

(24) Luke

The very next sentence in 2 TIMOTHY 4 makes mention of **Luke**, the twenty-fourth person found by name in the last three epistles of the Apostle Paul. 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *Only Luke is with me.* These five words speak volumes concerning **Luke**, a character we have studied before in our previous lessons on the life of the Apostle Paul. {Review pages 1184-1189 of these notes.} Recall back in that portion of our study we identified **Luke** as one of the ten men who visited Paul during his first imprisonment in Rome. This in itself is a great understatement, for no evidence is found in scripture that **Luke** ever left Paul's company since sailing from Caesarea in ACTS 27. And really when **Luke** joined up with Paul's group of traveling Saints in ACTS 20:5, we find nothing written of **Luke** ever being too far away from Paul from that point forward. A lot of the experiences written by **Luke** in ACTS 20 through 28 were first hand witnessed adventures that **Luke** either experienced, or saw with his own eyes for himself. Yet **Luke** remained very low profile, and very humble as he followed Paul as Paul followed Christ. At one point in time I did a Wednesday night Bible study concerning the stories that **Luke** could tell. There are fifty-two chapters of these stories written in scripture; Holy Ghost inspired stories penned by **Luke** for the sole purpose of accurately tracing in great detail the story of Jesus Christ from the events before his birth, until His death and resurrection, and this was done in the gospel according to LUKE. In ACTS **Luke** continued tracing in great detail the story of Jesus Christ in His post resurrection ministry, and how His ministry was magnified, and amplified after His ascension when a great cloud of Old Testament Saints received Him out of the sight of the many witnesses who heard His last words recorded in ACTS 1:8. ACTS 1:8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.* The remaining twenty-eight chapters of ACTS amplifies the ministry of Jesus Christ as the Holy Ghost used Jesus' disciples to expound, and expand the preaching of Jesus Christ. Some devoted Bible scholars have correctly noted that the book of ACTS should have been entitled "The Acts of the Holy Ghost" for it was by the power and unction of the Holy Ghost that the stories and events recorded in ACTS were possible in the first place. "The Acts of the Holy Ghost" continue on today, and for that reason the book of ACTS really has no ending.

In ACTS 2 through 12 **Luke** mainly records the ministry of Peter, and to a much lesser degree John after they were filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. Three of these chapters expound the ministry of two of their followers, Stephen, and Philip, whose ministries were only possible because they were men full of faith, and the Holy Ghost according to ACTS 6:5. Stephen's ministry is explained in ACTS chapters 6 & 7, and Philip's in ACTS 8. Stephen was instrumental in introducing a young man named Saul of Tarsus to Jesus Christ, though Saul of Tarsus didn't become a believer during Stephen's lifetime. Never the less the witness of Stephen concerning Jesus Christ to Saul of Tarsus pricked this young mans conscience until his arrest on the road to Damascus. The One who arrested Saul of Tarsus was the very same Just One Stephen testified of in ACTS 7:52 in a very powerful Holy Ghost inspired impromptu sermon. Here is what Stephen said at that time: ACTS 7:52 *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:...* . Saul of Tarsus met the Just One on the road to Damascus, and immediately knew it was indeed the Lord Jesus Christ who had stopped him in the way. **Luke** was the one who recorded these stories, having heard them from the very mouth of the Apostle Paul, the former Saul of Tarsus. Philip later in life was instrumental in comforting the Apostle Paul as he spent a couple years in prison in Caesarea, the home of Philip after ACTS 8:40. The one good thing governor Felix did in his unjustly holding Paul prisoner two years was letting him have certain liberties, which Luke explained in ACTS 24:23 -- *And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.* Though it is not told us in scripture that Philip visited Paul while in prison there in Caesarea, it

seems mostly like that he was one of the main acquaintance now living in Caesarea who knew, and loved Paul, and his gospel ministry, and had previously housed our beloved Apostle Paul, and those with him, in ACTS 21:8-15. Of course **Luke**, it seems, was a frequent visitor of Paul during these two years having now plenty of time to conduct lengthy interviews with Paul as he wrote the accounts recorded in ACTS.

In ACTS 13-28 **Luke** expounds on the ministry of Jesus Christ as presented mainly by the Apostle Paul, with some others preaching Jesus Christ in kind of a supporting roll. **Luke** is the one who tells of Paul's three missionary journeys, and was with Paul on his fourth journey to Rome. **Luke** ends his account in ACTS saying: *And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him...* ACTS 28:30 & 31. ACTS ends abruptly for a Divinely inspired reason; to highlight the operations of the Holy Ghost at the beginning of this church age. But the church age isn't over yet, and the workings of the Holy Spirit continue in the lives of Holy Ghost filled believers today. The letter entitled THE ACTS in our Bible was addressed to "O Theophilus" in ACTS 1:1, who was, according to tradition, a prominent man in the church at Antioch, Syria, the church where they were first called Christians. Thank God that they, (O Theophilus, and the people of the church at Antioch), treasured the record of the Acts of the Holy Ghost that **Luke** sent them, which is now a permanent part of our Holy Scriptures.

Only three words are written of **Luke** in ACTS; the words, "I," "we," and "us." {Look these scriptures up on your own.} We must note from this that **Luke** clearly never wanted the attention directed at himself, and his writings did magnify, and bring to the fore front the message of Jesus Christ, as either presented by Jesus Himself, or by the very privileged believers who were ordained to witness of His character. We mentioned some of these witnesses of Christ that **Luke** wrote about in ACTS above, and we can add several more to this list that are found in his epistle of LUKE. John the Baptist, and his parents, Zacharias and Elizabeth for example. The shepherds of LUKE 2, along with Simeon the prophet, and Anna the prophetess can be added to this list, along with the Emmaus disciples. But no reference is made to **Luke** in LUKE other than the little words "me" in LUKE 1:3, and "us" in LUKE 1:2 & 3. So what happened to **Luke** after he finished writing the gospel according to LUKE, and the record of ACTS? There is probably a four to five year time period that elapses between the last words written by **Luke** in ACTS, and Paul's writing **Timothy** in 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *Only Luke is with me*. In fact there are only three scriptures that make mention of **Luke** by name, and all are written by Paul. Let's review these three scriptures, and some other facts concerning **Luke**.

Luke's name is contracted from Latin Lucanus, and he is found also in scripture mentioned as **Lucas**. **Luke** and **Lucas** means: "light-giving," "luminous," "a light," and "white." This thought of "light-giving" is very appropriate, for **Luke** shed light on many thoughts, and themes, and lives that we otherwise would know nothing about, some of whom we mentioned above. Paul tells that **Luke** is a "fellowlabourer" in PHILEMON 1:24. Don't pass over this word "fellowlabourer" lightly, for we learned previously "fellowlabourer" comes from the same Greek word that also translates into our English as helper, fellowhelper, fellow worker, workfellow, labourer together with, and companion in labour. From this class of Christian followers of the Apostle Paul, who followed Paul as he followed Christ, will come those who will rule and reign with Christ, and who will be in the Bride of Christ. Certainly **Luke** followed Paul, but more importantly **Luke** put Jesus first in his own life, and thus was inspired by the Holy Ghost to put together the two books in scripture, which he wrote. Besides here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:11, and PHILEMON 1:24 where **Luke** is called a "fellowlabourer," the only other mention of **Luke** in scripture is in COLOSSIANS 4:14 where Paul writes: *Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you*. Recall that when Paul wrote both PHILEMON, and COLOSSIANS he was in prison at Rome the first time, and **Luke** was there with him, having been with Paul ever since leaving Caesarea. Paul mentions **Luke** in COLOSSIANS

4:14 **Luke**, *the beloved physician*... . We commented on this scripture previously noting that to Paul **Luke** was “beloved,” which is to say esteemed dear unto Paul, and worthy of love because of **Luke**’s love of Christ. And, by the way, Paul is saying that not only is **Luke** “beloved,” but his credentials also include that of being a “physician.” So we see that **Luke** was a physician, beloved of Paul. And think of Paul at this time in his life having suffered all of the things recorded in 2 CORINTHIANS 11, including 195 stripes laid on him by the Jews, being stoned, and left for dead once, three times being beaten with rods, numerous perils, plus the many other things recorded in ACTS after the time frame in which 2 CORINTHIANS 11 was written. No doubt Paul was left scarred, and a hurting man until the day he died, and to have a beloved friend who was also a physician brought much comfort to the Apostle Paul. **Luke** was with out a doubt a real blessing unto the Apostle Paul. On commentator notes that **Luke** was probably taught the science of medicine, which knowledge combined with faith in the Lord provided much aid and comfort to the Apostle Paul. For some of Paul’s health problems **Luke** became Paul’s medical advisor, and thus **Luke** earned the moniker “the beloved physician.” In one regard **Luke** was like a medical missionary, especially to Paul. And now Paul writes in 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *Only Luke is with me*. There were those who had now turned from Paul, and departed from Paul, and even had forsaken Paul, but **Luke** “the beloved physician,” who daily attended to the health cares of the Apostle Paul, was still with Paul, a fellowlabourer, and faithful follower to the end.

Let’s drill down to the depths of this statement: *Only Luke is with me*. Are you too with Paul? Of course we are now talking doctrinally, for the Apostle Paul has long ago gone home to be with the Lord. Paul’s gospel is the one we are to follow in this church age, for Paul followed Christ, and wrote *...Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample...* in PHILIPPIANS 3:17. Paul also wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16 *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me*. And again in 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 Paul wrote: *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ*. 2 CORINTHIANS 12:2 *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ*. Paul’s gospel message is the bridal message preached to those of us in this church age. So are you too following Paul as he followed Christ like **Luke** did? And what did Paul do every day, and every hour of the day? Pray, yes pray, for all situations in his life, and for all Saints everywhere. But even beyond that Paul had a higher focus every day, and every second of the day, for he constantly was *...Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ...* TITUS 2:13. In HEBREWS 12:2 Paul wrote that he was *...Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith...* and in the preceding verses of 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 Paul had written about *...all them also that love his appearing*. **Luke** had this same focus, for Paul wrote here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *...Luke is with me*. Are you too with Paul, *...Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ...*?

Consider this, there were very few people truly looking for Jesus at His first coming. Oh sure believers of that day knew that there would be a Messiah coming to earth someday, but there were very few actually looking for Jesus first advent in their lifetime. **Luke** was the one who recorded in scripture the names of those who were at the first *...Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. Let me give you some of their names: Zacharias and Elisabeth (LUKE 1:5); Mary and Joseph (LUKE 1:27); Simeon (LUKE 2:26 & 27); and Anna the prophetess (LUKE 2:36-38). Now think about this, how many people in this present world are truly *...Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ...*? How many are looking for Jesus second coming, not in their lifetime, but now? Of course we cannot answer that question, except for ourselves. The first rank that will be raptured will be the Bride of Christ, a rather small rib portion of believer taken out first from this church age; those who have followed Paul as he followed Christ and drawn closest to His heart in the body of Christ; those who love His appearing, and are constantly *...Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. In reality

there are today very few people actually looking for Jesus second coming, just like as was the case during His first coming. Not all Christians have followed Paul's gospel message, nor followed Paul as he followed Christ. However **Luke** did follow Paul until the end. 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *Only Luke is with me.* May we too be found to have latched onto, and followed Paul until the end, until Jesus comes!!!

One more point concerning Paul and **Luke**. What author in scripture introduced us to Paul? It was **Luke**, who under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, explained how the testimony of Stephen before the Sanhedrin council had pricked the heart of Saul of Tarsus, who later became the Apostle Paul. (Of course **Luke** later learned this very same information from the Apostle Paul as **Luke** and Paul spent hours together recalling Paul's conversion.) One point of Stephen's witness **Luke** recorded in ACTS 7:55 & 56, which reads: *But he, (Stephen) being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* What did Stephen see? Light. ISAIAH 60:1 states this: *Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.* The glory of God is indeed Light: Light that is greater than the noonday Sun. Later in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:41 Paul writes a simple explanation of glory, and in turn light, saying: *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.* So Stephen proclaimed with his Holy Ghost inspired voice what he saw, saying, *...I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* There was no doubt in the minds of the Sanhedrin council present at Stephen's sermon who he saw, for Stephen told them that it was *...Jesus standing on the right hand of God...* . **Luke** also recorded Jesus words before this very same Sanhedrin council years before during the time of His trial before them, writing in LUKE 22:66 *And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, 67 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: 68 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. 69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. 70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. 71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.* Thus we note that Jesus had told this very same Sanhedrin council that he would sit on the right hand of the power of God, and now Stephen had witnessed to this same Sanhedrin council, and proclaimed that he too now saw *...Jesus standing on the right hand of God...* . We have used a lot of words here to once again explain how Jesus is indeed the Light of life, and the Light of the world as He Himself explained in JOHN 8:12. And there was no doubt amongst those of the Sanhedrin council who Stephen was talking about in his sermon of ACTS 7, where we are also introduced to a young man named Saul of Tarsus.

A few short months pass, and **Luke** records the story of Saul of Tarsus traveling to Damascus. **Luke** records this in ACTS 9:3 *And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven...* . Is there any doubt who Saul of Tarsus saw in this blinding Light? There was no doubt in his mind, and **Luke** records his testimony in ACTS 22 & 26. Here is some of what was said before the multitude in Jerusalem by the Apostle Paul as he recalled the day he was arrested by the Lord on the road to Damascus: ACTS 22:6 *And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. 7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. 9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. 10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. 11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. 12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which*

dwelt there, 13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. 15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. The very same "Just One" that Ananias proclaimed Saul of Tarsus would see, and hear the voice of His mouth, was the very same "Just One" Stephen had spoken of in ACTS 7:52, Jesus the Light of the world!

Luke also recorded what the Apostle Paul said before King Agrippa as he described once again the profoundness of the Light greater than the noonday sun that shown upon him on the road to Damascus. ACTS 26:13 *At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. 14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. 19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. 21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. 22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: 23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.*

So we see in the above portion how **Luke** introduced us to Paul, the former Saul of Tarsus, who indeed witnessed *...in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun...* ACTS 26:13, which was indeed the glorious Light of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that temporarily blinded him until Ananias of Damascus was sent by Jesus to pray for him as noted in ACTS 9:17, which reads: *And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.* Immediately Paul received his sight, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to learn from the Holy Ghost the deep truths that he would preach, which would also open the eyes of those to whom he was sent, *...and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in...* Christ Jesus. The main theme we find in the above discussion is Light, the glorious Light of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who is magnified, and amplified all throughout Paul's gospel record. Paul heard the message of Light preached by Stephen in ACTS 7. Paul saw Light on the road to Damascus, and heard voice of our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ speak to him out of the Light, telling him that he was to preach about the Light, and open the eyes of those in darkness, and turn them to the Light of Christ. Paul spent the rest of his life preaching *...the light of the glorious gospel of Christ...* 2 CORINTHIANS 4:4. 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6 goes on to tell us: *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* This is what Paul preached *...the light of the glorious gospel of Christ.* Later Paul wrote to the Ephesians about his prayer for enlightenment. EPHESIANS 1:15 *Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and*

revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Now in his final letter Paul writes in 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 *Only Luke is with me.* Recall what **Luke** means: “light-giving,” “luminous,” “a light,” and “white.” Thus we could read 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 this way: “Only **Luke**, a precious light-giving Gentile Saint is with me; a constant reminder of that precious, and glorious Light of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who first appeared to me on the road to Damascus. His Light is always with me.” Paul adds this in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* Yes all believers should realize His Light is always with me.