

## Lecture 33 – Themes of Luke

*Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught. Luke 1:3-4 (NIV)*

### Key Terms

Investigation, eyewitnesses, prophecy, miracles

### Objectives

\*To describe a chronology of events leading up to Jesus' birth and ministry in Luke's Gospel

\*To state the purpose(s) of Jesus' sermon at Nazareth

### Themes of Luke

#### I. Introduction

A. For authorship and dates - see readings

B. Historicity

1. Luke's claim (1:1-4)
2. Baur's attack in 19th century
3. Ramsey's reply in early 20th stresses reliable knowledge of Roman world
  - a. Explicit connections to history
  - b. Luke's excellent record in difficult matter of governmental titles
4. Reply from the genre of Luke
5. Can memory of distant events remain clear? The case of an arrest for murder

C. Luke's stated goal of giving certainty implies a believing reader (1:1-4). How he does it.

1. Investigation
2. Eyewitnesses
3. Prophecy
4. Miracles

#### II. The Preparation for Jesus' Ministry

A. Birth and prophecies stress fulfillment of OT prophecy and concrete deliverance, Luke 1-2

B. Preparation for ministry, Luke 3-4

1. John the Baptist - repentance
2. Genealogy to Adam
3. The Spirit in Jesus' preparation: birth (1:35), maturation (2:40), baptism (3:22), temptation (4:1)
4. The Spirit in His message and miracles (4:14, 18)

#### III. First Sermon States Jesus' Program, Introduces Themes of Reversals, Universality

A. Contexts

1. Inaugural message establishes theme of ministry to poor
2. Miracles already known
3. Hometown; synagogue surprisingly dangerous

B. The honorary speaker brings a message

1. From Isaiah 61, with "day of vengeance" omitted
2. A commission: Theme: "He has anointed me to evangelize the poor."
  - a. Then, "He has sent me" + three more infinitive phrases
  - b. To proclaim release (or forgiveness) to captives and sight for the blind
  - c. To release (or forgive) the oppressed
  - d. To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord
3. Reflection: What kind of a mission is this?

- a. The horizontal and vertical aspects of ἀφεσι - “release”
- b. The vertical aspects of ἀφεσι - “forgiveness”
4. Reflection: If we want to accept Jesus’ ministry, what position does that put us in?
- C. Reaction to the proclamation: Jesus forces a resolution to initial ambiguity.
  1. Initial ambivalence
  2. Jesus presses their flaws.
    - a. Skepticism
    - b. Possessiveness
  3. What Elijah and Elisha illustrate
  4. Angry reaction
- D. Contemporary applications: What we can learn from sermon at Nazareth.
  1. The desire to control or restrict God’s work
  2. Skepticism
  3. Can we imitate Jesus’ words and attitudes in any way?

*What is meant by the stated themes of “Reversals and Universality” as described in this lesson?*