

Saint Luke, Evangelist

Sermon Road Map
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Luke 1:1-4; 24:44-53
October 18, 2020

**Our faith is not based on fake news, but facts.
Witness it. Give witness.**

- Lately we've heard a lot about *fake news* - things that are presented as facts, when in fact they are: facts out of context, *or* facts that are only part of the story, *or* speculation stated as fact, *or* a story crafted to confirm a false notion.
- *Fake news* is usually tailored to speak to an audience eager to believe it is true.
- Typical of deception, often the charge of *fake news* is fake itself - a deception.
- Knowing that Satan is the father of lies - I do not want to believe a news report just because it fits and confirms my worldview or opinion. **If I do, Satan wins.**
- **Facts matter.** If it is not factual, it didn't happen. It is not real or true.
 - ◆ Clinging to stories you like, but are not true, is self-deception, shaky ground
- Consider: *What challenges did Luke address to help Theophilus?*
 - ◆ The Athenians considered the good news of the resurrection to be *fake news*.
 - ◆ We face similar challenges from skeptics:
 - *You don't actually believe Jesus rose from the dead, do you? That doesn't happen. Dead is dead! Or Jesus wasn't really dead.*
 - *And all those miracles and demon possessions - superstition and myth*
 - ◆ If we respond: *Yes, by faith I believe these things happened.* Response:
 - The polite: *I see that makes you happy. I'm happy for you.* (dismissive)
 - The hostile: *You're ignorant to believe that **fake news**.*

The Holy Spirit gave us Luke *so that you may know the certainty of the things you were taught* - that these **accounts report facts, truth, reality with implications.**

Our faith is not based on fake news, but facts. Witness it. Give witness.

- ❖ Like us, Luke learned about the events of Jesus' life from tested eyewitnesses.
 - *an account ...handed down to us by those who were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word from the beginning.*
 - Luke doesn't claim to have been an eyewitness.
 - ◆ What little we're told suggests he's a Gentile convert, maybe through Paul
 - Luke was a physician (Col. 4:14). His books reveal a well educated student of facts.
 - ◆ Good physicians look for the facts through careful observation and listening
 - ◆ *I followed everything closely from the beginning.* Attention to details/facts
 - ◆ Luke *witnessed* many eyewitnesses who stuck to their accounts facing death.
 - ◆ The accounts revealed *the events that have been fulfilled among us*
 - *Events* = real, history - *fulfilled* = happened, *among us* = known witnesses
 - Luke set out to provide a compiled written record of these eyewitness accounts.
 - ◆ *...it seemed good to me also, since I followed everything closely from the beginning, to write an orderly account to you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴so that you may know the certainty of the things you were taught.*
 - ◆ Here are the facts. Collectively they replace **doubt** with **certainty**.

- **Double certainty:** factual events that fulfill prophecies = God's revealed truth
 - ◆ *the events that have been fulfilled among us*
 - ◆ The words of the Risen Lord Jesus Easter evening explaining Holy Week
 - Citing prophecies (100s & 1000s of years old) that said this would happen.
 - Jesus reminded them that he had explained (prophesied this) beforehand.
 - Teaching the prophecies of **Pentecost** and of the **spread** of this factual news.
 - Luke recorded Pentecost and the gospel's proclamation among the Gentiles
 - You and I are witnesses: *...preached in his name to all nations*
 - ◆ Honest and open students see: Christianity is fact/reality based - truth.
 - Not myths of one of a kind events that are unbelievable and unsubstantiated.
 - God's Good News for all has come: *The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations...*
 - God acted here to rescue people from being his enemies - forgiving all their offenses - giving people new and eternal life under his kingdom of care.
 - This offers real peace - real life based on reality - facts - eternal truth.
 - **Not** *merely my opinions, my feelings, my traditions, or a passing fad!*
- ❖ Witness reality and truth!
 - This certainty doesn't come with occasional readings of Luke 2 at Christmas.
 - This certainty doesn't come from a display copy of the Bible collecting dust.
 - This certainty is **daily affirmed by witnessing the witnesses.**
 - ◆ Let them take you there. Read it out loud, like you are telling what happened.
 - ◆ Notice the eyewitness details, historic facts - hallmarks of genuine facts.
 - *In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria.* Luke 2 Written when people were still alive who lived then.
 - *¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar — while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene — ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. ³ He went into the whole region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.* Luke 3
 - Do you have doubts? Are the facts of your faith challenged? God's answer: Luke
- ❖ Give Witness to the facts - God's Good News
 - Extends the long line of witnesses. *Eyewitnesses - Luke - your witness*
 - It's natural when you read Scripture **as events** you **encounter** and **experience.**
 - ◆ *so that you may know the certainty of the things you were taught.*
 - ◆ **Know** - come to know from encounter, experience, live with
 - **Don't wilt** when others dismiss the accounts of Jesus' life as **fake news!**
 - ◆ Who isn't intrigued by the story of an ancient prophecy fulfilled in history?
 - ◆ Ask: *Have you read Luke? Would you read it and show me the fake news.*
 - ◆ **Avoid:** *I think, I feel, I believe (my opinion), my church says, my pastor says...*
 - ◆ Give witness to the witness: God's word works faith's conviction & certainty.
 - We practice this in worship. After listening to the witness of Scripture we give witness to each other and all: *I believe in... We believe in... Truth & Eternal Life.*

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