

**The Discipler's Commentary**  
Answer Outline for the Discipler  
Luke 1

1:1-4 – Luke's introduction to his gospel: he was Theophilus's personal physician

- *The discipler may want to introduce the other gospel writers, and that Luke was the only one who was not an eyewitness.*
- *Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the "Synoptic" writers (lit. "through the same eye")*
- *Luke was a very educated and intelligent man from Macedonia (Greece); an employee of Theophilus, which means "Lover of God."*

Key words: "...having investigated everything carefully from the beginning"

- *See commentary for how Luke was able to investigate "everything carefully."*

Purpose for writing: so that Theophilus may know "the exact truth" (about Jesus Christ)

- *It is obvious that Theophilus was a Gentile who had become a Christian, and was wealthy enough to send Luke on a mission to verify the details of the gospel.*
- *Luke ended up a traveling companion of the apostle Paul.*
- *Luke includes details that the other gospel writers do not include, and it seems certain that he had personal interviews with Mary, the mother of Jesus.*

A lesson: In order to know the exact truth, we must study God's word

- *The discipler does not want to skip over the important lessons that can be learned. Here, the discipler wants to encourage critical thinking on the part of the disciple, perhaps by asking, "What other lessons do you think can be learned from this short section?" The same principle should be applied to all the other lessons that follow. (Note: the heading is "A lesson," not "**The** lesson," as there are many lessons to be learned. The ones provided here are only suggestions.)*

1:5-25 – The account of the priest Zacharias's encounter with the angel Gabriel

- *"Gabriel" means "Man of God." He appears to be the angel who announces good news.*
- *A brief description of the duties of a priest may be appropriate.*
- *This may be a good place to dwell on Zacharias's and Elizabeth's character (see v. 6)*
- *The discipler may want to describe what being barren meant to a woman in those days.*

Gabriel announces to Zacharias that he will be the father of John the Baptist

- *This would be a good place to list all the men named "John" in the New Testament. Differentiate especially between John the Baptist from the apostle John.*

Zacharias and Elizabeth will give birth to a son by natural means

- *Note the similarities between this encounter and Abraham's encounter with the angels in Genesis 18.*

Zacharias is disciplined by Gabriel because he requested proof (a sign)

- *Because he was a priest, Zacharias should have known better, especially knowing the story of Abraham. In essence, Zacharias was asking for a supernatural sign rather than relying on faith. After all, he is encountering an angel in the Holy Place.*

A lesson: Asking God for a sign instead of trusting by faith may result in discipline

- *Or withholding of blessings, or not receiving what we are asking for, etc.*

1:26-38 – The account of Mary's encounter with the angel Gabriel

- *The discipler may want to elaborate on where the small town of Nazareth was in relation to Jerusalem and Bethlehem, using a map if necessary. The discipler may also want to go into some explanation about arranged marriages in those days, and Mary's probable age.*

## Luke 1

Gabriel announces to Mary that she will give birth to Jesus, the "Son of God"

- *A number of subjects could be explained in this section, as long as it does not detract from the key points. Such subjects could be the importance of being a descendant of David and "throne of David," the meaning of the name "Jesus" (aka "Joshua" meaning "Savior" or "Deliverer"), and Mary's response to Gabriel ("bondslave").*

Luke makes it *very clear* that Mary, though engaged to Joseph, is a virgin

- *That Mary was a pure virgin at this time needs to be emphasized. To get around the miracle of the Virgin Birth, liberal scholars come up with all sorts of speculative ideas, such as Mary was raped by Roman soldiers, or that Joseph himself had violated Mary.*
- *In those days, to be "engaged" meant that a legal promise had been made between the families.*

Mary will give birth to a son by supernatural means (by the Holy Spirit)

- *This would be a good place to explain the Roman Catholic doctrine of Immaculate Conception; that it doesn't refer to Jesus' birth, but to Mary's, a doctrine contrived to advocate that Mary herself was born without sin ("Mother of God" doctrine).*
- *That Mary was impregnated by the Holy Spirit means that Jesus was born without sin, and therefore perfect human and fully divine. He was born the God-Man, which makes His death on the cross all that more significant.*

A lesson: With God, nothing is impossible

1:39-56 – The account of Mary's encounter with Elizabeth and Mary's song of praise to God

- *Point out that Mary had plenty of time to compose this song, often referred to as the "Magnificat."*

A lesson: Sometimes wonderful news from God can result in joyful singing

1:57-79 – The account of the birth of John the Baptist and Zacharias's prophecy

- *Note that in this chapter, the phrase "filled with the Holy Spirit" is used three times, and in no instance is there an association with "speaking in tongues." In all instances, there is "praise to God."*
- *Note that Jesus and John the Baptist will be cousins.*

A lesson: When we are faithful and obedient to God, wonderful things happen

1:80 – The account of the life of John the Baptist before he became an official prophet

- *We will learn much more about John the Baptist and his message in chapter 3.*

A lesson: Those who are wholly devoted to God do not necessarily lead an easy lifestyle

- *Finally, as the disciple how God is speaking to him or her personally through this chapter.*