

Luke's Remembering

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Introduction

I love to repeat the fact that we have the privilege to meet here in the Lord's house, on the Lord's day for the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Some prefatory remarks will help us focus our thoughts. 1) First, this whole service is the communion service. We are now at the table for some table talk as the meal is served. 2) Second, emphasis should be placed on remembering – remembering the Lord Jesus. That means that self-examination is not the key to communion. It is a natural by-product of course. Self-examination is a daily Christian responsibility; it is not distinctively a communion responsibility. 3) Third, we remember Him according to the remembrances – the Gospels with the rest of Scripture. Thus *we are to remember Him along the lines of God's reminding*. That is why we call communion a preaching rite. As Calvin put it, the minister is to point the people to that which is pictured by the bread and the wine: to the Lord Jesus as life-giver, as life giving nourishment. 4) Fourth, though we look to all of Scripture, the center of our remembering is appropriately the Gospels. There we have the history of the person and work of Christ. So, the last two communions I took up the Gospels of Matthew and Mark respectively. This morning we come to *Luke's remembering*.

What I propose to do today is to follow Luke's report by highlighting an outline of the book, reading select passages and summarizing the story line with brief comments.

The outline unfolds in six sections that are easy to identify and remember. If we think of the theme as the ministry of Jesus, or His work, then each section tells us something about His ministry. We have Luke's remembering of His ministry.

Luke's remembering of :

- the background of His ministry, chaps. 1-2 (focus is set)
- the beginning of His ministry, chapter 3 (and part of 4; focus is clarified)
- His ministry in Galilee, roughly chapters 4-9
- His ministry enroute to Jerusalem, roughly 10-19
- His ministry in and about Jerusalem, 20-21
- His ministry in death and resurrection, 22-24

1A. Background of the Ministry of Jesus (most is peculiar to Luke's record)

Preface regarding the apostolic tradition 1:1-4 (writing the authoritative apostolic tradition, handed down, v. 2; taught, v. 4; the apostles were chosen, appointed, commissioned, and empowered to give a unique eyewitness testimony to Christ. Jesus promised it for the church

over the coming ages, 24:47, as massive foundation rock. By this He implied its preservation in written form like the OT.)

Birth of John the Baptist, 1:5-80 (filled with the Spirit from the womb, **v. 15** to turn many to God by the power of Elijah, by the power of the Spirit, **v. 17**).

Birth, Circumcision, Childhood of Jesus, 2. Birth is cited in **2:7**. Its end beyond all ends, **2:14** (glory of God through the giving of "peace to men on whom his favor rests").

His destiny is to make division within Israel. By a discriminating sword He will save His people from their sins (**vs. 34-35**). This is how He will save, by dividing, by causing some to rise and some to fall. He will save Israel made up of Gentiles as well as Jews (**vs. 30-32**). He will save the new Israel by doing His Father's will in wisdom obtained by listening, asking questions, and giving answers (**vs. 42, 46-47, 49**). He is our example here but first He is the obedient Son of God.

2A. Beginning of the Ministry of Jesus, 3:1-4:13

1) by John's Way-Preparing 3:1-20

Overview of his ministry is given to the point when he was locked up in prison (**v. 20**). How did he prepare? By preaching gospel/good news (**v. 18**) of the Christ as Baptizer (**v. 16**) and thus the good news of salvation (forgiveness of sins through repentance, **v. 3**; of salvation to all mankind, **v. 6**, which means to both Jews and Gentiles in their darkness).

2) at Baptism, **3:21-22** (baptism with the Spirit and witness of the Father)

3) at age 30, **3:23** (the age when a priest enters his office)

4) in the lineage or genealogy that traces back through David to Adam (**3:23-38**) showing that He is the second Adam, Savior of the human family, king of the world as well as king of Israel. He came to save mankind (Jew and Gentile).

5) through temptation, 4:1-13 (sent, driven, impelled according to Mk. 1:12). Each phase of the temptation was answered with the word of God: "it is written" as shown in **4:1-4**. God says it, that's enough, that settles it.

Thus, by John's way-preparing, the witness of the Father, and the filling of the Spirit, Jesus, legal son of Joseph, son of David, son of Adam, through severe testing embarked on His ministry as king and priest (at age thirty). The testing showed that He is prepared to worship and serve God the Father with absolute obedience to His nourishing word, the true bread of life.

3A. The Ministry of Jesus in Galilee, 4:14-9:50

The king and priest embarks on a ministry of teaching (**4:14-15**) thus He is also a prophet like unto Moses (Deut. 18:18). Thus the reading in the synagogue from Isaiah 61:1-2 spoke of Him (**Lk. 4:18-21**, a fascinating account filled with gospel). He will preach good news of freedom and recovery of sight for the blind. From Deuteronomy and Isaiah, we know that Jesus will have God's word on His lips and He will do many miraculous signs and thus *present His message in word and deed* (**4:40, 43-44**). Thus, for example, he teaches in a town in Galilee (**4:31**), by the

Lake or Sea of Galilee, (proclaiming the word of God as God the Son and Prophet par excellence, **5:1**).

Although His fame spread immediately and people were awed at His works and words (**4:15, 32**), He infuriated people by His teaching on the division God made in Elijah's day (**4:28**; suggesting that they are sinful like Elijah's Israel and like that generation, they will also be passed over). His works got the attention of the leaders "from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem" (**5:17**) who were skeptical of Him (thinking he speaks blasphemy, **5:21**; asking, "why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?", **5:30**; they looked for reasons to accuse Him, **6:7**; teaching them His Lordship of the Sabbath led them to fury and discussion of "what they might do to Jesus," **6:11**).

From the larger group of disciples, Jesus chose twelve to be His apostles (**6:13**). Thus as He trained His disciples there was a special training of the apostles to be like their teacher (**6:40**) serving God from the heart (**6:45**).

From town to town he proclaimed "the good news of the kingdom of God" (**8:1**). He did so often in parables (Luke records about 18 parables not cited in the other gospels such as the prodigal son). Parabolic teaching continued His mission of causing the rising and falling of many in Israel (**8:10; 10:22**).

During this time in Galilee, the apostles were sent out to proclaim the gospel in word and deed (**9:2**). Note the reference to the Twelve (**9:1**), twelve baskets of food from the feeding miracles (**9:17**), Peter's confession (**9:20**), seeing the kingdom via the transfiguration of Christ (**9:27-29**) and telling no one "at *that* time" (**9:36**). This is the training of the apostles for the time when they *will* testify of Christ and His glory as His eyewitnesses (1:1-4).

4A. The Ministry of Jesus enroute to Jerusalem, 9:51-19:28

This section is introduced by a comment on the determination of Christ (**9:51**). Teaching on prayer is specifically given (10:1-13). Mary's blessing is stated to be surpassed by the blessing of "those who hear the word of God and obey it" (**11:27-28**). *Tension mounts between Jesus and the Pharisees* (**11:38-39; 44-45; 52**; and they oppose him fiercely, v. **53**). He continues to announce His coming baptism with fire and the division it will cause on the earth (**12:49-51**) and that the kingdom will come in a way unexpected (its comes by the sower sowing seed over time till the harvest, and the Sower will be killed! It will not come at once: the noble will go to a distant country and return, **19:11-12**).

5A. The Ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem, 19:29-21:38

He enters the city blessed as king (**19:38**) while the leaders try to kill him (**19:47**). Jesus speaks parables against them (**20:19**) and they sent spies (**20:20**, feigning honesty and trying to trap Him in what He said). He continued to teach at the temple each day retiring to the Mount of Olives each night (**21:37-38**).

6A. The Ministry of Jesus in death and resurrection, 22:1-24:53

- The treachery of Judas, 22:1-6. The leaders looked and Judas watched for the time to hand Jesus over with no crowd present (**22:2, 6**)

- The last supper, 22:7-38. Jesus and His apostles reclined at the Lord's table (**22:14**). This was a special and unique passion (**22:15**). It was the Passover of Passovers. Year after year the sacrificed lamb gave nourishment to God's people. But it did so as a type and shadow of the ceremonial law. Now the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world has come to this hour-to eat this Passover "before I suffer" (**22:15**).
- The dark hour, 22:39-23:56 (cf. **22:53b**, this is your hour-when darkness reigns). Jesus was arrested and tried unjustly before the high priest, the Jewish court, Herod and Pilate. Peter waited, watched and denied the Lord three times while the soldiers mocked Him cruelly: "Friends through fear his cause disowning, foes insulting his distress." But the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered (**22:61**). With no grounds for the death penalty (**23:22**), Pilate turned Christ over to crucifixion at the place of the Skull with a criminal on His right and on His left (**23:33**). Darkness covered the land (**23:44**) and Jesus committed His spirit into the Father's hands (**23:46**).
- The entrance to glory, 24 (cf. **24:26**). First, a) The empty tomb, 24:1-12 (*He is not here; He is risen*, v.6, is cited along with the responses of the women, the eleven, and Peter, vs. **9-12**). Second, b) The appearance of Jesus on the road to Emmaus, 24:13-35. When they talked with Jesus on the way, their hearts burned within them (**24:32**). Third, c) The appearance of Jesus to the eleven in Jerusalem, 24:36-49. Peace be with you (v. **36**). It is I myself (v. **39**). Do you have anything here to eat? (v. **41**). Then He explained "what is written" (v. **46**) and the witness they shall bear to the nations when empowered by the Spirit (vs. **47-49**). Fourth, the ascension, **24:50-53**.

Then He left them (v. **51**, three striking words). Their response must also be ours: they worshipped Him sight unseen, they did so with joy and continual praise to God (v. **52**). We must exclaim: "Glory to the bleeding Lamb! Glory to the Bleeding Lamb. Amen!"