we all develop a hunger to learn all we can about the Lord and Savior of the universe

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8.

Conclusion

- * I want to be known as a Luke [a Disciple of Christ] and a Theophilus [a Friend of God]
- * I want to be one who can address others because I have understanding of Heavenly things – one who can speak Heavenly things.
- * I want to be an influencer to the influencers
- * To set the atmosphere of movers and shakers
- * I want to influence others in a Godly way and introduce them to the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- * I want to be ministering in the Book of Acts way!