

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Workbook One: Exploring the Identity of Jesus

Lesson Notes

These lesson notes have basic answers to questions and additional questions to help move the discussion towards the answer. The leader's guide, supplementary worksheets and a schedule are separate documents. This is a draft, so any editorial comments are appreciated.

It is not necessary to use a guide to teach or study this workbook. The danger of including so many details is that you will get lost in them. I do encourage you to try some of my ideas, but remember that there are other ways to use the workbook.¹

Note: I have separated the first lesson into two. If you want to teach it as one lesson and cannot figure out how to do it, please send me an email and I will send you a combined lesson.

¹ For example, group members can prepare before class by reading the text in English and in their own language. They can also complete the "Look Over" sections. After a few lessons, they might be able to complete the "Label" sections at home, as well. If everyone is prepared, you could choose to spend most of the class time in discussion.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Workbook One: Exploring the Identity of Jesus

Workbook One: Luke 1 – 9

Exploring the Identity of Jesus

Janet V. Payne

Page	Lesson
3	Prologue as Part of Lesson One A “Getting to Know the Bible”
9	1 B God Has Spoken (Luke 1:1-4 and Genesis 1-3) “The First Humans”
12	2 God Has Spoken Again (Luke 3: 1-22) “The Christmas Story”
18	3 Son of Adam (Luke 3: 23 to 4: 1-13) “God’s Laws”
25	4 Spirit of the Lord (Luke 4: 14-44)
29	5 Rabbi (Luke 5: 1-32) “Following Jesus: A Personal Story”
34	6 Lord, Lord (Luke 6:20-36)
38	7 The One? (Luke 7: 11-23)
45	8 Teacher (Luke 8: 4-18)
51	9 Rescuer (Luke 8: 22-39)
56	10 Messiah (Luke 9:10--27) “Messiah: Introduction to the Oratorio” Epilogue: “The Turning Point” (Luke 9:28-36)

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - A

Lesson One: God Has Spoken

Lesson A: Luke 1:1-4 and the Prologue

Important Note: Since there is usually a lot to do in the first few meetings, this plan splits the first lesson into two sessions. The prologue is used as the background paper for the first part. If you wish to combine the lessons, you have the information you need in these two lesson plans.

Central Message

God is the author of the Bible; it is God's Word. At the same time, each book in the Bible has a human author. Luke was a respected Greek doctor and a historian. He researched the life of Jesus and wrote "an accurate account of exactly what happened" to Jesus of Nazareth.

We read in the prologue that God created us and wants us to know him, but the first humans turned away from God. Our relationship with God is broken. Luke's message is called the Good News. It tells us that God loves us and provided a way for us to come back to Him. The Good News is that Jesus is the Way.

Life Application

God wants for you to know him. He wants you to know the truth. He wants you to listen to his Word. You can research the truth about God.

Preparation: Prepare a workbook for each participant. Fill a three-ring binder with *Workbook One: Exploring the Identity of Jesus*. You may wish to give them one lesson at a time instead of the entire workbook, but if so, the first set should include your personalized syllabus, the introductory pages, the prologue, and the first lesson. You will also need one Bible, or one for each person.

Notes: Begin the class with introductions.² Show them the first few pages of the workbook, and point out the introductory material that they can read at home.³ Show them how the syllabus follows the contents of the workbook. Let them know how you would like them to prepare for each lesson. For example, you may want them to read the biblical passages in English and in their own language before they come to

² Note that the community-building activity comes a few minutes into the class. It does not include a time of introductions.

³ I recommend that you do not read the introductory pages together. The students will understand the pages better once they have had a chance to look over the lessons at home.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - A

class.⁴ However, you may instead want them to fill out all or part of the workbook.⁵

Community-Building Activity and Introduction⁶ *What Do You Know about Jesus?*

Preparation: Write the instructions on a board, or print the worksheet from the supplementary materials. If you use the instruction strips, copy and cut enough strips for each person.

Instructions: 1. Stand up and walk around. 2. Find one or two people. 3. Introduce yourselves. 4. *Say to them, "I'm glad you are here. Why did you come?"* 5. *"What do you know about Jesus?" Maybe you do not know very much about Jesus. What have you heard? What have you read?*⁷

Teaching Notes: Read the instructions on the board, and hand a strip to each person. (They appreciate the double instructions in the first few classes.) After a few minutes, bring them back and read the introduction in the opening paragraphs of Lesson One. When you come to the question about knowing Jesus, stop reading. Ask a few people to share their answer with the group, and then continue reading the introduction.

The introduction ends with an activity, "Look for *The Gospel According to Luke* in the Bible. How many chapters are in this book?" Give someone (or everyone) a Bible and ask them to find the book of Luke and count the chapters (24). Go over vocabulary, if necessary. For the phrase, "eyewitness accounts," read the footnote and show them the four gospels in a Bible.⁸ The words are not in this version of the text, but they will come up later in the lesson.

Lesson Notes

Part One: The Good News, Luke 1:1-4

Preparation: Note that the numbers below refer to the numbers in the workbook.

1. This introduction is more formal and therefore more difficult to read than the

⁴ The passages are listed in the syllabus.

⁵ See the footnote on page one of these notes.

⁶ The community-building activities and the introductions are often combined in the lesson notes because sometimes the introduction is first, and sometimes the activity is first.

⁷ These are extra questions they can ask if they need to keep the conversation going. You do not need to explain this to them unless they ask.

⁸ The footnote reads, "Matthew and John were disciples of Jesus, Mark and Luke were close friends of his disciples. They recorded what people actually saw and heard as they followed Jesus." The footnote is only in the latest version of the workbook.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - A

rest of the gospel. They will understand what they are reading better if they read phrase-by-phrase, or sets of phrases, rather than word-by-word. The point here is not to teach grammar, but to get the leader and the group members to read carefully with an emphasis on meaning,⁹ and for them to read that way themselves. Note that the instructions say *think about* (listen to) the pauses as you read the text together. They will *do* this activity after the oral reading.

2. Take turns reading, starting with the first sentence. Go over the footnotes after the entire text has been read. You might want to read the entire text again with everyone reading out loud at once.
3. Read the instructions to them, and have them work on their own. Let them know that this activity will help them listen for the meaning of the whole sentence, not just the words. You do not need to spend time going over this as a whole group.¹⁰ Below are two examples of how the students might mark the text. The first shows the smallest recommended units, and the second shows longer units. *I think* the overall meaning is easier to grasp with the longer units, but anything that makes senses is acceptable.

1:1 Dear Theophilus: / Many people/ have done their best / to write a report / of the things / that have taken place / among us. / 1:2 They wrote / what we have been told / by those / who saw these things / from the beginning / and who proclaimed the message. / 1:3 And so, / Your Excellency, / because I have carefully studied / all these matters / from their beginning, / I thought / it would be good / to write / an orderly account / for you. / 1:4 I do this / so that / you will know / the full truth / about everything / which you have been taught.

1:1 Dear Theophilus: / Many people have done their best / to write a report/ of the things that have taken place among us. / 1:2 They wrote / what we have been told / by those who saw these things from the beginning and who proclaimed the message. / 1:3 And so, / Your Excellency, / because I have carefully studied all these matters from their beginning, / I thought it would be good / to write an orderly account/ for you. / 1:4 I do this / so that you will know the full truth / about everything which you have been taught.
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4. Do #4 and #5 as a whole group since they are just learning the format. Name: Theophilus; Title: Your Excellency

⁹ See page 7 on how to read carefully.

¹⁰ If they do not understand the activity, you may want them to just skip it. However, if they have caught on, and if you have enough time, you may want them to exchange workbooks and try to read each other's text, pausing at the places marked.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - A

WHO wrote the book? Luke was a Greek doctor and a historian. He traveled with the great apostle Paul. He wrote this book and the book of Acts.

TO WHOM was it written? Luke wrote to a person named Theophilus. He was also writing to all "Gentile" believers. A Gentile is a person who is not Jewish. Jesus was Jewish, but the church was made of people from many nations.

5. "It is a report of the things that have taken place among us." (1:1) They might also say that it is a biography of Jesus' life.

LINK Remind them to look to the text for their answers to this section. Do this section as a whole group.

Background Information Luke got his information from "many people" who had "done their best to write a report." (1:1) These people were either eyewitnesses themselves, or they got their information from eyewitnesses who had seen these things from the beginning and told others.

The purpose statement is usually found at the end of an introduction, as is the case here. The last verse gives Luke's purpose. The key phrase is "so that," "I do this *so that* you will know the full truth about everything which you have been taught." (1:4) Read the footnote together.

6. The LEARN section works best in smaller groups of three or four people and a leader.¹¹ The questions here ask, "What *do you think?*" Ask them to imagine Luke talking to people. Let them say whatever they think; they do not need a complete answer.

I think Luke wanted to interview everyone who had been with Jesus: the men and women who followed him, people who were healed, and people who heard him speak. Luke may have asked, "What did you see? What did you hear? What did you think about Jesus? When did you begin to believe him?"

7. Again, let the group members speak. If they need help, ask them how *they* know whether someone has true information. Do they believe *everyone*?

Luke could make sure he had the real words of Jesus by asking for several people to tell him the same stories and repeat the teachings. (Jesus repeated his lessons and stories many times as he traveled, so the disciples memorized them word-for-word.) *I think* Luke checked on a person's story by asking the disciples and church leaders, "Do you know this person?" "Do you

¹¹ Small group leaders can be international Christians. See the leaders' guide.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - A

remember his or her story?" Most people never forgot what happened to them when they met Jesus.

Note: Go to the end of the lesson, to the LIVE section. Again, we are doing this because we are splitting the lesson into two.

LIVE Ask the second question only. Do this section as a whole group. You can point out to the students that they are researching about God in this Bible study! Perhaps they will also want to read the Bible themselves or talk to people who believe. They might want to ask believers why they think the Bible is true. They might also want to check some outside sources. They could read about Jesus or the land of Israel in historical accounts by Jewish and Roman historians. Be sure to let them know that they can also talk directly to God. "If you are real, show me." (There is much you could say about this, but you will probably want to save it for later.)

Be sure to finish by summarizing the central message.

WORDNote how the Bible verse at the end fits with the lesson, but don't read the verse together. It is something extra for them to read at home.

Background Paper "Getting to Know the Bible"

The background paper for this lesson is the prologue. The paper, "First Humans" will be used after the second class. Since flexibility is important for the first few weeks, here are four alternate ways to use the prologue.

1. Return to the prologue in their workbooks. Read the following parts while showing them a Bible, and suggest they read the rest at home.

Getting to Know the Bible

"The Bible is a library of 66 books with different human authors, written from about 1850 BC until 90 AD. Christians believe God chose the people to write, and they wrote what he wanted. That is why the Bible is called the "Word of God." The Bible has two "testaments" or promises. They tell about God and his promise to us."

The Old Testament Promise

5 books of the LAW tell about God's people and give his rules for living.

13 books tell the HISTORY of the nation of Israel.

4 books of POETRY show us God in a personal way.

17 books of PROPHECY tell what God is doing and plans to do.

The Promise and The New Testament

There are 4 books called GOSPELS - *The Ancient Biographies of Jesus*

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - A

There is 1 book called ACTS of the APOSTLES. *The History of the First Christians*

There are 21 LETTERS to the first churches.

There is 1 book of PROPHECY. *What God Plans to Do in the Future*

2. Read the short version of the prologue, as described in #1 above, at the beginning of class as you are introducing the workbooks.
3. As an alternative, ask them to read the prologue at home, and do the introduction in #1 at the beginning of the next class.
4. Read the first three pages of the prologue to the class while they read silently.¹² Read carefully with emphasis. You may want to explain or add to parts of this message, but in most cases, it's best to just read it through, stopping only for vocabulary.¹³ The prologue is written in a simple, clear manner that most will be able to understand. It shows the flow of the Bible and provides "just enough" of an introduction for one sitting.

What does it mean to **read carefully with emphasis**?

It **does not** mean to read each word s-l-o-w-l-y.

It **does not** mean to read ----each----word----separately.

It **does not** mean to read LOUDLY.

It means to read **clearly**; open your mouth so that you pronounce correctly.

It means to read **naturally**, which is not word-by-word, but phrase-by-phrase.

It means to read **emphatically**, emphasizing the words and phrases that carry the meaning of the sentence.¹⁴

It also helps to read with **good eye contact, gestures, and movement.**

*****A clear, emphatic *WHISPER* is often more powerful than a SHOUT.

¹² Usually the class does the oral reading, but it helps for them to hear the long prologue from careful readers.

¹³ Most of the vocabulary they need is footnoted.

¹⁴ We emphasize by saying those words and phrases a little louder and a little longer.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - B

Lesson One: God Has Spoken

Lesson B: Genesis 1:1-31

Important Note: This is the second session on Lesson One. If you prefer to teach it as one lesson, you will find all the information you need in these two sessions.

Central Message

God created us in His own image, and all that He created was good. However, even though we were created good, we are now separated from God by our own sin and disobedience.

Life Application

The Bible tells us that God continues to speak. He wants us to know Him. Listen carefully because God will also speak to you through his Word.¹⁵

Community-Building Activity and Introduction¹⁶ *Getting to Know Each Other*

Preparation: Write the instructions on a board, or print the worksheet or cover page from the supplementary materials. If you use the instruction strips, copy and cut enough strips for each person.

Instructions: Let's get to know each other! 1. Stand up and walk around. 2. Find one person. 3. Introduce yourself. 4. Spell your name for them. 5. Write your friend's name in your workbook. 6. "Please tell me something you like to do." 7. Listen! Ask questions! 8. Repeat 1-6 with 3 more people.

Teaching Notes: Hand a strip or cover page to everyone who walks in. Ask them to read the instructions, and then find a partner. While they are starting the activity, you can meet new people.

¹⁵ Leaders, this is true. God said that His Word "...will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:10-11.

¹⁶ The community-building activities and the introductions are often combined in the lesson notes because sometimes the introduction is first, and sometimes the activity is first.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - B

Lesson Notes

Part Two: The Beginning of Everything, Genesis 1: 1-31

Preparation: Keep a Bible near.

Introduction: As you read this, show them a Bible again, and open it to Genesis.

1. 2. The workbook has been planned with “just enough” information for the lesson. Additional information is not needed at this time.
3. You can do this LABEL section as a whole group or in pairs. Us=God, his=God, him=“man,” them=“man.” The purpose of this exercise is not to practice pronoun reference, but to notice that God is referred to as singular and plural, and man is referred to as male and female. A discussion of this comes later. Note the “just enough” definition of the Trinity.
4. God speaks, makes, and creates. Mark the words in the text. Another question asks for more detail later.
5. “It was very good.” (If they are able to mark the text in pairs, there is no need to go over this section as a large group.)
6. The LEARN section works best in smaller groups of three or four people and a leader. The word “man” refers to one individual man but also to mankind, or human beings, including both men and women. This is a common literary use of the word; although in recent years, it is less common.
7. They can learn a lot about God from this text. Ask for all their ideas and write them down.¹⁷ If they need help, go over each sentence and ask, “What does that tell us about God?” Include the quotes from Genesis 1:1 and 3.

Here are some of my ideas: We learn that God created the world. (This implies that he is not Himself created. Science developed from the idea that we can study nature because nature is not God.) God is powerful; He created the world with His Word alone. Also, if He created the world, He is bigger than the world and older than the world. God not only created the world, but He cares about it. (He shows He cares by giving man the responsibility.) God communicates with man. (He gave him instructions.) God knows what is good; good comes from God.

¹⁷ Write them down so they will remember when the large group shares. Later, one of them can be the “recorder.” There is generally not time during the discussion for them to write out full answers in their workbooks, but they can make some notes. It’s very helpful for them to work on these questions before class.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Notes on Lesson One: God Has Spoken - B

8. Listen carefully to what the readers say, and correct any misunderstandings. Read the footnote on “image” together, “An image is something that is ‘like’ the real thing. God does not have a body, but he made us like him in some ways.” This is another “just enough” answer. Notice that we are made like him in “some” ways. How, *do they think*, we are like God? In what ways are we *not* like God? Look back at Question 7. (A later question will discuss the implications of being made in God’s image.)

The note at the end of this section addresses the question, “If we are made in God’s image, why is there so much evil in some people?” It leads the reader to the background paper.

LIVE If you divided the lesson into two sessions, discuss question one at this time. This is an opinion question; the text does not tell us how to rule. The Bible teaches that the world belongs to God, and that we are to take care of it for Him. On the second question, if each person is made in the image of God, then each individual person is valuable. We must, therefore, respect all people and treat them fairly. We must respect *all* human life. (You might want to tell them that you could talk to them about this topic at another time. It includes a discussion about abortion and euthanasia.¹⁸)

Be sure to finish by reading the “Consider” section or summarizing the central message.

WORD Note how the Bible verse at the end fits with the lesson, but don’t read the verse together. It is something extra.

Background Paper ***The First Humans***

The background paper is a summary of Genesis 1-3. You can either read the paper together, or send it home. Lesson three returns to Genesis 1-3, so it would be good for them to read it before that lesson.

¹⁸ Here are some quick definitions, in case you need them. Abortion is the act of killing an unborn child, also referred to as an embryo or fetus. (Many dictionaries would say instead, “Abortion is removing an embryo or fetus in order to end a pregnancy.”) Euthanasia is the act of killing or assisting in the death of a person who is about to die because of illness or injury.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Workbook One: Exploring the Identity of Jesus

Getting to Know the Bible

A prologue is an introduction to a book.
The prologue in our workbook introduces the Bible.
The first lesson introduces the Gospel of Luke.
The Gospel of Luke is an ancient biography of Jesus of Nazareth.
What do you know about Jesus?

Community Time



What Do You Know About Jesus?

1. Stand up and walk around.
2. Find one or two people.
3. Introduce yourself.
4. "I'm glad you are here. Why did you come?"
5. "What do you know about Jesus?"
Maybe you do not know very much about Jesus.
What have you heard? What have you read?

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Prologue: Getting to Know the Bible

What Do You Know About Jesus?

1. Stand up and walk around.
2. Find one or two people.
3. Introduce yourselves.
4. "I'm glad you are here. Why did you come?"
5. "What do you know about Jesus?"

Maybe you do not know very much about Jesus.

What have you heard?

What have you read?

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Prologue: Getting to Know the Bible

What Do You Know About Jesus?

1. Stand up and walk around.
2. Find one or two people.
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Maybe you do not know very much about Jesus.
What have you heard? What have you read?

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What Do You Know About Jesus?

6. Stand up and walk around.
7. Find one or two people.
8. Introduce yourself.
9. "I'm glad you are here. Why did you come?"
10. "What do you know about Jesus?"
Maybe you do not know very much about Jesus.
What have you heard? What have you read?

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Workbook One: Exploring the Identity of Jesus

God Has Spoken

The last lesson was an introduction: to our workbooks, to the Bible, and to the Gospel of Luke. We discovered that the Bible is a library of books with different authors, but that God is the author of all. The Bible is God's message to the people he created.

In this lesson, we will go back to the beginning, to the first book in the Bible, called *Genesis*. We will look more closely at God, and the first humans that he created.

Community Time



Getting to Know Each Other

God created each one of us. Let's get to know each other!

1. Stand up and walk around.
2. Find one person.
3. Introduce yourself.
4. Spell your name for them.
5. Write your friend's name in your workbook.
6. "Please tell me something about you."
7. Listen! Ask questions!
8. Repeat 1-6 with 3 more people.

Luke's Ancient Biography of Jesus

Lesson One: God Has Spoken

Getting to Know Each Other

God created each one of us.
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Lesson One: God Has Spoken

Getting to Know Each Other

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6. Listen! Ask questions!
7. Repeat 1-6 with 3 more people.

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