

QUESTIONS:

- Which book was the sequel to the gospel of Luke?
 - Theophilus
 - Acts
 - 1 Thessalonians
 - John
- Who was Jesus talking to when He promised they would be His witnesses in the entire world?
 - Everyone who follows Him.
 - Peter and Paul.
 - Those who were His eyewitnesses.
 - Luke and Theophilus.
- Which of the following scriptures confirms they did just that?
 - Matthew 24:24
 - Acts 1:1,2
 - John 14:15
 - Colossians 1:23
- Paul described false teachers as _____?
 - Fierce wolves
 - Frightened sheep
 - Crafty foxes
 - Harmless fools
- Loving God is to loving Jesus as loving Jesus is to Love His ...
 - Mother
 - Word
 - Miracles
 - Compassion
- According to John 14:15 We do not love Jesus if we do not...
 - Hear His commands
 - Know His commands
 - Teach His commands
 - Obeys His commands
- According to 2 Thessalonians 2:10 those who perish ...
 - Want to perish
 - Do not love the truth
 - Forget the truth
 - Have sinned
- Jesus and His apostles predicted that there would be false teachers causing division and that we should just accept it.

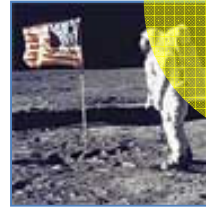
TRUE / FALSE
- The Bible teaches that there is only one faith and it has been around since the days of the apostles

TRUE / FALSE
- I want to be a "Theophilus"

YES / NO

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But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Deuteronomy 4:29

A LOOK INTO THE HEART OF GOD THROUGH THE STUDY OF HIS WORD

Part Twelve

The One Who Loves God — Theophilus

Luke was the writer of the book of Acts as well as the gospel according to Luke. He addresses both of these writings to "Theophilus".

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

Luke 1:1-4

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.

Acts 1:1,2

Who was Luke writing to?

We cannot say with certainty who Theophilus was. The name means "friend of God" or "one who loves God". It was a common name of the era and there are several who have been suggested as possible targets of Luke's writings.

- A Jew from Alexandria known as Theophilus
- Theophilus Ben Ananus, High Priest of the Temple in Jerusalem.
- Titus Flavius Sabinus: a former Prefect of Rome.
- Paul's lawyer during his trial period in Rome.

The other interpretation is that Luke is simply addressing all those who could be described as those who love God. God certainly intended for all people to have access to these writings.

Why was Luke writing?

Luke, in his gospel account is confirming what Theophilus had already been taught about Jesus. In the book of Acts he is continuing where he left off with his gospel account, which he refers to as “*all that Jesus began to do and teach*”. The inference is that he is now writing about the completion of that work. This is consistent with Jesus’ promise, to the eleven remaining apostles, just before His ascension as recorded in Luke 24:45-49 and Acts Acts 1:7,8. Paul, who was later added as an apostle, confirmed that the work was completed in his day.

...if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Colossians 1:23

Jesus had commanded the Apostles to preach the gospel to the whole creation (Mark 16:15, 16) He promised that these eleven (plus Matthias who was added in Acts 1:26) would be his witnesses in the entire world. He also promised that anyone who believed and was baptized would be saved. Paul refers to this in 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9

... inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

Paul describes those who will suffer this punishment as those “*who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel*”. The one who loves God is the one who knows and obeys Him and we obey Him by obeying the gospel. Jesus made this principle clear when He said, “*If you love me you will obey what I command*” (John 14:15).

Today there are so many different churches and different teachings How do we know if we are obeying the commands of Jesus or the commands of men? Jesus knew this would be a problem.



For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

Matthew 24:24

Paul and Peter and John also warn us:

I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Acts 20:29,30

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

2 Peter 2:1

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1John 4:1

The Bible gives us confidence if we will study it for ourselves. We must each be a “Theophilus” to gain the confidence that the scriptures hold for us. Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 2:9,10, says this:

The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

Here is the path of love if you want to be “Theophilus”

1. To love God you must love, by obeying, His son Jesus
2. To love Jesus you must love, by obeying, His word.

This is summed up in the word “faith” and we can be assured that there is only one faith in the scriptures, regardless of what men may say.

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. Jude 3.

Theophilus was someone who wanted to know the truth as it came from the apostles. The scriptures make it clear that the faith went into the world in that generation of men who were eyewitnesses of Jesus. It also warns that there would be false teachers and that they would be successful in winning many souls away from Christ. These souls simply did not love the truth. We hope that you are a Theophilus and that you will continue in the truth of God’s Word.

You will seek me and find me.

When you seek me with all your heart Jeremiah 29:13

THUS SAYS THE LORD!