



# **THE GOSPEL OF LUKE**

**GOD'S BIG IDEAS**

**SESSION 3**

# LUKE AND THE OTHER SYNOPTICS

- Uses *Mark* as a source, but only around half his verses
- Shares more than 230 verses with *Matthew* but not *Mark*
- More unique content
- Similar themes and thematic structure
- But some themes developed differently
- First part of two-volume work; some themes more developed in *Acts*

# 1. CHARACTER OF THE GOSPEL

- Nature and purpose:
  - Orderly, historical, narrative account of Jesus' life and ministry
  - Careful and well-informed author
  - Based on reliable tradition
  - Trustworthy eyewitnesses
  - Earlier writings
  - Confirms previous instruction
  - Seeks positive response

## 2. SALVATION HISTORY

- Gospel recounts a history of salvation that interprets world history
- It is unfolded by God according to his saving plan
- That plan is finally fulfilled in Jesus
- Three-age framework

## 2. SALVATION HISTORY

- First age: the Old Testament
  - Israel's scriptures point ahead to Jesus
  - All their promises are fulfilled in him
- Second age: the ministry of Jesus
  - Jesus proclaims, effects and achieves salvation
  - In line with the scriptures
  - He fulfils the promises, vocation and practices of Israel

## 2. SALVATION HISTORY

- Third age: the church and the Spirit
  - Starts from Jesus' departure
  - Salvation sent out by Jesus to the nations
  - In fulfilment of the scriptures
- Promise of salvation fulfilled completely only at Jesus' return
- John the Baptist concludes the first age by preparing for Jesus, who launches the second age

# 3. SALVATION

- Grounded in the kingdom of God
- Deliverance from evil and restoration to life under God's reign
- Provokes conflict with cosmic and human forces
- Forgiveness, freedom and the gift of the Spirit
- Peace, release, healing, sight
- Joy, praise, fellowship, unity, including the socially unacceptable
- Eternal life

# 3. SALVATION

- Especially for socially disadvantaged and despised
- Not effected by reform or revolution
- Physical restoration only a limited and temporary foretaste

## 4. THE IDENTITY OF JESUS

- God is the ultimate saviour
- Jesus acts as saviour in his earthly ministry...
- ...and in all his other roles
- Elements of his identity should be seen as a whole

# 4. THE IDENTITY OF JESUS

1 Prophet

2 Teacher

3 Messiah / son of David

4 Son of God

5 Son of man

6 Servant of the Lord

7 Lord

## 4. THE IDENTITY OF JESUS

- A fully human being...
- ...but also a transcendent figure

# 5. JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION

- Jesus is the righteous sufferer whose death establishes a new covenant
- His resurrection and ascension comprise his exaltation to glory
- This gives him authority to pour out the Spirit and launch the church's mission

## 6. THE RETURN OF JESUS

- Event concludes salvation history (see above)
- Similar teaching to *Matthew* and *Mark*
- Greater separation between fall of Jerusalem and Jesus' coming
- Moderates expectations of the end

# 7. THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Teaching of Acts anticipated in outline
- Adds little to *Mark* and *Matthew* but offers distinctive viewpoint
- The Spirit's work through Jesus is empowering and prophetic
- He is promised to Jesus' disciples for their mission

## 8. ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES

- Jesus' mission is first to redeem and restore Israel
- But his message requires individual recognition and response
- Some Jews receive the gospel and experience salvation
- But some reject it and incur judgment
- Israel loses its privilege, and the nation and temple are destroyed

## 8. ISRAEL AND THE GENTILES

- Israel now comprises those Jews who accept Jesus' message and receive his salvation
- Extension of salvation to the Gentiles is anticipated
- Twelve apostles are the nucleus of the people of God

# 9. DISCIPLESHIP

- Basic responses to Jesus: repentance and faith
- Living under God's rule, accountable to him
- Conformity to Jesus:
  - Obeying his teaching
  - Following in his way
  - Accepting his vocation

# 9. DISCIPLESHIP

- Love for God and neighbour
- Generosity to the needy and laying aside wealth
- Prayer
- Steadfastness in the face of opposition
- Readiness for Jesus' return

# 10. MISSION

- The Twelve are sent out to share in Jesus' mission
- He also commissions a larger group for the work
- Task of witness later given to the Eleven and 'those with them'

# APPLICATIONS

- Story of Jesus is the reliable historical foundation of our faith
- Contemporary events have no ultimate importance, but are incorporated by God into his invincible saving purpose
- Bold expectations of the difference Jesus can make to our lives, though its fullness awaits his return
- Reckoning with Jesus' call to generosity and giving up of possessions