

That You May Know the Certainty of What You Have Been Taught

Luke - Chapter 1:1-4

Luke 1:1-4 NIV Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, (2) just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. (3) With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, (4) so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Luke's purpose in writing the book...

...so that Theophilus [**Friend of God**] would know the certainty of the things he had been taught

When we care for someone/something - it drives our motivation

- Mothers and their children
- People and their pets
- with Luke, the spiritual welfare of Theophilus moved him to action
- Theophilus had been taught...but Luke Luke wanted him to know the CERTAINTY of what he was taught

CERTAINTY - [**Strong's - Safe, Sure, Secure**]

- **Safe** - evidence that may be safely depended on
- It comes from a word meaning (**G804 - to secure so as not to fail**)
- *Php 3:1 NIV Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and **it is a safeguard for you.***

What kind of person was Luke?

- He received from others
- He gave to others
- *Matt 10:8 Freely you have received freely give*

What did Luke freely receive?

1) Convincing evidence that persuaded him to believe

Luke 1:1 NIV Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been ***fulfilled*** among us

Fulfilled - STRONGS G4135 to carry out fully (in evidence), that is, completely assure (or convince), entirely accomplish: - most surely believe, fully know (persuade), make full proof of.

This verse also translated as “accomplished” - “things most surely believed”.

- Luk 1:1 NASB - Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of ***the things accomplished among us,***
- Luk 1:1 KJV - For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those ***things which are most surely believed among us,***

People had written about things that happened through Jesus, and these things were confirmed with evidence so complete and so convincing that people had been fully persuaded to believe. This is a huge gift in the midst of a cynical and skeptical world.

2) Eyewitness Accounts & Servants of the Word (more on servants later)

Luke 1:2 NIV just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were ***eyewitnesses*** and ***servants*** of the word.

- Acts 1:21-22 NIV ... choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, (22) beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become ***a witness with us of his resurrection.***"
- 1 Corinthians 15:6 NIV After that ***[the resurrection]***, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, ***most of whom are still living,*** though some have fallen asleep.
- 2Pe 1:16 NIV For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but ***we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.***
- 1Jn 1:1 NIV That which was from the beginning, which we have ***heard***, which we have ***seen with our eyes***, which we have ***looked at*** and ***our hands have touched***--this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

What did Luke freely give?

Luke 1:3 NIV With this in mind, since I myself have ***carefully investigated*** everything from the beginning, I too decided ***to write an orderly account*** for you, most excellent Theophilus,

- He was a doctor - given to attention, carefulness and detail
 - Col 4:14 NIV ***Our dear friend Luke, the doctor***, and Demas send greetings.

He actually continued to write to Theophilus (Acts) and was a personal eyewitness to much of what he wrote as Luke was a companion of Paul during some of the writing of Acts.

- Acts 1:1-2 NIV In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach (2) until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.

Servants of the Word...

... There are not only eyewitnesses but described as **servants of the word**

SLIDE Servant = G5257 Huperetes - an under oarsman

What is an under oarsman

- These oarsmen were slaves, they were chained to the ship and if the ship sank they went down with it, so they were really motivated.
- They rowed like their life depended on it, because it did.
- They worked in unison
- They worked at the calls of the captain of the ship
- Throughout church history there have been SERVANTS of the WORD - Under oarsmen of the word - guarding it, preaching it, preserving it, defending it, passing it to others

Paul was an under oarsman

- Acts 26:16 NIV 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a **servant [Under Oarsman]** and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me.
- 1 Corinthians 4:1 NIV This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as **servants [Under Orsman]** of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed.

SLIDES

- Rom 1:14-16 KJV I am debtor both to the Greeks...I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also...I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ
- 1Co 9:16 NIV For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!
- 1Co 9:22-23 KJV To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake
- Ephesians 6:19 NIV Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,
- Php 1:17 KJV But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

Other Under-Oarsmen of the Word

Under-oarsmen - when persecuted prayed for boldness to speak the word

- Acts 4:29 KJV And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word

Under-oarsmen guard the truth they have received

- 2 Timothy 1:13-14 NIV What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. (14) Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you--guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

Under-oarsmen contend for the faith

- Jude 1:3 NIV Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.

Under-oarsmen pass the message to the next generation

- 2 Timothy 2:2 KJV And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.
- 2 Peter 1:15-16 NIV And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things. (16) For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Under-oarsmen are convinced of the central role of Scripture

- 2 Timothy 4:2-3 KJV Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

Short History - Under Oarsmen of the Word

There have been attempts to thwart the spread of His word

- In 303 A. D. the emperor Diocletian issued a royal decree (EDICT) that EVERY BIBLE SHOULD BE DESTROYED.
- The Roman Catholic Church taught that the common man could not understand the Bible As a result, most of the people were totally IGNORANT of what the Bible really taught. In 1229 A.D. the Church Council of Toulouse actually forbade the use of the Bible to **laymen**
- John Wycliffe, born about 1324 was the first person to translate the complete Bible into the English language.
- In 1414 the reading of the English Scriptures was forbidden, and those who were caught reading the Bible in English could lose their land and possessions and even their life. The Church Council of Constance declared that Wycliffe was a heretic.
- At the Diet of Worms in 1521, Martin Luther was accused of renewing the errors of Wycliffe by making the Scriptures his final authority.
- William Tyndale, born in 1494. had a heart was to get the Bible into the language of the common man. In 1523 he stated this burden of his heart: "that the poor might also read and see the simple, plain Word of God." Tyndale once told a Catholic priest, "If God spare my life, before many years I will cause a boy that drives the plough to know more of the Scriptures than you do"
- In 1536 Tyndale was strangled to death and his body burned. He died at the young age of 42. His great crime was that he placed God's Word in English into the hands of the English speaking world.
- Less than 100 years later, the King of England, James I, endorsed and sponsored a new Bible translation (or revision) which has been known as the King James Bible. Tyndale's influence on the King James Bible is great, because most of the King James Version (90%) is worded just as Tyndale had it.

Under oarsmans of Today

- We are not eyewitnesses of the original events...but we can be SERVANTS of the Word
- Luke received the message about Christ because someone - a meticulous careful man, who wanted to get the message right - preached to him.
- Luke was a man like this - who wanted to get the message right so that Theophilus would know the certainty of the things he was taught...
- Throughout the early church we see example after example of men hearing, preserving and passing along what they have learned for the sake of the next generation of believers...
- Throughout the centuries God has raised up faithful men who would carry the torch and assure we have access to the scriptures - and we have a document - a more sure word of prophecy...

Now the torch is in our hands...God is calling us to be the Under oarsmans - to be SERVANTS of the WORD - to be sure that it is preserved intact and carried to the next generation.

God has given us a sacred trust...to carry on the message of His son.

His life and ministry are proven.

There have been eyewitnesses.

There have been thousands of under-oarsmen throughout church history

They have left their seats...and now we sit there

1) We need to be certain that God's word and truth are passed on to succeeding generations

- *Psalms 78:2-8 NIV I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old-- (3) things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. (4) We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. (5) He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children, (6) so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. (7) Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. (8) They would not be like their ancestors-- a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.*

2) May we be counted among those who have risked their lives for the good news of Jesus Christ - and for the sake of our friends - that they may know the CERTAINTY of the things they have heard.